

Proclamation

The
Occasional
Gentle Giant
Magazine

4

October 1994



Gary Green special issue

Proclamation

- The Occasional Gentle Giant Magazine, no. 4

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HEROES

They were standing there, - they were so near, yet so far away.

Were they so unreal? Just a dream of someone to be one day?

There was endless fame. They were heroes, now they're souvenirs.

And through changing years I can still remember - not quite so clear.

Heroes no more -

Stay with me still.

I dream. I hope. I always will.

Now they're mine no more as they stand there in the glowing light.

I see every face like my own, but that was another night.

Now they're just a dream of the time known ever left to fall.

Soon the game begins, but those heroes yours always to recall.

Heroes no more -

Stay with me still.

I dream. I hope. I always will.

Proclamation

Trondheim, Norway, October 1994.

Finally, a new issue of the newsletter, or magazine, as I have now chosen to call it. The news the fans seem to find in other places, like new releases of CDs, while a magazine like this is more suited to in-depth articles, interviews etc. I have received a mass of letters from satisfied readers. They really pour in, and you can rest assured that I will keep up the work in the way I have started it. Also, a heartfelt welcome to all our new readers since last issue. You are spread out in far-off places all over the world, and I am sure there are many more of us out there, so please continue to spread the word around and find new subscribers, that's the only way I can expand the magazine.

This year has been more hectic than ever for me. Believe me, there are other things in life than editing a fan magazine for a 70's rock band. I have other interests, too, it is not only my research, my wife and family that hinders me, although the year has been hard in those areas. My father has been ill and had to move from our family house, which had to be emptied and sold, so I have not even had any holiday this summer. However, here we are again, and I promise that I will try to get the magazine out a bit more often. I have already filled a considerable part of the next issue while waiting to complete this one.

Many great things have happened during the last 15 months. We have now seen the complete Chrysalis catalogue of the band released, with the Terrapin *Playing the Fool* due out in October. My letter about the recording project has created a marvellous flow of devotion to the idea, including interest from the Giant members themselves. The group rose to #77 in this year's Record Collector poll, their highest position ever. We have been working on the first of what will hopefully be a series of legitimately released concerts on CD; although there have been unprecedented problems which may render it impossible and push the concerts onto bootlegs. And Damon Shulman, Phil's son, has conducted many interesting projects which have resulted in releases.

Yet there are remaining things to be done. We want to see the first four albums out on good CDs, and with the additional material that has been brought to light recently. We want videos commercially available. We want a sound economic basis for a part time reunion of the group. We even want Kerry to go on with other solo projects. Your ideas for the magazine and the other activities are as always welcome.

All issues have sold out and have had to be reprinted. As a consequence, this issue is printed in 600 copies, although the number of subscribers has just passed 400. We will hopefully outgrow that, too.

This issue has become a "Gary Green special issue", with three different interviews with this fantastic guitar player. The next issue will concentrate on John Weathers and drumming. Also, the response to the recording project will be covered fully in the next issue.

The audio guide I promised you in the two last newsletters has once again been postponed, due to the many new tapes that have poured in along with the new subscribers. The list of gigs, or concerts, is also under development still. The bibliography, or list of articles about the group and their activities, likewise.

I now and then forward letters, written interviews, tapes and CDs to the band members. I hope that you all think this is an OK way of communicating with them.

The goal of the magazine is to let Gentle Giant fans have a place to communicate about Giant and other like-minded groups. If you want to write in the magazine, do it. If you want an ad, you can have it for free, within reasonable limits. I will make you laugh, revel, merry-dance. Throw your pennies...

It's Not Imagination

It's more than that. Certainly, as most of you will have realized by now, *Road Goes On Forever*, the subsidiary of London company Terrapin Truckin, released *Free Hand*, *Interview*, *The Missing Piece*, *Giant for a Day* and *Civilian* on CD last year. All were taken from the master tapes and given the same superb treatment as *In a Glass House* and *The Power and the Glory*. A cassette tape copy (John's, actually) of the unreleased track *Heroes* was included on *Civilian*, a splendid song although the sound of the deteriorated tape copy could not offer it full justice. Booklets were included with all CDs, and they contained all that was included on the sleeves of the original albums, even the mask from *Giant for a Day*. Sad to say, the lyrics of *The Missing Piece* and to the *Heroes* track weren't included, but we have traced these now, and they will be included with reprints of the CD booklets, provided the CDs sell so well that it is OK to reset the booklets. These had essays written by Alan Kinsman, who had interviewed Kerry and Ray about the albums and included their comments where appropriate.

We have to note that track 5 on *Civilian*; *Underground*, had been called *All Through the Night*, but we hope that this will be corrected on a new release. Likewise, we will advise that the last four words on the vinyl album: *That's all there is*, will be included, although this isn't true any longer, with the inclusion of *Heroes* and the archeological findings, see below.

The release of the *Civilian* CD was postponed while they searched for a better copy of *Heroes*. The search was fruitless, though, and *Civilian* was released in October. However, in the meantime, people with sharp ears had complained over tape hiss etc. on some of the CDs, notably *The Missing Piece*. RGOF then asked John and Kerry to remaster the tapes from Chrysalis in the best possible way for the reprint of the CDs. *Civilian* then could be sent out with a new master, and as the first edition of the other CDs sold out, they could also be sent out in remastered form. Kerry told me Chrysalis had been fairly careless with the first tapes they had sent, nobody had been monitoring the copying, and the remastering work was mainly for better clarity.

The sound of the CDs is superb, the only exception is *Heroes*. However, when David Armas visited Gary Green this spring, they worked through all of Gary's tapes, and they found the master to the song. I received a tape copy which is tremendous. When I heard the track the first time, I couldn't resist crying, so touched by the marvellous songwriting abilities of Kerry and Derek, and also because the text told the story of us fans so many years after the group made their heyday. So imagine my delight when I came home one day and found my 11-year old son singing to *Civilian*. I just sat down and we joined in humming to *Heroes*, before I jumped on the piano.

This year, Terrapin Truckin changed the name of the label to Terrapin Truckin Records, and all the remastered CDs have been given new numbers: From TRUCK CD1 up to TRUCK CD9, which is the new *Playing the Fool* release. See ad in the back of the newsletter. The next issue will feature a in-depth article on the GG CD sound.

Terrapin hoped to obtain the rights to re-release the first four albums this year. However, they weren't allowed to by Phonogram. I can't understand why, nor can they. Terrapin hasn't given up hope, though. They aspire to include the two tracks that Kerry found in his vaults, together with three more cuts from the band's first years, that Gary Green has dug up.

I have actually got a tape from Gary with these three cuts on. They were all played live in 1970-71, and two of them were recorded for BBC. *Hometown Special* is a 3/4 jazz-waltz type song, quite unlike anything else they did. However, that can be said about most of what the group wrote. But even though there are some multilayered

vocals, it is just a chord-based song, no real composition. After some singing it changes into a 12/8 boogie where Gary plays solo. This part is nearly identical to the boogie part of *Why Not?*, a bit weird since *Why Not?* was played in the same concert. Then the group returns to the 3/4 verse. The refrain where they repeat the title is in 5/4 with Derek in the lead, but I am not terribly impressed.

The next song really enchanted me, though: *City Hermit* opens with a fast 4/4 organ intro, a cross between Bach and Keith Emerson, and then the song changes between 3/4 and 4/4, and the organ fills in the same riff between the lines of the song. A Jethro Tull-inspired guitar riff fills between verses, and then Gary improvises on chords for a while before the last verse is sung. This was a real gem, and would shock you all if included on the early CDs. Both *Hometown Special* and *City Hermit* were recorded for the BBC and given air play in 1970, and may exist in better versions.

The third song was actually a forerunner to *Peel the Paint*. It was called *Peel Off the Paint* and included most of the lyrics to the later version, but the music was quite different. A minor chords scheme was used with heavy guitar and organ, and then a lyrical middle section with what sounded like synthesized flute. A gradual build-up like in *Why Not?* and *Wreck* lead into a guitar solo that actually contain a lot of elements that were used in the album version, then over to guitar chords and back to the verse again. It is quite OK to release it, and especially interesting because it shows how Gentle Giant actually could develop their bits and pieces to much better tunes.

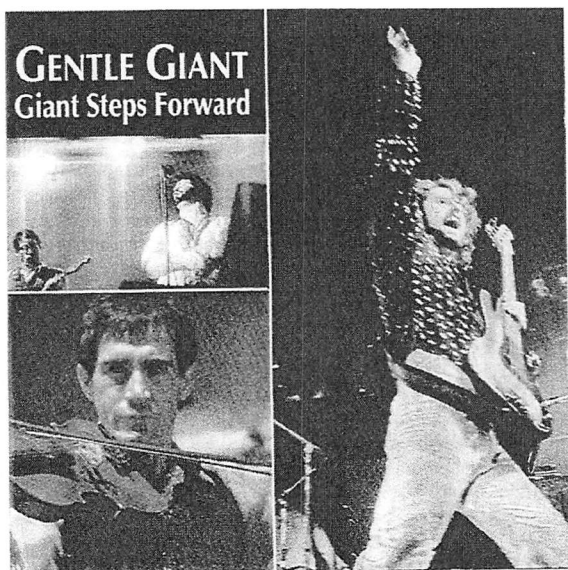
All songs were probably scrapped because they relied too much on chords and had too little development and originality in them. These songs in my opinion have more in common with other bands than anything else that Gentle Giant has done. However, we will hope that you will soon have access to them, although you will have to buy yet another copy of a G. G. album you probably own some versions of already.

The cooperation between *Proclamation* and Terrapin has resulted in attempts to release live concerts on CD, which were selected from original tapes recorded at shows. Although technically bootlegs, such live show tapes will sooner or later be released. Already this has happened in Italy, one of the countries that allow it, making it technically legal, like *Giant Steps Forward*, see below. It is, however, much better to let us fans use our network to find a tape copy as near to the original as possible, and let Terrapin and the group master it and prepare it for release. Plans are in hand for issuing the Roxy Shows of 13th and 14th June, 1980, the last shows ever, but they have been postponed due to two obstacles. First, Terrapin has to buy the rights to issue the tracks in a different order than how they appeared on the studio albums. This is expensive, and I can't even see why it should be possible to charge such a thing. Second, there might be union problems because the tapes were recorded by unauthorized personnell. We hope to sort this out soon. John has remastered the tape, the artwork has been done with photographs taken by Chris Hoard, and Dave Armas has provided the booklet which includes text from him and Chris. We are all a little disappointed just now, after looking forward to the first legitimate release of a new Gentle Giant album for 14 years; but we have still not lost hope.

Terrapin will put out *Playing the Fool* in late October. I haven't got it yet as this is written, but it will probably be out as the newsletter has reached you. This should be a complete version and completely reworked, with the limited edition booklet included.

They also plan a box set for 1995, since many 70's groups have done so recently. Here they hope to include various live material and unreleased tracks, and also to be able to both remix and remaster original tracks using today's technology. We will hope for the best, although many fans have complained that they don't want a box set, but separate releases.

A company called Windsong sits with the rights for the BBC Sight and Sound in Concert series, in which Gentle Giant was featured in 1978 and which is the only TV performance that is generally circulated among fans. They will now release the concert on CD, most probably from the transcription disc. This disc is appr. 50 minutes long, includes 6 tracks from *The Missing Piece*, the A side of *Free Hand* and *Playing the Game*. *Funny Ways* is omitted. Pete Gray wrote the sleeve notes just the other day, and the CD will probably be out late October or November, at least so they say. Terrapin told me they are going to stock it: £10 for UK, £12 for Europe and £14 elsewhere.



Giant Steps Forward (RTCD0C2)

review by Pete Gray

Yes, another of those naughty bootleg CDs has been issued in Italy, this time on the 'Reel Tapes' label. As always the booklet provides no information other than track listing, but it does sport some very good photos of the band in action; some are colour, others black and white, and, although from different occasions, they give a far more professional appearance to this CD than previous bootlegs. The disc plays for a total of just under 70 minutes and in this sense at least offers partial value for money.

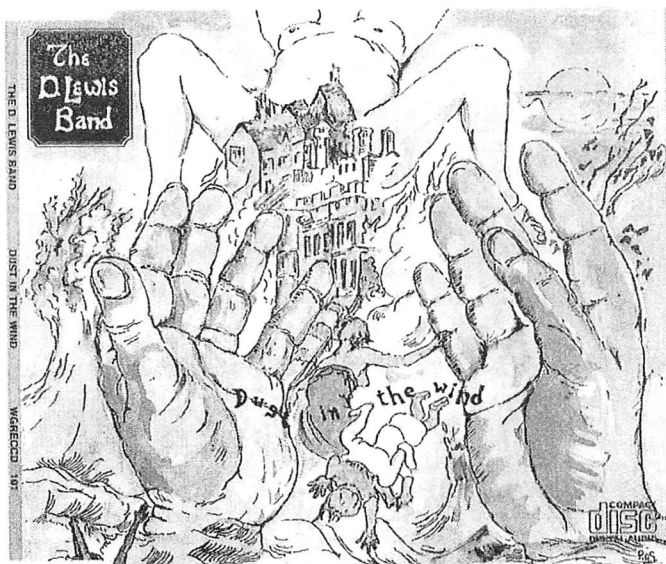
The venue in question is the PalaEur, Rome, Italy, 26/11 1974, and the recording sounds as if it's taken from the mixing desk. As such it seems to lose some of the dynamics and ambience that a live concert generates. Overall, sound quality is acceptable and worthy of release, but not consistent or exceptional. Near the start, a strange alarm bell intrudes on proceedings [extremely terrible -gh] and the band are partially lost, whilst at other points the sound is too strong, creating distortion. Wow and flutter,

thankfully, are within acceptable limits.

The show starts with the opening section of *Giant*, which blends into a brief, rearranged and more gentle version of *Cogs in Cogs* before the medley comes to its conclusion with *Proclamation*. This opening section is to me the best part of the show, though the vocals sound a bit flat and beg for more reverb. As always, *Funny Ways* is included, with its virtuoso vibes solo. Then comes a medley featuring *The Runaway* and *Experience*. The mix here is poor and does no justice to the songs. The *Octopus* excerpts follow, with the usual live medley of *Knots*, an acoustic guitar section, *The Advent of Panurge*, and a recorder solo. This whole section is always a favourite part for me, but here it doesn't sound as polished as it did in later performances. The recorder solo leans on *Raconteur Troubadour* hardly touching *Yankee Doodle*, and the guitar solo loses some of its finesse. The set concludes with a medley of *Nothing at All* and *Plain Truth*, the former featuring the drum solo and the latter, as ever, providing opportunities for guitar and violin pyrotechnics. Again, unfortunately, the sound is rather poor for this closing section and doesn't portray the pieces in their full glory!

I'm certain most of you will want a copy of this (if you can find one) for your collection, but I suggest more as a collectable item than a definitive example of Gentle Giant's live work. I by far prefer *Amongst the Darkers* and recommend that one, if you're not a prolific buyer of all bootlegs. The overall quality of this release is not great and only goes to enforce the feeling that we must endeavour to get legitimate releases of quality live tapes onto the market as soon as possible.

Martin Smith called for some long conversations and has promised to help with memories of old days, press cuttings etc. He is currently in *Bruce Roberts Band* with guitarist Bruce Roberts and Gordon Haskell, known from *King Crimson*.



The first thing we finally heard from Damon Shulman, after Phil had told us about his son's efforts, was the CD single *Dust in the Wind* (WGRECCD 101) from the **D. Lewis** band, Lewis being the middle name of Damon. This CD was released in September 1993 and is a must for the hardcore Giant fans, not only because of the family relations and the clear influence in Damon's tunes and his instrumental versatility – like his father – but also because Phil has made the cover. The single includes two versions of the title track *Dust in the Wind* and between them the nearly 10 minute long *Cruel Trick*. I don't know if the single got much airplay and sales, but some copies are in circulation. The tracks are to be found on **Different Trains'** first CD, which in fact is the same band, so look below for more details. The CD was released on what seems to be quite a private label; The Wapping Great Record Company. More details on this in the next issue. To order the CD, write to: *The Wapping Great Record Company, 39 Dundee Court, 73 Wapping High Street, London E1 9YG, England*. BMG is given as distributor, but I doubt if they have more singles now.



DIFFERENT TRAINS, *On The Right Track* (GEPCD 100S)

review by Pete Gray

This is the first album from Damon SHULMAN, son of Phil SHULMAN, and his band, **DIFFERENT TRAINS**. The band's unusual name is inspired by a piece of music written by Steve REICH, and the album's title, well, I won't patronize! The album is on the GEP (or Giant Electric Pea) label and as such the band find themselves stable-mates of the cream of UK neo-prog, i.e. IQ and JADIS. GEP have a policy of letting

bands develop their own artistic tendencies (I know it's been said by many labels before, but I believe GEP mean it!) which goes right through to design of the CD booklet. Cover concept and design is in fact credited to Phil SHULMAN, though sadly he's not credited for anything else, other than inspiration, of course. The cover is in grand 'Thomas The Tank Engine' style! As well as including the lyrics and a rather nice dedication to Frank ZAPPA [RIP], the booklet includes a lengthy message from Damon, which I have to quote from:

"I must say that this band is not prone to obsequiousness. Our aim is to be punctilious as musicians ... If anyone is old fashioned enough to start using words such as pretentious or contrived or self indulgent in relation to anything to do with this album, I suggest you prepare back up and qualification for those words which are so often used as criticism against musicians who wish to experiment..."

Now, this all reminds me of Phil's feted message on the cover of *Acquiring the Taste*, dare I say, like father, like son!

Anyhow. Damon has witten all the music and words, as well as taking care of virtually all the production. He supplies vocals and guitars throughout and also turns his talents to keyboards, tambourine, tenor saxophone, mandolin, recorder, glockenspiel, reed pipe, bass drum, violin and cornet. Obviously, he is a multi-instrumentalist in the grand Shulman tradition and this array of instruments must whet the appetite of most Giant fans. The rest of the band: John Rozzell on Keyboards, Ajay Shukla or Alan Woods on bass and Mike Payne on drums. They all help with vocals.

The album kicks off with *Birth*, a brief and jazzy instrumental. A Donald Duck type voice then tells us *This is Life*. Essentially jazz-funk, but with plenty of subtle intricacies to keep Giant fans happy, including 5/8 - 7/8 time changes. Next comes *Dust in the Wind*, a wellcrafted and intelligent pop song, and then *In my House*, one of the album's highlights. It blends psychedelia with very strong, instantly memorable melodies. *Sweet Children* returns to more of a jazz-funk feel, but then Damon treats us to an impressive acoustic guitar solo which totally reverses the tempo before the track leads into *Class*, a more purely jazz oriented number. After that, the album pauses for breath with an absolutely gorgeous string octet, totally unexpected like many of the other ingenious touches throughout. Then, *Work*, a fairly standard funk track, before *Rain*, another of the album's high-lights; the melodies are again so strong that you're sucked in. Damon also offers us another of his superb acoustic solos before becoming unexpectedly heavy and yes, these boys can rock! The *Tired Tide*, a brief interlude before the final two tracks, is for me the most Giant-esque part of the whole work. It sounds almost identical (in a 90's sort of way) to Giant's vocal harmony arrangements. *Swim Against the Tide* combines some modern jazz with a lengthy speech, not my favourite moment on the disc [definitely not mine either, should have been left out -gh]. Another, humorous, interlude leads us into *Cruel Trick*, the final track [trick?], which, though funk-based, suddenly manages an instrumental section with recorders and Glockenspiel that's strongly reminiscent of Giant's *Glass House* days.

The theme of the album is life and the lyrics are clever without being contrived. It even manages to mimic life musically: you never know what's coming next.

For a debut album, it's very impressive and manages to run its 72 minute length without a real duff song. Damon is an accomplished and imaginative musician with a strong voice and his band support him formidably throughout. The production is too polished for me, and I'd like to see far more experimentation. I can't classify the album as being wholly similar to Giant or as being seminally progressive, yet, in an economical manner, it is both. And yes, I think you will all enjoy it. [The most important difference to GG is that it is chord-based and as such far away from typical GG. -gh]

On Reflection

I have just got the four last CDs and have only listened to them a couple of times, but I cannot really find any fault with them. What's the big idea about remastering?

Some of us will not hear anything wrong, while others will be bothered. We all listen differently, and you can be sure there are guys out there that have better ears or care more for the sound than you and I. Personally, the musical content is much more important for me than the production, provided that this is at least average. In the next issues, we will have some more learned discussions of the sound of the various albums and CDs.

We do need a complete discography and videography which could be updated in each issue! And will it be possible to publish a list of all Gentle Giant's live gigs, including TV-appearances and Radio performances in chronological order?

As you can see the album list is updated in this issue and the BBC sessions are listed. We are working on lists of singles, shows, tapes from shows, and videos. All will be presented and updates will be given on a regular basis.

Do you contact the various TV stations in the US and Europe for more videos?

We have written with the help of the band members to many TV stations and have obtained perfect quality videos from two while we have been promised more from others. We will list these as existing and available / unavailable. The videos that band members get can not be copied because that is a breach of the deal with the TV stations handing out the videos. We will however work for the release of this material.

Is the 1978 BBC show worth reproducing for sale?

That is two questions. 1) Will it cost too much? 2) Is the sound and performance good enough? The answer to 2) is that when I finally got a splendid quality copy of it I was so excited, it was incredible to see and hear. The answer to 1) is that we have to talk with those who have the rights. I have heard that some such videos cost an enormous amount, and although we might be able to sell a thousand videos, that may be far too little to cover the licences. We hope for the best.

Some of us are interested in performing some of Giant's material and thus are interested in locating some of their pieces in sheet music form. If you have any ideas about how to go about doing this please let me know.

No music has been published except the ones in Proclamation. I have obtained the rights to publish everything and have started receiving people's transcriptions, and lots of others have promised me their efforts, but it seems it takes some time before I will receive it. I need all I can get, because I cannot transcribe everything from scratch, and however incomplete, your own transcriptions may help in deciding details otherwise missed. So come on, flood me with your transcriptions. Up to now, I have got fragments of most songs from the 7 first albums and all the melodies of *The Missing Piece*. In the end, we will publish the complete Gentle Giant tunebook, but it needs your dedication to the project.

Do hardcore Gentle Giant fans who have seen the band many times and have been listening to them for years consider the double live *Playing the Fool* an accurate representation of what a live show from the band was like at that time?

Yes! Indeed! It really was that fantastic according to all the people who have written about seeing them live. The BBC concert in 1978 was incredible musically, although the band members were not especially charismatic as stage persons.

Is it *the* Derek S. who was involved with PantEra's *Cowboys from Hell* album?

I'd say I hope not so judging from the title – however, Derek has been involved with a lot of bands, but as it is now we know next to nothing about his whereabouts since the split. Hopefully, this can be revealed later, but as he has been working in mainstream rock A&R, much of his work may not have any interest for this readership.

Was there another album with Simon Dupree reputed to have a silver eagle on the cover? I would have given the rumour no thought, had it not been for the fact that the source was unaware of *The Eagle Flies Tonight* single.

I can't answer, can any of you? We are working on a Simon Dupree article for a later issue. I know of only one proper Simon Dupree album: *Without Reservations*.

Will you print a translation of the Italian "Super Star" compilation liner notes?

I have mailed the booklet text to an Italian subscriber; he is working with the translation now, and it will of course be printed in Proclamation.

Is it worth reproducing the *Record Collector* piece by Barry Winton?

It was a typical overview article and the details from it will be found in other articles. Some details were clearly wrong, so it has to be an annotated version. My intention is to print the best and most interesting articles about the group that has appeared, at least one in each issue, so sooner or later that one may also be printed.

Geir, why haven't you put your A New Day article (on the Jethro Tull/Gentle Giant relationship) in *Proclamation* yet? Not all of us subscribe to the Tull fanzine!

I will revise the article and put it out in a future issue. The revision will mostly concern updating of touring info and more about the influence Giant had upon Tull. The article was bent towards hardcore Tull fans, a little too biased, and it wasn't proofread by the natives either.

It goes without saying that *The Reaper's Christmas Album* needs to be put on CD as soon as possible!

I agree 100%. I will talk with Terrapin Truckin about it.

If I can help you with the artwork, I will be more than willing to do so at no charge. Cartooning and book illustration is my main field and I hope to use the books of Rabelais with the sections referred to by Gentle Giant to produce a few drawings.

I would be very glad to receive artwork to reproduce, but I cannot pay anyone to make the illustrations. It would, however, add real value to the magazine.

Time permitting, I will try to arrange a small get-together of fans that would be able to meet in the Torquay area if you think there would be enough interest.

Come on, fans, write to *Michael Middleton, Flat 4, Haddon Lees, Tor Park Rd, Torquay, Devon TQ2 5BQ*. And if there are any others with the same idea, let me know and I will print your name and address and, if you wish, your phone number. I know some fans in the LA area already have got together.

Experience

Lorenzo Sangalli of Italy wrote this in a letter:

"As a final note: do you know the Italian band *Premiata Forneria Marconi*, or *PFM*? They were active more or less during the same period as GG, and I remember I read an interview with *Franco Mussida* (guitarist and composer) in which he said that while they were recording their first albums, they were listening to GG records during the breaks. I can assure you that you can clearly hear how much they were influenced by GG in their first three albums (then they made different choices...)."

I just have to add that, yes, of course I know of the first fine albums of Italy's finest progressive act, and the only problem with them is that although you can hear innovative riffs and patterns very much like GG's, they never were able to develop them in the same manner as Giant did, which is something I have always been very sorry for. -gh.



Gary with Joe Jarrett and Gerhard Zimmermann at the XTC convention, June 1993.

The Missing Piece

GENTLE GIANT'S BBC SESSIONS

Adrian Dover

The information is given as detailed in the new book : *In session tonight : the complete Radio 1 recordings* by Ken Garner (London : BBC Books), 1993. ISBN 0-563-36452-1.

Notes to this list:

1 The information for pre-1979 sessions (i.e. all those included here) is from microfilm copies of the programme scripts kept at the BBC written archives. This has been cross-checked by Garner with the artists' contract files. An exception is the producer and engineer details which are compiled from personal recollections of those involved with different shows at different periods - this explains the gaps in this information, indicated by '?'.
 2 BBC session tapes were habitually re-used before 1980 and, anyway, the agreement with the Musicians' Union only allowed them to be kept for six months, so it is unlikely that any of the master tapes survive at the BBC. Pre-1980 sessions generally only survive if the band or producer kept a duplicate for private reasons.

3 A session is defined as a pre-recorded single day's work in a BBC studio. This generally comprised: arrival at about 13.00, 90 minutes setting up, rest of the afternoon laying down tracks, 1 hour meal break at c. 18.00 - 19.00, rest of evening mixing (finish by 01.00 following day).
 4 The list does NOT include 'In concert' recordings, private recording sessions in BBC studios, live appearances on BBC radio programmes or any Television work.

5 Dates are in the UK style {day/month/year} and the day of the week has been added to the session dates.

6 For sessions up to 1974 the titles of the tracks recorded are usually in the order broadcast, thereafter they are usually in the order in which they were recorded during the session. The title is in the form used at the time of recording; Garner has tried to provide more familiar later names of tracks where appropriate (but this doesn't seem to apply to Gentle Giant).

7 The personnel are those listed on the artists' contract. To save space the same line-up as the previous BBC session is assumed ('same'); only changes are indicated - e.g. B replaced A.

8 Broadcast details have been checked against the *Radio Times* (except 8/1/74 which is a gap in my local reference library's holdings). The title of the show is in the form given in RT (not in the form given by Garner). Note that RT dropped the 'Sounds of the 70s' title/sub-title in 1974 before Garner's details of shows suggest.

9 The broadcast frequency bands have been added - from about 1971 Radio 1 (then a Medium Wave station) pinched the Radio 2 VHF frequency in the evening, hence the better quality broadcasts.

10 Also added is whether or not Gentle Giant received a billing in the *Radio Times* to appear in the show - when 'not billed' is quoted this is because no artists were billed (probably either because of production schedules or because of page space in RT).

A contract exists for the band doing a session on 29/6/70 (Monday) for Terry Wogan's afternoon show, but there is no trace in the programme scripts file of its being broadcast, hence no other details are available. When I have more time I will search through RT in case any details can be found – but they're not usually given for day-time shows.

Session date: 21/7/70; Tuesday
 Studio used: BBC Playhouse Theatre, Northumberland Avenue
 Producer: Bernie Andrews
 Engineer(s): unknown
 Tracks broadcast: Isn't it quiet and cold
 City hermit

Freedom's child
 Band personnel: Phil Shulman: tenor sax, trumpet, flute, vocals
 Derek Shulman: guitar, bass, vocals, harmonica
 Ray Shulman: guitar, bass, vocals, violin, trumpet
 Kerry Minnear: keyboards, violin, cello, percussion, vocals
 Gary Green: lead guitar
 Martin Smith: drums

Broadcast date: 17/8/70, Monday, 18.00–19.00, MW only, billing
 Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: David Symmonds

Session date: 1/12/70; Tuesday
 Studio used: BBC Maida Vale, Studio 5
 Producer: Malcolm Brown
 Engineer(s): Mike Harding (balance) & Mike Franks (tape)
 Tracks broadcast: Home town special

Nothing at all
 Funny ways
 Band personnel: same
 Broadcast date: 8/12/70, Tuesday, 18.00–19.00, MW only, billing
 Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: Mike Harding

Session date: 12/12/71; Sunday ??? – only the date is given, so it could be a misprint)
 Studio used: BBC Transcription service, Kensington House, Shepherd's Bush, Studio T1
 Producer: Pete Dauncey
 Engineer(s): ?
 Tracks broadcast: Alucard

Plain truth
 Giant
 plus
 Funny ways (broadcast 4/2/72; Friday)
 Band personnel: Malcolm Mortimore: drums; replaced Smith
 Broadcast date: 7/1/72, Friday, 22.00–24.00, VHF & MW, billing
 Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: John Peel

Session date: 13/6/72; Tuesday
Studio used: BBC Transcription Service, Kensington House, Shepherd's Bush, Studio T1
Producer: John Muir
Engineer(s): ?
Tracks broadcast: Mr Class and Quality
 Prologue
 Schooldays
Band personnel: John Weathers: drums; replaced Mortimore
Broadcast date: 14/7/72, Friday, 22.00-24.00, VHF & MW, billing
Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: John Peel

Session date: 8/8/72; Tuesday
Studio used: BBC Maida Vale, Studio 4
Producer: Pete Ritzema
Engineer(s): Bob Conduct
Tracks broadcast: Plain truth
 The advent of Panurge
 Funny ways
Band personnel: same
Broadcast date: 5/9/72, Tuesday, 22.00-24.00, VHF & MW, not billed
Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: John Peel with Top Gear

Session date: 11/12/72; Monday
Studio used: BBC Langham, Studio 1
Producer: Bernie Andrews
Engineer(s): ?
Tracks broadcast: Prologue
 The advent of Panurge
 Cry for everyone
Band personnel: same
Broadcast date: 14/12/72, Thursday, 22.00-24.00, VHF & MW, not billed
Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: John Peel

Session date: 28/8/73; Tuesday
Studio used: BBC Langham, Studio 1
Producer: John Muir
Engineer(s): ?
Tracks broadcast: Way of life
 The advent of Panurge
 The runaway
Band personnel: Phil Shulman out
Broadcast date: 28/9/73, Friday, 22.00-24.00, VHF & MW, billing
Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: Sequence presented by Pete Drummond

Session date: 4/12/73; Tuesday
 Studio used: BBC Langham, Studio 1
 Producer: Tony Wilson
 Engineer(s): Bob Conduct
 Tracks broadcast: Excerpts from Octopus
 Way of life
 Band personnel: same
 Broadcast date: 8/1/74, Tuesday, 22.00–24.00, RT information not available
 Show on which broadcast: Sounds of the 70s: John Peel

Session date: 29/5/74; Wednesday
 Studio used: ?
 Producer: Jeff Griffin
 Engineer(s): ?
 Tracks broadcast: So sincere
 Aspirations
 Playing the game
 The face
 Band personnel: same
 Broadcast date: 1/7/74, Monday, 22.00–24.00, VHF & MW, billing
 Show on which broadcast: Bob Harris [Sounds of the 70s]

Session date: 10/12/74; Tuesday
 Studio used: ?
 Producer: Tony Wilson
 Engineer(s): ?
 Tracks broadcast: Proclamation
 Experience
 Aspirations
 Cogs in cogs
 Band personnel: same
 Broadcast date: 17/12/74, Tuesday, 22.00–24.00, VHF & MW, not billed
 Show on which broadcast: John Peel [Sounds of the 70s]

Session date: 16/9/75; Tuesday
 Studio used: BBC, Maida Vale, Studio 4
 Producer: ?
 Engineer(s): Bill Aitken
 Tracks broadcast: Just the same
 Free hand
 On reflection
 Band personnel: same
 Broadcast date: 13/10/75, Monday 23.00–24.00, VHF & MW, not billed
 Show on which broadcast: John Peel

A Cry for Everyone

As you may have seen from the enclosed sheet sent out with this issue, I have always meant that new subscribers should send their votes to the poll. A few have done so, but I don't have space to show the altered results here. Instead, fill out the form and return it; the poll will always go on.

How about a favorite non-GG albums poll? To make this less predictable, I would suggest asking respondents to exclude the more commercially successful prog groups (Tull, Yes, ELP, etc.). This would help readers locate the more obscure prog-rock masterpieces, which would be nice since few of the rock reference books include anything about such groups as Focus or Hatfield. For that matter, it might point readers towards some great classical music as well.

The answer is obvious, in fact this question triggered my putting these categories onto the enclosed form. I have for categories' sake divided into three groups: classical music, progressive music (considered so by the respondent) and other favourite music. Hopefully, you will take the time to answer.

Record Collector's Top 500 Collectable Artists 1994

In this year's *Record Collector* poll Gentle Giant once again advanced remarkably, from 140 to 77, so for the first time in history the group is among the Top 100. It may be because of the Road Goes On / Terrapin reissues on CD, and it may be because I wrote about the necessity of voting in #3. So some more subscribers have cared to vote, with the result that Gentle Giant climbed nearly half the way to the top. Well, now I must say that although I am quite a fan of them, I really don't expect the group to get much higher, but now you see that your vote matters. Let us give next year's poll an even higher climb!

The highest position for a progressive group is Jethro Tull at 18, followed by Genesis at 26. Further down we have Marillion at 50, Fairport Convention at 51, Yes at 53, and Rush at 67. Behind Gentle Giant we find King Crimson up at 84, The Strawbs up at 98, IQ at 118, Peter Gabriel down to 122, Emerson, Lake and Palmer up to 132, and Caravan at 181 with Man right behind at 182. Not many progressive acts among the collected ones, really, and with so many great artists it is fun to see that Gentle Giant has found a proper place. Eyebrows have been lifted all over the countries where *Record Collector* reaches, and yet some more people have become aware of the Giant.

Thank You

As I said before, I never really intended to include this section with every issue, but again it seems I have to. I have now received yet more information, yet more heart-warming letters, yet more tapes and CDs, than I could ever believe. People from all over the world, of all ages and occupations (mostly males, though), tell of how much the group has meant to them. I can not reply to all of you, but I have tried to send a note to all who have sent tapes and CDs and large bulks of material. Please read the Thank You page of last issue, it captures all I want to say, including the intention to print everything that might be of collective interest about the band.

Finally, once again big thanks to Pete Gray for his proofreading.

Design

Each issue of the newsletter will, in chronological order, carry a brief description of one Gentle Giant album. This is because not all readers have acquired all albums, though Giant fans are notorious for their completomania. The inner sleeves with lyrics on may be missing, particularly from the reprints and CDs, etc. In addition, the collective responsibility for the various tracks says nothing about where the idea originated and who did what with the development of the composition. This time, the third album.

Three Friends.

Vertigo 6360 070.



Issued March 1972, as the third of four albums on the Vertigo label. As with the other Vertigo albums, the first edition came with the swirling label, with a swirling design on side A and the information for both sides on side B. The swirl was also printed on the inner bag. A later edition had a label designed by Roger Dean, the so-called space-ship label, just as the other three albums had on their later editions. All four Vertigo albums came with gatefold sleeves with the lyrics and some other information on the inner side. *Three Friends* was the first album not to be presented sideways. The cover was painted by Rick Breach, who also drew the drawings on the inside. The idea for the cover was again the band's. It was meant to illustrate the concept of the Three Friends in school days, who later broke up the friendship – together on the front, back



British one, and it used the same inside sleeve as the British version. The outside, however, was taken from the first British album, probably because Columbia found the first album cover more striking and appealing than the quiet *Three Friends* cover. This was done to support the group's first US tour in early 1972. The band's name and the title was placed on the Giant's bald forehead, the track listing besides his feet. It was a silly thing to use the first album cover, as the group shown contained Martin Smith and not Malcolm Mortimore. Moreover, the track marker for the last track was put in the middle of the instrumental section of the previous one.

As far as I know, there exists only one double-package of two Gentle Giant albums, as the first album was coupled with *Three Friends* in Germany (6685 016-33).

WORKING ALL DAY

Working all day, I'm digging up the roads, just working all day.
The far my pay and spend it where I like. I've nothing to say.
Driven to my sweat but money bags escape, I've got no regret.
Working all day.
Working all day.
When I was young I used to have illusions - Dreams ain't enough.
Pain was rough. He didn't care for learning. Half life is tough.
Easy to say that everybody's equal then look around and see it ain't true.
Working all day.
I eat the dust. The boss gets all the money. Life ain't just.
I'm still the same as all the other people - who can I trust?
Working all day and never getting nowhere. What can I say working all day.
Working all day.



PEEL THE PAINT

Free from the start -
Left to depart -
Feeling the pleasure and the pain to his art.
Lost in the rush -
No need to rush -
Time waits for him, him who creates with the brush.
Colour the brush.
High in the air -
His dreams are there.
Searching for answers he will look everywhere.
Thinks he has won -
A place in the sun.
Free from the worries and the ways of everyone.
Peel the paint.
Look underneath.
You'll see the want, the same old wants burst.
Strip the coats.
The costs of time.
And find mud eyes and see those sharpened teeth.
Nothing's been learned -
No thought at all.
Don't be fooled, get up before you fall.
Carnal grace.
Craving smooth.
Open flesh and you must let him in.
Glass reflects.
What you are.
It shows the face, the old face of sin.

MISTER CLASS AND QUALITY?

Look around my rooms and see the prizes I have showing.
Working hard to build my life and plan the way I'm going.
House and car and every wife - they've all been won by knowing.
All been won by knowing.
All been won by knowing.
Paperwork, white collar'd shirts - where would we be without them.
Man of class and quality - I never shout about them.
Choose my friends for my own ends.
You can't succeed without them.
Can't succeed without them.
Middleman sees straight ahead and never crosses borders.
Never understood the artist or the lazy workers.
The world needs steady men like me to give and take the orders.
Give and take the orders.
Give and take the orders.

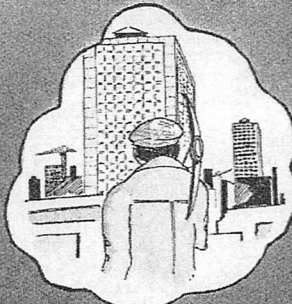
THREE FRIENDS

Once three friends.
Sweet in sadness.
Now part of their past.
In the end.
Full of gladness.
Went from class to class.



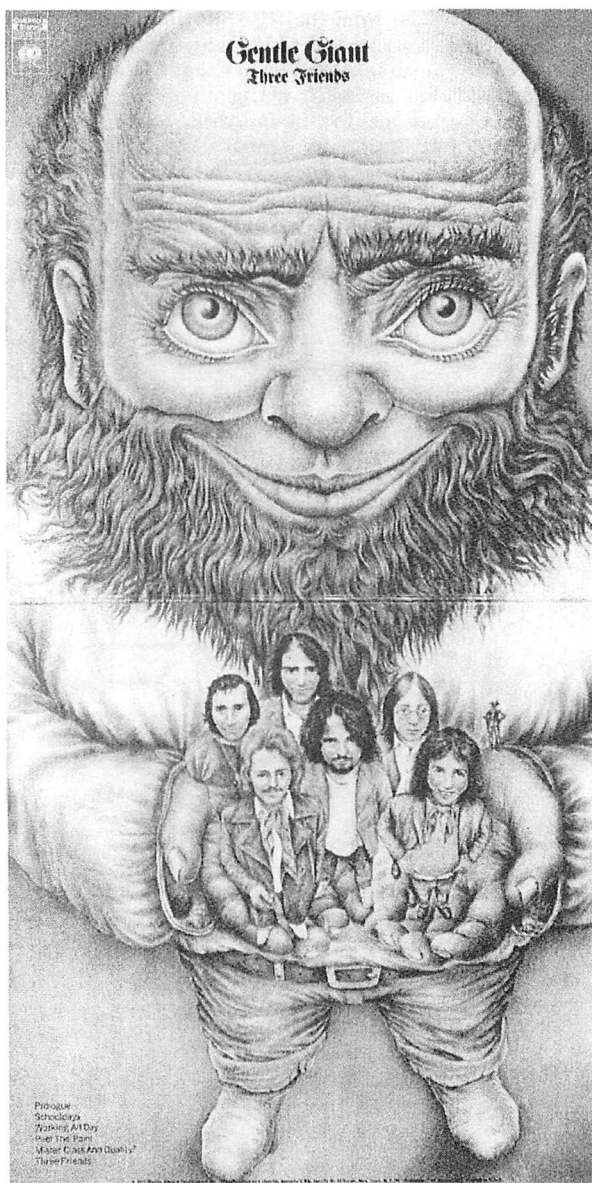
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This notice cannot be placed on recordings for public performance, as it is not possible to place it on the label of all recordings for public performance, and is not to be removed or altered in any way.



Line Records of Hamburg bought the rights to reissue the first four albums on CD and all four were released late in 1989. *Three Friends* (LICD 900730) came with all artwork, and even though I have been told that it was taken from mint vinyl copies, it is the best CD version of the album so far. In the US Columbia released the album on CD in 1991, I believe (CK 31649, undated). The cover art is identical to the album on the outside while the inside has been given more pages to avoid the otherwise very small print of the lyrics. However, they have managed to misplace all the line illustrations to the various songs. The edition was taken from the master tapes, but sounds incredibly dull. As on the album, the track marker for the last track is in the middle of the previous. The Terrapin Truckin Record Co. plans to release the album, but still hasn't obtained the rights to do so.

The album was recorded in Advision and another studio (which?) in London a few weeks late 1971. *The US album cover, with the title on the forehead and track list.*





Phil, Gary, Kerry, Malcolm, Derek and Ray in early 1972.

The material had mostly been written during the preceding months in Portsmouth and on the farm in Southwick on which Kerry lived at the time. It so happened that Kerry had written the piece that later would become *Schooldays*, and he played it for the band on piano. Phil immediately pictured the memories of schooldays from its hints of children's songs and the springness of children. He had for many years been thinking about the splitting of friendship because of the class traditions and school system in England, where once you have settled on your path, you can never go back, and this already from the age of 11. And now he got the idea for an album based on the stories of three boys that go each their own way as adults.

Ray and Kerry then wrote the music, and Phil incorporated ideas which he had had previously. Derek co-worked with Ray on his tunes, and as before, they all contributed bits and pieces, words and phrases. This time they could not experiment that much in the studio, and the tunes had been more carefully worked out on beforehand. All the tracks have been played live, but not all of them worked live, and therefore they were later abandoned.

During the work in the studio the band experienced the worst accident ever in their career. Once Ray was driving the bus with the band to London; then suddenly something went wrong and the bus went into the opposite lane before crashing through a hedge and falling down a few meters before it stopped. A few more feet and it would have fallen 60 feet down and there would have been no more Gentle Giant.

Track listing:

Prologue. Running time 6.09. Phil wanted the album to have a proper beginning and a proper ending. Ray then wrote what would be the overture to the album and Kerry helped with the vocal arrangement when Phil had written a few introducing lines. In the studio, they arranged the piece so that the themes would never be repeated on one instrument alone, but played by different instrument combinations each time. The track also includes another Gentle Giant trait: gradually building an orchestral piece out of many small themes on various instruments.

Schooldays. Running time 7.34. Kerry had written the piece for piano beforehand. It triggered the whole concept, see above, and Phil put words to it to depict the theme. The whole group helped with the instrumentation of it, putting various phrases to various instruments.

Working All Day. Running time 5.08. Phil wanted the tune to depict the hopelessness of the worker who never could aspire to anything higher in life. Then, Ray wrote the tune and Derek helped at some places figuring out the melodies and harmonies. Phil then wrote the lyrics, and the whole group chose instrumentation and solos.

Peel the Paint. Running time 7.27. Kerry wrote this one out completely for piano after Phil had hinted of the theme of the artist with his brutal outlook, and the music was to reflect this. Phil reused his lyrics to the non-album tune *Peel off the Paint* written two years previously, and wrote some more. Gary reused his guitar solo from the other tune, and together with Malcolm depicted the mood of the tune in their solo.

Mr. Class and Quality? Running time 5.50. Phil wanted to have the mood of the white-collar man described, then Kerry wrote it out completely for piano. Even the cross-fade before the last verse was intended from the beginning. It was to be used in conjunction with the last track, thus the introductory riff to be reused in the last tune, and the lack of a standard ending. Phil then put words to the tune and the group instrumented it.

Three Friends. Running time 2.59. This was meant to be the proper ending of the album, and again was a Kerry tune. It is basically one long riff with a slightly different instrumentation for each run, that fades out the story. Phil again wrote the words and Kerry harmonized the choir.



The Columbia promo single, which came in a neutral Columbia sleeve.

Total running time 35.07 (+ pauses). The record, as its predecessor, displays a fantastic musical variation and content and an instrumental variation that, as on previous albums, is marvellous. It was the first album they produced themselves, it was well produced, and it was more rocky than its predecessor. The rock feel dominates and the folk / jazzy / classical influences are more bound into the framework, which becomes more and more distinctly Gentle Giant. They managed longer compositions, longer lines, better development of the pieces, and feel much more secure. The wholeness of the pieces covers the stunning virtuoso abilities of each of the musicians, you do not listen to a bunch of musicians, but to a piece of musical art. None of the musicians show off, they work together in an incredible way for the purpose of the group.

Phil later said that rock lyrics are different from poetry, you can't develop the theme too much, you are restricted, and the lyrics are to be sung, to be as close as possible to the music. Having taken the restrictions from form into account, one can nevertheless praise what was the outcome. The concept works perfectly, with a more positive outlook than the previous album, and once again the group manages to work lyrics and music together as no other group ever did.

If one were to find faults from today's technological standards, it might be that the bass line in the overture is too loud and too simple, and that the track doesn't incorporate the same degree of chronic polyphony as the other tunes. In the same way, the solo of *Peel the Paint* feels too long for my ears and may put off newer listeners. All in all, however, the album contains relatively little that is dated, and most of it will live forever; it should have been rearranged as a classical suite.

E. L. P., Genesis and Jethro Tull, to mention some of the ambitious acts, all made in my opinion fantastic albums at this time, they reached for the top and to be the most original, and tried to break away from the typical chord-based rock, but in 1972 *Three Friends* and *Octopus* beat them all. Along with Tull the group won Europe and the States this year and even went to the top in Italy. The world lay open to them.

No proper single was taken from the album, but a few promo singles have appeared. In Italy was released a disc-jockey version of the first part of Jethro Tull's *Thick as a Brick* with *Peel the Paint* on the flip side, probably in connection with the Tull / Giant joint tour. As Columbia was launching Gentle Giant in the States, they



The Italian Jethro Tull / Gentle Giant disc-jockey single. Bag unknown.



Two early promotional stickers from Columbia.

released a promotional single with **Prologue** on the A side and **Working All Day and Three Friends** (the US version which incorporated the solo and last verse from the previous track) on the B side. The bag was a plain one with *Columbia* written on it.

Columbia in fact did much to promote the band. They made some promotional stickers, and they even raised a huge board in Los Angeles where they announced the concert and the new album. At this tour, Malcolm had been replaced with John.



Gentle Giant in a more familiar size in Los Angeles, photograph by Gary Green.

Interview

This interview is taken from Blue Moon, The UCLA Magazine, Vol. 11, No. 5, June 1981, pp. 24-25. It was submitted by its author, Chris Hoard, who is also one of our subscribers.

A FALTERING GIANT

Since its formation in 1969 [1970!], Gentle Giant has been one of the most respected progressive rock bands – now, for a while, it's over.

*Yes it's been hard, going a long time
and we're together even now.
Why do you ask? Surely you know it!
Isn't it clear just when and how?
What can we tell you?
At the beginning had no direction
any other way.
After the fourth one, realisation
finding our road the same as if today.
– lyrics from eighth album, Interview*

Text And Photography By Chris Hoard

Though the news came as no surprise, Derek Shulman's words still gave me a chill. "We're putting the band on ice for a while," came the crisp English voice over the phone. Many ugly rumors had just been substantiated; after twelve years and as many albums, Gentle Giant – perhaps the longest lasting English progressive group not to suffer major personnel changes – had finally called it a day.

Four years before, the larger portion of a crowd 5,000 strong seemed convinced that Gentle Giant was on the verge of taking over and revolutionizing the world of music. What transpired in the early spring of 1977 on the stage of the old Shrine auditorium impressed many as an enchanting display of draconic musical power and instrumental virtuosity. After two encores, a gigantic chandelier and the houselights illuminated the elaborately decorated, massive wooden hall, signaling to the concertgoers that the show was over.

A near-deafening surge of cheers and applause endured, gradually building up more fervor and enthusiasm. Some of the few who started to leave their seats early to escape the inevitable post-concert zoo, were drawn back inside the hall by the ecstatic sea of screams. The minutes began to roll by with no foreseeable concession by the crowd. When the house light finally dimmed again, the noise from the crowd approached my hearing's pain threshold, then suddenly subsided as Derek Shulman strolled onto the stage, followed by his four colleagues. Shulman grabbed his microphone and announced, "We weren't quite prepared for this, but we'll do something anyway."

Earlier that night, when Ray Shulman and Gary Green lashed out a classically structured duet on their acoustic guitars, the audience's enthusiasm annoyingly overshadowed some of the softer subtleties of the performance during the "Excerpts From Octopus" medley. When the band moved into "The Advent of Panurge", a song

about mythical Rabelaisian giants, a true-to-life-size puppet of their faithful logo, the smiling gentle giant, walked up behind an eight foot screen separating the band from the rear portion of the stage. The familiar giant grinned and nodded in approval as some of the drugged concertgoers reached up to keep their eyes in their sockets.

June, 1980 - I'm sitting upstairs at the Roxy watching Gary Green and Ray Shulman string up their guitars before their first concert appearance in L. A. in over three years. Between the twangs of virgin strings I bring up the subject of the Shrine concert. "I wonder if you remember the last show you did here - when the house lights went on and everyone just stood there and screamed and you played 'Midnight Hour' for the final encore..."

Gary Green and Ray simultaneously: "Oh yeah?" Green scratches his head, then says, "That's right." Shulman nods and laughs. Green: "That was fun! We loved it - shit there was no other way we would have played 'Midnight Hour'. That was an indication that we'd had a good time that night." The old R&B standard had come as a total surprise at the concert - a total contrast from the otherwise intricate melodies played on the stage.

During the course of their concert, the nature of the band's compositions demanded an extreme amount of concentration and a cohesive exchange between the band members, yet plenty of room was left for spontaneity and jazz/fusion-like improvisation.

Despite all the cerebral and often bizarre passages that flourish in Gentle Giant's songs, the element that initially attracted me to their music was their intuitive exploitation of fresh, gut-level hard-rock and off-beat funk rhythms. Often their finesse, delicately woven interludes will explode into rollicking, pounding riffs. However, the course of their music will also frequently stray entirely out of the realm of rock into some new uncharted territory.

Phil Shulman, who played trumpet and occasionally sang lead vocals until he departed after the group's fourth album *Octopus*, wrote the liner notes to the second album *Acquiring The Taste*: "...It is our goal to expand the frontiers of contemporary music at the risk of being very unpopular. We have recorded each composition with one thought - that it should be unique, adventurous, and fascinating..."

BM: How does that statement pertain to what you're doing now?

Green: "That was one person speaking on what he thought was on behalf of the band ... I wouldn't have put it there - I wouldn't have been so egotistical as to do it." Ray Shulman agreed.



Ray Shulman: 'You Always need an element of risk - it's one of those creative things'.

Gary Green: 'I had to take on a regular job for a while - I didn't like it ...'

You thought it was pompous

Green: Yeah, I thought so.

Nevertheless, I thought you did it ...

Ray Shulman: Oh I know we did it then ...

Green: We did it! But we didn't want to urge people ...

Shulman: We did it, but we didn't know we did it and that's why Phil's statement is genuinely on there – oh yeah, we're proud enough of those albums, it's just that we don't want to make them anymore.

In addition to Gentle Giant's propensity to successfully open new doors in musical expression, the band wields an unusually large amount of instrumental ability and diversity between various compositions. Each member fills a traditional instrumental niche – Derek Shulman, lead vocals; Ray Shulman, bass; Kerry Minnear, keyboards; Gary Green, guitars; and John Weathers, drums. Gentle Giant's compositions, however, usually call for an instrumental dexterity matched by no other rock group. Kerry Minnear often delivers stunning virtuoso performances on vibraphone in addition to playing cello, recorder, electric guitar, xylophone, drums, and occasionally stepping in as a lead vocalist. During the group's 1977 tour, their set featured a five-voice experimental vocal fugue called "On Reflection", a five-man drum piece that evolved from African percussive complexities into a very medieval-sounding interlude with four members playing xylophone. Another song, "The Advent of Pan-urge", included an amusing and meticulously arranged version of "Yankee Doodle", with each member playing a recorder. "Memories of Old Days", a concert favorite, finds the entire band playing various guitars with Derek Shulman on bass.

Such a concentrated gathering of creative and instrumental energy could easily explain the band's tendency to steer far away from mainstream rock; their often complete abandonment of convention might also partially account for their failure to achieve the success of progressive rock groups like Genesis and Yes. Yet Gentle Giant managed to establish a strong following in mainland Europe, Canada, and New York – enough to support many tours and twelve albums.

Last June, after not touring for three years, Gentle Giant signed a new contract with Columbia and sold out six shows at the Roxy. Unfortunately on their 1980 world tour, the band could not afford to have the elaborate visual effects and carry the diversity of instruments they used on their 1977 tour. Much of their older material, with the exception of the predominantly acoustic "Memories of Old Days", was tailored to the harder rocking textures of their most recent, and eleventh studio album *Civilian*. Beyond financing tours, Gentle Giant has never been heavily promoted by the several record companies they have worked for. Their unlikely momentum and endurance has been sustained primarily by word-of-mouth.

Geographically, the band lends even less probability to their continued coherence; Derek Shulman lives in Dallas with his family, Kerry Minnear in London, Gary Green in Portsmouth on the South English coast, John Weathers in Wales, and Ray Shulman alternates between New York and London. Before I heard of the band's temporary but indefinite break-up, I had wondered how the adverse pressures of the record business, combined with their greatly varying personal situations, had not brought an end to their collective venture already.

BM: All the other English groups playing music comparable to yours like Yes and Genesis have suffered devastating personnel changes if they haven't already broken up. How has Gentle Giant managed to survive essentially intact after such a long time?

Ray Shulman: You could say we refuse to give up – we're a bit stubborn in lots of

ways, although sometimes it might have been more creative to break up and do something new, but we didn't, and when you get by that point it makes it even harder ...

Green: Yeah, we did it to play safe at times ...

Shulman: I'd say at this point we're dedicated to have fun – or not having fun. It's gotten to a stage where something has got to be worthwhile doing for us to do it ... For so long it seemed like, apart from being in the studio, it seemed a bit academic where a record comes out then we do the tour – another record, another tour, and so on. And it was getting less and less risky the more we did it, you know.

You always need an element of risk – it's just one of those creative things ... It got to the point where we decided we were not going to go on tour with an album – that was a wrong decision. So here we are album/tour, album/tour (laughs) – no. We've got another album in the pipeline that we want to do.

I think recently there has been a circulation of musicians in the English avant-garde much like the mixture that occurs in the American jazz scene – why haven't members of Gentle Giant recorded with other innovative English musicians?

Green: I think the answer to that is mainly because we don't live in the epicenters of music. We've never been the kind of people who have rubbed shoulders with the Bill Brufords of this world – I mean I guess we would have done it had we actually lived in closer proximity, but that hasn't been the case. It's not out of the question – no doubt some day it will happen – I'll know when it happens and if the circumstances don't feel right, I won't do it.

In your most recent albums, the band has pursued drastically different directions – how would you describe these changes?

Green: We were a little bit directionless at the *Interview* stage, which is why we put out that live album afterwards – we knew we were a good band and good on stage, but somehow we always managed to avoid getting it on tape, so we decided we'd capture it on the live album. I liked that album – I think it captured the band in a totally different light.

The tunes we always played live were [taken from] studio albums, and inevitably what we did in the studio often didn't work on the road. And what we decided to do with the *Missing Piece* is that we should write the tunes and then take them out on tour, and then if there were to be any changes made in the material they would naturally happen on the road on a one-night basis. So they did get changed, and they did get recorded in that form ...

*Was the band generally satisfied with the latest album *Civilian*?*

Ray Shulman: I think we were generally very happy with it ... but economics always interfere with the process – they always get in the way. And they get in the way for both negative and positive reasons. The negative reason is you never have enough money to make the album you want to make – at some stage you have to be satisfied with both your performance and generally what the album is. At one stage you have to say economically, "this is what we've put out". And you never want to say that. You can't spend all your money in the studio, so you draw your own lines – you're given a budget to record an album with and it's [nowhere] near enough. There's so many down-to-earth little problems you've got to deal with.

So you dream about a Pink Floyd budget ...

Shulman: You always dream about that – you always want that. I think if we had the money, a double studio album would be a possibility ...

Green: Yeah – we'd do it ... if we had the right idea to justify it, yeah.

Shulman: I think the world is certainly ripe – it's full of ideas. I know that in one way the world's falling to pieces, but it gives people something to talk about. It's great –

at a time of world distress it's always a very creative time for a band, or it should be. The world created its own strife for its own reasons – I'm a total fatalist.

Green: Oh, I'm an optimist – except for the things that I know are out there.

Shulman (laughs): You can expect a wide and varying album this time – full of contradictions – that would be the perfect statement describing it.

Green: Next question, answer: no!

Okay – so no visuals on this tour. (Both laugh).

Green: Well, we did have plans, but again the old mundane subject of the financial aspect kept us from doing it. It would've been great ...

Do you anticipate any major new changes coming about in contemporary music?

Green: If you mean, do I think there's a new progressive wave coming up – no.

Shulman: I think there's a new kind of psychedelic wave happening ...

Can you tell me any details about the upcoming album project?

Shulman: Only that if we use the particular studio we're planning on using, we'll make a fucking brilliant record – we'll have the time and space to do it ...

When Gentle Giant formed in 1969 [It was 1970, really], most of the band members were in their late teens [no, only Gary]. Their admirers recognize a long and relatively brilliant career at the edge of obscurity – a band that paved pathways for new forms of musical expression, and a band that at times succeeded to enchant a portion of the rock audience while their work was being studied seriously on the graduate level in major universities. Gary Green, recognized by many guitarists as one of the most innovative and technically accomplished modern players, took on a regular job during part of 1979 "booking car fares across the Isle of Wight". Now Green and Ray Shulman have recorded their mutual solo album, which is due to be released shortly in England [see pp. 32-33]. According to a phone conversation I had with Derek Shulman several weeks ago, the main reason the band broke up was to pursue solo projects – "we wanted to get it out of our systems", Derek explained [it wasn't, see p. 32].

Derek also gave me the latest information he had on the rest of the band. Kerry Minnear, an honored graduate of the Royal Music Academy who, together with three young Shulman brothers, formed Gentle Giant's creative nucleus, is presently writing material for his first solo album [the demos survive]. Derek is presently involved in a management venture in Dallas, and John Weathers is auditioning for the upcoming Jethro Tull tour [but no]. With the sum of these parts indefinitely inactive, the days of the most grandiose and technically daring edge of rock have seemingly passed. Perhaps rock's only era of extravagance is over.



The Boys in the Band

An interview with Gary Green

Conducted by Gerhard Zimmermann

This interview was conducted in June 1993 at the XTC convention in Princeton, Illinois, where Gary and Gerhard had planned to meet each other. In Gerhard's hotel room, they filled tape after tape with reminiscences from the good old days to the benefit of the *Proclamation* readers. This is the first interview with Gary Green after the split in 1980, and the largest ever that far.

Gerhard: The last Gentle Giant Album *Civilian* was rather successful, at least in Germany. Can you tell us some main reasons why Gentle Giant split up yet?

Gary: Ooh, difficult ... I think really because we had never had a hit album, a really big selling album. *Civilian* did fairly well. It wasn't, as you know, a great seller. You will get different answers from each of us. I think the reason lay with Derek and Kerry. When we had our last tour, we met in New York and had that group meeting you usually have before you do a tour, and Derek and Kerry both said right at the start, before we had played a note, that they didn't want to tour anymore. I didn't feel this was a really good way to start the tour off. It was a little bit frustrating, intimidating. John and I and Ray still wanted to play, so ... That tour was a good tour, but we kind of ended up in two camps. It was a little bit sad.

It sounds strange to hear that Derek and Kerry were in one camp.

Yeah, I mean it was only the fact that they both didn't want to tour that was what put them in that camp. Previous to that it hadn't been like this at all. It wasn't a situation where we were fighting each other, we just felt sad because we all knew it's gonna be the last tour. And for me and probably for John I know that playing live is one of the best things to do for a musician, that's why I started doing it, it's to get in front of people and play, that's the magic of it.

What were the reasons for Derek and Kerry to stop touring?

Kerry had been married for maybe three years and had had two children, and Derek also had been fairly recently married and also was having children. In every interview with bands I read, it always plays a big factor that a family comes along and a musician feels very torn between being on the road and doing what his youthful instincts always wanted himself to do, and that he now has a family. That becomes very tough. He finds he can't be Jekyll and Hyde. But having said that, John was married, I was married and Ray was married (laughs).

But maybe no children on the way?

No, that's true. The most important thing you're missing is the kids growing up, and that's sad.

Gary, after Gentle Giant you moved to America to Princeton, Illinois, because of private reasons. Tell us something about your musical activities in those early Eighties.

Well, immediately after Giant broke up, Ray and I decided that we still wanted to play, and John too, and so we started to write and rehearse in their houses in Portsmouth. We actually did get a record deal and we actually did put a single out, it was just Ray and I at this point under the name of "Shout", and the tune was *Starting Line*, I think. But then it failed for the reason that when we started talking about the

venture, Ray had married Barbara, and she is an American from the Pittsburgh area, and we had thought that we wanted to move to the States and have the whole thing be based in America. So I promptly sold my house and collected all my furniture – it was in a great big truck in one of those containers that goes on the ships – and that was gone. It was in the North Sea, coming down the St. Lawrence seaway, going to Chicago – at which point Ray decided to stay in London. That kind of made it difficult, so we carried on fruitlessly for about a month, six weeks, trying to straddle the Atlantic and it really didn't work. It just sort of fell apart, no one even said anything about it, really, and that was okay, 'cause it wasn't a great effort what we did, it was just kind of aftermath: wanting still to play but not having really an outlet or a band to do it.

What kind of musical direction had that "Shout" project? Was it influenced by this new punk/new wave thing at that time?

Kind of, a little bit. I mean it was quite musical, it was a tune, a bona fide tune (laughs) and not just shouting as the name would indicate. It was fairly simple, fairly stripped down. I played drums and guitar, Ray played a couple of guitar lines and bass and he sang and I sang a couple of harmonies. We had some more songs, they were nothing like Gentle Giant at all, more short, three and a half minute singles. I think we did about four or five demos. Ray wanted a hit, but I always felt that there was still a lot more life in Gentle Giant as a touring band who played live shows and who made maybe one album a year, and could be content with that. Everybody has different ambitions, Ray was looking at the stars and I was looking not quite that high. I was looking just to still produce good music and enjoy it, you know.

After settling down in America there was another offer to you, by Eddie Jobson, right?

Yeah, that came through Derek, actually. Derek fairly soon got a job I think in A&R (Artists and Relations) with Polygram in New York. He must have just got friendly with Eddie Jobson in New York 'cause he was living there, too. Eddie Jobson was putting together a record, and a band he wanted to call "Zinc". He needed a guitar player, and Derek suggested myself. Eddie and I spoke on the phone for a long time and had a really good conversation, at the upshot of which I went to his house in



The (actually red-labelled) Shout single. No names given. How could we know?!?

Connecticut, and we recorded some tunes in 1981 or 1982 for that *Green album* which came out in 1983.

Did Eddie Jobson know the music of Gentle Giant?

Probably not. I'm not sure, I think he knew of it as a band that was a progressive rock band, and he was kind of in the same label having played with Roxy Music and Jethro Tull as well. So he must have been familiar with the name and the reputation at least, perhaps not the music. It was quite a little fun experience, he's a very talented guy.

Were there any plans for touring?

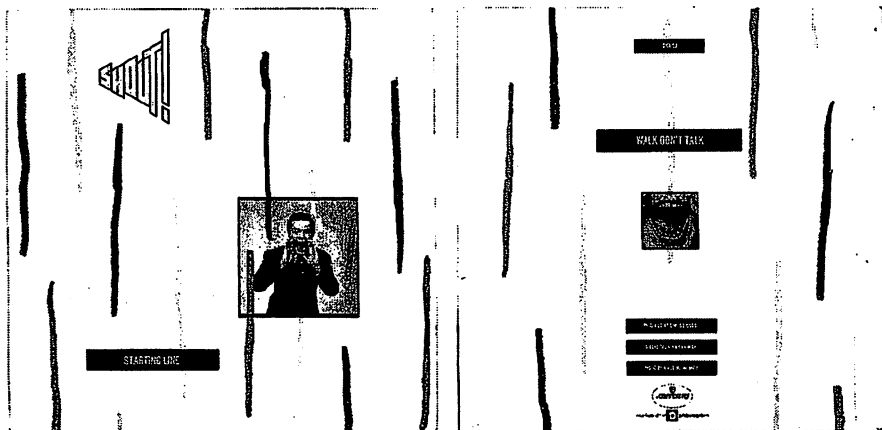
Yes, there were, but it didn't come to anything. I don't actually know if he would have used me in that band 'cause he used several guitar players on this album, I think there were four or five [four, actually, with Gary]. We never met each other, but we all probably played the same parts, and it's hard to know who actually played what on the album. I think I can hear myself on a couple of tracks. [Gary is credited on the tracks *Listen to Reason* and *Through the Glass*.]

After this, were there any other musical activities?

That was real sort of a dull point for me, musically. See, when I joined Gentle Giant I was 19, I was kind of wet behind the ears, green – as my name suggests. It was a very formative time for me, that whole period, very influential on me, moulding the kind of person I was to become. So I felt, I don't wanna say devastated, but quite at a loss to know what to do after Giant broke up. It was like a family, we did really get on very well until this very end part, it had been real good fun. It was similar to, like, loosing a family member, kind of empty feeling. I really didn't play much for three or four years, I played here and now in this area with a local band, with friends. It was nothing really adventurous musically, but good fun to play.

Are you still around with this band?

No, I play with another band now, a bit more musically adventurous, called "Mother Tongue". People don't understand the name at all. We have a real hard time with that. "Tongue"? "Yeah, but it means native language." So I figured that was a good name for me being English, and rock'n roll maybe is kind of native to us all – but perhaps it doesn't sound very good.



So, Gary, how have you been earning your living then?

Mostly it's been music, mostly it's been operating sound for band, mixing sound for various bands around Illinois, but not on a very big scale. But it's been fun for me, I've met a lot of musicians, naturally, which has been really good for me, because in Giant we were secluded, cloistered. We didn't venture outside of Giant for any other musical experiences or even social experiences. We were not very good in mixing with other people, which in retrospect just seems so ludicrous. There were always incredible people we ran into all the time, who loved the band. It seems the obvious thing to have done, to have made friends with so many of these people instead of huddling together in the corner, stuck together and doing what we Giants did.

So mostly you can live on this, mixing sounds for bands?

Yeah, but I have also done other things. I've just done some farming. A friend of mine owns a farm a few miles from here in very rural countryside. I think this area of the States is the largest producer of corn in the world. It has got some of the best farmland, some of it is very, very pretty. The last few weeks – this planting season – all the farmers have been putting corn and soya beans in the ground, and that's what I've been doing, driving a tractor, etc. I really enjoyed it. I think I found a meteorite in the fields, compared to other rocks around it was very different looking. I haven't verified it yet, but I'm convinced it's a meteorite. I'm intrigued by the idea that this thing came from the other side of the universe into my living room.

Are there other bands or musicians who intrigued you after Gentle Giant?

Yeah, Little Feat was one. I was listening to them during Giant as well. Lowell George, I thought that was an awful sad loss – a fabulous player and just a really good band. Richard Thompson I would say has been perhaps my greatest find if you like, I think he is, in my estimation, probably one of my top 5 guitar players and musicians. He really is a fantastic song writer and plays with so much spirit, which is what attracts me in any music anyway. The first thing I listen for is the spirit, that's what jumps out of the CD to me regardless of the type of music it might be. It's how it is played and with what passion behind that. Em, who else? Lots of people. The band that brought you to Princeton as well, XTC, I'm becoming more familiar with them, I really like what they do.

How did you know about this band?

Well, XTC I knew about before I left England because they had started in 1977, I think. Their hit in England was *Making plans for Nigel* which introduced most people to their stuff.

But at that time you weren't too impressed by them?

Not by that particular tune, no. Although it was fun and I liked the idea of it. Because I think we all knew somebody called Nigel, and I just liked the story line of the lyric that was very humorous and I felt that Giant lacked that a little bit. We lacked a humour sometimes, we were always perhaps – especially on record – a little bit too serious. Live, anything could have happened, it was pretty chaotic and quite funny, but that's a fairly essential ingredient for me these days too. I don't think you should take yourself too seriously.

My first XTC album that really convinced me was *The big express* in 1984. It's so full of passion and soul – this variety of moods and the richness of melodies...

This one I don't know. I think the first album I listened to was *Drums and wires* (1979). The bass player I work with has been an XTC fan for a long time. He used to be in a band that played some XTC. He introduced me to *Oranges and lemons*, the XTC album I really like an awful lot.

There has not been much contact between Gentle Giant members over the last



Jolly Gary Gentle, Green Giant Guitarist, and Scott Nuckles at the XTC convention.

ten years, but recently we found out you have a lot of appreciation for each other. We spoke to John Weathers two months ago, and he is really enthusiastic about you.

We were soulmates, we were together on tours, we shared the same passion for blues. John was the best player I have ever played with.

We also spoke to Kerry some years ago, he said you had the talent really to play this animal stuff and as well the tricky rhythms and melodies with strange meters and strange changes of ...

Yeah, some of them were!

Well, I thought these people really appreciated each other so much – and they split?

Well, Kerry of course is a lovely player, a wonderful writer, I don't know what more to say. I hope – I understand he's doing some sort of thematic film work, maybe, which would be very nice to hear. But yeah, I would not discount, I would *not* discount the possibility of playing with John and Kerry, that would be great – I could see that happening because it's far enough now in the past that whatever anybody may have thought or thought they thought is irrelevant now.

How do you think it could happen? How could it happen practically.? Will it be phoning, writing ...?

It would be phoning, no doubt, because obviously geographically it would be difficult now because I'm living here in the States and John and Kerry I think are both where they were. I saw Kerry about two or three years ago, when I went to England and had a very nice visit with him.

Ten years of Gentle Giant as an immensely creative band with an output of 11 regular studio albums – thinking about this I again realize that each GG record has its own mood, its own feel, its own history how the songs evolved, how the recording sessions passed off. Maybe, Gary, you can recall a special feeling about each of these records? What is still in your mind or heart when you remember those times? Let us

start with the first album.

That was a fabulous experience for me, it was the first real record I made! This first album we had rehearsed and rehearsed and rehearsed because it was the basis of our life show. It was the first thing that the band had done, we rehearsed for six months or so with basically just those tunes. So when we came to record them the actual recording process went fairly quickly, it was still done in the days of "you all play together in the studio". So it was not primitive, exactly, though primitive perhaps to now. I think it was recorded in two weeks, which was very quick, but I have good memories of that. When we did that drum solo in *Nothing at All* – I wasn't allowed to play drums back then – I don't know why (laughs) – that was real chaos, it was great fun in the studio. I remember Martin and Kerry and Ray all playing on Martin's drum kit and sort of shouting as they were doing it. I think they did several takes – most of them ended with everybody just lying on the floor laughing, not able to believe they were producing this cacophonous sound. And then we stuck that blues part at the end of *Why Not?* so that I could play a solo.

I do remember one specific point about that album. At that time our manager was Gerry Bron, and he and his wife Lilian came down to listen to a rough mix of the album. I think it was *Funny Ways* we played to them, and then the guitar solo came on – it turned out real good, I was really pleased with that solo – and Lilian said: "Ah, I love that guitar solo, it's so evocative! I don't know of what, but it's really evocative." (laughs). I thought that was an odd comment at the time, but that stuck in my mind. And also the engineer we used on that album, Roy Baker, now called Roy Thomas Baker – I don't know where he got a third name from (laughs) – he liked the drum sound, and we were commenting that we liked the drum sound he was producing, being naive not realizing quite how all these things were done. And he put a little box over the EQ, the tone controls for the drums, so that nobody could see how he got the sound (laughs), which I thought was very insane, but yeah, that was fun.

The second album, *Acquiring the Taste*, that one was quite different.

Yeah, the album cover didn't come out quite as good as we'd liked.

The colours, or ...?

No, what it was supposed to represent. We wanted – because it was what they called a gatefold sleeve – we wanted it to look like one thing on one side and then when you opened it out you would go: "Oh, that's what it is!" You know, we were pretty down on the music business industry as a whole and getting frustrated at getting record deals, and all these people you had to suck up to in order to please, to get what you wanted. So the cover, as you looked at it without opening it was supposed to represent a tongue licking a bum, an arsehole, you know. So that when you open it up, it was: "Ah, it's not that at all, it's a peach!" and it's OK. So (sarcastically) acquiring the taste for having to get a record deal!

So it's not acquiring the taste for getting into some new, adventurous music?

Well, yeah, that was its other meaning, sure. But, I mean, it was quite a declaration that Phil wrote on there (laughs) – pretty bold. But that was cool, that was alright to do because that's really what the band was trying to do at that point. A lot of that album was experimental, we didn't know what the hell was going on as we were doing it. Sometimes you can't worry about those things, sometimes you've just got to throw stuff up in the air and it lands in a fortuitous way – it works, somehow. You have to just trust your instincts as you go along that it will turn out right, often it will and if it doesn't, well OK, do it again.

Do you have something special musically in your mind from that second album?

Yeah! We first had a Moog synthesizer. And the guy who was in Manfred Mann

– Mike Hugg, I believe – was the programmer, 'cause you had to have a programmer to do that those days, and it was this enormous machine, which filled up about six feet of the wall of Advision Studios, and Mike Hugg was plugging in plugs on the top to the bottom. We were trying to get sounds to approximate orchestral sounds like oboes, etc. Kerry produced the title track basically on these switches.

Was Kerry pleased and intrigued with the possibilities of a Moog synthesizer?

Oh yeah, he was. I mean, Kerry was actually totally technically inept (laughs) of being able to produce the sounds, so when they came out with the small portable one he was very happy. These machines are dinosaurs now. We also had one of those mellotrons, which was an insane machine before there were sampling keyboards. It was actually all tapes for every note you played – if you wanted violins there was maybe 70 tapes, one tape for each key. A very characteristic sound. Did you wave it it went out of pitch, they all sounded different, they'd have different attacks. Mellotrons were monstrously heavy and stupid, heavier than a Hammond B-3 organ. And then they came with a streamlined version, but it is still a dinosaur.

Can you recall the mood the band were in when you recorded the album?

The mood of the band was always influenced by how well we were doing in the market. The band was always driven by Ray, Derek and Phil as far as being the leaders, if you like, and trying to promote the band and get the best commercial success out of it, which was kind of the opposite of what actually the band was doing musically. So there was this thrust to get commercial success despite the fact that we weren't playing music that could get commercial success. So I think Ray and Derek and Phil were always kind of frustrated with that. And I think *Acquiring the Taste* probably reflects that mood. It felt like maybe it was going to be our last album. Many of our albums seemed to be our last at the time we made them because of lack of success. There wasn't any guaranteed success, artistically yes, but it was not ever gonna be a commercial thing. It was more kind of an intellectual approach about this album anyway, we deemed it to be more experimental, it was to deal more with philosophical thoughts rather than rock'n'roll, fast cars, women stuff, you know, we never liked that anyway.

Though musically there were quite some rough, hard-edged parts, for instance the guitar solo part in *The House*, *the Street*, *the Room*, by the way one of the most impressive guitar solos of all time. I find it amazingly hard to do.

Well, I have to tell you, I cheated in it, it was not one take, it was I think two takes blended together.

But wasn't it hard for you not to rely on a blues scale ...

Which I tend to do.

... because the chord structure underneath that solo was based on a whole note scale?

Yeah, it was difficult because I had to play differently. I'm not a really good musician. I don't know notes in relationships, I find it very hard. But having said that, there's a natural ability that hopefully kicks in, that overcomes that (laughs).

This particular guitar solo, it has a lot of tension, getting more and more tense in leading into the last verse. Do you plan such things?

It's spontaneous, but you know where you have to come out on the other end of the solo, you know what that solo has to achieve. It has to reflect the tension of the guy sitting alone in his house, street, room, not doing anything and wants to break out of it, and that's where it's gotta get to on the other end of the solo. You have this in mind but then you forget about it. It's like musical technique, you need it, but you have to forget about it if you're gonna play, it becomes more of an instinctual thing again.



Waiting for luggage

The next album, *Three Friends*, was a concept album and it showed a new musical direction, a more rocky and straightforward attitude. How did this come?

Well, most of these directions are forced by the attempted commercial success of the band. Obviously, *Acquiring the Taste* didn't do very well as a product, as units in the shops – we didn't get our success fast enough, damn it! – so the next one was going to be a little bit more commercial. And it had a theme to it; that was the big deal at that time, everybody was doing theme albums. We tried to suggest at that time that we didn't do things in conventional manner, but in actual fact we pretty much did (laughs). Our theme, as you know, was about three schoolboy friends who grew up to be very different people and lost their dreams somewhere along the way. The album basically was about aspirations and not being able to get them. It was kind of successful in that respect, it has some good music on it, too.

You had a solo on Peel the Paint.

Yeah, together with Malcolm Mortimore. Malcolm was a very good drummer, but at that point he had a very bad problem with timing, he would really rush ahead of it all the time. Because we played the solo together, which was rather unusual, we were playing off each other, it is that response thing you do. I was playing through an Echoplex, which is a taped delay, which gives you a sense of time, so naturally you have to keep within that sense of time. And Malcolm would rush ahead of this.

How were your feelings when recording a tricky piece like Schooldays? Was it fun for you, or did you think: "Oh, let's get over this queer stuff"?

Oh no! Everything I played in that band really was an adventure for me to play, because of the school of playing I had come out of before I joined Giant – I was a blues player, a rock'n'roll player, I still am. I don't see any point denying that, I never have. I tried to deny in Giant, I think, which was stupid because that's my best ability. But anyway, musically it was wonderful, I found it very intriguing to play different times and quirky rhythms and all of that. I'm also a drummer, and probably my main strength is as a rhythmic player. I don't have any trouble with rhythms, they come very natural to me.

How did the writers like Kerry tell you about these metre and time things, how

did they explain it to you, as written music probably didn't mean a lot to you?

Well, often I would just sit with Kerry and Ray and they played what they thought was the part. I'd learn it by ear, it was not a big deal. *Schooldays* was a wonderful tune to do. I still don't know how it does it, but it *does* evoke memories of schooldays. I don't know how music does that; it's still for me one of the great mysteries in the love about music I have, that it kind of suggests actual scenes. We actually played *Schooldays* live a few times, on a British tour I remember, and it went really well. I mean, we played it very good, and it had a good reception which you would not think it was gonna have. I doubt there's any recording of that around, but it would be nice to hear. Prologue didn't go nearly as well.

Octopus is the album I remember in a special way because I was lucky to follow about ten days of the recording sessions in Advision studios. I was blown away hearing this unbelievable rock/jazz/medieval blend of The Advent of Panurge for the first time. I remember Kerry manipulating his Hammond organ by using a wah-wah to get some queer, degenerated sounds for Knots, how he hurt the skin of his knuckles in doing the piano glissando in Raconteur Troubadour several times, and many other things, like your guitar part in The Boys in the Band (hums). Those *Octopus* recording sessions were a great experience for me.

Yeah, it felt really good to record the album. At that time it seemed that we were creating – I'm very reticent to use terms like 'special' – but yeah, that we were creating something really special. It was also the first album that John was on, because Malcolm had been in a motorcycle accident, and had broken his leg and his arm, I think, just a week before a British tour. So, what the hell were we gonna do? We remembered we saw John with Graham Bond, so we got hold of John and it was – oooh – instant band.

Were you already involved in singing vocals at that time?

I'm not sure if I sang on *Octopus*. I forget these things because I sang Phil's part, for instance on Knots, live. So I tend to remember that I sang on the record, which I didn't. I guess, while Phil was still in the band I didn't sing.

I remember that the band had already recorded *River*, and then you and Ray decided to re-record it – or at least parts of it – because it was not living enough.

Yeah, this is quite possible. I mean, recording at that time, you sometimes lose sight of ..., you get so involved in the smallness of details, you tend sometimes to lose the overall picture. And I think we suffered a little bit that way from not having a producer. We tended to do it ourselves and we perhaps weren't the best people to do it. We should have had someone to tell us when to stop.

In the last sections of the guitar solo in *River*, there is a voice doubling this solo. Is this Derek?

No, it's me. I had little vocal appearances (laughs) on most of the albums. There was a grunt in a solo, on Mr. Class and Quality I think, and that high scat singing on top of the *River* guitar solo. And what else? Eh ... Spooky Boogie – that scream after the first bars, that's me. We decided we needed a scream in the tune, so I was on my way out into the room to record the scream, and they were playing the tape and it was in record, and I was miles away from the microphone. And when the point came I let go; it was the perfect one, so we kept that one, it was just fortunate. And there's another one – eh, yeah – Way of Life, that's me shouting "Go!" on the front of that. So I had these little cameo Alfred Hitchcock-type vocal appearances, you know.

In *Glass House*, this album was produced rather quickly after *Octopus*, wasn't it?

Yeah, Phil had left for family reasons, I think he always felt he was kind of too old to be with us, to be on the road. So we had to do something to replace Phil. We in fact did buy a Moog synthesizer trying to do the saxophone lines Phil had done. So live

arrangements often would be the Moog and Derek's saxophone playing what used to have been two saxophone lines originally. *In a Glass House*, the album I regarded as a pretty strong album. Regrettably it failed to be released in the United States because of contractual things. We were always looking towards America, good sales there would ship dollars over to Europe. Maybe we should have concentrated on Europe ... We didn't have a good time with the record company, the album title reflects that. Every little thing we complained about seemed to backfire on us.

On *The Power and the Glory* there seemed – compared to *In a Glass House* – a bit more experimenting again?

Well, the technology was getting better the whole time as we were recording. I think the first album was done on 16 track or maybe even 8 track, I'm not sure. On *The Power and the Glory* we made some good use of noise gates in one particular tune, I think it was *No God's a Man*, which is a really nice tune, I really liked that a lot, it captures a real light feeling.

And there is this wonderful heavy bluesy middle section in this song. You must have felt very at home with this part of the song?

Yeah, that was John's influence, I think, on Kerry and Ray as writers, perhaps mine as well. John was such a solid player, it made Kerry realize he could actually – maybe – get the grips of rock'n'roll. Kerry was never very much at home with rock'n'roll as a pure sort of enjoyment rock thing, he didn't ever quite grasp it, and it was just natural to John and me. So I think, Kerry quite enjoyed having this sort of rude solid rhythm thing underneath his own pretty parts. The things he would write in a rock'n'roll manner were things a rock'n'roll writer wouldn't think of. So they had extra sort of punch somehow inversely, and *The Power and the Glory* is a pretty good example of that, and *In a Glass House* too. *Way of Life* – I mean, it's not a rock'n'roll tune by any means, but by God, it's such a stomping tune!

And on *The Power and the Glory* there is the second of the greatest guitar solos of all times, in my opinion, so strange and wonderful ...

'Strange and wonderful' (laughs), I take that as a compliment, I like that!
... in *So Sincere*; what a sound! So tortured, so insane!



No expense spared!

Yeah, 'tortured', that's the word (laughs). So *Sincere* was a great tune live, too. We started out acoustically: cello, violin, acoustic guitar, Derek singing. Then after a four bar drums interlude all changing to electric, I had to run off to my electric guitar; keyboards, bass, and then into the big drum solo which was terrific.

This is one of the best songs ever written by Kerry, I think.

I think so, too. This timing – I really had quite some difficulty trying to learn that at first (both hum and laugh).

The cover to *The Power and the Glory* I found very beautiful – the colours, the round angles ...

We were on tour in Germany – I think we had recorded the album – and we were thinking about the cover. We were looking at all the Germans playing cards, the design on most of them was great, we couldn't find anything to approximate that in England or elsewhere. So we actually ended up using one of the jacks of one of the playing cards we bought to do that.

***The Power and the Glory* was pretty successful, and so you got to *Free Hand*, which seemed to be much more enthusiastic and with a good feel ...**

Yeah, it had a much lighter feeling. The tunes always did reflect the social conditions of the band, we were having a much better time with the record company, we could do what we wanted, we literally had *Free Hand*.

And you sang a part of *On Reflection*.

I came in on those with many vocal parts. I sang the fourth one (hums). Derek and Ray and Kerry were the main singers, you know. I would just fill in.

It was interesting how we would sometimes record the vocals on albums. It was my job – it just sort of devolved to me (laughs) – to record Derek, I was Derek's producer on the vocals. Everybody would disappear when Derek was in doing the vocals, and I had to sit there and do Derek. 'Cause it usually took a fairly long time to do Derek, and nearly sometimes you'd go phrase by phrase – "that one was a little bit rushed, Derek, go back do that once again", "a little bit flat", "a little bit sharp", "can you change that word a little bit?" – perhaps I shouldn't be saying this, I'm destroying myths, but hell, it's the truth, folks.

So anyway, John was *my* producer of vocals. The other guys left and John did it, and it turned out OK.

The *Free Hand* album contains my personal favourite Gentle Giant song, *His Last Voyage*, and in the song there is the third of the greatest guitar solos of all time ...

I'm flattered, I really am, Gerhard (laughs).

Did you play it live with John? Because it was so together ...

No, it was an overdub, the drum track was already done. I mean, there are advantages to doing it as an overdub: you already hear what people have played, so you know the spirit that you have to join, to help to come out. I have always played like that, I listen all the time and empathetically you play to what is being played.

And there is more good stuff on the album, as *Mobile*. Did you play this live?

I don't think so. Some tunes just did not work well live, sometimes because there are too many notes in them, they are too tricky, they don't translate well. Bands like U2 are largely successful because their music sounds good in those awful-sounding arenas, there's a lot of space between each note, there is plenty of room to hear the note and understand it before the next one. Jazz doesn't come across good in an arena, and we didn't. Simpler tunes did, *Knots* did, but things like *Mobile* – no, too tricky.

The follow-up album, *Interview*, seemed very close, stylistically, to *Free Hand*, like a second session after the recording of *Free Hand*.

Yes, too close. I think you'll probably find everybody in the band think that it's

their least favourite album. That's why we did a live album next, we felt really stale, all we had done was repeat ourselves. The album sounded flat, there was not much life in it, although there were some good moments on it, for sure.

Yeah, for instance these whiny violins on that blues boogie based middle section in *Timing*, or *Give it Back*, this witty, tongue in cheek reggae style adaptation, no one apart from Gentle Giant could have done such a piece.

Yeah, but in whole it was disappointing. It was not a succesful album, you know. *Free Hand* did the best of all the albums that we released, it got actually in the charts, in America it got to no. 26! So *Interview* was a miserable failure compared to that. [Actually, *Interview* was the only album to go into the Norwegian Top 20! -gh] We should have taken a little bit more time and try to actually make a really good studio album that could have capitalized on the success of *Free Hand*, but it was not to be.

So the disappointment at the failure of *Interview* caused kind of insecurity and embarrassment what to do next. Watching the recording sessions for *The Missing Piece* in Hilvarenbeek, Holland, I saw the dullness and vacillation in the band members producing that stuff that appeared like Giant cut down to normal size on purpose.

Yeah, all those other bands we had been compared with were doing extremely well: Genesis, Yes, Jethro Tull, they all were doing great guns. And there was this new



June 1993, with Linda Shepherd and Reinhold Munch, fans of XTC and GG.

punk movement happening at that time.

One more reason to reduce the band's abilities intentionally ...

That was true as far as recording went, it wasn't the case live. I mean, this has been a simmering thing throughout the history of the band. I think it's fair to say that basically Ray and Derek really wanted huge success. Of course it would have been nice, but as a first goal - no. But I think it was the first goal for Ray and Derek. And this had been simmering since the first album that they had wanted to have a really huge album. But the more the band went on, the more obvious it became that it was not gonna be *that* kind of band. That frustration came out - on the recorded album - in being more simplified and trying to be more tailored to the commercial market. It was fun for ten minutes to play such things, but not more. *The Missing Piece* was a sort of bitty album, there was some great stuff on it: *Memories of Old Days*, or *For Nobody*, a killer tune, one of our better live tunes, we used to end with that one, and there was some not very good stuff on it as well. It was not a real good whole thing. But most albums today are like that, there's two good tracks, the rest of it you can throw away. But the band was doing very well live, the albums never matched up to the live performances.

And then came *Giant for a Day*, probably the band's most cramped and clenched effort to achieve commercial success.

Yeah, this again contained much more straightforward kind of tunes, some of which I enjoyed yet, e. g. *Little Brown Bag* and *Rock Climber*. And also my George Harrison type solo in *Thank You* (hums), a nice tune.

Though the album in whole was pretty much of a shock for me, I liked some musical specialties on it like those permanently floating feedback guitar lines in *Giant for a Day*.

That was a very hard track to record 'cause we really wanted a huge drum sound for it, and we ended up not playing together to record it, unfortunately. John had to overdub the drums, so that's why the time is a little bit funny. We scrapped the first version and re-recorded it, and I would have liked to have done that again. There's actually quite a few of those tunes I'd like to do again *now* because we could play them so much better. I know much more about the recording process, and so does Ray 'cause he is a producer these days, you know. We would be much better at that kind of thing.

Finally, *Civilian*. What about that album?

We had a good time making the album, because we came to the States to make it. We all rented apartments in Los Angeles, which is really very nasty, actually, I didn't like that at all. But the fact remained that we were all together, that we were in one place and would communicate with each other. It was a good feeling making the album. I actually got a composition on there too, you know.

Really? Which one? [He was credited on the label. -gh]

Convenience. That's mostly mine. I mean, Ray did most of the arrangement and Derek wrote the words, but the composition itself is mine.

Well, Gary, we have sort of reached the beginning of this interview now - after *Civilian* Gentle Giant split. Maybe you'd like to say a word about that there is actually a Gentle Giant newsletter around now?

The newsletter is wonderful. I've received both of them now [June 1993]. I know, Geir, I have been a bit lax in giving you material yet. I have hundreds of press clippings and I'm going to photocopy them and send them to you. I also have lots of other stuff: sorts of badges and promotional shit [I have begun to receive now - many thanks! -gh]. I think it's a wonderful thing, it's great you're all getting together, and it's very flattering still to be thought of - today, 13 years after the fact.

Another interview with Gary Green

Conducted by David Armas

This interview was conducted in the Spring of 1994, over the telephone, and after transcription, it was revised by Gary in the Fall.

David: Hi, Gary. Well, how have you been doing after all this time.

Gary: I'm fine, very well, thanks. How are you?

I'm OK after the quake. Do you remember any earthquakes happening while you were doing a gig, house lights shaking, etc?

No, I don't. None that I remember.

What do you think of the fan magazine so far?

I think it's great that there is still so much interest in the band. You and Geir are doing a fine job of keeping the memory alive. So kudos to you both for the hard work.

Thanks, Gary, and I thank the fans the most. I want to ask you some questions from our readers and myself. Let's start with this. When you guys did the song Playing The Game live, what was the name of that funny-looking instrument Derek used to strum? How was that sound created in the studio? It looks like an electric ukulele?

We called it the 'Shulberry'. It was strung with the top three strings of a violin: E, A and D. We got the sound in the studio by Ray lightly tapping his violin with a drumstick. For some reason we weren't sure that we were going to play this live, but the song required two guitars. So that meant Ray couldn't play bass. As it turned out, Kerry played the bass part with the left hand on the clavinet. When it came time to play this live, we still needed that signature sound. So rather than let Derek attack Ray's 17th century instrument, our keyboard roadie Phil Freeman fabricated this thing out of a plank of wood, using guitar tuning pegs and guitar pick-ups. This was the best way to emulate this sound. The roadies collectively dubbed it the 'Shulberry'. That was their pet name for the Shulman brothers, so the name stuck. It was a neat little instrument. Phil became our lighting director later on and continues in that field, working with the Psychedelic Furs and Diana Ross. He's much sought after.

Who might now have that instrument?

I had. But I'm sorry to say I threw it out a couple of years ago. I'm trying to think of any other little custom-made instruments we had. I remember we bought these really cheap xylophones for one of the incarnations incorporated in the percussion solo on So Sincere. They may have appeared in other tunes in their various configurations, but we literally went out and found them in the toy section at Woolworths. They had these incredibly vile overtones. You'd hit them and your ears would just ring. Just reverberate. But they were loud so we used them. That is what Kerry and I had. John got a proper professional one. They had a pentatonic scale and Kerry figured out a melody to write using the notes provided on them.

You guys didn't seem to buy many new instruments. You still have the same Les Paul standard.

No, we didn't. We were never a rich band. Pretty much a cottage industry on a shoestring budget for the most part. We did upgrade equipment as time went on and technology improved, principally the keyboards. Remember, a lot of this was back in the dark ages of sound reproduction. Ray originally had this Fender Mustang 3/4 scale bass, so the strings are shorter and therefore not able to produce low notes very well. We were on tour with Jethro Tull in 1972 and while in Frankfurt, Germany, John, Ray and I visited a music shop and spotted this Precision on the wall for a reasonable price.

It played nicely and we wanted it, but had no cash. So Eric Brooks who was Jethro Tull's tour manager at the time (later to become ours) lent us the money on the side, unbeknownst to them – about \$200. It was a spur of the moment thing. We repaid the money at the end of the tour when we were flush. That was one of several good things to come about from working with the Tull people. Ray used that bass on almost everything ever since. He was a good musician and therefore needed a good instrument. Any player, even an absolute beginner needs the best instrument they can afford. A poor tool is detrimental to the learning process. After all, we were a good band competing with the likes of Tull. So we figured that if we were going to play with them, we deserved one of these too! Someone was telling me the other day that he read a recent magazine article about Ray, what an unsung hero of the bass he was in all this. It was very true. He was an underrated and unacknowledged bass guitar player.

How much did you buy your Les Paul for?

I bought it in a store in London in 1971 for about \$700. Back then that was not cheap. It's a good playing guitar and I'm looking to sell it. Mint ones can fetch up to \$50,000. Mine is not mint by any means. It had the headstock broken on it, a victim of a tug-of-war between the roadies one night or it got knocked off a stand. It's funny now even years afterwards but at the time, I was very upset about it. We just started playing



Gary's 1960 Les Paul Standard. It features on all Giant albums except the 1st.



Gary, aged 10, with his dad, who whistles in an attempt to cover the sound of the hi-hat, while Gary strums an early Maccaferri.

So Sincere and I was stage left with Ray on acoustic guitar and as we were playing the opening bars we heard this incredible 'clang'. We all looked at each other and laughed thinking some klutz had fallen over some stage gear. Little did I know! So when we got to the part where John played a four bar pattern we had to scramble back and pick up our electrics and come in on '1' of the fifth bar. As I reached out for it from Frank Covey, he's standing there with my guitar in two parts. A most peculiar feeling. So I got it repaired by Sam Li who also worked on Steve Howe's guitars. It's a good guitar and I used it on every Giant album except the first, which we already recorded before I bought it. So it's a valuable piece. I'd like to get \$20,000 for it but the price is negotiable.

Your musical background, what was it like? Who did you learn guitar from?

From my brother Jeff., he was elder by 7 years. He played clarinet in school and was pretty good. He developed an interest in guitar and started off by listening to Django Reinhardt. Our dad always played jazz records to us when we were young. He left his guitar around the home. I would pick it up and he would show me a few things. I guess I was about 11 years old then. This was just before The Beatles started happening. There was also a 3 string one laying around that I would pop off some 3 string chords with. All the rock and roll was American derived, as most of the pop music was. The things you would find on public radio over here was our traditional English folk, of course. One side of the Atlantic was always envious of the other side. Every English recording artist wound up wishing his record sounded like American records and vice-versa.

What did you think of the Hollywood Bowl tape I sent you?

It was much better than I remembered it being. Very cool. I didn't know anybody had recorded it. The guy who was recording it, obviously he was the one sitting close to the speakers and he was loving the show. You can hear his chit-chat between songs and cherry-bomb bursts that the audience was setting off. The Black Sabbath fans didn't take very kindly to us. It wasn't a very compatible mix of bands that day.

There is a pretty good bootleg CD out now, from Rome, Italy, 1974, off the board.

That's the Sports Palace, on top of a hill. It held about 20,000 folks. Italian audiences were great. Those were the days we used to tune up on stage, then walk out.

There would be huge cheers and gesticulations and when they noticed us tuning they'd start shushing each other, angrily sometimes, so we could hear what we were doing. Amazing hearing 20,000 people quiet themselves down like that. But they were not great masters of organization. Things always seemed to get screwed up somehow. It was usually more irksome than disastrous and nearly so that day. We had done the sound check in the afternoon, then went back to the hotel for a bite and relaxation. Then back to the gig later on. It's a big circular place with entrances all around and we went to our designated one only to be refused admission in spite of having guitars, bags and English accents. So we trooped all round the place trying every entrance and still couldn't get in. The security guard just denied all knowledge of us even though we had the passes. We had the paper, but no move. It was really getting down to the wire and panic was starting to set in. We were shouting at these guards in mock Italian swear words to no avail. The roadies started into wondering where the hell's the band! They came out looking for us and we got in with about 20 minutes to spare. Nearly didn't make that one. But there has been even stranger times ...

What was the name of that woman tour manager you had on the *Free Hand* tour? She gave a fan a hard time backstage at the Shrine. German lady.

She wasn't German. She was an English lady, her name was Rita. Her last name was Etheridge, I think. She was a violinist in the string quartet Tull used on a couple of gigs in late '74. A very good violin player. And she somehow became our tour manager after Uncle Eric left us. It was a time when there weren't too many women in road crews and her appointment was the cause of a bit of derision in some quarters, I'm ashamed to say. It was the cause of much hilarity all around. She came up with a classic comment one night. I forget where we were, but aforementioned Phil Freeman was doing the lights for the show. It was after the gig and we were all back at the hotel drinking up and talking. There was John and me in the room with the road crew. Rita came in little bit tipsy. She was concerned about the lights. Phil hadn't been very good on the lights that night as he normally was. His cues were a bit off. She offered him her worldly wisdom and said "Look Phil - if you would have just moved the fader knob a little bit earlier this will give the electricity enough time to get up the cables." It just threw everybody on the floor in gales of laughter. She didn't know what she'd said but she joined in with the fun. It was really very funny. But they have to give you a hard time once in a while. It's their job to protect the band. Hard to know where to



Rita and Gary, manager and managed.

draw the line sometimes.

You stopped playing with Tull halfway through the 1972 tour, so they say. What was the reason behind that?

Our tour obligations had been met. Tull continued on. It wasn't because they dropped us or anything like that. There wasn't any animosity or dislike between us. As a matter of fact, we all got along very well.

Who named the band?

Colin. Again, I forget the last name. He worked for the Gerry Bron Organization which was our first management company. He had managed Simon Dupree And The Big Sound and was pretty good friends with all the Shulmans. And through his generosity, he agreed to sponsor about six months worth of rehearsals to pay everybody's wages. They told him about the idea that they wanted to get out of the pop band and do something more meaningful musically. And Gerry went along with us thinking that the time was right and agreed to be the band's patron for six months so we could get players and to fine tune the band. Colin came around with us on tours. He also managed the band Colosseum with John Hiseman on drums. He's a great drummer. They were also under Bron management and he was kind of tight in with them. It was his idea to call the band Gentle Giant in an attempt to describe the music. I thought it was a bit wimpy at the time when I first heard the suggestion, but everybody else seemed to like it, so I said "Oh well, alright." That was so well documented, I thought everybody knew that. That was parodied on the album *Interview* because every one we did had the same questions all the time that we were just lampooning them.

Every interview that I've read made no mention.

Well, you're right. Colin's name never came up before as the one who named the band. So there you go.

Do you play in any bands now?

Yes. I'm in two bands right now, "Mad Cow" and "Big Hello".

Mad Cow! Music to milk by?

Yeah - Farm music. No, not really. Cow is mostly songs by Richard Thompson, Midnight Oil, X.T.C., Elvis, the living Elvis. Big Hello is power pop. Straight ahead crunchy guitar noises. They are both three-piece bands so the guitar is a dominant feature. And I sing lead vocals as well. That's quite new for me and I'm getting pretty good, I think ... I hope! My guitar playing is much stronger these days. It's amazing what practice will do. Imagine that. You practice - you get better. What a concept! But there were some places in Giant that was like that too, like the song *Cry For Everyone*. My guitar playing in there. We felt that it was really good with the guitar way up front like that. We never could do that tune out loud and I suggested it a few times. I think we did try it once. I don't know why we didn't continue with it because it would have been a good crowd pleaser, I thought. It was almost felt between the writers that you shouldn't stoop that low, for it was intended to be more cerebral than that.

Someone claimed that you guys played together pre-Gentle Giant in a Hollywood club somewhere.

No. Definitely not. I didn't play with them until I joined the band in 1970. I didn't know the Shulman brothers before that. I first met them at my audition in London, February of 1970, after answering an ad in *Melody Maker* that said "Name musicians looking for guitarist." I took the train down to Portsmouth, their roadie picked me up at the station and we headed for a pub called the Pied Bull. My brother Jeff went with me. It was obviously a rock band and not quite Jeff's thing. He's a jazz player for want of a better term. I hate labels - he's a guitarist for God's sake. He's played with Stephane Grapelli, Nigel Kennedy, Soft Machine. So I did the audition. I was struck by how

seemingly 'Bigtime' everything was done. Here were these musicians who had these roadies and the drummer Martin got up and said "Give me a cigarette, Frank." He promptly delivered a lit one to him. I thought "This is, wow - bigtime." Ray gave me some musical memory tests like "Can you play this?" A few single note lines unaccompanied and no tempo guide. I seemed to get through those alright. They played a piece which I later came to know as *Giant*. I couldn't figure it out on hearing it for the first time. I just jumped on in, my brother hollering into my ear to just 'play over the top of it'. A few days later I got a call asking me to come down to Portsmouth for further, more intense trials, working out the parts with them. At the end of the day Phil said: "Well yeah. We like you. You got the job. It's gonna be really big."

Soon afterwards I moved in with Martin Smith in Southampton, driving to Pompey (as Portsmouth was known as) for rehearsals. And soon after that I moved north to Winchester in a flat that boasted a view of the cathedral from the kitchen window. I stayed there for a little while, then moved to Pompey into a bedsit. You call them efficiency apartments. That was depressing, so Derek and I rented a flat together. Then he bought a house. I slept on the couch in the family's front room. Rebecca, Derek's mother was kind to me and I enjoyed some very good meals there. She used to make this incredible Arabic rice...mmmmm! Sorry I wandered there, but no, we never played together before *Giant*. Kerry and I certainly didn't know them before that. Maybe Simon Dupree came to the states, but I'm positive they didn't.

They might be confusing it with the Whiskey Gigs.

Yeah, must be.

Did you enjoy performing in Los Angeles and what are some of your recollections of these performances?

I really enjoyed the Hollywood Bowl even though it wasn't a great gig for us. There had been a lot of promotion for it. We had a big billboard on the Sunset Strip by the Hyatt house where we stayed [see p. 26]. It was our first tour and everything was new and magical to us. The tape of that show corrects my memory of it and bears out that we played pretty good, really. I thought we stormed off the stage without finishing the set, but we were more professional than that. We did finish the full set. Phil called the audience some pretty choice names there. But I don't know if you'd single out Los Angeles. Everywhere you go people say, "Well, we're your biggest fans."



Long Beach, Nov. 1974.

Probably because the high concentration of fans in the big cities make it seem so.

Yes. And those gigs are always memorable. Either of the coast gigs were accompanied by record company hoopla. You are always being feted by A&R people. And it was always nice to have your ego stroked in that regard. You tend to tour the country in ignominy for the most part, but the big cities laid it on. Limos from the airport with drivers who all seem to know Frank Sinatra and Wayne Newton. One limo driver dropped his keys down a drain in the gutter. We all laid on the sidewalk fishing for his keys with wire coat-hangers. We got them too, by God. We weren't going to be deprived of our ride! Yeah, from that pampered treatment aspect, it makes you feel good. And we were always one of those bands that seemed to play better under pressure too. We could rise to the occasion, get up and really have to put it on the line. L.A. was always good for that. The Whiskey shows were real good, Roxy too. They weren't the ideal position for playing. There was not very much room on stage for back props but it really brought it back down to the level of "Well, we're a band. Here we are and this is it, so we'll play for you." And it was great from that aspect. I remember the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium as being one of the best shows we did on the west coast. We just had this feeling during and after the show that we played a landmark gig. And those feelings are exactly the reason you play. The Shrine Auditorium show was excellent, but perhaps not quite like Santa Monica. The Anaheim Stadium show was memorable not so much from the playing aspect but because of the enormous crowd of 70,000 or more. You feel a little bit lost, like an ant on the horizon kind of thing, but it was a phenomenal event nonetheless. Although I have to say personally, they're not my favorite gigs to play. The sound is never that great. I know there are much worse places to see a band, but I hate seeing bands under those kind of conditions, a few miles away. I prefer (and the others did too) places like the Shrine or the Santa Monica Civic. With that size of a crowd you had pretty good control of the sound and you had seats for the people to sit down in. You had a real stage. You were able to put the show on as it's meant to be done. You weren't subject to weather conditions or all the rest of it. The small theaters, 5,000 to 6,000 seaters - they were the absolute - our favorite gigs. I would have been content just to play that size of venue all the time. We played in Canada a lot and played big places there too, but still the smaller theaters were the best shows that always came off good for us.

The intimate settings were much better.

Yeah. But the clubs. Gee! It's just this side of intimate from being a cattle drive. Hot, sweaty and too crowded. Great fun in their own way, but not ideal for us. There was a beautiful place we played in upstate New York, possibly Rochester. It was an old theater refurbished back to its 1930's splendor by a bunch of community-minded citizens. It had one of these magnificent huge Wurlitzer electrical/mechanical organs that would bring into play all sorts of instruments stored up in the wings above the arch of the stage. Tambourines, violins actually bowed, percussion actually struck, trumpets, xylophones, just loads of stuff. All to be played by use of the keyboard. It was just phenomenal. Couldn't pass this up. We determined that we should start with the song *Experience* for it would lend itself perfectly to it. The tune started from a blackout while a spotlight picked out Kerry rising from the orchestra pit playing this mighty Wurlitzer. He looked like a pianist accompanying a silent film. The opening strain of *Experience* wafting from the instrument clusters up above was just magic. It was just great. It would have made an excellent video.

Indeed. How many Minnears did it take to operate it?

Just one on this occasion. It was fabulous.

Did the 5 man percussion piece ever get a working title?

No. It was just the 'drum bit'. We were always looking to do something special or unique with a certain piece to be used in live shows and we all had percussion ability. The drum bit was born from the first album on the song *Nothing At All*. Naturally, over time, this evolved into more drums and bits and pieces for us to play ... more fun! Back then, within its first live incarnations Ray and Kerry used to smack on Martin's drums so they needed their own. Eventually they had a big military marching bass drum and tenor drum on permanent loan from their next-door neighbor for Derek and Ray to play. They were kind of antique, with calf-skin heads and rope tensioners. Kerry had a deep military snare and a pair of bongos and I had a pair of tom-toms. We also had those toy xylophones. Lighting effects really helped set the whole thing off. And we had these powerful strobe lights which would be switched on towards the end of it, making us look demented because we were really flailing about by this point in the solo. Then in the middle of all this, we went to the quiet part with the xylophones. Derek used to bang on this big gong at the beginning and end of that piece. We had little chaser lights that twinkled 'round the edges of the screens we used to hide the amplification behind. There was always a humorous sigh that went up from the crowd at this ... kind of like a release of tension. This drum solo could get pretty intimidating at times.

Who has the Slides from the 1975 show intro and the segue transition tapes? Do you know what happened to them?

Yeah. I have them all. There not in any order anymore. I put together a couple of those slide shows ... a few long nights in my front room three days before the tour started. The first time we used the slides, we did it in collusion with an ex-schoolmate of Raymond's, Jeff Alman, who had an audio-visual consulting firm. They put together the first working model by linking three Kodak carousel projectors together synchronized to a pulse on one of the two tracks from a 1/4" two-track tape on a Revox machine, the other track being used for the music that the slides were being synched to. Then once we had that formula down, it fell to us, then to me to rearrange the running of the slides and to take more pictures for the show as needed. For instance, we needed some shots to go with the tune *I'm Turning Around*. We made pictures of everybody so when the slides went through the projector the images appeared on the three screens with the effect of a circle of people revolving. Somebody would come to the forefront as one receded back into the middle distance, then another into the back and so on. We recorded the intro music in Ray and Derek's front room in Southsea with Ray as engineer. All was done on a two track Revox bouncing between each track. Primitive by today's standards, but the results were pretty good. Then you'd record the pulse onto the tape to sync the slide changes which was just a trial and error thing. I would run the sequence perhaps a dozen times trying to achieve the correct effect. I do have some photos of us on the road and I will be happy to send them to you to run in the fan magazine.

Sounds great. Send me the slides and we'll run those too in the fan magazine for everyone. Also, does the long version of Talybont still exist, the long version that was supposed to go with the movie *Robin Hood*, the new *Robin Hood*?

I don't think there was one. There was only one Talybont and that was the one we recorded. There was some suggestion tossed 'round that they were going to make a Robin Hood film, but this was well before the Kevin Kostner and Sean Connery effort. I remember when we were with WWA, World Wide Artists. They were also affiliated with Hendale Films, who did a bunch of films during the 70's and early 80's, some with Oliver Reed. I remember one movie called *The Triple Echo*. I think Kerry was going to submit some tunes and hopefully end up doing the soundtrack, but that



Oslo, Norway, Sep. 1976.

never did come around. There was a suggestion about a Robin Hood movie and we were going to do *Talybont*. But it never got any further than that as far as I know. I don't know if Kerry worked on a longer version, but it would have been an appropriate choice considering it did have a sort of medieval flavor. As far as I know there was never any other recording of *Talybont* save Kerry's own original demo.

How about the remix outro of Just The Same that shows up on some radio shows? It seems very continuous.

I wonder if it got released as a single. The original recording of the finger snaps was made long so it could be faded at will. It wasn't a tape loop that we made or anything like that.

It sounds like one because it just keeps going on and on. It's never shown up on a single and it's nothing that we've heard other than on the radio programs. Maybe you have it.

That's possible. I mean, as far as tapes go, I've got 40 ten inch reels. Some of them are copy masters of the albums, but most are just rough mixes, outtakes and backing tracks. I used to have the 2" masters but when I moved to the states I passed them on to Kerry. Someday I'll get my tape recorder working again and I'll play them.

They say *The Power And The Glory* was inspired by the Watergate scandal.

No, I don't think it was to tell you the truth. It was just coincidental. I just read in an old Capitol records paper about a rumor that the record company held the albums in warehouses in Britain to await the outcome of the Watergate trial so it could be more timely released. That's just not true as far as I know. There might have been whiffs of Watergate happening, but it certainly wasn't inspired by it. We had already recorded it by the time Watergate blew. It just seemed to be a fortuitous coincidence. It didn't make it a hit but it did seem very timely, didn't it? You can always find examples of corruption to link to the release of an album like that.

Good. Glad you buried that one.

Rumors are good. That's okay. If there's rumor and intrigue, it creates this sort of mystery around a record, and that's fine. If people want to believe that stuff, I don't mind at all. If it turns out not to be true, that's fine too.

Did you ever write any material for the band besides the music on the song Convenience (Clean And Easy)?

Well, I couldn't say that I, yes, wrote a tune per se. My influence was with the other guys as theirs was in me and so in rehearsals we were always making suggestions, changing things around. So in that regard yes, of course. I didn't bring a complete tune to the table and say "We're gonna play this" but in other subtle ways the influence was always there.

Who wrote the lyrics to the songs? The elements within seem like they were written by Derek.

Later on, pretty much all of it was. After *Octopus* once Phil had left the band, it was mostly done by Derek, although there were times where we didn't agree as to what was coming across. We would say "Hey, change that" and it would get switched around.

Tell us about the promotional items.

We had some 'Power And The Glory' mirrors made, about 100 or so, of the album cover with the King and his sword. I still have mine around somewhere. We had *The Missing Piece* puzzle made from a 1/4" piece of plywood and I took the pictures for that album cover on the dining room table in my living room of my house while I was living on Hayling Island. I was living with my wife Judy and we had our sound man Dave Zammit there at the time. It says photo by g.g. on the back sleeve. That puzzle was the original one and I still have it. We had more of them made out of thinner cardboard that the record company sent to radio stations and stores. We had a discussion as to which piece to take out and we decided the lobotomized version would be most appropriate. There were 'Missing Piece' pin-on buttons from the missing piece of the puzzle. The *Power And The Glory* cover was lifted from a pack of playing cards we bought in a bookstore in Germany. We always frequented bookstores while on tour and they had neat calendars and items like these cards. The Gothic appearance seemed to fit well with the 'Olde English' lettering of the band's logo. I think there was some cards made, but I'm not sure. There was an inflatable Octopus/Octopi made as well. I may have mine around somewhere. What else? There were paper masks for *Giant For A Day* and some very long pencils that said "BE A GIANT FOR A DAY" on the side. You couldn't write with them, they were too big and cumbersome. A 'Little Brown Bag' had the Giant's face printed on the outside. The inside contained a button, a candy sucker, a sticker, a 7" 45 RPM orange vinyl single with *Words From The Wise/Spooky Boogie* along with a Halloween poem printed on orange paper. There were *Civilian* buttons too.

When was your most enjoyable period in Gentle Giant? Was there a particular tour that you felt really clicked?

The very early tours we did with Tull in Europe were just outstanding. We had a great promoter, Lippman and Rau. They had been active in the 1950's and gained their reputation in the 60's staging Jazz and R&B shows. They did all the big concerts. They gained their reputation and standing in the professional community by promoting tours like Louie Armstrong. They were into jazz, R&B and branching out even further. They loved us. And Tull too! We had some fabulous dinners in some nice restaurants with great stories going 'round the table. And we were playing well. We were just hitting our stride as a band. The audiences were compatible and their reaction was just great for us, always. And then to go back to those places in our own

right, particularly Italy and Canada. That was thrilling. We felt very energetic as a whole band around the *Octopus* period prior to Phil's departure. That seems to me about the most enjoyable period. Some bits of tours were better than other bits. But you're going to get a different answer from whoever you ask about that and for different reasons. There were some strange tours we did like the British tour opening up for Jimi Hendrix at the Monterey Jazz Festival. Bizarre! But we got to watch Jimi every night for two weeks so that was not too bad. But my main focus was how well the band was playing because that's the ultimate reflection of what happened. The band is only as good as how it is right now in front of you this minute. You don't get another take live. That's what people bring home with them from the show and remember.

Being on the road all the time, you might not always find it so rosy eating out every night? You might even get sick.

Which happened a couple of times. Particularly in Miami. We played a gig there after there had been a whole bunch of shootings and some racial unrest. We got into town and stayed at the Holiday Inn, ate in the restaurant and we all got sick with food poisoning. It came on pretty rapidly and we had the show to do. Derek seemed to have the worse case of it somehow. But it was one of the better gigs we played, so how do you figure that? It was always of interest to me that if we had played a particularly good show that I would try and remember all the circumstances that led up to it in the hopes of maybe trying to duplicate it the next time around. But you could never pinpoint it or fit it into any kind of pattern. You would arrive at some gigs in the most flustered state, the plane had been late, you couldn't get to the gig in time, the rooms were dank and you really didn't feel like playing. Despite all, you played a great gig. And then there were other days when you had a nice relaxing day and you got a bit of sun or whatever, you had some good interviews and were feeling great, then you'd play a \$#@!*& gig. There's no rhyme or reason to it.

Tell me about the *Glass House* tour. You had conceived and developed a show using screens for that tour. Is there any film of that tour? Any photos? Did that evolve into the slide show on the '75 tour and is that where the original idea came from?

I believe that's right. There is no film of it, sorry. We had a few different backdrops that incorporated screens in them. We started talking about visual representation on stage and we had a little 16 mm movie made. I sent you an early publicity picture from the first album's press kit where we were standing around this model village in Portsmouth. We had this idea to dress John up as the Giant in medieval rags, then film him striding over these houses of the little village and finally over the camera placed low to the ground to enhance the scale of the shot. We wanted to project this film onto smoke, thinking that it would work. So we used this smoke machine in the rehearsal hall and it just filled the whole place up! We tried to project the image onto the smoke which would have looked really good, but it didn't work because the smoke moved and the focal plane changed. That was the first idea we had. Then we realized we couldn't use that. But you have to try these things to see if they are going to work or not, and we were pretty adventurous. That evolved into the Giant mask we made. One of the roadies wore it and strutted about on stage with a liquor jug in his hand. We had another 16 mm movie - a color shot of somebody wearing the mask and peeping through a curtain as if to be looking down on John. The screen was right behind him at that time. This was just a single screen deal. We used that movie, but I don't remember what tour. We thought we could go further with this idea of back projection. This gave birth to the idea of slides and synchronized music. We ended up with an elaborate multi-screen deal, three slide screens and one

movie screen. The whole backdrop was made of 6' square frames which hung together – 4 panels high and 6 or 7 wide, which was broken down and put into one enormous flight case. You could have put a Bösendorfer concert grand piano in it and it still would have been lighter than the screens. Again, technology was young and we needed some very wide-angle lenses so as not to take up all the stage room for the slides. We weren't able to show them at every single show. By that time the Giant's face had become the logo of the band. I was always a little bit leery of using the Giant's face over and over, but it really turned out fine. People liked it. It was an immediately recognizable symbol of the band.

U.S. Capitol reissued *Free Hand* off of a different matrix. It sounds remastered and a bit different. They cheated you out of a few bump-bumps on the guitar but the overall sound is very clear. What do you think?

I listened to it, but not very intensely. I had a quick sorta listen to of the same tune on both and I didn't hear any difference. It doesn't sound like it is a remix. What I hear is a sonic difference. It sounds like it's been remastered. I'd like to listen to it a bit more closely and I will when I get time. It seems to be that the differences could be achieved with a different equalization on the final mastering. What I would like to find out is whether or not it was remixed. That would be a process that takes at least a few days of hard studio time. It isn't too far off from the original version but there is enough subtleties to say that it is different than the first one.

The John Peel Sessions, they're very good. They're live, but sound more like a studio session than a live concert.

It is a studio session. It's a BBC studio and you do it just as you would a regular recording. Only a little stripped down for you have to do it quicker because you've got 8 hours to do the 4 tunes. We played it live and we tried to get the whole band's instrumental take first. Then if there was a guitar solo we would do that and any other overdubs later. The double-track vocals would also be done later. So it was like a proper recording session. Kerry could sing the opening of *Experience* because he didn't have to play the keyboards at the same time.

Is there any material left over from the live album *Playing The Fool*? The stuff that got recorded, like songs from *Interview* and the like.

I don't know for sure. It seems logical that the rest of the material recorded is locked away, but I've got no idea where their location might be. We recorded a total of five live shows in Europe, so there must be four alternate takes of each piece somewhere. We used what we felt were the best tunes from each and compiled them in an album. But what tunes were taken from where? It's hard to remember each one. So *Sincere* was done in Brussels, I think. The keyboards blew up there. We were getting ready to play that tune and this acrid smelling smoke started pouring from them. Wally, the keyboard tech, was waving his arms trying to get rid of it. Ray and I were standing there, him with violin and me with acoustic, so we launched into a quasi-Hot Club De France version of *Sweet Georgia Brown*. Seemed appropriate since Django was a Belgian Gypsy. *Free Hand* may have been Paris. We used the same mobile unit Tull used for one of their albums – the *Maison Rouge* mobile recording studio. We ourselves made all the arrangements for the making of this album. We knew we were going on tape and it was just for that reason, but I don't think we played better because of it. There may have been a little bit more apprehension because when that red light goes on it's always different somehow. It was a good reflection of how we played generally and that is what pleased me so much about that album. I always felt, and I think we all felt (especially in the wake of the album *Interview*) that we were not able to capture the band's spirit in the studio. Another reason for doing a live album



Brussels, Belgium, 1977.

was that we felt we were such a strong band we wanted people to hear us live. Not everyone could come and see us because we didn't pass through that much. It was also a chance for us to hear what we were like live. You have to remember there is not a 'they' involved here. It's not like some faceless record company doing this. All these are our choices – which dates we recorded, which tunes we wanted done and which ones we left. Not some anonymous record company person pulling the strings.

Then you have to sit there and listen to all this material again just to pick the right songs.

Yeah. And you have to listen to three or five takes of it from five different places and pick the 'best'. That's a tricky thing to do considering everyone's got their own idea of what constitutes 'best'. One person felt they played a part particularly well and another one didn't feel it was his strongest effort. So you're all fighting for your own little piece there. We didn't actually come to blows over it in the studio, but there were some good arguments about it, naturally.

Any overdubbing in it?

There was a little of that, most notably in the vocals. You can hear what sounds like double-tracking on Derek's voice in some parts. John, Ray and me are clean all the way through. Kerry did redo one keyboard part in *So Sincere* because when the keyboards blew up he didn't have the clavinet and had to play it on the piano which didn't suit the piece. So he ended up overdubbing that one keyboard part. You can't entirely erase a part from a live track 'cause it's bleeding all over the other mics. We had very strong feelings about overdubs on purportedly 'live' albums – it's cheating. What I wanted was an honest record of what happened that day.

The Roxy show is like that. It was an end to end recording. It was recorded with the house equipment without your supervision. Our hopes are that it will be appreciated for what it is and not what one might or might not expect.

It is a tape from the board so there is no provision for remixing. The balance is

strange at times because the soundman is compensating on the board for imbalances in the room. So you only hear those things that got processed through the board. If you do a live album you have to have control of everything after the fact so that you're able to make the balance and sound more natural and have the performance captured. So *Fool* is 99.5% as it happened. That was a big point with John, Kerry and me. That it should remain as faithful as possible to the event. Otherwise it's pointless. It's like trying to rewrite history to your advantage.

The Roxy catches you a bit off guard.

Yeah, and I like that. That's fine. So if you can't handle it because you think you're not good enough, then you better go practice some more.

What songs did you enjoy playing most with Gentle Giant?

The ones we liked playing best? Jeez. They were all fun because each was challenging in different ways. So *Sincere* notably because it involved a lot of different instruments and mood changes. I started on acoustic guitar, went to electric guitar and then to drums. *The Advent Of Panurge* was interesting for the recorder quartet. It's hard to single out specific tunes. They all had their good points. Some we got burned out on, too, like *Funny Ways* for instance. We played it on every tour, and got fried on that. It was a great tune, but we just played it to death. I wish somewhere there were recordings of one of our very British tours where we did *School Days* live on stage with Malcolm Mortimore. It received some very warm applause. After the release of *Acquiring The Taste*, before we came to the states, we played *Pantagruel's Nativity*. I specifically remember playing that in Southampton with Phil in the band because it was something I had to start off with on 12-string guitar. That was hard to pull off. I've got to say that I did enjoy the rocky tunes a lot where John and I could really connect visually and lay the thing down for the band and rock. We were pretty tight, you know.

People say the Giant never had the same sound live as it had on the studio albums. I guess it's for many different reasons. Obviously, the band's studio sound is hard to reproduce in a live setting. Some bands have the same sound live.

We had our share of impecuniosity, as a lawyer once put it – lack of cash. We didn't have anything close to approaching the kind of budget that larger, more popular bands had to be able to reproduce it live. But money alone wouldn't have helped. The technology was available back then, but to actually try and reproduce the record live, in my mind, is redundant occupation for a band to do. We were bringing to the stage very complicated pieces of music that had been created in the studio – an altogether different palette. And the two were treated accordingly. The studio stuff was more cerebral than the live versions which were obviously more visceral and visual. Don't forget we're talking about shows. I realize that fans want to hear the same thing live as what they listen to at home, but I don't understand it. A band is always looking to do something new and different and a live performance always affords you the chance to expand on recorded efforts before. It was very exciting to present new sections of music in old faithfuls. The lack of being able to produce the songs as faithfully as the album on stage was in fact an advantage for Giant. You got more music because you had different arrangements of tunes, totally new pieces thrown in there. Here you play for one night and that's what people are going to remember. Not a figment of a pre-conceived notion in their heads of what the record is like. You've got all the toys in a studio too, like multi-tracking, where you've got three guitars playing a part. If you want to hire a bunch of other musicians to do that, that's fine. But then you're playing a written piece of music. You're playing it cold and unemotionally. However, I hate to make that a general statement. I don't mean that in any way a negative reflection on,

say, classical players who sit down and play a written piece of music. I suppose we could have hired seven more guitar players and four more keyboard players with some percussionist singers, a brass ensemble and Auntie Flo', but we're not an orchestra. We're a rock and roll band.

At the beginning of Plain Truth. - "Tell Frank to order me" - was that you Gary, and what was the rest of it?

Yes. I have bits like that on other albums too. That one was recorded as it happened. We were in Advision Studios late at night as we often were and we were getting hungry. Frank the roadie was sent out for food. He was going to the Wimpy Bar in Oxford Street for hamburgers and fries (called chips in Britain) and that was my order. I was standing in the studio with my guitar cranked up and headphones on ready for a take. The tape's rolling and I see the others in the control room behind the glass giving their orders to Frank, so I shouted mine to him through the mics. To the best I can remember it went: "Tell Frank to order me, eh, two Wimpies and a portion of chips, will you. And remind him to put tomato sauce on the chips, please." They just left it on the tape. You know, we thought, well that sounds ... that's for real. So we used it. There are other voice things like that on other tracks. Some contrived, and a couple of them spontaneous. In *Way Of Life*, the yell "Go" at the beginning, that's me. Also *Spooky Boogie* - that scream in there is me too. That was hilarious. We were at Lamport Studios, Pete Townsend place in South London when we recorded that album. There was this gap in between verses that seemed to be calling out for something. I got picked so I made my way out of the control room with the tape already rolling. I could vaguely hear the track through the glass and the spot was coming up. The mic was already set up in the room because Kerry and John had just finished dragging a rusty old chain across a piece of plywood for some sound effects in there, but I was far off from the mic and the spot was here! I bellowed across the room. There was no run through, no rehearsal, no getting levels, nothing. This scream came out and everybody just collapsed with laughter. We must have laughed for about a half hour. It was real fun. It was just the perfect thing at the right time. There was no way that we could make it sound any better so we left it.



Phil Freeman to the left, Frank Covey kneeling, with Ray and Derek at Advision, in a Glass House sessions.

A reader asked "Where did Gary's foot stomping come from?"

It was an extension of my playing style, I guess. You get excited playing so you leap around. I used it to keep time, but it was more or less born out of need. You play the bigger places and the equipment and monitors were not terribly sophisticated where you could hear everything very well. You needed a visual thing on stage to keep it all together. I did it mostly for my own sake. I couldn't hear Kerry at the other end, nor him me. John was the main timekeeper, but there were parts where he wasn't playing so we needed something. I got carried away with it and more than once had a black and blue heel. But it was how I played live. It turned into my thing. When we got it together, it was our visual clue as to where the beat should be. It was a visual metronome.

Interesting. Who were those female singers that did the backup vocals on the song Mountain Time and how did you acquire them? No credits were printed and some assumed it was you guys.

I don't remember who they were. It was arranged through the record company or the management. We did *The Missing Piece* in Holland and at the mixing stage, we decided we needed girl's voices towards the end of that tune. John was acting as the musical director on those sessions. The call went out for two studio session singers and that was done in London. So, no, it's not us. We couldn't sing quite like that. We did use session players on a few other parts. We did have a female cellist come in and do the part on *Isn't It Quiet And Cold* on the first album. She was a great player. We used the mighty Paul Cosh on the first albums, a good trumpet player. He was a fellow student of Kerry's at the Royal Academy.

The lighting. Colored lighting emerged as a really big thing from the mid 70's onward. Your early performances were done under basically white lights up to about '74. The old low resolution cameras were still in use here in America. White lighting could only be splashed with colored lights that remained lit all the time. Videos reveal some obvious trails, no allowance for any changes in brightness that is too fast for the camera to catch. The Europeans had high res with a black and white picture until the implementation of color in 1970. High res picks up good definition, but it also picks up reds alot and causes bleeding. You can get an almost complete wash-out. A happy balance between white on the front men and the colored hues to the back makes a better combo. Misused lighting detracts from your objective - a music performance, becoming a show of its own devise that may or may not have any bearing on the music whatsoever. You get these L. D.'s who like to flood everybody out because it's their job to play with dials. Then they say: "Well, it looks good." No, it doesn't.

All you mention is simply an unfortunate side effect of technology that was not up to par - of being able to reproduce what was possible in a live situation back then. The cameras T. V. stations used were not capable of swinging from a fairly dark situation to a bright situation. They had to be within a certain illumination range so that you could see everything all the time. Lighting can create wonderful moods on stage and it did for us. Once we did get a good lighting director we had some really nice visual effects. And now you've got bands playing with a thousand lights and that's fine if it's used with thought and imagination. Like a painter having like a trillion colors in his palette - it's which one he suggests to use that determines the effect he's going to render. But so often you see the potential for dramatic effect squandered - the kitchen sink syndrome, using every effect they have all the time. Midnight Oil is one of my favorite bands and I admire the way they use lights. Quite subdued in a way, but effective. It's mood and scene setting that's subservient to the music, which for me, at least, is the whole point. They have a plain blue wash across the front of the stage and



At home in Illinois.

right behind them so they are silhouetted against it. There is a brilliant orange wash on the backdrop which looks like a western Australian sunset. Then the individual members are picked out by little white spotlights. Plain, but appropriate. And they use it for great effect. If you just got disco lights, I don't consider that a light show at all. I also like the lighting that you would get in a play on Broadway. That's what should be used in musical settings like the Giant had. Peter Gabriel also uses lights very well. The video of Biko live – he's standing there singing at the end of the song. He's got his hand held out and the spotlight is on him. The rest of the stage is blacked out and the spot narrows down to his hand and then disappears. Just beautiful effects.

When was it decided that the band should split?

The seeds were sown at a meeting we had before the start of the American tour in 1980. Both Derek and Kerry felt that they didn't want to tour anymore. It is hard on family life.

Rumor had it that you were going to embark on a solo project after the break-up.

I think there was a rumor that everyone was. But there were no plans for solo projects. Because two of us members were not going to tour anymore, that rang the death-knell for the band, since Kerry or Derek were not exactly replaceable. Kerry thought he would still like to write for the band and record with us but the wind was gone from the sails. After realizing that the band would be no more you start to think about other things. You're not going to quit playing! Ray and I wanted to do something and we started the **Shout** project. That would be the name of the band. The two of us played all the instruments and we recorded four tunes, two of which would be released as a single called **Starting Line** with the B side called **Walk, don't talk**. The two incomplete outtakes were called **Friday Night Suit** and **Running Away**. We originally planned to move to America to continue this project, and to that end I had sold my house in Portsmouth and arranged for all my furniture, a semi-truckfull to be shipped to Chicago. And Ray was going to do the same. But when my stuff was halfway down

the St. Lawrence Seaway, Ray decided to stay in London. We tried to continue on a transatlantic basis but the distance was just too great for any real communication so it fell apart. Today we could have had modems and thrown information back and forth without too much problem. But physical proximity is important when you are trying to do a musical project and we just didn't have it anymore. So that was the end of that.

Your wife Judy is an American.

Yes, that's right. I met her in Denver in 1973. She was working food catering back stage for Barry Faye, the promoter from that area who went on the DDS festival and did tons of stuff out there. We got married in April 1976, and we were living in Portsmouth. Although we recently separated, we're now back together again. There was another reason we decided to move to the states. Ray's wife, Barbara, is also an American, she was from Beaver Falls, the hometown of Joe Namath. Ray met her in Pittsburgh. And we felt it was our turn to be the foreigners, so to speak, both Judy and Barbara wanted to go back to the U. S.

How about Derek and his family?

Derek's wife Sharon is American, too. They met in New York and got married in Dallas, Texas, in 1978. Derek lived in Dallas for a while and for a short time too in L. A. on Hollywood Boulevard.

When we were at the Roxy, a fan told me he would go over to Derek's and visit him. His friend had emblazoned an iron-on of the Giant's head on a T-shirt. That's how I caught wind of them.

He rented a unit in an apartment complex there. That's where they were living when we recorded *Civilian*. The rest of us moved to various places for the duration of rehearsals and taping for that album. Ray and Barbara were in a different complex down on Santa Monica Blvd somewhere by Barney's Beanery. John and I were just around the corner from Grauman's Chinese Theater. A strange area [boy, he can say that again. -DA] because there were no older folks, children or families around. Just these single early twenties type of youths ... wannabees ... very odd. Kerry and Leslie were a couple of blocks from us in a place with their daughter Sally. She had been born with a hip problem which necessitated corrective surgery when she was three months old. It needed to be done at that time so the bones could knit and grow strong in the correct manner. Put in this incredible cast from her chest down to the knees that held her legs apart in a kind of wishbone fashion. She had to be held in this state for a long time while the surgery healed. I remember the task of trying to bathe her without getting the plaster wet. She was brave through it all and she's fine now. Lovely girl. But it was a rough period for us all.

A fan said they read somewhere that Derek would never sign a band like the Giant nowadays.

I don't think that is the case. He will be the first in line if the progressives got popular, and there are signs that it will. He's subject to the winds of public taste like any record company exec. They always have a different perspective. They look at it from a number crunching point of view - how many units can we sell? He was always inclined that way. But as soon as there is interest in a form they come out in droves. Record companies don't establish musical taste or waves. Bands do it and fans do it. The record companies pick up on it last of all, with a few notable exceptions like some indies.

Gentle Giant had this particular thing about itself. It had a lot of the good qualities of the human mind and human being. The astuteness, the intelligence, precision playing, awareness and attention to quality and detail, plus a host of others. Some brash points, too. And it brought out all those good things a person would have

about themselves. Amazingly so, these qualities seemed to carry over into people's personal lives. In the fan club there are professionals, people in the recording and music business, electronics people. And a lot of seemingly conscientious people. But you know what I mean. It seems this music attracted these people because some predisposition in their personality dictated their liking it. Then you look at the current music genre. These kids (and I'm not trying to belittle all of them) get up there and start in with all this yelling and screaming, pulling their pants down on stage along with any other outrageous thing that pops into mind and blasting your ears out in the process. This doesn't cut it. This stuff is not something you listen to and find halfway good. It's complete crap!

There was a lot of crap back then, too. The same percentage today as there was when we started in the band as there will be in the future. It's just seems like there is more of it because we are so inundated with information. We're exposed to more of it. And there is more people making music. I can only feel – the more people playing instruments, the better. But it's hard for a band to make an impression so shock value becomes a useful tool. Especially for marginally talented bands. And it's mostly that winds up on T. V. since that makes for 'good' T. V. There's obviously much more marketing strategy going on. If you think about the musical scene the Beatles came out of, they were guaranteed to make an impression regardless of musical brilliance. It was a very bland time in terms of pop music. Extremely safe. It was bouffant hairdo's, ever-so-nice wool sweaters and cardigans. And into this comes the Beatles and Stones with hair and attitudes ... absolutely shocking to staid old Britain. And people sat up and took notice. But if that becomes the norm, how do you make an impression on a world where you see 500 crimes a day on television? The shock value wears off. You get numb to the point of non-reaction.

A Seattle grunge group sold like 5 million copies of an album. If this is what we've got to look forward to save us in the music world, we're in trouble.

I don't think so. Not at all. The same thing was said about punk and I was one of those voices. But it's not so. That movement infused a healthy bunch of new blood into the music stream, into a really tired, moribund music industry I thought. It was basically revolution, and that's good for music – to shake things up. The state of things then dictated change. I think it's healthy for the music world to bring in new blood by, again, getting a lot of kids out there making noise and learning to play instruments. They've got to have some kind of nurturing ground. You can't expect everybody to make a record masterpiece on the first go. They've got to start somewhere. They're starting with spirit and without that you just have wallpaper. And I'm not saying it's simplistic either. The spirit is the first thing and the rest follows. But you've got to have a will to want to do it and if that is what gives it to them, then more power to them. Essentially that is what music is. It's a constant handing down to generations of all the best things that have gone before. It's an information exchange, a conglomeration of influences from all things you have heard and that is perfectly natural. That's the way it's going to be for it always has been. And progressive is going to be one of those things that today's bands will use which is one aspect of it. They're also going to use disco. They use retro 70's stuff now. It's all a part of it, the same as progressive music was a part of its predecessors.

Well, it seems the rock and roll of today is too washed up, recycled. Like a family with inbreeding. No originality or creativity to it anymore.

No. I felt that too for a time, but I don't know if that is an honest accurate reaction or if it's symptomatic of getting older. We tend to think it was always better before and now it's not so good. You're always going to have imitators, but that's how you learn

to play. Hopefully you discard the imitation as you discover your own voice, but the influence stays with you. You don't learn to play in a vacuum, with no influences. As Giant we used to say: "We have no musical influences." That's simply not true. There is no way you cannot be influenced by music all around you. Maybe it's subliminal to some degree, but it is there. Kerry listened to jazz, liked the Beatles and got his fair share of Stones, Bach and Palestrina. You can't avoid hearing it anyway. It will always stick with you. How you use the influence is what separates the men from the boys. You can let it dominate you or choose to focus your thoughts more accurately. Plus influences are more wide-spread today. You have more information coming at you all the time, it's information overload. It's impossible to assimilate it all. And if you're saying it is lending a blandness to music, then it is lending a blandness to literature, architecture, art, conversation, you name it. But it doesn't have to be that way. You have choice and don't have to put up with junk in any form. But that's the inevitable product of what we euphemistically call 'progress'. Witness the short attention spans people have nowadays plus the fact that people don't read books anymore. The best music is still the product of an active imagination and that means having a certain amount of individuality. And thank God there's always going to be those people out there and they will be the ones who produce the best thought in whatever medium they choose to express it. It's not that everybody is saturated to the state of mindlessness. There are still people with good imaginations and genius out there. You just have to actively seek them out. People like Richard Thompson is one of my personal faves and I think a Giant fan would appreciate his work.

I know some people who like Richard Thompson and despise Gentle Giant.

I don't know how to answer that! I would say that I always look for the positive traits in any given situation and try to be open to new ideas. You can't be open to new and rewarding experiences if you mope around with a closed mind. But, OK. It takes all types. Long live diversity, I say. What I'm saying is that it's not a hopeless outlook by any means. There is great music out there. And there will be more from where that came from. But it's to do something that is essentially you. Every individual is incredibly unique and that is what attracts me to any player. I can spot B. B. King, Eric Clapton, John or Kerry on the first few notes or beats. Their uniqueness is what hits you between the eyes and it's the hardest thing to obtain. You have to get out of your own way and let yourself come through and I think any player of great substance will tell you the same thing. For me, it's music's Holy Grail. I said it takes all kinds.

Would you ever do Gentle Giant again?

Ah! The \$64,000 dollar question. Yes, I think I would. If the circumstances were right. I wouldn't want it to be a trip down memory lane. We used to live there! Yeah, it would be very interesting to bring Giant into the 90's and be real fun to work with John, Kerry and the others again. I still say Gentle Giant was a killer band even after all these years.

Thank you, Gary. We will talk again sometime.

Alright. Goodbye for now.

We thank Gary for spending some time talking and giving us his thoughts. Fortunately, we will be giving those tapes a listen. (And you think he's leery about using the Giant's head over and over. Whew!)

Peel the Paint

"Pantagruel's Nativity". A musical analysis**By Gerhard Zimmermann**

Compared to Gentle Giant's first record, their second one, *Acquiring The Taste*, is distinguished by a much more refined musical idiom and with this a differentiation of means concerning musical and sound-technical construction. The rock influence is repressed now, some pieces (e.g. *Edge Of Twilight* or *Black Cat*) get kind of a rock touch merely by being backed with drums. Each composition on *Acquiring The Taste* has individual shape and emanation, they are excelled by a most sensitive range of colour shades and characterised by contrapuntal and motivic development.

The opening song, *Pantagruel's Nativity*, is a perfect example for how to achieve innermusical coherence and formal compactness by motivic bond. The synthesizer prelude introduces the motivic and thematic basic material of the song (example 1); it's essentially three groups of motives: the first one (a) consists of one quarter, 4 eighth and one three-quarter note, the second one (b), as contrapuntal bottom part, is a chromatically descending triplet plus quarter note, the third one finally (c) is a chain of triplets swinging downward. The prelude is divided into two sections of four bars each. Because of the highly chromatic conduct of the parts there is a tonal halt only at the end of the sections (E-major); elsewhere, however, harmony floats "in open air"; because of the permanent chromatic sliding you cannot bring the chords in a clear functional context.

Example 1



Formally, *Pantagruel's Nativity* consists of verses that are interrupted by smaller or longer instrumental interludes. The melody line of the first and second verse is derived from motive *a*:

example 2

How can I laugh or cry When my mind's sore-ly torn,

Ba - da - bec had to die fair Pan-ta - gruel is born,

Shall I weep, yes, for why? then laugh and show my scorn

As you can see, the verse is built of three slightly different melody sections, each a variation of that motive *a*, and based upon a different pentatonic chord. Owing to the direct succession of these in themselves cadentially neutral pentatonic chords, again one cannot determine a certain tonality. These delicate, hazily veiled chord images and the singer's light and tender voice create a maximum of sensibility and expression. Noteworthy here is also how at the beginning of the verse the instruments slowly emerge from the background and gradually gain more and more contour. The continuous musical intensification leads, at the end of the verse, into a short interlude whose melodic formula (electric guitar) is taken "note-literally" from motive *c* of the synthesizer prelude. It's the last triplet plus the half note simply being altered rhythmically and transposed:

example 3

The second verse ("Born with a strength untold ...") harmonically and melodically corresponds to the first verse; artful decorations and paraphrases derived from the original motives and played by flute-sounding synthesizer and trumpet, are added, e.g.

the diminution and variation of motive *a* played by the trumpet during lyric lines 1 and 2:

example 4



During lyric lines 3 and 4 ("set in Gargantuan mould ...") the bass guitar catches on this melodic figure:

example 5



and, finally, during lyric lines 5 and 6 ("princely wisdom, habits bold ...") trumpet and bass simultaneously present this paraphrase:

example 6



The second verse is followed by a 4 bar bridge section:

example 7



This transition, a condensation of motives *a* and *c*, causes by means of constant decrescendo a certain calming and reducing of tension. All this is suddenly contrasted by a loud and heavily played electric guitar (plus bass guitar in unison) introducing a new two bar theme, powerful and striking and fundamental for the following middle section of the song:

example 8



This theme constitutes the basis for the following four-part vocal setting that – concerning harmonic boldness – exceeds everything that Gentle Giant had written till then:

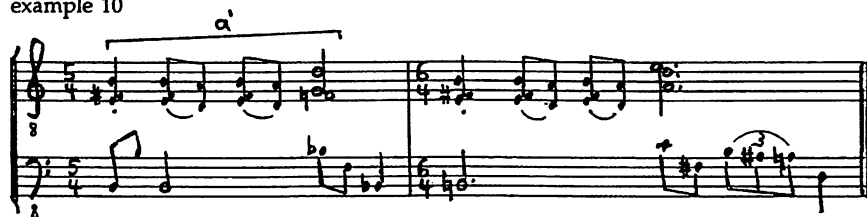
example 9

Musical notation for example 9, a four-part vocal setting. It consists of five staves. The top four staves are for voices, labeled "C." (Contralto) on the left. The bottom staff is for guitar, labeled "Git." and "Bgit." on the left. The music is in 5/4 and 6/4 time signatures. The lyrics are: "Pan - ta - gruel born - the earth was dry - and burn - ing". The notation includes various musical symbols such as clefs, key signatures, time signatures, notes, rests, and slurs.

The polyphonic conduct of the parts involves a steady interflow of contiguous major and minor chords. Within the shortest distance possible you can hear B-major (first bar, beat "3 and"), Bb-major (beat 4), Bb-minor (beat "4 and"), B-minor (second bar, beat 2), G-major sixth-chord (beat 3) leading intermediate dominant into C-minor (beat 4), F-major sixth-chord (beat 5), D-minor (beat 6), D-major (beat "6 and"). Though the harmonic occurrence revolves around a central note (B) you cannot determine a real tonic.

The vocal setting is followed by an improvised instrumental passage, provided by vibraphone and guitar. Vocal setting and improvisation section are not simply put after one another, they are tied by motivic-thematic linkage: While the significant 5/4, 6/4-time theme (which worked as basis for the vocal setting) carries on, motive *a* now joins again:

example 10



Motive *a*, the song's "ur-motiv" (elementary motive), now played by saxophone and electric harpsichord, becomes supporting figure of accompaniment for the improvisations of vibraphone and guitar. And, last but not least, note the transition from vibraphone solo to guitar solo: the vibraphone's ascending triplet line seems to aim directly into the first note of the guitar solo! The guitar solo immediately leads back to the four-part vocal section – though shortened this time. A final development of motives *a* (trumpet) and *b* (bass guitar) follows: a twice played sequence of these polyphonically opposed motives which widens to an almost orchestral gradation. Climax and conclusion of this part arise from the two pithy triplet calls of the trumpet.

example 11



This "great" development sequence is certainly the weakest part of the song. With its pomposity it turns out rather academic and turgid. [What? Do not agree! -gh]

Then follows the last verse with same lyrics as the first one. For the last four lyric lines a second voice is joining which once more raises subtlety and sensitiveness of sound and emotion:

example 12



With the third of the D-major chord, the gradually fading note F#, the song finishes.

The construction of *Pantagruel's Nativity* in short:

- prelude
- verse 1
- verse 2
- transition
- middle section:
 - four-part vocal setting
 - vibraphone solo,
 - guitar solo
 - four-part vocal setting (shortened)
- "orchestral" development
- verse 1.

Gerhard has promised to do more analyses in the future, but don't let that scare you from writing something yourself! -gh.

Knots

First, a note on *On Reflection* from issue 3. I have finally got to see a video of the group as they sing *On Reflection*, and therefore have to correct last issue's naming of the voices. Derek is first and Ray is second, but then comes Kerry as no. 3 and Gary as no. 4. John joins in as no. 5 on the second page.

I have received transcriptions of parts of most songs from the first seven albums, and in addition have got the tunes from *The Missing Piece*, but still no other finished transcriptions. If you want to transcribe a tune, I can send you what I have got. I can, however, not mail copies of these transcriptions to everyone.

On the next four pages, a new transcription:

"Acquiring the Taste"

by Ray Shulman and Kerry Minnearn
transcribed by Dan Bornemark

Acquiring the Taste

Shulman - Shulman - Shulman - Minnear

Transcription:
Dan Bornemark -94

♩ = 144

Flute

Oboe

Whab

Clarinet

Basson

Flute

Oboe

Whab

Sharp

Clar.

Basson

Flute + Sine

Oboe + Whab

Sharp + Clar.

Basson

Flute
+ Sine

Oboe
+ Whab

Sharp
+ Clar.

Basson

This system contains four staves of music. The Flute + Sine staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Oboe + Whab staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Sharp + Clar. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Basson staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Sine

Flute

Oboe

Whab

Sharp

Clar.

Basson

This system contains seven staves of music. The Sine staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Flute staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Oboe staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Whab staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Sharp staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Clar. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Basson staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Sine

Flute

Sharp

Clar.

Basson

This system contains five staves of music. The Sine staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Flute staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Sharp staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Clar. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Basson staff has a bass clef and a key signature of two flats, with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Flute
+ Sine

Oboe
+ Whab

Sharp
+ Clar.

Basson

Flute
+ Sine

Oboe
+ Whab

Sharp
+ Clar.

Basson

Flute
+ Sine

Oboe
+ Whab

Sharp
+ Clar.

Basson

Twenty years have passed since I first heard *Acquiring the Taste*. Twenty years with the conviction that it is our century's foremost arrangement for the Moog modular synthesizer, that later so drastically would change the world of music.

In those days, the synthesizer concept was a completely unexplored territory on the heavenly body of music. Yet, Chris Thomas knew how to program and Kerry Minnear how to arrange and play. So many thanks to you both!

Typically, I was to realize that keys were my life and, to no great surprise, *Acquiring the Taste* was one of my favourite tunes by my absolutely favourite artists.

There is immensely much more to be said about Gentle Giant, both in terms of writing about them and their style and in transcribing their pieces into sheet music. I feel more of the latter ought to be seen in *Proclamation*. This is merely a first [second! - gh] attempt in the right direction.

Assuming I am not the only musician among us Gentle Giant lovers, I hereby would like to offer this arrangement on a 3.5' floppy disc for those of you who would like to explore this music further. However, the prerequisite is that your sequencer can import Midi files. I use Steinberg's Cubase Score 2.0 and will naturally send a special disc for Atari / Cubase brothers and sisters.

After a brief deliberation with Kerry Minnear, I was given Free Hands as to the determination of species and naming of the seven parts. Kerry's key thought was to make a woodwind arrangement of the original guitarpiece by Ray. Besides, everybody knows what his version sounds like, so the names are just a guideline.

For those who have a Roland JV - 80/90/1000/880/980/1080 synthesizer with a Vintage Expansion Board at home, I would be more than willing to send a floppy disc with system exclusive data for special patches. These are adapted to reproducing the original recording as close as possible. In the future I hope to be able to transcribe some more tunes, as this is really the coolest way to 'shake hands' with the music of Gentle Giant.

Warm regards, Dan Bornemark.

My address from Dec. 1st 1994:

Dan Bornemark, Brandstorp 6709, S-263 91 Höganäs, Sweden.



Acquiring the Taste

MUSIC BY OUR SUBSCRIBERS

As you might find quite natural, a lot of our subscribers are musicians themselves, and some have even recorded albums. I have had the pleasure to receive some of these and want to share them with you. I have also included ads with information about how to order. Coincidentally, all the records have been issued on their own small private labels, mostly because music of this kind doesn't appeal to the larger public, or rather the larger record companies. Which in itself often may be an extra sign of that quality you readers approve of.

The first CD I received was *Book in Hand* by Kurt Rongey of Texas. In 1991 he did a keyboard-dominated album of 9 tracks spanning 45 minutes, and it has become one of my favourites of the 90s. His compositions have developed far above the usual chord-based tunes, and both playing and music are outstanding. He plays nearly all instruments himself, and besides hearing Gentle Giant in his work, we especially note the influence of old Genesis, although he is not a copyist, but rather incorporates ideas and influences, not least from 20th century classical music, into his own unique style. Strongly recommended, see separate ad. His new album is made but not released yet.

Then I received a couple of CDs from Rick Goodhart of New York state, who has studied percussion and made two albums of mainly percussion-based tunes. As with Kurt Rongey, he has performed nearly every instrument himself, all by fingers and not by samples. *Divining Signs* was made in 1988, containing 8 tracks at 49 minutes, and *Affirmative Reply* in 1991, with 11 tracks at 46 minutes. Rick has made meditative pieces in the world music vein, and as a refreshing contrast to today's heavily streamlined products the albums are well worth having, especially for those who enjoy Kerry Minnear's percussive side in Gentle Giant, although they are not what we usually denote as progressive music. See separate ad.

From Germany I received first a cassette and then a CD from Versus X, the band of subscriber Arne Schäfer. He plays guitar and bass and sings in the trio which also contains keyboards and drums. The CD of the same name as the group contains 7 tracks clocking in at 55 minutes. This is the more usual progressive vein, with minor key chords and interesting riffs and you may find them especially related to other German progressive acts although also influenced by Gentle Giant. Absolutely recommended as very listenable and not just mainstream prog. The CD can be obtained from TOM Productions, A. Tofahrn, Ch. Männchen, St. Egreve Str. 17, D-61 184 Karben, Germany.

In Sweden a group called Isildur's Bane (name nicked from Tolkien's works) has existed quite a long time, and the composer and keyboardist Mats Johansson sent me two of their latest works: *Cheval* of 1989, 8 tracks at 41 minutes, and *Voyage - a Trip to Elsewhere*, a double CD in appropriate suitcase with 13 tracks of 79 minutes, from 1992. The full group also incorporates professional rock and classical musicians and singers, and their coherent thematic works are incredibly packed with exciting and intriguing music, drawing heavily on classical composition technique. Gentle Giant is one of their main influences, which is quite obvious. Strongly recommended, see separate ad.

At last, a little additional information on Pekka Pohjola who was presented in #3. I have now heard *Fairyport*, which is a double album, and 3 of the four sides are very good, while the fourth is a jam. All in all I rate it 4 out of 5. The mentioned album *Wigwam* is only a compilation of previous albums. *Sinfonia no. 1* is a rather good though entirely classical record, but only 27 minutes long, and I give it 4. *Changing Waters* has grown on me so I raise the rating from 3 to 4.

Memories of Old Days

A Canadian in London

Terry Kroetsch

It was 1975, and I was in London in the hopes of living out my progressive music dreams. Hey, I was only 19 years old! and JUST listening yet. And beyond reading every Melody Maker and New Musical Express issue and going to every concert I could find, I was also hanging around studios hoping to catch a glimpse of ... well ... anyone! My circuit included Island Studios (great talk with Brian Eno during *Taking Tiger Mountain* sessions), AIR (Fripp sightings, Roxy Music) and Advision.

I had, up to this point in time, seen Gentle Giant in Canada perhaps 3 times, the first on a tour with Vinegar Joe and Wishbone Ash, that must have been in October 1972. All three were rather unknown and extremely good, but Gentle Giant SHOCKED people. I walk past the stage that they performed on every day at my work as music professor at the Wilfrid Laurier University, and marvel.

Then one day: there was a corner cafe, one of those tea/coffee/greasy breakfast places, just around the corner from Advision. I was writing in my journal, my diary, and looked up out the window to catch sight of Kerry Minnear sauntering by – he would be rather hard to miss because of his distinctive elfin looks, and that hair ...

I RAN to catch him and, rather boldly, introduced myself. I told him where I was from, had seen them a number of times and, yes, I was their biggest fan! Kerry was very polite and kind. He took me first to a nearby pub, bought me drinks and showed me manuscript Gentle Giant scores. The scores were open scores, all parts showing for *Cogs in Cogs* and something from *Free Hand*, I am sorry I can't be more specific. We further spoke of his classical training, and touring with the band. Next we went to Advision and walked into a small control booth where all the other Giants were listening to mixes of *Just the Same*. They tried many things, but had not got to the finger-snapping sound that starts it. They then went back and remixed out Giant material for quadrophonic (big at the time), *Cogs and Cogs* was one. Then Chinese food was ordered. Everyone was totally cool about having me there. Generally everyone was very polite, sharing food with me, but getting on with the task at hand.

The big moment came when Kerry took me into the famed recording room: a huge space with a great piano and organ used by Emerson, etc. He listened politely as I played my feeble keyboard arrangement of some GG piece (I can't remember it now) and *Tarkus* [by ELP]. He seemed to be sharing my enthusiasm for that music, but mentioned that he didn't listen to other music – only to what they were working on.

Upon returning to the control booth, I said I had to leave – in fact, I was overwhelmed to be in this situation – scared in fact. They all invited me back the next day but I felt so odd/awed that I didn't go back and preferred to leave it as a memory. Months later I saw a three hour GG concert at New Victoria Hall and this all changed my perception of life in general. It was September 23, 1975 – I felt I had an insiders look at that music. Also, I think I was the only one in the audience who had heard the music before (they were premiering *Free Hand* – the record came out one month later when I was back in Canada. It felt so odd to hear it in my home after it had been in my head for so long. Years later I heard a student at my school playing the opening keyboard part of *Just the Same*.

I also just this minute (Christmas 1993) bought the CD – as good as ever!

Funny Ways

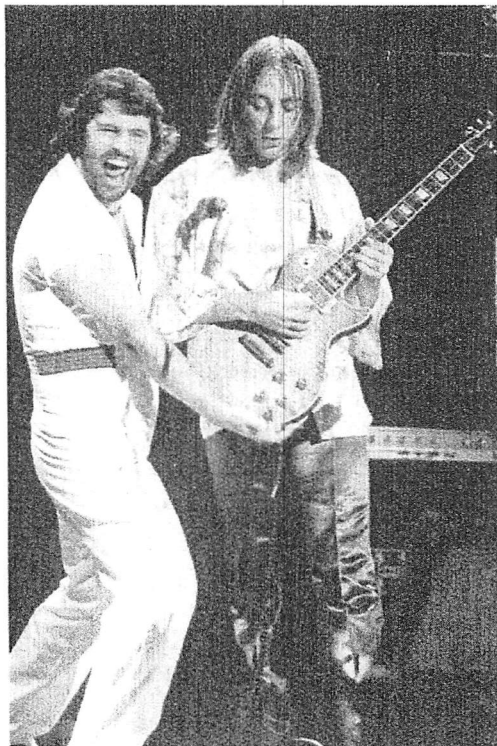
Gentle Giant album covers and inner sleeves in the UK and the US.

Since last issue, I have seen many more album releases from the UK and US. I have actually got most of them now, thanks to Pete and Dave. They all differed in one way or another. Thank you for all the information you have sent on the various releases. I just wonder about one thing: when was *Octopus* released in the US, was it 1972 or 73?

- *Gentle Giant*, 1970,
UK: gatefold sleeve, lyrics on inside of cover. Spiral on inner sleeve.
US: no US release.
- *Acquiring the Taste*, 1971,
UK: gatefold sleeve, title in green letters, lyrics in blue on black inside covers. Spiral on inner sleeve.
US: same as UK, but title in black letters, lyrics in black on white on one page and white on purple on the other, opening inwards. Blank inner sleeve.
- *Three Friends*, 1972,
UK: gatefold sleeve, lyrics on inside of cover. Spiral on inner sleeve.
US: gatefold sleeve, 1st UK album cover with title on the outside, the UK inside cover of *Three Friends* on the inside. Blank inner sleeve.
- *Octopus*, 1972,
UK: gatefold sleeve, Roger Dean painting, lyrics on inside of cover. Spiral on inner sleeve.
US: die-cut jar-shaped cover depicting an octopus in a jar. Blue inner sleeve with lyrics on one side. Later editions were not die-cut.
- *In a Glass House*, 1973,
UK: printed silk screen on cover. Photograph insert. Lyrics on inner sleeve.
US: no US release.
- *The Power and the Glory*, 1974,
UK: die-cut half playing-card shaped cover, spades and gothic G's on the spine. Lyric insert. Blank inner sleeve.
US: same cover, with Capitol C trademark on it. Lyrics on inner sleeve. Later editions were not die-cut.
- *Free Hand*, 1975,
UK: ordinary cover. Lyric insert. Blank inner sleeve.
US: a different photograph of the same motive on the cover, with Capitol C trademark on it. Lyrics on inner sleeve.
- *Interview*, 1976,
UK: ordinary cover. Lyrics on inner sleeve.
US: same cover, with Capitol C trademark on it. Lyrics on inner sleeve.
Some European releases had lyric insert.
- *Playing the Fool*, 1977, double album,
UK: gatefold sleeve, information on inside of cover. The first 10 000 UK copies had a 12 page book inserted presenting the band but including no lyrics. Blank inner sleeves.
US: same cover, with Capitol C trademark on it. No book. Blank inner sleeves.

- *The Missing Piece*, 1977,
UK: ordinary cover. Green inner sleeve with puzzle piece, NO LYRICS.
US: same cover, with Capitol C trademark on it. Same sleeve as UK, NO LYRICS.
- *Giant for a Day*, 1978,
UK: ordinary cover. Mask insert. Lyrics on both sides of inner sleeve.
US: same cover in a darker blue. The inner sleeve carried the mask on one side and the lyrics on the other.
- *Civilian*, 1980,
UK: ordinary cover. Lyrics on inner sleeve.
US: same cover. Lyrics on inner sleeve. A US promo version had different colors on the cover.
The German, French, Spanish and Italian editions carried the lyrics in their respective tongues on the inner sleeve.

If you can correct me or add something to the list, tell me. I want additions on other releases than the UK and US ones. I know, for instance, that there is a different cover of the Italian *Gentle Giant* release, and that one Italian *Acquiring the Taste* and one German *Octopus* weren't gatefolds. There is even one Russian *In a Glass House*! There are also loads of compilations and some limited and promo albums.



Words from the Wise

As an old Gentle Giant diehard I had to write and commend you for your efforts in getting Proclamation off the ground. Issue 2 [received July 1993] was a thumping good read and it brought some *memories of old days* flooding back. In fact there is *nothing at all* to criticize in its layout, content and *design*, not to mention the *plain truth* contained therein, though *on reflection*, it should be larger and more frequent. I shall certainly be bringing it to the attention of some of my *friends*. Hopefully, other Gentle Giant fans will subscribe and make it their *Number One* read, if only to *experience* the thrills of yesteryear once more. I have a little more *time to kill* at the moment so I would like to add my votes to the *Cry for everyone* section, so without tying everyone in *knots*, here goes (this will take me *all through the night*): [votes for poll deleted]. Never mind about the polls, they were all great tracks, *why not* have a top 20? As it could make things turn *inside out* when all the votes are counted. From my list you may also *take me* for a fan of jazz guitarists. All I can say now is *thank you* for giving me a *free hand* to air my views, and it's *only goodbye* for now.

P.S. I saw *the Boys in the Band* twice at Birmingham Town Hall - Dec 75 and May 76, the latter one particularly was one of the best concerts I've ever witnessed.

Sean Hipkiss, Birmingham

...Even these excellent bands were forced to change by the rising tide of younger bands that called them 'dinosaurs'. G.G.'s last three albums were a response to this change in musical climate. Simpler, shorter, more aggressive tunes were the new direction in popular music. G. G. responded with *Betcha Thought We Couldn't Do It*, but they shouldn't have tried, it was like Frank Sinatra singing *Satisfaction*. Strawbs also fell into this trap. *Giant for a Day* was a rather pathetic attempt to hang on, and *Civilian* almost an afterthought, by then most fans didn't care anymore. By 'pathetic' I mean that a band of the creative brilliance of Gentle Giant should not have had to, or shouldn't have attempted to gain commercial popular success. Let's face it, Derek's voice wasn't meant for commercial radio anyway. They should have been content to please themselves, like the liner from *Acquiring the Taste* states, and their very loyal, very large following. They could take a lesson from XTC in this regard. XTC is an unfashionable, excellent band that records for the gratification of themselves and their fans. They don't make their label a lot of money, but enough to keep going and provide a living for themselves...

I loved Gentle Giant in the 70's and still do today. I saw them at least six times and constantly marvelled at their musicianship, virtuosity and the way the live arrangements with all the solos were so much more vital than the studio tracks. I also loved their sense of humour. They did not take themselves too seriously and really seemed to enjoy playing live. I miss them very much, but I'm glad they didn't continue in the post Official Live mode, that would have been a horrible end to probably the most original and creative band I have ever heard.

Joe Jarrett, Scarborough, Ontario

...I will even buy copies of *Giant for a Day* and *Civilian* when reissued on CD. Might even listen to them! That's how dedicated I am.

Scott Allen, Lake Wales, Florida

I enjoyed the bit on Kerry Minnear especially. I too have released an album of Christian music as an independent and can quite relate. We here pray for his success

and yours as well – and as soon as we finish up our latest release I'll send it as a gift of thanks – to warm you and yours on those cold Norwegian nights.

Mike Walker, Florence, Alabama

Thanks for the thoughts, I look forward to hearing the CD. It seems like many of us Giant fans are Christians, and it has been quite encouraging to Kerry that so many Christians have enjoyed what he and the band made. -gh.

Earlier today I received my first three issues of the fanzine, and I'm still flabbergasted. It's "excellent". I anticipate future issues can only get better.

I discovered – and I hope you forgive the term, but for an eighteen year old GG does feel like quite a discovery – the band almost a year ago on an erstwhile progressive rock station, WXRT of Chicago. Their one-hour show Gone But Not Forgotten introduced me to the unique sounds of the best band I've yet heard (and, sadly, am I likely to hear). I confess I wasn't immediately charmed by the group, but the saxophone reminded me a lot of Tull's *Passion Play*, and being a huge Tull fan, I thought to check them out.

On 12 December 92, a few weeks after the radio show, my brother found a couple of a few of their albums at a local compact disc store. He too had heard them, noted the Tull influence (little did we know it was actually the other way around), but wasn't really interested in buying them. I took a chance, though. The songs had interesting titles like *Isn't It Quiet and Cold?* and *Alucard* (I habitually read things backwards, by the way), and the album's dated 1970. I took a chance and bought.

At first I thought it was pretty good. Then really good. Then excellent. Later I bought *Free Hand*, and at first I thought that that album was okay, then good, then pretty – you get the idea. Next I got *Acquiring the Taste*. That album was and is their most challenging work. It is difficult yet compelling, elusive yet haunting. It's the album that helped me to get past my idolation of Ian Anderson and recognize the infinite hierarchy that exists in music and any art form.

Now I have most of their albums, and like them all about equally, judging only *AtT* and *The Power and the Glory* a notch higher.

I've even had the opportunity to thank a member of the band. Finding him living in my state, I called Gary Green and spoke to his wife, who kindly gave me the number of a friend with whom Gary was staying. I begged off though, not wanting to impose, and asked only that she pass on my regards to him. I agree entirely with the statements you have made about the privacy of various members of the band.

Doug Lomas, Grayslake, Illinois

I included your letter because it is interesting for us in the thirties and forties to see that younger people also pick up Gentle Giant. I have feared a little that it is with us like with every generation, that we hold on to the music we grew up with, but I stick to the view that it was otherwise with the timeless Gentle Giant. -gh.

I found out about GG when they opened up for Focus on Nov. 1, 1974 at the Academy of Music in NY. This was my first rock concert ever – I was 13. I saw them twice more; at Avery Fisher Music Hall in Feb. 1977, where they previewed the entire B-side of *The Missing Piece* – by the way, I think the live arrangement of *Winning* was superior to the album version – and at the Palladium (the renamed Academy of Music) Nov. 5, 1977. At this show, John Weathers announced the song "Funny Ways, Up Yours!" towards a voice in the audience that had been shouting "Funny Ways!" during his

lengthy monologue introducing the song. The voice was mine, as by then I had known that when Weathers stepped up to the mike, this was the song that always followed. By the way, I still have the tape I made at that show.

I recall that there were at least two more songs on the live radio broadcast from which *Amongst the Darkers* came, one of them was **Proclamation between Cogs in Cogs and Funny Ways**.

On the subject of promo items, I heard rumors at the time of its release that *The Missing Piece* was issued in the US on green vinyl. Calls to Capitol resulted in conflicting information. One person said Yes, such a promo existed, and there were about 500. A second person told me there were only 50 made! Yet a third claimed there never was such an item! I have never seen one, nor even heard about it since, so I'd love to know if anyone has any info on this.

Hadley Kahn, Brooklyn, New York

Thanks for all the information you sent, of which only some has been printed above – the rest is to be included in articles we are working with for later issues. Also thanks for the promo buttons, they were marvellous! –gh.

As you might suspect, Gentle Giant is almost non-existent here. But those who do know it, appreciate it. Here's an anecdote: when I approached my current bass teacher (a well-known and busy bassist locally) and asked to be his student, his only question was: "What music do you listen to?" to which I replied "Mostly Gentle Giant and Zappa and such". He was very surprised. I was accepted immediately...

Ron Vinocourt, Tel Aviv, Israel

I must take issue with one point in your discussion of the debut album – the comments on Tony Visconti's poor production. Although the sound is less-than-ideal in some parts (especially near the end), the album sounds a lot less dated to me than, for instance, the Tull albums of that era, with their jumbled mixes and buried drums. Admittedly, I don't know how much of this should be credited to Visconti himself.

Lastly, one idea that occurred to me was to have a classical-music scholar analyze GG's compositions (particularly such songs as *On Reflection* and *Talybont*) in order to point out the references to classical music of various eras. This could be fun, and educational, if there is anyone with the knowledge to do this. (Of course, the *Peel the Paint* article in issue 3 comes close to what I have in mind here.)

Patrick Buzby, Oberlin, Ohio

I received the first three issues of Proclamation a few days ago (care of David Armas) and had to write you to tell you they are ***FABULOUS***!

I particularly appreciate the fact that you're a knowledgeable musician. It gives Proclamation a depth that I've never seen in a fanzine. In my honest opinion any discussion of Gentle Giant is worthless without consideration of the musical details themselves and it's nice to see that you're aware of that fact.

I don't make a habit of joining fan clubs, but I had to make an exception this time. Gentle Giant is (and I say this without reservation) my favorite band (a fact that you might deduce from my e-mail address [Panurge]). Reading Proclamation over the last few days has increased my knowledge of them by a considerable amount. You've obviously gone to great trouble to dig up a lot of information that is very difficult to unearth. The WWA profiles, the letter from Phil S., the details of the compositional contributions of the members (in the GG and ATT album features), the Minnear

update, these are all more precious to me than jewels.

I have to say that I just had to sit a while and think and cope with the sobering fact that at the very time Gentle Giant was making their initial assault on my gray matter (1987, sorry, I'm kind of young), Kerry and his family were living in poverty. I can clearly remember at that time listening to *Cogs and Cogs*, then rewinding and listening again and again and again ...

I can't suggest any real improvements to make. I can only tell you to please keep doing what you're doing. There is one thing, though. Perhaps you could consider a comprehensive list of Ray Shulman's album production credits (*Sugarcubes*, Ian McCullough, etc.)?

The transcriptions are an excellent idea. On *Reflection* looks great, although I haven't played through it yet. I've done some work on transcribing *Proclamation*, *So Sincere*, and *His Last Voyage*, but haven't gotten too far for lack of time.

Also, I hope you'll consider (if he permits), printing some facsimiles of scores in Minnear's own hand.

I must say that I'm anxious to see the bibliography you're compiling. Would it be possible you could e-mail what you have? If you don't have the time, or if it's not yet in electronic form, I certainly understand.

Finally, I *HATED* the polls. Who are these people? Interview, one of the finest, most exciting, most musically detailed, most rocking GG tunes didn't even appear! So *Sincere* is probably the most important, ground-breaking, sophisticated rock tune ever. Where is it? Perhaps there was a printing mistake? Although I'm obviously too late, consider this my entry for next year's poll [poll info deleted here, but added onto the statistics] (this information should be considered objective fact, not opinion! :-):

Kurt Rongey, Arlington, Texas

I finally received the first three issues of *Proclamation* and (to paraphrase the great romanticist, Victor Hugo) there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come! Speaking of great romanticists – how wonderful it is to learn of Kerry Minnear's travails! I know of dozens of Giant heads in LA that will be thrilled to learn about the newsletter, and I've met dozens of serious keyboardists, all who echo with a resounding – what ever happened to that guy in Gentle Giant ...

Speaking of great progressive bands... I met the publisher of the Steely Dan fanzine *Metal Leg* in New York last year – a publication that probably played an essential role in getting Donald Fagen interested in recording and performing again... And lo and behold, most of my friends (who are Giant devotees and share a strong reverence for the Dan) found ourselves being treated to the greatest live show in recent memory (September 10, Irvine Meadows). So who knows – by your efforts at networking the (still growing I'm sure) denizens of progressive music fans, the payoffs can be memorable and profound – mountains can be moved!

Speaking of Kerry Minnear, I've known too many Christians over the years who have allowed their strong faith to interfere with the universal appeal of their God-given talents. Let's hope he gets back into recording and composing with the same spirit of innovative musicianship he demonstrated in Gentle Giant – if the Lord is really watching over us, I'm sure this could do nothing but please him more!

Christopher Hoard, Long Beach, California

I'm 22 years old and I have noted that many of your readers are between 35 and 45. I would like to know if there are other young fans around, not only old men like you!

A friend of mine went to see Tull in Rome in 1972 and he didn't know of any

support group. When these unknown, long-haired, bearded men begun to play all sorts of instruments, people were flabbergasted and forgot all about Ian Anderson...

Fabrizio Pellicciaro, Ortona, Italy

It seems like Gentle Giant attracts a lot of younger people now, especially a lot of students with access to the Internet. I have got many letters from the younger generation (those under 35) and printed a few here as a relief for us oldies that Gentle Giant will probably not be forgotten in our lifetime. -gh.

Few times in my life have I become really depressed and disappointed as I was during the Christmas season of 1993. I had been going through several old record albums, looking specifically for my meagre Gentle Giant collection in hopes of raising my spirits and maybe even begin to write and play again myself. It had been years since I had seriously listened to any music, and having spent most of my life playing guitar in every type of band you could imagine, I had become burned out some five or six years ago. But as I approached my forty-second birthday, my thirst for something different and fulfilling made me search out *The Power and the Glory*, *Free Hand* and *In a Glass House*. Along with *Interview*, *The Missing Piece*, *Civilian* and *Playing the Fool*, I had found every Giant album in the house that was to be found. I guess I had loaned out *Octopus*, *Giant for a Day* and *Giant Steps*, and my memory couldn't focus on where they could have ended up over the years or why I hadn't collected the others while I had the chance.

As I dusted off the old turntable and thumbed through the albums, I began to remember the times that I had sat and listened to this group of musicians and the privilege and excitement I had as I had seen them live on two different occasions. As I played the albums one after another, I wondered how such a brilliant and diverse group could just disappear, and how the world could forget such powerful, original music. I wondered if I was the only person left who still felt the presence of the music from the Gentle Giant.

As 1994 began I decided to try playing again. It had been at least four years since I had even picked up the guitar. I searched out an old friend to borrow some recording equipment to help with song writing, and when we met he surprised me with a video of Gentle Giant, and started talking about some fan newsletter for the group that I had thought was all but forgotten. He loaned me his newsletters, and you can't believe the enthusiasm I felt as I read through the pages, article after article, word after word.

I'm looking forward to becoming a part of the Gentle Giant fan resurrection and am enclosing some money, so sign me up. If you have any iron-on decals left and the money is enough, I'll take what ever you can send. If you don't have any decals left, just apply the money to my account and to help cover the cost for improving the newsletter. I appreciate your hard work and effort and hope to be talking to you again soon.

Mel, South Carolina

Especially thanks to you, Mel! Letters like yours help me keep on doing the work. I have got a few more in this vein, which implies that Gentle Giant meant a lot for us then and obviously does still, not only for what they did, but also for what they meant for our attitude to life in general. I do definitely not think that this 'fannish' activity doesn't have implications for our whole life. Music can be uplifting and inspiring and rewarding, and I do feel that we have a lot in common, not only a narrow interest for collecting for collecting's sake, but a broader view of the deeper sides of life. -gh

Why Not?

All Gentle Giant items bought, sold, traded.

If selling, state condition and your price or ask for my offer. For my list, send SAE or IRC. Pete Gray, 2 Coniston Close, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 6UD, England.

Records, tapes, CDs for sale or exchange.

Most Gentle Giant items in stock most of the time. SAE and IRC for further details. Colin Hayes, 55 South Street, Enfield, Middlesex EN3 4LD, England.

Buying and selling.

- I sell or trade T-shirt iron-ons of the Giant head.
 - I will accept tape copies as trade for other boots and on Simon Dupree material.
 - If you need help in locating Gentle Giant CDs or vinyl albums, I may be of assistance.
- David Armas, 3730 Stockbridge Ave., Los Angeles, CA. 90032, USA.

For sale: Gentle Giant Pin!

I have produced 100 pins, all metal construction, great colors and details. US\$8.- includes shipping and handling. Money orders only. [Recommended! -gh] ---> Charles Hall, 78 Cartier, St. Constant, Quebec, Canada J5A 1G6.



For sale or trade.

I have scanned the Giant head and logo, and can send Atari diskettes and stickers. Dan Bornemark, Möllevångsgt. 37, S-214 20 Malmö, Sverige

Wanted! I buy or trade.

Motive ed. of *Acquiring the Taste* (Mercury 6381 04513), *Circling Around Gentle Giant* (ZNLCH 33166), double album *Gentle Giant / Three Friends* (Vertigo 6685 016-33), singles, bootlegs, promos, posters, scores of progressive music.

Dan Andersson, Lagmannsgt. 6B, S-416 53 Göteborg, Sverige.

For sale: Reservations Simon Dupree single.

Wanted: *I See the Light* and *The Eagle Flies Tonight* S. Dupree singles.

Michael Middleton, Flat 4, Haddon Lees, Tor Park Rd, Torquay, Devon TQ2 5BQ.

For sale: 8x10 b/w glossy photo of Derek & Gary, Palace Theatre, Albany, NY 1977, \$15.

Wanted: Any GG video, bootleg tapes and related material.

Vincent Janowski, 1552 Miller Rd., Castleton, NY 12033, USA.

For sale. *Gargantua*, *Amongst the Darkers*, *The Last Giant Step*, 6 other concert boots.

Scott Allen, 3105 Harmon Lane, Winter Haven, FL 33880, USA.

For sale or trade: Three concert tapes, BBC video, Kites CD.

Jack C. Loesch, 162 Maple Place, Keyport, NJ 07735, USA.

CDs, audio and video tapes, rarities.

A and A Music, Larry Babbin, P. O. Box 369, Keansburg, NJ 07734-0369, USA.

Catalogue on Progressive Music.

Marcel Koopman, Rösbergerstr. 14, D-53332 Bornheim, Germany.

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Aeon Music, P. O. Box 6185, Torrance, CA 90504, USA.

Catalogue on collectable music, including progressives, used / new, vinyl / CD.

Panorama, P. O. Box 96, N-1350 Nesoddtangen, Norway.

The Welsh Connection, bi-monthly Man fanzine. Sub of 6 issues £12.95 (UK), £17 (Europe), £19 (elsewhere) to Northdown Publishing, Ronald House, 1-3 Chalet Hill, Bordon, Hants GU35 0TQ, England.

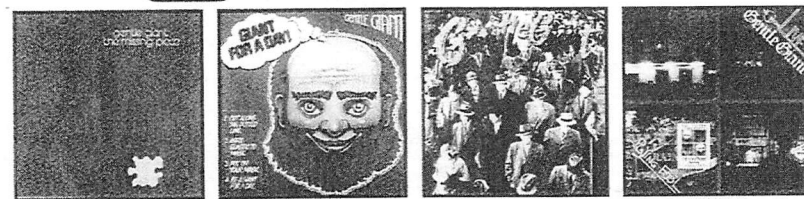
Facelift. The Canterbury Scene and Beyond. Sub of 3 issues £4.50 (UK), £5.40 (Europe), or £6.75 (elsewhere) to Facelift, Phil Howitt, 39 Nicolas Rd, Manchester M21 9LG, England.

Big Bang. Magazine de Musiques Progressives. In French. Bi-monthly. Sub of 6 issues, send French Francs 80 (Europe) or 100 (elsewhere) to Big Bang, Aymeric Leroy, 9, Impasse Figueroa, F-13 008 Marseille, France.



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So Sincere

The Occasional Gentle Giant Newsletter was edited by Geir Hasnes and published by Classica Forlag AS, Trondheim, Norway, October 1994. 600 copies were printed.

The newsletter is issued as often as I manage to get it out, usually twice a year. It all depends on the number of letters with interesting material in them. Cost will be used to cover production and postage. The more readers, the more pages.

I take subscriptions for four issues at a time. A new subscription will now run for issues 5 to 8. The first four issues cost the same and can only be ordered as a whole. Money is to be sent as detailed below:

If living in Scandinavia send NKR 100 or equivalent national currency in cash to *Classica Forlag AS, Ragnhilds gt. 10, N-7030 Trondheim, Norway*. The best way is to send the money in cash, but it can also be sent on postal giro account 0824 01 97538.

If living in the British Isles, send £10 to our UK distributor *Pete Gray, 2 Coniston Close, Stukeley Meadows, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 6UD*. The best thing is to send cash, but personal cheques or IMO are also accepted.

If living in Continental Europe, send 25 German DM to our distributor *Gerhard Zimmermann, Otmarstr. 26, D-90439 Nürnberg, Germany*. The best thing is to send cash, but personal cheques, or IMO (at 27 DM) are also accepted. They must be in German currency. Earlier we took cash in other currencies, but it costs so much to change it that we've dropped this, unless you pay an equivalent to \$2 extra. Sorry, guys and gals, I didn't invent banking policies.

If living in the USA or Canada, send US \$15 directly to our distributor *David Armas, 3730 Stockbridge Ave., Los Angeles, CA. 90032*. The best thing is to send cash, but personal cheques, or IMO (at US\$16), are also accepted.

If living elsewhere, send US\$20 to the US distributor.

The distributors make the financial transactions with me here in Norway after their costs have been covered.

All back issues of the newsletter have been reprinted and are available.

The newsletter is written in Microsoft Word on a Macintosh. I would prefer submitted material to be delivered on a floppydisc. I can take almost all PC formats. I can also scan all typewritten or photostet material, so don't bother too much with a floppy disc if you can send me a nice printout. All correspondence and material should be sent to my private address: Geir Hasnes, Eidsvolls gt. 16, N-7016 Trondheim, Norway. I can also be reached on e-mail address <Geir.Hasnes@delab.sintef.no>.

You may reach other Gentle Giant fans via electronic mail. The address for the group is <on-reflection@netcom.com>. To subscribe, send a message to the address.





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