

Proclamation

The Occasional

Gentle Giant

Magazine



5

March 1997



The band at the Roxy, June 1980. Photo by Chris Hoard.

ASPIRATIONS: THIS ISSUE'S CONTENT

<i>Proclamation:</i>	Editorial	4
<i>It's not Imagination:</i>	"News about Gentle Giant releases and other important events" by Geir Hasnes	5
<i>A Reunion:</i>	"The Recording Project" by Geir Hasnes	19
<i>The Boys in the Band:</i>	"One Week in Britain" by Geir Hasnes	23
<i>Design:</i>	"The Last Steps" by David Armas	39
<i>Memories of Old Days:</i>	"Gentle Giant at The Roxy, June 1980" by Chris Hoard	42
<i>Experience:</i>	"Ian Anderson remembers Gentle Giant", an interview conducted by Arlo West	45
<i>Interview:</i>	"Double Take →→ Gentle Giant", conducted by Jim Green	47
<i>The Boys in the Band:</i>	"A Conversation with Phil Shulman", conducted by Arlo West	49
<i>The Missing Piece:</i>	"Simon Dupree and the Big Sound" by Geir Hasnes ..	54
<i>Peel the Paint:</i>	"In praise of excess: continuity and discontinuity in Gentle Giant's "So Sincere" " by David Palmer	56
<i>Knots:</i>	" So Sincere " by Derek and Ray Shulman and Kerry Minnear, transcribed by David Palmer	60
<i>A Cry for Everyone:</i>	"The Record Collector Poll" by Geir Hasnes	64
<i>So Sincere:</i>		66

MARTIN SMITH

Martin Smith, Gentle Giant's first-drummer, died in Southampton General Hospital from an internal intestine hemorrhage 2. March 1997. Martin was born in Southampton 17. December 1946, the youngest of four children. He became a member of Simon Dupree and the Big Sound early 1969, and joined the Shulman brothers into Gentle Giant in 1970.

Following internal disagreements, he left the band in 1971 after having played on the first two albums. He however continued to play and occasionally to record with blues and jazz artists. Currently he was working with Gordon Haskell.

Martin suffered for many years of a blood disorder and was ill the last five years. At the funeral, more than one hundred musicians and friends met for the last farewell. Gordon Haskell read a eulogy he had written. Lesley and Kerry Minnear sent a gift on behalf of the group and I sent flowers on behalf of the Gentle Giant fans all over the world.

I spoke to Martin on several occasions and he had intended to see us all at the planned convention.
He will be missed by us all.

Phil Shulman, who shared the room with him on tours, said Martin was an accomplished drummer, and the reason why he left the group was that he was more orientated towards jazz than the rest of the group and therefore also considered too 'light' in his approach. In a future issue we will go into details about his work with various artists.

RIP

Geir Hasnes

PROCLAMATION

Trondheim, Norway, January 1997

Welcome back, my friends, to a new issue of Proclamation.

So many things have happened during the last two years that it is a shame that I haven't been able to inform you before now. However, here we are again, filled to the brim with news regarding releases and other important events for the Giant fan. The Gentle Giant fandom is growing tremendously and there has been a lot of activity in many areas, not least on the internet. You will also be updated about what most of the band members are doing nowadays, whether a reunion is possible and lots of other kinds of nostalgia to wallow in.

The best things at once: Kerry is at the time composing in the old Gentle Giant vein, and he is satisfied with what he is doing. Old unreleased recordings have been unearthed, which will be mixed by Ray for a future release. Most of the original 16 and 24 track studio tapes have been transferred to adat tape and thus taken care of for the future. And some of the band members have met and talked about making music together again.

I have left out the questions and answers, the excerpts from letters, the review of releases from subscribers and the private advertisements from this issue, simply in order to keep down the number of pages and have the magazine finished. I know that you have been waiting for too long and also that you have been informed in various ways that the issue soon would be out, so it is on high time that I finish it all and get it printed.

There are many reasons why this issue has been delayed. The main reason is that I have experienced severe problems with my eyes. Because of that I have been more or less burnt out because of head and neck problems the last

few years. In April 1995 I had a skiing accident in addition, which displaced one eye. It took me more than a year to get it back to its proper position. The good thing was that one could at last begin to try to find out why I was burnt out and suffered from headaches etc. At last, in December 1995 it was discovered that I am born with an eye coordination defect. I can live with it if I exercise my eyes often and regularly. It can't be cured by glasses.

I have also used some time developing the new format. Late last year I received a letter from French fan and graphical designer Christian Staebler, who offered to help with the design of the magazine. This reduces my burden and makes *Proclamation* much nicer than I could do it, but it has taken me some time to set up the procedure for scanning, transferring material to him and giving instructions for the design, including additional material that can be used to fill in empty spaces. Earlier I

could adjust the text to fill the pages, but now I have to mail it all off and hope that text and illustrations will fit well.

While I have been away from work – for nearly two years now – I have used some of my time to collect material about the band and the band members. I have been able to make a detailed listing of the activity of the band, including concerts and recording dates, which was meant to be included in this issue. It grew so much because of a continuous flow of new information, press cuttings, promotional material, various singles, albums and CDs, old and new photographs, recorded interviews and even recording dates for the various tunes, that it will be put in the next issue instead. There we will also feature a listing of all known recorded concerts so far. If space permits, we will run the John Weathers material there too, if not, all the Pugwash stuff will be transferred to issue #7.

I have conducted interviews in the homes of Malcolm, Phil and John, which have to be transcribed for publication. I have received tapes with interviews from the 70s, which also need to be transcribed. Now that scanning can be done with a good result, I will reprint nearly all articles about the band in English musical newspapers. You have much to look forward to. Keep sending your contributions, they will all be taken care of.

As I write this, we have more than 650 subscribers. Not all of you have renewed your subscription yet, but I hope you will do it when you see that there still is life in *Proclamation*. We may also look forward to the convention, which is now scheduled for this summer.

Working all day...



It's NOT IMAGINATION: NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

by Geir Hasnes

ALBUMS RELEASED ON CD

THE TERRAPIN TRUCKIN CD RELEASES

It is obviously not easy for a small record label to survive. Terrapin Truckin Records Co. is no exception to that, nor of course was their predecessor Road Goes On Forever, which was also a subsidiary under Terrapin Truckin Co. After having released the remastered Gentle Giant CDs on the new Truck label in 1994, together with some other releases, they folded in 1995. A new company called Red Steel has now been set up, and Simon Hart, the former owner of Terrapin Truckin

Records Co., is one of the partners. This company hopes to release more Gentle Giant material, in cooperation with the group. The first; *The Last Steps*, was released late last year. See below under *New releases of previously unissued material*, and in the **Design** section.

The remastered CDs were treated in the best way by Kerry and John. Kerry said the productions were so well done at the time that they only had to fine-tune the sound of the DAT tapes that Chrysalis had given Terrapin.

The table below gives the CDs with the Road Goes On Forever (unmastered) cat. no., and the Terrapin (remastered) cat. no., so that the reader can be sure of what he/she has got. In addition to remastering, the error of the song titles on *Civilian* has been cleared up.

The Playing the Fool release was the

first CD to include the **Breakdown in Brussels** (or **Sweet Georgia Brown**, the real name of the tune) track left out on the previous Castle/Essential CD release in 1989. More importantly, it was intended to divide the recorded material into more tracks than had been done on the LP. This was due to both a bad description of the material and bad indication of the tracks' duration, especially on the UK album, but also on the US album. You need to know the titles on beforehand to know what is actually played, and it is quite obvious that the people at Castle/Essential didn't know it.

It was my idea to divide the CD into more tracks, and in addition to showing the actual tunes, also make it easy to find the guitar duet, **Knots**, **The Advent of Panurge**, **Experience**, **I Lost My Head** and so on. After having talked with Simon about it, I sat down to do the timing correctly and to show which pieces that were actually played on the **Octopus medley** and which parts that were new material created for the live performances. We can now spot the new pieces **Drum and Percussion Bash** and **The Famous Recorder Quartet** on this CD. In addition, the small preludes or interludes **Introduction** to **Just the Same** and **Organ**

In a Glass House	RGF CD 1001	TRUCK CD 001
The Power and the Glory w/b. t.	RGF CD 1002	TRUCK CD 002
Free Hand	RGF CD 1004	TRUCK CD 004
Interview	RGF CD 1005	TRUCK CD 005
The Missing Piece	RGF CD 1006	TRUCK CD 006
Giant for a Day	RGF CD 1007	TRUCK CD 007
Civilian w/bonus track	RGF CD 1008	TRUCK CD 008
Playing the Fool (complete)	[no RGF release]	TRUCK CD 009

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

Bridge were also new tracks, not heard on studio albums. All previously released tracks are more or less rearranged, most so are **On Reflection** and **Raconteur Troubadour**, which is the first part of the guitar duet that also features **Acquiring the Taste**.

Sorry to say, the engineer who was to add the track markers must have felt so insecure about it that he left out all the markers for the **Octopus medley**. Consequently, the track numbers on the sleeve for the last tracks are not the same as on the CD. With a new release, this should be corrected. The CD included only a few of the photos and some quoted text from the 12 page booklet that was included with the first 10 000 UK albums, making it still necessary for the completist to search for the original UK vinyl album. It was planned to include the whole booklet with the CD; why it wasn't done I cannot say.

As usual, the sound is quite good and

as the album itself is a wonder, the best live album ever made, I can only recommend the CD. Whether a new CD will emerge with all the track markers is not possible for me to prophesise about.

It is still possible to order the CDs from Terrapin Records Ltd. See their advertisement at page 65 for further details. They also have an email address:

simon@teratruk.demon.co.uk.

ONE WAY CDs IN THE USA.

One Way Records, which seems to be a division under Capitol in the USA, has released US versions of *Interview* (1995, S21-18467) with lyrics and inner sleeve photo, *Giant for a Day* (1995, S21-18470) with small mask and lyrics, *The Missing Piece* (1996, S21-18469) without the missing piece from the inner bag, *Playing the Fool* (1996, S21-

18466) with inside cover star chart, and *The Power and the Glory* (1996, S21-18468) with lyrics. These CDs are somewhat disappointing as they are only a reprint of the albums with minimal packaging. The sound is quite OK, but I admit that I prefer the Terrapin ones. However, for the majority of fans who live in the States and Canada this is the best way to get the latter half of the original albums on CD. *Free Hand* has been released earlier, and *Civilian* is now in the planning stage. I have been able to direct them to the master to **Heroes**, which will be included as a bonus track.

To obtain the records, write to One Way Records, P. O. Box 6429, Albany, NY 12206, USA. You can also write them a letter and express disappointment about them not doing anything extra in the booklet.

Various other Gentle Giant albums have been released in Germany and Japan, and these will be reported upon at a later stage.

ANTHOLOGIES

"CHAMPIONS OF ROCK"

Anthologies of Gentle Giant tracks are not something I am very happy with. The studio albums are superb in their own way and I really wonder who would buy these anthologies anyway. Maybe, if you don't know anything about the group and your taste is not fine tuned to their ways of making music, then an anthology like the one recently offered in the series **Champions of Rock** would do. With 16 tracks from the 4 first Chrysalis studio albums (3/4/5/4) clocking in at 77 minutes it is certainly a good bargain. However, all tracks from *Giant for a Day* are too slow, sounding a half-note lower, so it seems quite certain a DAT has been transferred with the wrong speed in this case. There are no liner notes and the promo photo from 1974



NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS



on front and back doesn't seem very suitable when all the tracks are from later albums. However, the photo is the last common one with colours, so it is not unnatural that it is used. I could make a lot of comments on the choice of tracks, but I abstain. Buy it if you are a completist. Else, save your money for more worthy things.

To obtain the CD with serial number CR 863762, write to Disky Communications Europe B. V., Verlengde Lageweg 19, NL-1628 PM Hoorn, The Netherlands.

"EDGE OF TWILIGHT"

There is also a two-CD anthology from the first four and the sixth album released by Phonogram in the UK. It is named *Edge of Twilight*, but an early working title was *Dusky Voices*, and some early advertisements used this title. After Dan Barrett's web-page had been shown in the *Q* magazine (see below under Articles the last years), Phonogram took contact, and a two CD anthology with a large booklet written by Dan was the result. I do not know why Phonogram had to do it in this way, having to leave out some tracks, when the four first albums would suit perfectly on two CDs. However, here is Dan Barrett's own account of what happened:

"In November 1995, the British magazine, *Q*, ran a story that included a photograph of my Gentle Giant Home Page. Several weeks later, I received an

email message from Polygram UK, asking for my telephone number. I provided it, and several minutes later, I was called by Nick Stewart of Polygram. He said that Polygram was interested in putting together a greatest hits anthology of Gentle Giant's music, and asked if I would like to select the tracks. Of course I was extremely excited by this offer and said yes immediately. The material was limited to the first four GG albums, plus *The Power and the Glory*, since this was the only material that Polygram owned. Polygram was also interested in including unreleased material, but in the end, they decided against it, citing copyright restrictions. [Polygram owns *In a Glass House* too, don't they know that? In addition, at that time no unreleased material had been found that could have been included, except some live material that exists on bootleg tapes or CDs. -ed.]

"It was quite difficult to choose the tracks for this album. With 155 minutes to play with, I had almost enough room for all five albums, but I had to cut some songs. So I polled the readers of On-Reflection [The Internet Gentle Giant discussion list - ed.] to vote for their favorite songs, and then I cut the songs with the lowest ranks.

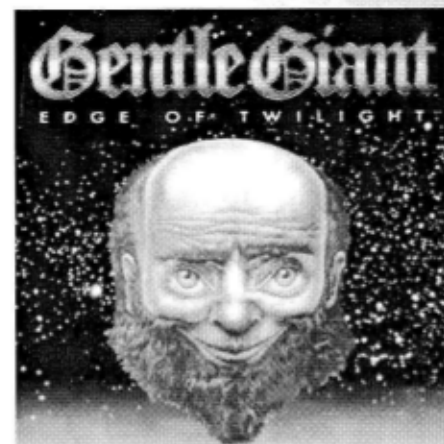
"It was also tough to select a good ordering for the tracks. I could have done them in chronological order, but it turned out to be more interesting to mix them up. So I devoted effort to 'matching' the songs that should be played together. I decided early on that the first CD should open with *The Advent of Panurge* and close with *Three Friends*, and the second CD should open with *Proclamation* and close with *Valedictory*. Ordering the remaining songs took me several days.

"In addition to choosing the tracks, I decided to send Polygram additional information. I wrote liner notes, including a lengthy essay and the locations of Gentle Giant resources (the home page, the mailing list, and *Proclamation*). I

also created a list of all CD mastering errors that had been committed by other record companies when transferring GG's music to CD, in the hopes that Polygram's engineers would not make the same mistakes. For example, I discussed the 'bend' at the beginning of *Acquiring the Taste* [on the US vinyl album and CD], some song endings that were cut off, and so on. All of this I sent to Polygram.

"Polygram decided to use the liner notes, though they omitted some of the information on GG resources, and their engineers did a terrific job. The resulting album has excellent sound quality. In fact, they located a master tape of *Acquiring the Taste* without the bend at the beginning, so the world now has a correct version on CD. Overall, I am quite happy with the release, though I wish we could have included some unreleased material."

The compilation flows well and has a wonderful sound quality. Especially the material from the first albums come off very well here, so for no other reason, the Giant aficionado should own this anthology. Dan's essay is well-written and insightful and the 12-page booklet includes four promo photos and some live photos. This is actually the first time Malcolm Mortimore is shown in an album package (with fair hair on p. 5, for those of you who haven't noticed him in *Proclamation* #4). The record company omitted the *Proclamation* information, which might not count as



NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

much as leaving out two tracks from *Gentle Giant*, one from *Acquiring the Taste*, two from *Three Friends* and one from *Octopus*, including *The Power and the Glory* in its entirety. Certainly this is a package that makes you listen to the pieces in a new way, and it is also a splendid introduction to the uninitiated.

The CD with release no. Vertigo 534 101-2 can be obtained from Terrapin. See their ad at page 65.

NEW RELEASES OF PREVIOUSLY UNISSUED MATERIAL "IN CONCERT"

In Kent, there exists a small record company called Strange Fruit. This company has acquired the rights to release material recorded for the BBC on CD. This has had huge consequences for the Gentle Giant hardcore fan, who is not satisfied with having the studio albums only on CDs. In October 1994, Pete Gray got a phone call from the company, who wanted him to write the booklet text for a new concert CD with Giant, due out on the company's label Windsong. In fact, he had to hurry, the CD had already been mastered. It was Barry Winton, *the Record Collector* writer whom I had collaborated with for the feature on Gentle Giant in 1991, who had to some extent motivated Strange Fruit to release this concert (the first video I ever saw with the group was a copy I got from Barry of the concert) and who had given them Pete's number. They found him a suitable author for the CD booklet, as fans obviously were few and far between. "A lifetime's achievement, a dream come true" Pete stated after the CD was out. I just thought, "why ain't I an inborn Englishman?"

The company used some earlier publicity shots to illustrate the CD, nicely done, but missing the fact that when the group gave this concert on the 5th of January, 1978 at the BBC Golders

Green Hippodrome, they had all cut their hair, complying more with the new wave hairstyle than the old longer and progressively undone hairstyle of the photographs. Also missing was the fact that this was the last concert they gave for more than two years, although Pete mentioned that it was the last UK concert ever. But most horrible of all – they missed *Funny Ways*, which was played between *Betcha Thought We Couldn't Do It* and *For Nobody*. I don't know what the BBC had against *Funny Ways*, since it was also missing from the BBC transcription disc from the program which I had become the lucky owner of just some months before (at least the CD omits Derek crediting Kerry for playing the vibes solo, which was included on the transcription disc, for no reason whatsoever). The CD also cuts the spoken introduction of the transcription disc and the differently spoken introduction before the TV concert. This is nothing to talk of, but

more mysterious to me is that the LP and the CD both omit the two taped intros (two tapes made for the *Free Hand* tours and *The Missing Piece* tours) that sounds on the TV program whilst the audience applauds and John Weathers makes the first hi-hat clashes.

The concert was broadcast twice, once with all tracks, but fading out and away the last line of *Mountain Time*, while the other time, they kept the end of *Mountain Time* and the group leaving the scene as uninspired as they would leave a bus on a bus stop, but left out *On Reflection* and *Funny Ways*. The CD is as such another compromise, leaving one track, but keeping the end of the last track. And why the BBC used the same introduction both times on TV with "for the first time tonight broadcasting in quadrophonic", is yet another mystery.

In addition, *I'm Turning Around* is put between *Betcha Thought* and *For Nobody*, while it was actually played



NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

between *On Reflection* and *Just the Same*. This is a result of using the tape edited for the transcription disc, as that had to be halved to suit the LP format. The CD uses the timing for the transcription disc on the back, which differs in many respects from what is actually recorded, and the last thing is that the listing of instruments is wrong for all the members of the group, both omitting instruments actually played and adding instruments not seen or heard.

Criticism apart, it is of course wonderful that we now have a complete concert from the last years of the group. With material mostly from *Free Hand* and *The Missing Piece*, adding *Playing the Game*, we have much new live material, which give a good picture of the group live. The energy is not at the heights of the *Playing the Fool* album, but overall quite good although I personally don't think the more poppy material suited the group in their live persona. The TV program shows more restrained guys than some years before; Kerry in particular doesn't seem quite happy with the later material. This is not to say I don't give a high recommendation of the disc. The people at Strange Fruit said nearly 8000 copies had been sold the first 18 months and the CD still sells steadily.

To obtain the CD with release no. WINCD 066 (WIN is for Windsong, for the *In Concert* CDs), write to Strange Fruit, Electron House, Cray Avenue, St. Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent BR5 3RJ, England.

"OUT OF THE WOODS"

Early last year Strange Fruit decided to release material that Gentle Giant had recorded for BBC radio through the years. You can read more about this material in Adrian Dover's excellent essay in *Proclamation #4*. However, in March, Dan Bornemark was able to tell me on the phone that Ray had advised that Dan could make the design and I

could write the booklet for the CD. It was really fantastic finally to be able to work with a Gentle Giant release and I was very excited, but also a little scared about what the die-hard fans would say about what I chose to write. So I made sure that the details were discussed with Phil and Kerry and that the essay was proof-read by Pete Gray.

However, I had to hear the material first. On our April tour, which you can read about in *The Boys in the Band* section, we visited Ray, and he handed us a cassette with the material that the BBC had unearthed. We couldn't listen to it all at once, but we had a quick listen to *City Hermit*, the new and previously unreleased track, which I had heard just one year before on a slightly muffled live tape from Gary. It is a wonder to find a new Giant composition, and *City Hermit* is a wonderful track, although more patchy and less developed than most other Giant material. Actually, every time one of us found we did something wrong in the traffic on the tour, he started diddling the opening riff.

The material on the CD is all that the BBC has been able to find. Dan asked the BBC explicitly for the other programs we listed in *Proclamation #4*, but there was no trace of them. We will just have to hope that some of the programs have been preserved on tape by an early collector and will surface later.

What is interesting is that we now have the first version of the *Excerpts from Octopus*, which differs in many ways from the version on *Playing the Fool*. The *Organ Bridge* is different, the guitar duet also and the recorder quartet here includes *Yankee Doodle*, which never has been released officially and which was a very popular number at the live shows. *Way of Life* is much faster than the studio version and features many new details. The humour at the end of that track can only be matched by the wild ending of *Free Hand*.

Probably because the tapes weren't meant to last longer than one radio program, the group could put in a bit more energy at the expense of errors and flaws, of which there definitely are some. However, they also put in much more humour than usual. The different instrumentation and rearrangements make the CD a gold chest for those who are addicted to the group's recordings and need more in the same vein. All the different details make listening fantastic for the fan who has used the last 20 years to memorize completely the studio recordings. *Cogs is Cogs*, for instance, is a phenomenal track in its new live setting. Listen to the opening riff of *Free Hand* move between various keys. Notice the fantastic clarity and separation of the instruments. Or the different verse on *Isn't it Quiet and Cold?* You lose your breath, you are shocked and thrilled!

Dan had an excellent idea for a cover beforehand, so he asked for an English saying with the word 'wood' in. Then "*Out of the Woods*" came to my mind, which says that something that is hidden comes forward to the attention of other people. This suited perfectly the BBC tapes which no one really had reckoned with. Although my English is not as funny and ironic and full of word play as an Englishman's, I now also have had the honour of writing a booklet for the group. In my opinion, Dan and his friend the professional designer made a wonderful job in which all the details were brought together in a consistent way. Dan's Giant head fit nicely into the concept. The 1970 photograph we found at Kerry's in a suitcase Lesley brought down from the loft. The 1973 photograph we found in John's treasure chest. At last, these photos could be used with a release!

To obtain the CD with release no. BOJCD 018 (BOJ is Band of Joy, the BBC radio 1 frequency band, obviously not that Gentle Giant is Band of Joy nr. 18), write to Strange Fruit, Electron

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS



House, Cray Avenue, St. Mary Cray, Orpington, Kent BR5 3RJ, England.

I am quite sure there are many collectors who would love to have the albums on more lasting material than aluminium CDs. Somebody ought to make vinyl copies of these two Strange Fruit releases. I think we could guarantee to sell many thousand copies of those versions too.

"THE LAST STEPS"

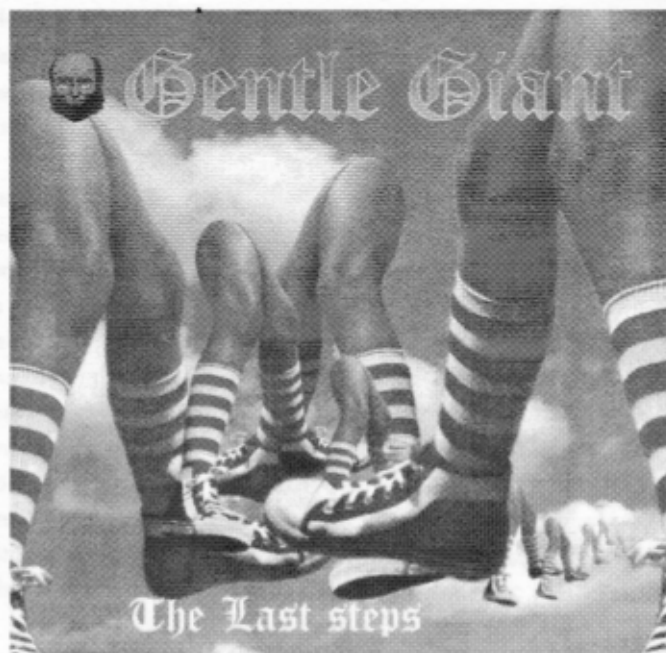
Already nearly three years ago we started to walk in tandem with Terrapin to have the Los Angeles Roxy shows of June, 1980, released on CD. David Armas brought good tapes, worked on the cover and liner notes, giving his own personal accounts of events that night. Chris Hoard provided concert photos from his personal collection, and another essay for consideration. Everything was delivered and then the

work ground to a halt. It seemed there had to be some legal clearance of the tape, which was technically a bootleg. Early this year the work was taken up again after those problems had been cleared, but then it seemed some originals for the artwork were lost. Then the cover got redesigned, much to our grief. I supplied a promo photo of the band. We reported about the work in *Proclamation* #4, and it took a long time to clear everything out, but at last it happened. In the *Design* section we have chosen to print David's account of working with this

release, and proposals for the booklet cover and inside.

I am not happy with the new design as I have seen David's, but after all, there is a 8 page full colour booklet with both concert photos and tickets and a nice picture disc. The CD is nearly 80 minutes, giving real value for money. The sound is raw live, and shows us a band that is very energetic, especially on the later material, but at the same time filled with sadness because the life with the Giant is soon to be over. The early pieces don't get the same good treatment as previously. The bass could have been reduced somewhat, but the CD is far better than the usual bootlegs taken from tapes, and that makes me very happy that David and I took the trouble to get it properly released. The band has got a good deal with Red Steel and they already think of other material to be released.

Of the 15 tracks, not 13 as on the back of the booklet, 6 are taken from *Civilian*, with *Free Hand*, *Knots*, *Playing the Game*, *Memories of Old Days*, *Giant for a Day*, the *Drum and Percussion Bash*, *For Nobody* and *The Advent of Panurge* in addition. One track is simply the spoken presentation of the members. Gone are many



NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

of the acoustic instruments – this is much more Giant than Gentle. Nevertheless, now the last part of the group's career has been properly documented at last. And of course it is a must for the collector, no doubt about that.

The CD with release no. RMC CD 0205 can be obtained from Terrapin Records. See their advertisement at page 65.

FUTURE RELEASES OF OLD MATERIAL

The members of the group now really want to take control over their earlier production, having had their share of problems with royalties, bad packaging etc. This means that there are plans to have all existing CDs brought out uniformly by the group themselves, including control of the packaging, the distribution etc. I will not go further into this matter yet as there are lots of problems that have to be resolved in order to enable them to do this. There is, however, a will to have a better control of their old material, now that they see that they are not at all forgotten by the fans or the buying public.

For some years, there have been rumors about various box set plans. The group certainly wants to have material released in a nicely produced packaging. Dan Bornemark and I are now working on plans for such a boxed set. We will also propose a separate box set for Simon Dupree and the Big Sound. That this is something that will fill the fans with expectations is very much due to the work of Dan Bornemark the last months, in his Save the Tapes project.

For many years, both Dan and I have wanted to bring the original tapes out of their hiding-place to ensure that the material was well preserved and available. When we went to England last Easter, we spoke with the band members about the possibility of transferring the old tapes to a more recent medium, and

that Dan was eager to do this.

The last few months, Dan has spoken to all the band members and me about where the original studio 8-, 16- and 24-track tapes could be situated. This included hours on the telephone to various studio owners, engineers etc. He has now located many of them, actually all tracks of *Gentle Giant*, *The Power and the Glory*, *Free Hand*, *Interview*, *Playing the Fool* and *The Missing Piece*. In addition, he has located two tracks from *Acquiring the Taste*, four from *Three Friends* and five from *Octopus*. There is no trace still of *In a Glass House*, *Giant for a Day* and *Civilian*, but we keep on searching.

Dan then went to England in January to transfer the tapes to adad digital tape, with a view to new mixes and also to be able to transcribe the music so that it can be properly published. Actually, we plan to publish a complete Gentle Giant music book in the end. All the band members are very pleased with his efforts, not least because some previously unreleased tracks were found.

We now know of original tapes to *Weekend Cowboy*, *Freedom's Child*, *Hometown Special* and even the previously unknown (and forgotten) *Bringing Me Down*, along with a very early version of *Nothing at All*, all of them recorded in 1970. Granted, this is far from the Giant as we know them, very much on the Gentle side, but extremely fun to listen to.

Further, many tapes from the *Playing the Fool* tour has been unearthed, which includes wonderful versions of *Interview* and *Timing*, and as a special gem, the introductory tape to the tour, of which only a short part was included on the album.

Funny Ways and *Isn't It Quiet and Cold?* were recorded on 8-track tape, the rest of the first four albums on 16-track tape, and thereafter on 24-track tape, for those who care to know such details.

Dan has also located 4 track tapes of Simon Dupree tunes, including many unreleased melodies. It almost seems they recorded for another album which was never released. In addition, Ray brought out of the closet lots of tapes with finished mixes of all released and 15 unreleased Simon Dupree pieces, to be transferred to digital tape. We will go into detail about this in the next issue.

In addition, I have found a set of 23 acetates with both released and unreleased Simon Dupree material. Consequently, a Simon Dupree box set can stand on its own.

Dan has also, by pure coincidence, become acquainted with an Englishman who has worked at the BBC sound archives for 20 years, and he will search further for the Giant sessions that weren't found for *Out of the Woods*.

The group members also intend to release the best live shows that can be found. Certain shows were taped at the soundboard, and some shows were aired, mostly on radio, but also on TV. In addition, the group did some live studio concerts in the USA. I have already asked Strange Fruit to look for the group's BBC live concert aired on the radio in December 1973.

Look forward to exciting releases in the future!

SOLO WORKS RAY'S MAXIS

Ray has toyed with techno music recently, and has had two techno maxi singles released under the pseudonym of *Head-Doctor*. Actually, at the time he didn't want it to be commonly known in the techno circles that it was he who had done these maxis, and therefore it was a bit difficult for the hardcore Giant collector to obtain them. The first, containing *Head-Doctor*, *D. I. N.*, *Magic Bullet* and *Outpatient* (MILL 12-001), was released in April 1994 and clocks in at over 25 minutes. The other, containing *Train à Medellín*, *Re-Morse*

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS



(*What's My Name*)

and *Fantasma de Escobar* (MILL-008-TW), was released in January 1995 and lasts for over 19 minutes. They both came in white record company sleeves with some black and grey dots and the name of the company in colour on front and back. The first one was printed in red, the other one in green. The label information was printed on one side of the record, while the other carried the blots. Not

really a fascinating cover work, if you ask me. They have sold well as compared to other techno maxis, somewhere around 2-3000 copies of each, much of this in Germany. The maxis are fun to listen to, for relaxing, dancing, or exercising, and some of the pieces actually tell a story that you can listen to and picture for yourself, but they are nothing remotely like Gentle Giant. I learnt a bit from Ray about what techno freaks listen for in this kind of music, especially the wave function. Thus I think it is interesting enough to have these two maxis which shine with Ray's humour and inventiveness. Ray has not planned new techno music, as he is now busy making computer games music.

For the most interested fans, I have a stack of sets of the two maxis for sale. Or you can write to Millenium Records Ltd., 9 Thorpe Close, Portobello Road, London W10 5XL, England, tel.: +44 181 964 9495. However, they told me they didn't have many left.

COMPUTER GAMES MUSIC

The last few years, Ray has been working with computer games music, and now his first projects have been released. We shall go into detail about these in further issues, but here are the titles so that you can start searching: *EF 2000*, a flight simulator released by Ocean, *Fear the Night*, released by Virgin and *The Darkening*, released by Electronic Arts. Ray doesn't think the first ones that good that he will recommend them, but he is satisfied with the third one. Myself, I can only say the music is breathtaking, but I haven't seen the game yet and can't tell whether you will find it enjoyable, but I would think that depends on whether you are a game player or not.

Last year, Ray also wanted Kerry to compose music for a computer game. This game was released late 1996 as *Azrael's Tear. The Quest for the Holy Grail*. It is on CD-ROM for PC and costs approx. £20. The music is absolutely terrific, so I find myself in the situation that I may need to buy a PC to be able to play it. Ray has made the title music and Kerry made the music for the various scenes - taken from memory I think it was about 40 minutes of various sequences.

To obtain the game, contact Mindscape, Priority House, Moltings Park, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 9TQ, call them on +44 1444 87 2230 or go into their website at www.mindscapeuk.com.

KERRY

The royalties of the last years have finally enabled Kerry to work full time on his own projects. He is very secretive about what he is doing, because of his own high standards and because he has to find out what he wants to say and how to say it. However, the last year has seen him working contrapuntally in the old Gentle Giant style. He has been very satisfied lately with the results and

I cannot really conceal my expectations, having heard his demos, TV pieces and now his computer games music.

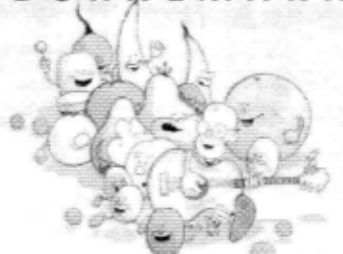
Kerry has also produced a CD for a friend of his. More about this later.

DAN & GULLAN BORNEMARK - "FRUKTSALLAD"

Last year Giant fan Dan Bornemark started recording a CD of his mother's songs for children, which are very popular in Sweden. The CD *Fruktsallad*, or Fruit Salad, was released in Nov. 1995, includes 13 orchestrated children's songs for different fruits and berries and a drawn self portrait of Dan Banana both on the CD and the front cover. What makes it interesting for Giant fans is that Dan, who has been in contact with Ray for many years, managed to persuade him to pick up the fiddle and play some ragtime solos to be included on track 12: Ragtime Lime. Ray makes some humorous playing and the CD itself is a very good one, even with some snippets of Gentle Giant motifs here and there.

The CD with catalogue no. RFM D5101 can be obtained from RFM Records, telephone +46 54 21 15 15, or faster from Dan Bornemark, Brandstorp 6709, S-263 91 Höganäs, Sweden. Dan can also be reached by telephone +46 42 33 50 40 or by electronic mail: danbanan@hem.passagen.se.

DAN & GULLAN
BORNEMARK



FRUKTSALLAD

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

THE LATEST MAN CD

"CALL DOWN THE MOON"

Call Down the Moon was to be the last Man CD for John Weathers. It was recorded in November 1994 and released in 1995. John quit the group this Spring in order to pursue other projects, one of which is the reforming of Gentle Giant. This is not to say the CD should be avoided, but quite the



contrary. John's playing is brilliant and the CD itself is much better than its predecessor *The Twang Dynasty*. I actually enjoy it, taking it for what it is. It contains 9 tracks, of which the last is John's own blues which he fought to have included. We are served blues-orientated rock that is varied and well-produced although the tracks could have been shortened down a little.

To obtain the CD with release no. HYCD 200 154, write to the German company Hypertension Music, St. Benedictsstr. 5, D-20 149 Hamburg, Germany, or in the UK: P. O. Box 2259, London E17 4RD.

John has lately been drumming with a puppet theatre group performing their play all over Wales. He will be covered in detail in a further issue of *Proclamation*.

GARY

Gary has been more active recently than for a long time. After his first encounter with the band Mother Tongue, he played for a while in a band called Big Hello, an easy-going trio where Gary both played the guitar and sang.

In September 1995 I was lucky to connect Italian progressive music fans with Gary. He was asked to take a trip to Italy to play at a progressive music festival, where lots of big acts had reformed. The Italians have always had a special eye and ear for Gentle Giant, thus Gary was well received and played both in Napoli and in Rome. A local group, Diva! played their composition *Il Ritorno del Gigante Gentile*, or The Return of the Gentle Giant, and together with Gary they played *The Boys in the Band* and some other easier stuff on which Gary could improvise. He brought Judy with him, and afterwards they went to England, where they met with John and Kerry and their wives for the first time since the split. The three wanted to meet to see if they still had any chance to re-establish that good communication they had within the group, in order to see whether they could start playing together again. They had a wonderful time, they found they had kept the fondness for each other, and they began planning for the future.

Gary was also rehearsing for work on an album recently by a friend named Paul Adams, who has already had some CDs out in Canada and the USA. However, he got some problems with one of his hands due to repetitive work, something which a guitarist may experience. It is called the Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. He thus had to cancel the work on that album. Last December he underwent an operation to rectify this, and it all went very well.

MALCOLM

Malcolm Mortimore has recently been working on a CD with Chris Jagger. In a future issue we will cover his complete whereabouts both before, under and after the time with Gentle Giant. Well, at least some of it, I think, as he has a huge list of people he has been working with. He has also been touring a lot, even using the Gentle Giant t-shirt I gave him at Eastern! His son Paul just sent me a demo cassette of his band *Microcosm*, where Paul is the drummer. This is energetic black metal, which I find very refreshing and releasing to listen to, actually. Paul has a lot of energy and so have the other band members. If they obtain a recording contract, we will of course cover it.

PHIL

Phil has recently been working on a more orchestral piece together with his son Damon. I have been listening to a tape copy of it lately. Phil has written the text, which is about situations from his childhood and youth. He reads or rather speaks it to music composed by Damon, it lasts for 35 minutes and is very modern classical rather than bearing any resemblance to pop or rock. They have a cassette tape at the BBC for consideration at the moment. While it is more in the Minimalist vein than anything else Phil has been involved with, notably Steve Reich's pieces, it is very interesting and should be rehearsed and released properly.

MARTIN

Martin Smith is still playing and touring with Gordon Haskell. He is, however, not on Gordon Haskell's CDs, of which the last one is called *Butterfly in China* and was released in 1996. Martin is credited for being the funniest man in the world, though, on the cover.

The sad news has just reached us that Martin has passed away. Read p.3.

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

THE INTERNET

ON-REFLECTION

In April 1994 I tried to start mailing out news about Gentle Giant via email, as I had a list of some 30 persons' email addresses. Later that year Malcolm Smith of USA started the same thing, and as I hadn't the time or the resources to keep on myself, I was more than happy to give Malcolm all the addresses I had. He made a list address called "on-reflection@netcom.com" to which Gentle Giant fans could send email, and it would then send out the mail to all the names on the list.

The list has been steadily growing, and I think there is some 300 persons on it now. As the most interested fans send mail daily, the mail will heap up, and it is not easy to keep up with the flow, as the list is more a daily discussion group than a means of communicating only the most important news to all the fans. You will meet a lot of interesting fans though, and be enlightened on many musical topics with little or no relation to Gentle Giant. There is also a daily digest version of the list, which can be preferred if you want to print out the whole thing and bring home to read. The list is now supervised by Bob Parker of Oregon.

You can subscribe by sending mail to owner-on-reflection@darkwing.oregon.edu with the message subscribe on-reflection.

THE GENTLE GIANT HOMEPAGE ON THE WWW

Dan Barrett was the Gentle Giant fan that should make Gentle Giant known on the web - or World Wide Web of computer networks, to be quite correct. He started making his own hierarchy of Gentle Giant files on his computer site at the University of Massachusetts at the end of 1994, and got help from the fans at on-reflection,

who mailed him lyrics and other facts about the group. Now the website is visited by thousands of music fans, students and others, and news and facts about the group are spread more effectively than in any other way.

The Gentle Giant Home Page contains a discography, lyrics, photos, audio files, concert information, memories written by fans, essays about the music, listening tips, and even Gentle Giant jokes: 23 megabytes of information in all. There's also a "What's New" page to keep you informed of recent additions and developments in the world of GG. Please visit, contribute your own stories, and help keep GG fandom alive on the Internet.

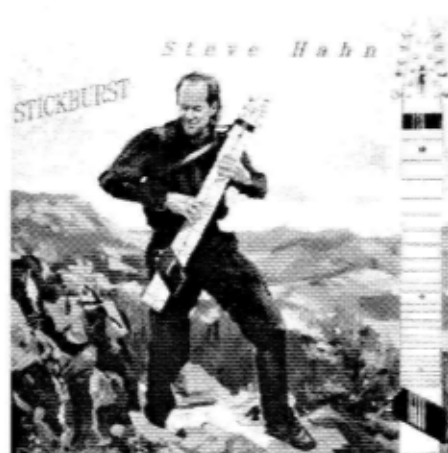
I still think that the email mailing list is best suited for chat or conversation, that the web file structure is best suited to spread basic facts that by its nature is not suited for discussion, and that a magazine is the best place to go deeper into the matter of various topics, as with Gentle Giant, bringing huge interviews and in-depth articles about their music. All these forms fill out each other and fill the various needs of the more or less interested person.

The home page is shown under Articles as it was featured as the musical web page example in *Q* magazine of November 1995. It can be reached at <http://www.cs.umass.edu/~barrett/gentlegiant.html>.

COVER VERSIONS AND TRIBUTE ALBUMS

"STICKBURST" BY STEVE HAHN

1994 saw the first recorded covers of GG, on Steve Hahn's CD *Stickburst*. This private production is some kind of demonstration CD for the *Stick*, the combined 10-string bass and guitar



which has become more popular in recent years. The CD will be described in detail in our Music by the Subscribers section, but here we must mention the two covered tunes; the live version of the guitar duet which opens with *Raconteur Troubadour* and ends with *Acquiring the Taste*, and *Spooky Boogie*. Both tracks are excellent and to some extent rearranged, especially the latter, to sound more jazzy and funky. Wonderful playing, highly recommended.

The CD with release no. SR 930301 can be obtained from Deep Chocolate Productions, 6152 Habitat Drive, Boulder, CO 80301-5387, USA. Scandinavians can write to me as I have a stack myself for sale from when Steve visited me in the summer of 1995.

"GIANT TRACKS", THE INTERNET TRIBUTE ALBUM

One year ago, Rob Rosen got the idea that the fans record a Gentle Giant tune each and put it together as a tribute to the group. He presented it on on-reflection and the idea of a tribute album was well received. Many members of the list, who are musicians, got into the project, and other musicians also wished to contribute. A double CD is planned, as this was considered better than ruling out the 'worst' contributions or cutting the recorded material. John S. Hagewood

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

has been responsible for compiling the various contributions and doing the mastering and duplication, while Dan Barrett has taken care of rights and royalties. The album is ready for manufacture as this is written, and we will come back to how it will be marketed and made available. It will probably be available via the Gentle Giant Home Page (see above). Some of the tracks are supposedly very different from the originals.

For the tracks list, see the table to the right..

Plus original tribute pieces:

- Suit Canon - Fugue of the A&R Staff, by Kevin Gilbert: a vocal fugue. [Tragically, Kevin Gilbert died on May 17, 1996, of accidental asphyxiation.]

- In Memory of Gentle Giant, by Gustavo Matamoros: a 20th century classical piece using short samples of GG's music.

1. Betcha Thought We Couldn't Do It	Alan Wiseman
2. The Boys In The Band	Advent (Alan Benjamin and friends)
3. Cogs/Aspirations	Steve Hahn
4. Experience/Knots/So Sincere ("Minnear Medley")	Richard Hilton
5. Funny Ways	John Hagewood
6. Give It Back	Eclipse (Aloisio Campelo and friends)
7. Heroes	Arlo West
8. I'm Turning Around	Arlo West
9. Just The Same	Glass Haus (Dan Barrett, Tom Benson, Bill Noland, Madeleine Noland, Lance Levine and Marc Vadeboncoeur)
10. No God's a Man	Mike Keneally
11. Number One	Dan Barrett
12. Pantagruel's Nativity	Jeff "Jerfo" McClelland
13. Raconteur Troubadour	Alberto E. and Enrico E. Minetti
14. River	Rob Rosen
15. Spooky Boogie	Phil Beane
16. Talybont	Ian McGrath and friends
17. Thank You	Glen Burg
18. Two Weeks In Spain	Bug Choir (Keith Lundberg, Greg Nichols and Wildebeest)
19. Wreck	Pangaea (Chad Bacho, Dave Forsyth and Travis Jiorle)

1. Talybont	Fonya
2. In a Glass House	Sky Island (Tom Benson)
3. Experience/For Nobody	Advent (Alan Benjamin), the latter also listed by Glass Hammer.
4. Mr. Class & Quality	French TV
5. Think of Me with Kindness	Raymond Benson
6. River	The Works
7. Inside Out	Strange New Toys
8. Aspirations	Page
9. Cogs in Cogs	Louie Mastro
10. The Boys in the Band	Advent (Alan Benjamin)
11. Number One	Dan Barrett
12. I'm Turning Around	Evolution
13. Reunion	Zauber
14. Peel the Paint	Sven Herman
15. Funny Ways	Algebra
16. Nothing at All	Germinal
17. Mystery Track	- according to the record company
18. Talybont	Clarion
19. The House, the Street, the Room	A Piedi Nudi
20. Wreck	Finisterre
21. A Cry for Everyone	House of Usher

"GIANT FOR A LIFE", A TRIBUTE ALBUM FROM ITALY

There has always been a great interest in progressive music in Italy. Mellow Records has already released tribute albums to Genesis, Van der Graaf Generator and Camel, and in 1993 they started planning for a Gentle Giant tribute. It has taken some time to finish the double CD, and the release is now planned to mid-February. We will come back to how it will be marketed and made available. Some of the tracks are in common with Giant Tracks. The album is a double CD, with mostly US artists, but also one UK and five or six Italian groups.

The album is supposed to include the tracks given in the table to the left. However, I have got two different listings, and there are some divergences.

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

JETHRO TULL AND ELP TOURS

When the news about a possible reunion leaked out in 1995, Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull contacted Derek Shulman in order to offer the group to play support for Tull in England. As we all know, nothing came of that, as Derek is the least committed of the group members to the idea of performing again. In 1996, many concert arrangers have called various members of the group to have them perform. Both the managements of Emerson, Lake & Palmer and Jethro Tull have called the group to have them joining the two supergroups on their joint North American tour in the summer of 1996. So we see that the idea of reforming Gentle Giant is not confined to a handful of ardent fans, but rather something that will stir a much wider audience, as the group is tremendously highly respected in musical circles still.

ARTICLES THE LAST YEARS

There have been some articles here and there over the last few years. Most notably, *Q* magazine have actually told about Gentle Giant twice, both times with that sour twist, although there seems to be some respect for the group which they call "at its best a parenthesis in rock history".

In *Q* magazine of Sep. 1994, in their feature **Techno! Techno! Techno!** about the Information Superhighway, they had a vision of the future in which one could foresee waking up one morning to see the message flashing on the computer screen that Gentle Giant reforms, including downloading promotional material and snippets of the music. Of course it wouldn't be Gentle Giant, they said, but rather one of the supergroups or artists. However, I suspect that with the technologically advanced Giant fans, we would rather be in the fore-

front when Gentle Giant reform, utilising the internet just as well as any other supergroup!

normally involves payment to a local operator who has a hook-up. After that, you're off. How long you spend tearing down those highways is only limited by your need for sleep, the demands of loved ones and your income (don't forget you're racking up units on the phone bill all the time you're connected).

And of the many news groups you can join, there are hundreds to do with music. Every kind of music. Rec: Music: Progressive is one such group: a worldwide cabal of people who, for reasons best known to themselves, are ridiculously keen on '70s European progressive rock. You join up and after that, every time a message is passed to Rec: Music: Progressive, it is mailed direct to your computer. No-one does it. It just happens. This could take any form. It might be an enquiry about Japanese pressings of Gentle Giant's *Octopus*. It could be hot news about Belgium's fabled Universe Zero. It might even be one of Universe Zero or Gentle Giant or Magma dropping into say hello. Conventional rock magazines like *Q* simply don't have the space to devote to such specialist areas. But put an inquiry about Frump or Amos Duul on The Internet and there'll be dozens of replies within hours. A review of Pink Floyd's opening American date on their current world tour appeared on The Internet two hours after curtain down. It wasn't a particularly stylish review but it was there and it had the unmistakably pungent whiff of real news. If it's sheer information you're after, The Internet is more efficient than any magazine or newspaper could ever hope to be. What the magazine industry have to hope is that the reader has a loyalty to a stylish, colourful, glossy, sensually tactile artefact and a writing style rather than simply a thirst for hard gen. Even so, all magazines, however lifestyle-orientated, have a "need to know" element, even if that's just a gig guide, a catalogue number or a restaurant address. What if they were never wrong or out of date again? Magazines such as *Q* with a heavy creative input will probably always be around, but given that electronic media can be updated by the second, magazines that are primarily concerned with statistics and data may not have so healthy a future.

There's another, much more significant, potential influence that The Internet could have on the music industry, this time on the actual organisation of music sales and distribution. Let's go back to our hypothetical prog rock nut. Let's say he wakes up one morning to find the message GENTLE GIANT RE-FORM! flashing from his VDU and finds that, at a press of a few keys he can, for five dollars or ECU or yen, hear a track from the new album plus video footage with an option to download the rest of the album (or multi-media package) if he so desires.

Of-or-missus! The medium is the message etc.

This is not science-fiction. All that's required is recordable CD, DAT, or some other digital form of getting a high quality copy of what the Internet can offer you. Given a state of the art colour laser printer, you could have artwork too. Of course, it won't be Gentle Giant but Pink Floyd or Madonna or U2. And it probably won't be the lovely anarchic Internet but Murdoch Music Networks International. Still, the principle remains the same. Once you can download multi-media packages, text and music and movies and games, straight into your home, it raises big and quite scary questions for the music, film and video industries. Actually, perhaps not that scary, since it will inevitably be the existing prime movers in these fields that are the first commercial prospectors on the so-called digital frontier. If someone can make you pay real money for these services, they will.

In *Q* magazine of Nov. 1995, in the Technology Supplement "Modern life isn't rubbish", there is an article about the internet, called Untangling nets and webs. Here, the World Wide Web of Dan Barrett is mentioned, and the home page with the first album cover is even shown, while the opening sentence about the home page is emphasised in bold letters.

genres, instruments and countries. And onwards to punk lyrics, venues in Iceland and the sleeves of Roger Dean.

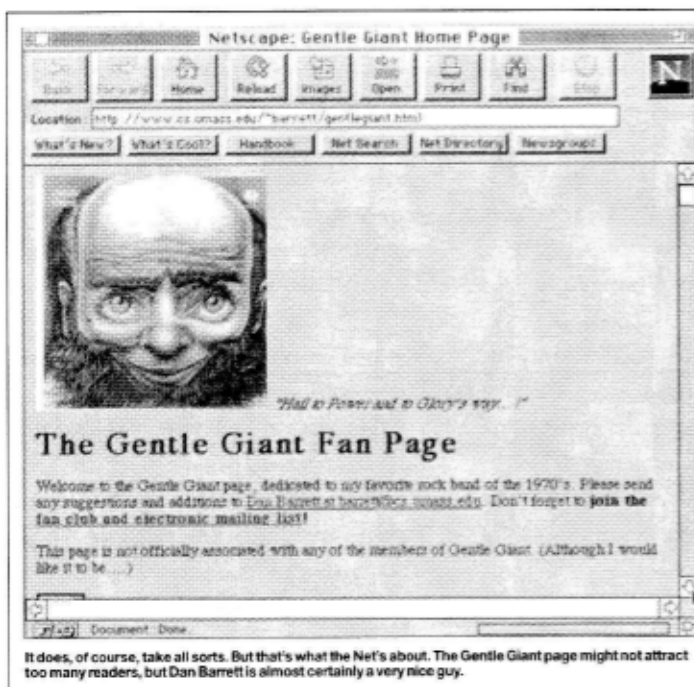
To give you some idea of the mind-boggling diversity of it, a glance down the B-index reveals that there are two Peter Blegvad home pages, three Basia sites and, implausibly, five for Bauhaus.

The artist home pages are usually maintained by either the record label or a Web-literate fan. Quality is variable but at the very least you should find tour dates, a biography, some pictures, lyrics, gossip and the like. But you may find much more, often in the most unexpected places. The Gentle Giant home page, for instance, is an example of just what the insanely keen can do with limited resources but a lot of energy, cigarettes and coffee. There is sheet music, previously unpublished lyrics, extensive interviews with past band members, painstaking reports on fluffs and bad edits on CD transfers, video clips and bits of songs to download. There's even a page of Gentle Giant-related humour. That this is assembled from the work of enthusiasts from all over the world coupled with the fact that this doughy prog rock quintet are, at best, a footnote in the history of rock gives you some idea of the wild and fecund jungle of information that is the Web.

Because Home Pages are often the work of individual fans, they can be fairly transitory beasts. You may find that they aren't updated for months if the creator is on the summer vacation (many pages are maintained from campus computers here and abroad). You may find that they disappear overnight but obviously corporately-maintained ones will tend to remain constant. They benefit too from having the resources of major labels.

The *Musician* magazine featured a short interview with Derek in their March 1995 issue, within a compilation of interviews with musicians who had turned record executives; **Sleeping with the enemy**. We here learned that Derek has been with Polygram, Mercury and Atco and that he is now

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS



The Gentle Giant home page is an example of just what the insanely keen can do with limited resources but a lot of energy, cigarettes and coffee.

you can afford but bear in mind that a lot of service providers don't yet support the superfast 28.8 connection. 14.4 should be fine. However top-flight your gear, you'll still find that downloading movies and sound takes ages. Watching the progress meter of the download meter on your screen is known as being trapped in "Graybar Land".

Finally, and crucially, you need a service provider and some software, the one often coming via the other. There are any number of organisations offering a connection. The most crucial question is, do they provide a connection local to you? If you live in Manchester, do they offer connection via a 0161 number? You'll be spending barmy amounts of time on the phone and don't want to be racking up calls to London all the

find them on the free discs that come with computer magazines, you can get them from your service provider or you can get them from the Internet itself. Newsreaders abound but Netscape 1.1 seems to have established itself as the top of the range Web browser.

Now just dial and go. Be prepared to lose a lot of sleep. Be prepared to tie up your phone for hours until you get a separate line. (BT, sussing this, are already offering half-price deals on second lines.) Don't give yourself too hard a time over looking in the nappy sex forum or the Militia men pages. You'll soon find the other stuff more entertaining and more edifying.

But hey, do what you like. This is the Internet. No-one owns it. It's the final unpoliced frontier. For now. And once you've

an A & R man for Irving Azoff's Giant [!] records.

Record Collector has also featured some album reviews of the various CDs, but better is that in their feature 25 years ago. Looking back at 1971 in the August 1996 issue, they printed a promo photograph of Gentle Giant from 1971 accompanying the singles and album listing of August 1971, when *Acquiring the Taste* was released on Vertigo. Nicely done.

The Norwegian metal fan magazine *Metal Shuffle*, which has also dealt with some progressive bands, published in their issue 2, May 1996, a large article by the undersigned, but to the dissatisfaction of most of you readers it was in pure Norwegian. It was, however, just a kind of short summary of my Giant trip of April which you can read about in this issue, so you haven't missed anything. I find it very uplifting that so many young Norwegian metal fans also turn towards progressive music and Gentle Giant.

Tarkus, another Norwegian magazine for 'music in the borderlands' printed a large feature on the group in their issue no. 2, Dec. 1996, but, alas, also in Norwegian.

Smaller articles have also appeared in as diverse countries as Mexico and Italy, bringing the group to the attention of still more people. Please mail me any articles that you spot in any mag whatsoever, and the best will be reproduced here.

Finally, I must mention the Danish subscriber John Bæk, who is now finishing his university education, writing a thesis on Gentle Giant's music. He visited me last August for four days and went exhausted home after having listened to music, bought lots of records and photocopied everything he needed from my archive for his work.

Anyone wishing to see my archive can visit me and come to stay if you don't live nearby. Or you can ask me for information you need.

THE EVENT YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR!

THE 1ST INTERNATIONAL GENTLE GIANT FAN CONVENTION

A few of us Norwegian fans worked in the Autumn of 1996 to realise the dream of a fan convention for Gentle

Giant fans. We mailed out fliers and put a lot of effort into the event. Many people helped with the various dreary jobs concerning meals, equipment, stands etc., in short all those things that are necessary for the convention, but which no one sees.

As it happened, the event caught much more momentum than we had thought. It was originally meant to be a two-day convention for Norwegian fans, but people from the whole of Europe, USA, Canada and even Japan wanted to attend, pushing the limits of the arrangement the whole time.

The convention was scheduled for early January. However, because of various reasons, fans in the UK and the USA and Canada would get to know about the arrangement too late to be able to decide to go there, and many people complained about January being the worst time of the year both because of lack of funds after Christmas and because of bad weather. In addition to this there were other reasons, too, so in early December we found we had to postpone the convention to the Summer of 1997, thus giving people a possibility too choose and plan a long time on beforehand.

NEWS ABOUT GENTLE GIANT RELEASES AND OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS

We have still not decided when the convention will happen. We will have to ask all the band members about when it suits them best to attend. Further, after heavy criticism from the fans on the internet, we want all fans to tell which date will be the best for them.

However, I am still a little proud of what we are going to fill the convention with.

There will be at least three talks from people having studied the group's music at universities.

There will be full concert videos from three fantastic concerts with the group, and also some promotional and other smaller clips.

Many of the band members will be attending together with their wives. For the January event, six of them had said that they would come, some of them if they were able to slip away from other duties. The other ones were not able to, but wished to greet the convention in some way.

There will be workshops for the eager musicians and singers. How many is still unclear, as we want the band members to help with workshops on their instruments.

There will be stands, making it possible for you to obtain records both by Gentle Giant, the members' solo projects and other related musicians and groups.

There will also be an exhibition of GG posters and other promotional material.

Depending on the number of people attending, we may be able to bring in what we regard as the best group within the field of adventurous music today for concerts both Friday and Saturday. They have agreed, but we need to be sure of how many people will attend before we sign the contracts. As an alternative, there may be people wishing to play Giant covers or jam or bring the results from the workshops in the evening.

And we will of course play the music

of the group and its members when nothing else happens. You will be able to hear fantastic music you didn't know existed. In fact we will try to play everything that we know exists made by the band or the solo efforts or related groups.

Because so many people have said they will travel the long way to Norway, we will also take care of dinners and evening meals, so that the fans don't need to leave the convention to find a place to eat expensive food or fast garbage meals, while interesting things happen all the time inside the venue.

There will also be much cheaper beer than in the Norwegian pubs.

We will also try to accommodate everyone who doesn't have a place to stay, for free. In that case, you may have to bring your sleeping-bag.

You will receive a convention program with lots of both promotional and private photographs you never have seen before and you will have an exclusive convention t-shirt. And of course, you will meet lots of interesting people!

The price are planned to be NoK 800, GB£ 80, US\$ 125, or equivalent. We will do our best to see if it is possible to go down on this price.

The reason for the high price is mainly that so many Gentle Giant members want to attend and we will fly them in from both the UK and the US. This is an idealistic affair and if there is money left after all bills have been paid we will try to channel the surplus back to the attendants through a memory made from the convention.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

subject to change due to unforeseen events

Friday	1600	Open doors; registration
	1800	Official opening, presentation of guests, workers and speakers
	1830	Talk with slides; the history of the group
	1930	Interval
	2000	Video: GG Concert ZDF Germany 1975
	2100	Evening meal
	2130	Playing unknown tunes by GG and each of the members
Saturday	2300	Socializing
	1100	Open doors
	1200	Record Fair + Stands + Playing GG records, until 1600
	1300	Workshop: Learning Knots & On Reflection; Drums; Guitar; Keyboards,
	1600	Talk; polyphony and counterpoint in GG and other groups
	1630	Talk; composition techniques in GG pieces
	1700	Panel debate; the future of adventurous rock
Sunday	1800	Festive convention dinner
	2000	Video: GG Concert ABC USA 1974
	2030	Interval
	2100	Concert of some kind
	2230	Evening meal
	2300	Socializing
	1100	Open doors
	1200	Photo session, Autograph session
	1300	Video: GG Concert BBC 1978
	1400	Talk; composition details in GG pieces
	1430	Last chance for making contacts, buying at stands
	1500	Farewell dinner
	1600	Official ending

In April 1994 I mailed out a carefully worded letter to all the subscribers of Proclamation about the possibility that the Giant fandom could finance work with a new album. We had nearly 300 personal subscribers at that time, band members, fanzine swappers and review copies apart, and their answers would be a good indication of today's market and the belief in the group's ability to make music still. In addition, the readership was steadily growing, so that I could safely calculate that more fans would be willing to join in if something like this happened. The letter is given below and speaks for itself.

The response was overwhelming. Nearly all the subscribers replied, nearly all of them positively. Lots of you gave suggestions, which are summed up on the following pages. For the new subscribers of the last two years it can be a good thing to read the letter before the conclusions.

Copies of all the approx. 270 letters have been sent to Gary, John and Kerry. The other band members will have copies in due time. This has been the most important function of the letters. To just hold the stack of paper in your hands, knowing that this is a token of the love and confidence people have

A REUNION: THE RECORDING PROJECT

by Geir Hasnes

for the group and their ability to make music, is really touching. The letters have given the band members a tremendous boost in their confidence that there are people all around the world that still want music from the band. You must remember that the band members have been out there for more than 15 years without much talk about what they once did, not even between themselves. I, for instance, talk with lots of fans nearly every day, while they live somewhat isolated from each other and from those who enjoyed their music and want them to do more. Consequently, they do not have the feedback they need and haven't had it for many years. The idea of bringing the band together again was dead and buried until we resurrected it.

Why has it taken such a long time to report from the project? Why hasn't it been started? The most important thing is that this project is obviously nothing we can put pressure on the group to do. The idea has to grow in them so that they make the project their own. They have their commitments and their way of life, and they have to look further than the few months when they are involved in such a project. The families, the bills, everything of their daily life is different now than in their youth with the group. Furthermore, they have to work with the ideas, toy with them, start practicing, start talking to each other to see if the old spark is there still. They have to be sure there is a market for them and they have to agree

between themselves on what they want to do and how.

Where do we go from here? John Weathers concluded that this way of funding the band would give them a completely *Free Hand* to do whatever they felt would be right to do, not only economically, but also because that was the main conclusion he read out of the letters – that all fans want to support them without exercising any kind of pressure on them about what to do and how to do it. The group would not have to be dependent on a record company either. The idea of running their own business has been growing the last few years and will be reported on when the details have become clearer. While the market is there still, the problems will be in two areas. First, the logistics. The band members live far from each other. While they can communicate swapping tapes, they still lack the back and forth communicative inspiration which can only be had if they were living close to each other. Tossing ball to each other is incredibly important. Secondly, the creativity. After so many years on a low creativity level, they need to see if they still have something to say with their music. This takes some time to find out.

THE LETTER OF APRIL 1994

The Gentle Giant Recording Project

Dear Gentle Giant fan,

do you want some new Gentle Giant music? Well, I know that all of you wish for

A REUNION: THE RECORDING PROJECT

that, it was just a rhetorical question.

One of the subscribers to *Proclamation* suggested to me in a letter that a new Gentle Giant album for him would be worth £50 at least. What if the subscribers joined forces and paid Kerry and the others to make a new album, for the studio rent, fares etc.? What if this even paid for a collectors special edition for each contributor?

I have presented the idea to people face to face, on the phone (even overseas), and on electronic mail. All of those whom I have asked if this is a good idea say WOW!

I have presented the idea to Kerry Minnear and he thinks it is a good idea, which he will go for if the subscribers of *Proclamation* wish him to, provided that he finds himself capable to. Phil Shulman, John Weathers and Gary Green are also keen on the idea. We really want to have Ray and Derek join in too, and will ask for their participation if you fans think this is something you will help see the light.

300 subscribers times £50 is £15 000. 400 subscribers means £20 000. We are nearly 400 subscribers now, and you all seem to me to be decent and devoted to what Gentle Giant stood for. We may be able to build up a fund for this project.

My plan is as follows:

I will ask you whether you would like to contribute money now to build up a fund to cover expenses for a new Gentle Giant recording project.

Kerry Minnear may for instance be bought free for approximate 6 months of work. He will be paid each month from the fund. As this will be gifts to him, he will not have to pay taxes.

Kerry has got some time now to write, but it would be good to be able to help him staying alive in periods he would like to concentrate more on writing and recording.

During this time, he may for instance be writing and rehearsing for 4 months and the last 2 months will be in the studio recording. In the beginning he will be using his own studio, and his wish is to have Ray as producer even though Ray might not join in musically.

We hope that Ray and Derek will join in when they see the devotion from their core fans. We will thus have to pay Ray for all costs connected with production. The studio rent and all the various production costs amount to a lot, but with devotion we are able to contribute to this.

We will be able to fly Gary Green in from the States and call up John Weathers from Wales for rehearsals and recording. Phil Shulman is willing to produce lyrics and eager to sing.

The 4 + 2 months period is a little bit more than what approximately was required to make a Gentle Giant album in the 70s. We think it will be possible to produce 70-80 minutes of music in that span of time.

The main thing is that Kerry is able to concentrate on creating the music he really wants to create, and not for any specific market. We will commission him and the group to make music for us, and give them the economical freedom that is required to be creative. We may also give inputs in the form of suggested listening and questions about the use of styles and instruments, so that the group members may know a little about what kind of music we like them to do. There will be absolutely no kneefall for commercial purposes.

We may recommend both classical music, contemporary progressive and other artists to be listened to, both for knowledge and inspiration.

I cannot guarantee anything about the band members' payment for more than a short time. Unless more subscribers join in in the mean time. I know that the band members view this opportunity as a springboard for continued activity, and hope that all of you can view this as an investment in the future. I cannot guarantee that the group will be giving concerts as a result of coming together. This will probably follow if the project is a success and then if the band members want to. To produce music is our main goal.

The deal is as follows:

Each subscriber to *Proclamation* pays £50 or the equivalent in their currency, for

the USA this will be appr. \$70.

For that, each of us will have a 70-80 minutes CD with new music.

The CD will be produced as soon as the result is finished, and brought out to the subscribers in numbered and autographed form. If I have a fast acknowledgement from you, I will try to make a time schedule that brings us the CD for Christmas 1994.

The CD will find its way out into the market afterwards. In order to make the project interesting, that is paying the large amount of money for a CD you can buy in a store for normal price afterwards, we have agreed that it is probably a good idea to keep some tracks on the limited CD only.

It may also be an idea that you will receive the common CD edition also.

You shall not send any money now. If more than 250 of the subscribers join in the project, I will talk again with Kerry and the other band members and make a proper deal as suggested here. I have spoken to the Road Goes On company, now the Terrapin Truckin Co., and they are willing to go into the project on these terms. When everything is OK, I will notify all of you about it, and then ask you to send money to your local distributor. Then you only have to wait. It is reasonable that you will want to know how the project is going, so I will send out a report now and then, besides doing the newsletter.

Nothing will be paid out unless we are quite sure that there will be at least a definite result, so that you should not be afraid of poor handling. The only thing required is faith in the abilities of the group members.

If you have suggestions, this is the time to make them. All questions and suggestions will be collated and routed to Kerry and company. I will make the deal based on your suggestions. You may ask for themes to be treated, musical instruments to be used, musical styles to be used, etc.

The project is at this time strictly limited to one CD per basic amount of money paid, and only for the subscribers of *Proclamation*.

Please return the next page with your own choice filled in. It is important to me

A REUNION: THE RECORDING PROJECT

that those of you who may be negative to the project also voice your viewpoint. All responses will be kept anonymous.

[Next page with address info only, cut.]

Suggestions from the letters

The enthusiasm shining from the letters received makes us quite sure that the fans (and not only the hardcore fans) would love to make a contribution in order to have the Gentle Giant out from his hideout and begin to make music again. They would do it as a gift and really not expect much back for it. In fact, a new Gentle Giant CD would no doubt be worth the money, so if one could pay beforehand, that would not be a problem at all!

The main suggestion made by most fans was that the band members should do whatever they wanted to do, without interference from the fans. We loved what they did in the 70's and we would most probably do it now, too. They didn't need us then and consequently they don't need us now, to direct them. They will of course need a dialogue with their fans, but only as an input for inspiration. They should bring out what they are concerned with today, but keep in mind that there are thousands of people out there that love their kind of music and want them to be themselves and not make a kneefall for commercial purposes.

Many fans also mentioned that they want the old-style GG music back, the more adventurous pieces with counterpoint and polyphony. They don't want tunes like the ones on the last few albums. This was not what the band was really able to do.

It was also quite clear that acoustic instruments are wanted. Recorders, violin, cello, various percussion, acoustic guitars and acoustic keyboards should be included. The varied instrumentation is seen as a real extra with Gentle Giant and should be taken good care of. Hints ranged from the medieval to the eastern and ethnic, from the

experiments already made with fugues and 5-part singing/drumming etc., to far-out Tibetan chants or whatever style they would try to incorporate. Kerry on a church-organ would be exciting, to quote one of the numerous examples.

Many respondents also asked if it was possible to make cantatas, sonatas, operas, whole conceptual works or other kinds that utilize the classical forms. A 12-tone composition in Giant style would probably be very exciting.

Of special importance was that the band should not revert to the 70's sound and techniques for their own sake, but on the other hand not become too dependent on 90's equipment and synthesized sounds. The band should live in the 90's while bringing with them the adventurousness from the 70's.

An exception is the analog keyboards. As digital keyboards often make players more sterile, many asked if Kerry still would utilize the old analog ones.

Many people were especially concerned about Ray and Derek, that they would be irreplaceable, and felt that a reunion without the Shulmans could not be called Gentle Giant. Many also asked for Phil as songwriter and singer.

Some producers and recording engineers would love to help with the work. Some studio owners would provide free studio time for the group. This includes the some of the largest record companies and people working for well-known megastars in the music world.

Many people asked for a documentary video recorded as the work progressed from rehearsals to finished product.

Some people discussed to some length what could be done to finance such a project in addition to personal contributions. Some suggested that companies could pay higher shares and then have their names printed, as a sort of advertisement. This will be further discussed on a later stage.

One should not keep some special

CD tracks on a special edition for the contributors only. Our reward should be that music had been made, and not that a small group of fans should have any exclusive rights to any material. All of it should be available to everyone.

A matter of special concern was what to do if the project fails. Will the money be returned back? Other people answered and said that the contribution should be regarded as a gift and that one should not really expect anything back. They were quite sure the money would be used in the best way to ensure that composition and rehearsing would begin.

What has the band members done since 1994 with regards to the idea of reforming?

It was in late 1993 that I first started talking with Kerry about him making music for the Giant fan market again. The *Christmas Album* and his demo tapes during the 80s showed that he hadn't lost his touch at all. A friend of mine once remarked that Kerry was able to master every aspect of composition, from the simplest though most breath-taking



A REUNION: THE RECORDING PROJECT

melody to the most complex form like fugues and chamber music. Why should this mastermind sit isolated in his home doing anonymous short pieces for TV?

At the same time Kerry and John had met to help with the remastering of the albums on CD. They refreshed their friendship although nothing was said about any reunion of whatever sort it might be.

The main contents of the letters about what fans might mean about a reunion was channeled to Kerry after I began to receive them. This made it possible for him to begin thinking seriously about how he should go on composing music and for what purposes. At this time Gary would also pick up on the idea. A little bit later, John was informed, and he was also very keen on the idea.

In early 1995, Ray and Kerry got in contact about Kerry doing computer games music for the company Ray was working for. Kerry was able to learn much about the new computerized music technology from Ray and they have since been in close contact.

In September 1995, Gary, John, Kerry and their wives met in Kerry's home, for the first time together in 15 years. They wanted to see if they still were able to make music together. The result was a resounding "yes!". They had a fantastic time together and were very enthusiastic about what the future could bring. I have seen photographs from the event, which showed them laughing like kids at each other.

At Christmas time that year, Derek and Ray talked together about the growing pressure from fans to revive the group, but they were not very keen on the idea and not on the others using the name either, as the Shulman brothers had been so instrumental in forming the concept of the group and developing it through ten years. If the name were to be used, most of the old members should be with the group

again, they concluded.

In 1996, the royalties for the new CDs had become so high that Kerry, for the first time since the band split, was able to use his whole time to work on composing again. In February he reported to me that he wanted to go contrapuntal again after having worked for many years with simpler musical concepts.

The same year, the band members became more keen on controlling their products in order to lose less money to the in-betweeners. This included the will to go back and see what more is in the vaults after the successful release of the last two CDs from the BBC.

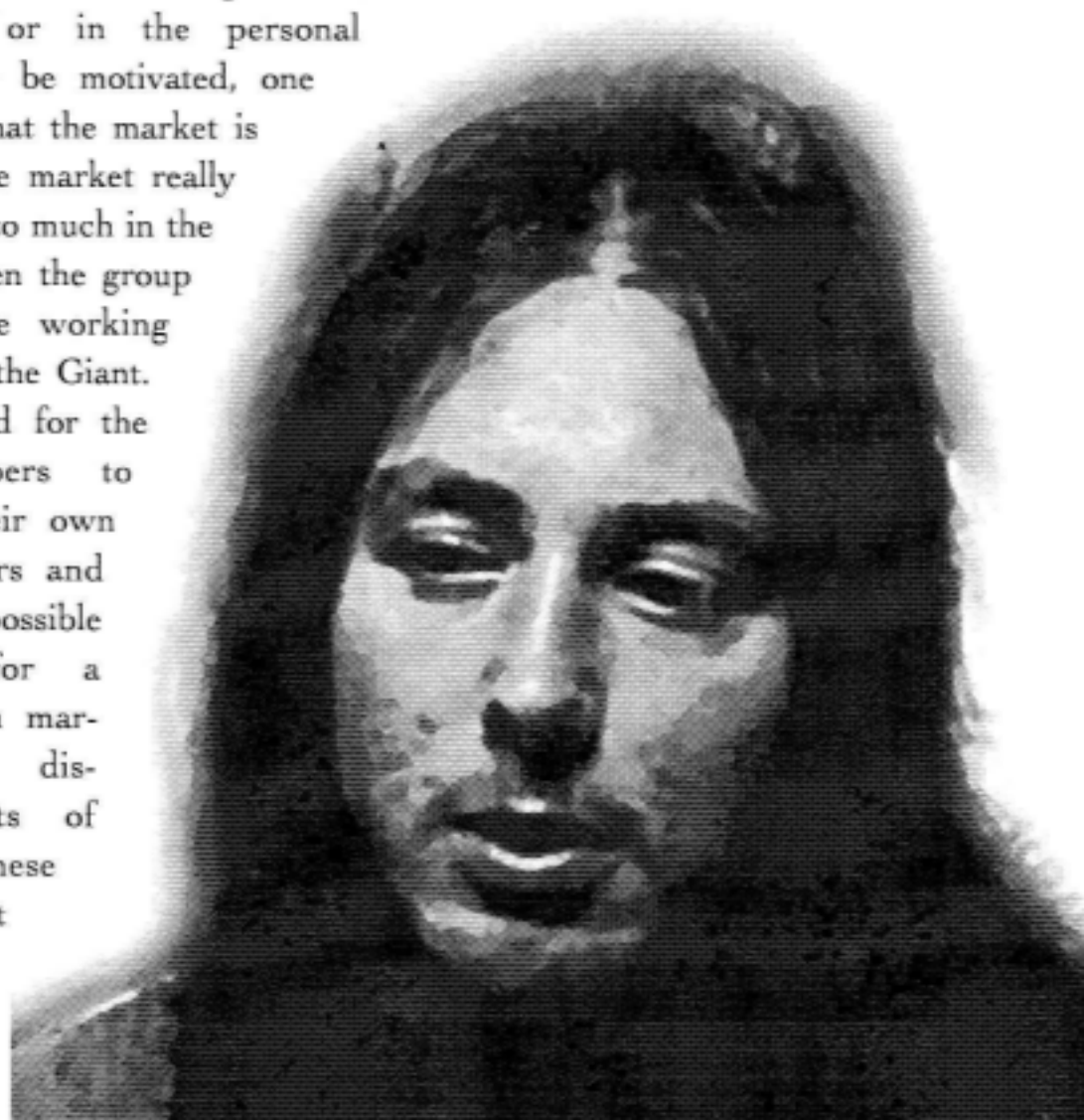
Rumours brought out on the Internet fuelled the interest among old and new fans. Concert arrangers and well-known musicians started asking the group members if a reunion was possible and if the group would play at their place or with their groups.

In April 1996 Dan Bornemark and I travelled around England and Wales to meet the band members and interview them about old times and new plans. We realized that the problems connected to a reunion mainly were either in the logistics, in the lack of input from the market, or in the personal motivation. To be motivated, one must believe that the market is there - and the market really didn't amount to much in the 70s either, when the group members were working full time with the Giant. It is also hard for the group members to believe in their own creative powers and whether it is possible to create for a demanding fan market without discouraging lots of people. These things are not easy to consider, but

in my opinion they are not impossible hurdles. Time is needed to find out of such things.

Ray is mostly interested in helping to release more old Gentle Giant material now, while Derek has a kind attitude to the fan activity, but little time for any involvement. Kerry, Phil and Gary have been swapping tapes, and Kerry has made some pieces in the old Giant style lately. John is eager as always. That is the situation of today.

However, although we haven't been able to start the recordings yet, we have come a long way. Three years ago, no one dared think the thought of reforming the Giant. Now, it is at least talked about and the various ways of doing it are evaluated. In my opinion, it is a real possibility that the band will come together again and that they will continue making music that even matches the rich 70's. We have some ways to go though before that happens. We must, however, not give up hope and rather keep on giving the band members the support they sorely need in order to continue making the most adventurous rock music ever heard.



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

by Geir Hasnes

"One week in Britain... er, that was not a good catch phrase.... what about "Meeting in this way, no one could have known"?"

Darn it, words cannot convey the pleasure and excitement of this trip by Dan Bornemark from Sweden's west coast and myself to the coasts and valleys of fair Britain in the Easter week of 1996.

Our intention was to meet with all the UK-based members and ex-members of Gentle Giant and also the record companies that have brought the groups' albums out on CDs over the last few years. Dan, who had met with both John, Phil, Kerry and Ray some 12 years ago in a teenage solo raid on Britain, is now a wholetime musician, but still with a special ear for the group. I don't know who is the most eager fan in the Giant fandom, but both Dan and I may qualify for the final round. We had been talking about this trip for nearly a year, but my eye problems had prevented it earlier. In March, however, I took the chance, experiencing better eye conditions. We made a schedule to make the most out of the trip and then called the gentle giants to find out if we could meet with them, to interview them for *Proclamation*, talk about their glorious years, find out more about what they had been doing in the barren

80s and the hopeful 90s, and even dare to discuss possibilities of a reunion. We returned home with loads of material, both on audio- and videotape, musical demos and finished products on disc, cassettes, CDs & vinyl. And we also brought with us plans of future musical journeys both for the band members and consequently for all their fans and friends.

I have to warn the reader: This story is going to be very annoying for those who want serious facts and a certain distance to the topic. No self-indulgence spared, as this is not a story about some journalists observing some musicians. It is a story about two eager fans meeting their life-time heroes and trying to do their best to conceal their excitement behind serious interviewing and polite faces. It is a rendition for our friends who happen to be subscribers to this magazine, who themselves will be sighing and panting reading this while they grow green with envy. It was a glorious trip, to be remembered for the rest of our lives, with some glimpses of eternity scattered in between the splendid and incredibly friendly company of the gentle giants of our musical lives.

SUNDAY 31. MARCH - MONDAY 1. APRIL: WITH PETE GRAY IN HUNTINGDON

On Palm Sunday 1996, tense with excitement, I boarded the next to the last direct flight between Trondheim and Stansted for the year, being a weekly flight for Englishmen wanting to ski in the Norwegian mountains. At the airport I bought some bottles of

"Lakka" - cloudberry liquor, a specialty from Scandinavia of my own favourite taste for the band members. You ought to bring with you something other than CDs to be autographed and cameras to shoot your idols with. Luckily, this only direct flight from my hometown to England went to the airport nearest to Pete Gray, the contact person for *Proclamation* in the UK. He was kind enough to meet me at the airport even though it was an hour's drive away. We both wore our Gentle Giant t-shirts to be easily recognizable, although it helped that I had received a photograph of him earlier.

Pete works as a policeman in London when he doesn't collect or listen to progressive music. At their home in Huntingdon, a relatively new house in a newly built area, I met with his beautiful gentle and giant wife Sarah, 6 feet tall and heartily laughing about most things, although not with that keen interest in progressive music, and their two kids Jamie and Christian. We of course had to go into the study at once to look into Pete's own collection of weird Giant vinyl, including a Chilean Vertigo swirl *In a Glass House*, a Uruguayan *The Missing Piece* with title in Spanish (*La pieza faltante*), and the Russian *In a Glass House* and *The Power and the Glory*. He even had the *Shout* single, after having searched in 7" stacks at record fairs for more than a year. The walls carried both a case of bootleg tapes and a concert poster from the *The Missing Piece* tour in Germany, while the advertising poster for the first album was still folded on the top of the vinyl shelf collection (shame). Out came wonderful press cuttings, some

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

even in color (to be reproduced in *Proclamation*), while on the floor there emerged a huge heap of used vinyl he had for sale, of which I had to bring a whole stack with me back to friends in Norway.

We could have carried on for a while, but we had to go back to the airport to fetch Dan. His plane was a little late, having been through some snowstorms, but there he was, looking, as he'd said, just like the cartoon kid on the front of his newly-released children's CD. We talked and talked while driving home, naturally enough, and after he had met the rest of Pete's family, Dan showed that it was possible to play the intro to *Experience* on a child's Casio keyboard. Then he too discovered Pete's treasures. It wasn't easy to get him out of the study. Dan also played a tape for us with various pop music he had made and afterwards presented his own CD to the family. We ended up the evening talking and listening to lots of more or less progressive music Pete picked out of his collection. As many of the readers may have experienced, it is always very exciting to play the music one enjoys for like-minded persons, and that doesn't

happen too often. (Well, it does here in Norway!)

The treat I got for desert after dinner, the so-called Turkish Delight (however very English!) which I had only read about before, had been a little too sweet for my taste, but little did I know that it would give me the worst toothache in years. So I lay awake most of the night and had to go to the local dentist early in the morning - well, at least compared to our other mornings. Luckily, no sign of decay at all, simply irritation on the tooth neck. Avoid sugary things, £10, the best toothwork she had ever seen, Norway is a nice country. Next please!

We were wondering about how to travel, but after finding out about the train fares to London from Pete, we hired a car for a week. Dan paid for that, making me pay all the meals and hotels and beer for the rest of the week ("Geir, I want another beer! Do you have some change?"). Britain is incredibly cheap, compared to our own countries, it is fantastic to eat and drink without feeling the pain in your wallet. And so, we set out on the round trip some time after noon, coming back to

Three friends with the seldom seen *Three Friends* long box.



Pete in the study where *Proclamation* is proof-read and finished copies mailed out in the UK.

Pete to fetch the records before leaving the next Sunday. I was to leave very early so it was good to have someone living that near the airport to help. As it turned out, I read the map and Dan drove and he soon got adjusted to the left-hand driving. By the way, the Swedes shifted from left-hand to right-hand driving in 1967, just as *Simon Dupree and the Big Sound* were on their first trip abroad - they were in Gothenburg the day when the country stood still for a minute and all cars drove over to the other side of the road. Luckily, Dan only once drove on the wrong side of the road this time.

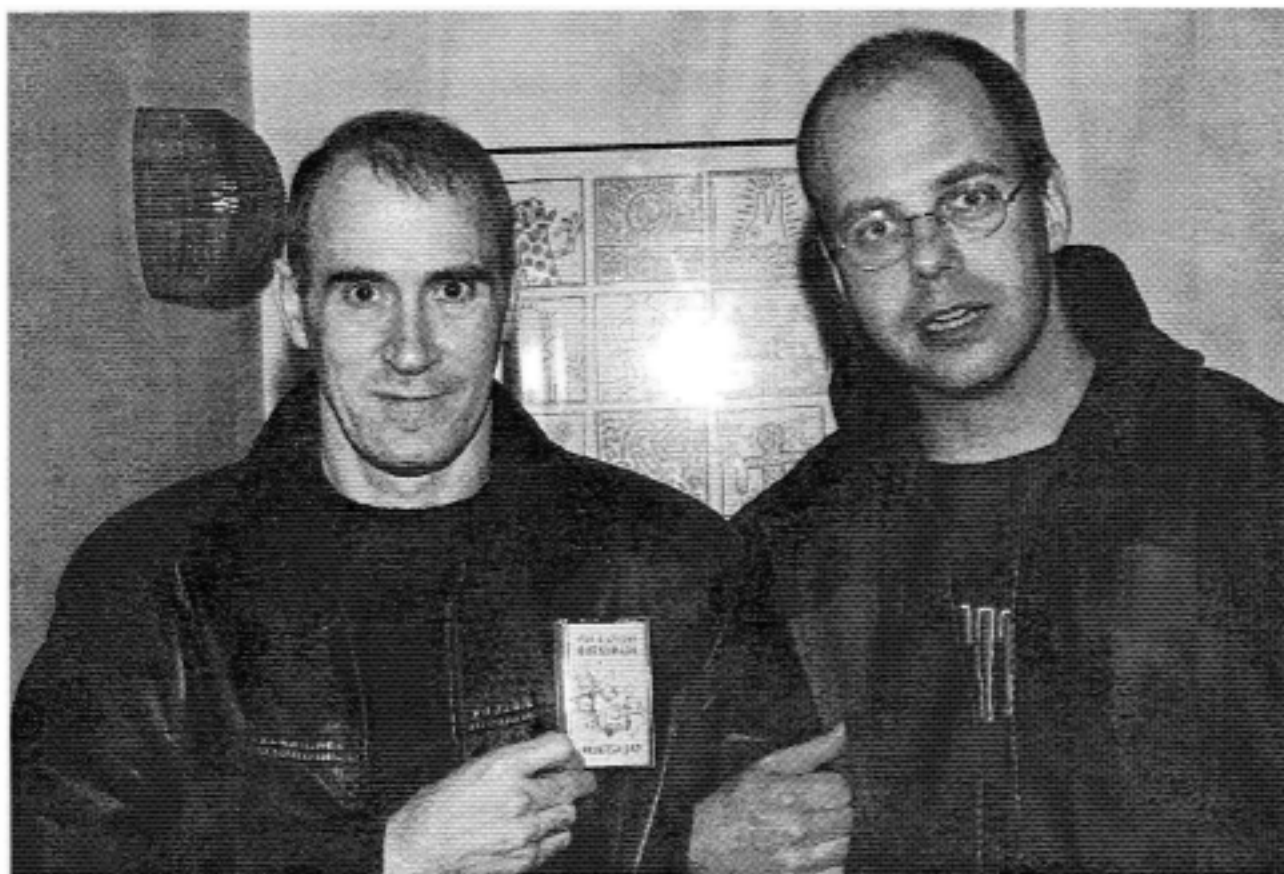
MONDAY 1. APRIL: WITH RAY SHULMAN IN LONDON

Not a small amount of nervousness ran into my veins as we neared London. Ray is the one in the band most reluctant to meet fans and to talk about the glorious days of yore. As he had said earlier, he is much more interested in the future than the past. As with Derek, he has lots of contacts and is firmly

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

settled on his own. So I wondered about what to talk about and how to serve all the burning questions at the right moment. While driving and discussing, we ate the lunch Sarah had prepared for us and then agreed on being cool about the band for a starter. We managed to get it mostly right as we shifted roads in the big city and only a few times found ourselves driving in circles to reach the correct lane. At last, we came to the part of London and the pub they were to be met at. We were lucky to find a parking-house nearby, to drive our small Opel in between vintage luxury cars, Rolls-Royces, Bentleys and red Ferraris. What an environment to live in!

We reached the pub and there Dan picked the two at once. Suddenly I stand face to face with a small and energetic – girl, I would have said, if it hadn't been for the grey streaks in her half-long hair and some laughing wrinkles in her face. This was Barbara, Ray's wife for more than 20 years, American of origin and preferring to be called Tam. She actually was a kind of Gentle Giant's Yoko Ono, as she travelled with them on the tours while the other wives were at home. In addition, she later admitted to having been the first one among them to be interested in punk and new wave and the one to get Ray interested in it. Hmm. However, we chatted a while before going to the table where Dan and this small, very short-haired man with the slightly skewered upper lip were eagerly talking. So this is Ray, I thought, certainly a little more relaxed and even shy than the hopping, jumping figure from the concert videos. He also lisped a little, something not recognizable from the songs on the albums. However, he greeted me and we sat down to have dinner. Barbara told about an old Danish lady of the neighbourhood whom she often talked to – they were not unacquainted with Scandinavians. All of a sudden the stately lady comes in



Ray, the guest fiddler with the composer and sequencer operator.

and in a few minutes she is telling a long string of stories from the war years and her work in the resistance, even killing a nazi! To entertain Ray and Barbara, we spoke the same sentence in our three respective languages. For them it was incredible that we could understand each other's tongues – which is quite usual in Scandinavia although they sound very different.

I also asked about the car crash Kerry had told about. Yes, Ray vividly remembered it, late in 1971 near Guildford. He was driving his brothers and Kerry to the studio, the car had worn-down tyres and it rained heavily. Since that accident, Ray has always been a little thoughtful and on the alert when driving.

After dinner, we were invited just around the corner to their flat. It was a typical London flat with many big rooms stacked upon each other in half-floors. Ray had his own studio loaded with equipment, where he was working on composing music for a computer game. He received the animated films before they were fully completed, so that he could work on the music at the same time as the animators were finishing the film. He put on some music for us while the new film was running and

it was Powerful, to say the least. I was deeply impressed. In the film, futuristic horror scenes were mixed with Middle-Age dungeons and Ray's music added to the tension. For Ray the challenge was to make sequences of music that would suit the animation and the various scenes and not bore the player after he has been stuck in a scene for some days. I will in future issues review the games. Even though I am not keen on games at all, it seems I've got to buy the correct kind of computer to be able to play those games and keep the collection up to date. Or should I? How mad can one possibly be? However, the music socked me in my stomach. Ray has certainly not forgotten how to write intriguing and rocking themes.

We then went to the living-room, where we presented them with liquor, a Grieg CD and Dan's new CD. Ray told us he had received the tape with the BBC sessions which was to be released on Strange Fruit, just the other day. He gave it to me so that I could know what to write about in the booklet – I was thrilled. Then something strange happened. They wanted to expose us to what kind of music they enjoyed, and there it was, some techno stuff. Well, I listened, understanding very little – “do

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

they really enjoy that?" I thought. I just had to put up that polite face. Then it dawned upon me that they were telling us about Ray's techno records, and that we were actually listening to one of his creations. Ray told us about this wave that is so important to get right for the techno freaks and suddenly I was able to listen and even understand a little of what people see in techno. He even presented each of us with one copy of the second 12" maxi he had made. Of the first one, he had given away all his own copies save one! However, they told us to keep to ourselves who was beneath the pseudonym on the label. It was a part of the joke that the techno fans were wondering whom this artist could be. Ray and Barbara didn't want it to become publicly known yet that it was him. The record company had sold nearly 3000 copies of each of the two maxis and one could not expect to sell more - this was like having reached most of the hardcore techno freaks. The company was too small to make a promotional video, but a sampler called *Rave Revolution* included the main tune of the second EP, and this cut was chosen when the sampler was presented on MTV. Ray and Barbara then felt as excited as if it had been the first *Simon*

Dupree single. We were also told that many other old prog people made techno today to survive. We will not give away any of their names here, of course.

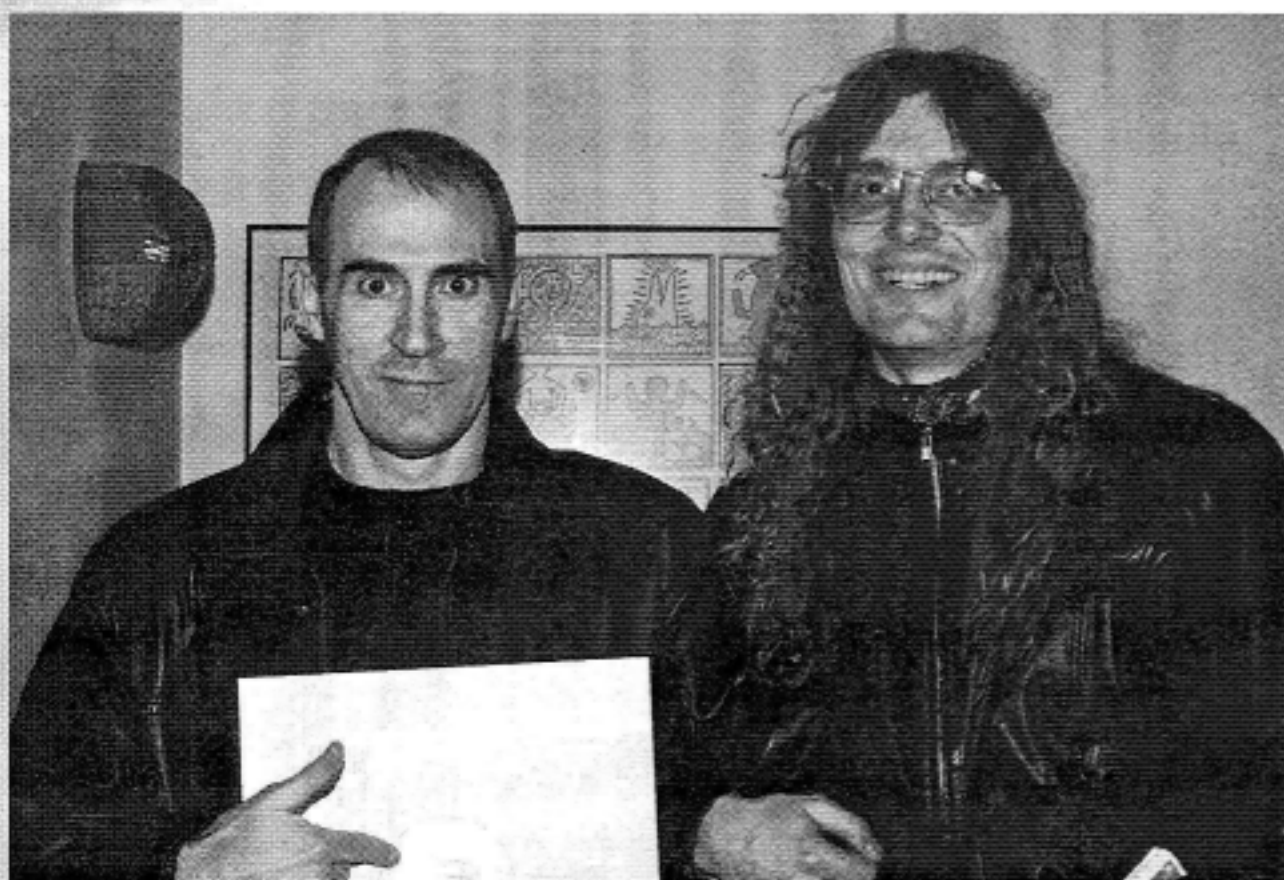
Ray then took us to their living-room computer, to let us hear something incredible. Could it really be? Yes, it had to be. It was Kerry's music to a computer game, some fantastic spell-binding tunes combining futuristic and middle-ages moods. If Ray's music had rocked us, these pieces made it hard to keep standing. Ray told that he always had thought of Kerry as a genius and that when Kerry got into the group and started practicing his composition skills, Ray did his best to imitate what he was doing. Ray thought it incredible that Kerry has so little faith in himself, and so did we, as we just listened and were awestruck. It was Ray, on behalf of the games company, who had asked Kerry to compose for them. He found it very inspiring to be working together with Kerry after 15 years. I also know that Kerry was very uplifted by talking to Ray again and having him help him with the newest in technology.

Actually, Kerry had first done a disc of music that was rejected because the tunes were too Elizabethan; they had

too little of this futuristic atonality and anxiety in them. Ray, though, still thought it was brilliant and we couldn't agree more. Even though it was made with a sequencer, it was just like listening to old *Gentle Giant* material, made in the same way as Kerry did it at that time. He always finished the composition at the keyboard and taped it before Ray and the others helped him instrument it. This session removed all our doubt that Kerry might have lost some of his ability to make the ultimate music. We had a copy of the disc, because the rejected pieces weren't copyrighted, an album's worth of material although the pieces differed in duration from 30 seconds to 6 minutes. Kerry had also made a new set of wonderful pieces which we listened to but couldn't copy - we would have to buy the game instead. After this exhausting listening experience, Ray and Barbara supervised Dan in another game and we laughed heartily at his attempts to escape from prison. They helped him while they told of how many weeks they had used to come to this or that spot in the game.

We continued the evening at a local pub and then at a nightclub. Ray told lots of stories about the old days and what he had done since the break. He felt that fans very often were trying to rewrite the history of the 70s to make it look more happy and carefree than it really was. They were often glorifying it, not thinking about how hard it could be for the group to write music, rehearse and travel for large parts of the year. They could often be forthright intruding on his privacy when they turned up on his doorstep. One fan had even stolen the last issue of *Proclamation*! How low one can sink - however understandable the crime was. Ray felt that the most honest albums were the two first, because they later always had a view to the commercial aspect of the music. In making *Interview* and *Giant for a Day*, they tried to be

Ray and guest with secret techno maxi single.



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

something which they weren't.

The last few years with the Giant was very hard, and when Ray returned to the UK in 1980, he felt he had to work himself up from nothing. He knocked on lots of doors and finally found himself writing music for TV shows. Then in 1983, he was asked to write advertising music for a large company making commercials for cinema and TV. The album with *Minor Detail* from that year was the first album he worked on after the split, playing both guitar and bass. In 1987, a guy from the advertising bureau asked him if he would do some production. For the next seven years he produced maybe three or four groups a year, among them *The Sugarcubes* from Iceland (*Björk's* group), *Ian McCullough* and *The Sundays*. Then two years ago he had started doing techno and computer games music. In the first computer game, some football game, he just contributed one melody. Then a flight simulator followed, and then more interesting games with some sort of story and environment. We will go more into details with Ray's production and other areas in a future issue.

Both Ray and Barbara were very dissatisfied when they heard that Gary, John and Kerry with their wives had met last autumn. Even though Ray was less interested in a reunion than the other old members, they would have loved meeting them. The truth was that the other guys wanted to see if the old spark was still there so that they could work together again. They were a little afraid that Ray might feel this as a pressure to join them if he and Barbara were invited. Ray said that he had so many projects on his own that he did not feel it necessary to have a group to work within. He was quite convinced, however, that Kerry had to have a group to work in. So a reunion would be the best thing for him and for Gary and John. Ray was afraid that the fans would have *Gentle Giant* do the 70s

once again, while he was more interested in the 90s. I could assure him that the fans simply want the group to do whatever they want to do, for we have such a belief in them that we would gladly support their musical ventures and give them *Free Hand*.

Far out in the night we headed for home, still eagerly talking. Ray fetched some female advertising from phone booths as we passed by. They were gifts for us and Kerry too so that we could better remember what kind of neighbourhood they were living in. Ray advised us to hibernight in a hotel just above the first pub we visited, and we had to chime the bell for some minutes until the landlady came down and agreed to give us room for the night. We then went with Ray, fetched the luggage, took some photographs with great haste – damn, why didn't we think of that earlier, said our goodbyes, went

around the corner, up the zillions of stairs and entered into a good room. But don't you think we fell down sleeping at once. We were far too excited about all we had learnt. We had to put down on tape the details we had been told in the various locations, as best as we could remember. After that had been done, we fell asleep, very satisfied with our first day in the UK.

TUESDAY 2. APRIL: WITH TERRAPIN TRUCKIN IN LONDON

Tuesday morning, after a somewhat late breakfast, we headed north for Crouch End and the *Terrapin Truckin* record shop and record company. The proprietor himself, Mr. Simon Hart, is the guy who is responsible for the great UK CD reissues. Of course he had to



Simon Hart outside his fine shop, with some of his Giant products. Recommended!

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

be visited so that we could be made aware of further plans. Actually, Simon is not unlike the Giant himself, as may be seen from the photo. Although he worked continually with loads of new CDs the whole time we were there (among them heaps of *Fairport* live albums for export, together with an earlier member of the Fairport crew who is now helping him in the shop), he took time to show us around and talk about his new label which was set up in order to bring out things like the *Gentle Giant* show at the *Roxy* in June, 1980. This CD was delayed due to various legal problems arising as it was, technically, a bootleg. In addition, the printer went bankrupt, keeping material for the booklet with him. We agreed that I should send some suitable material for the booklet, like promo photos from that time and even advertisements for shows showing fans queueing up for *Gentle Giant*! As it turned up, only the promo photo was used. Another interesting topic was the planned box set, but nothing had been substantiated yet, apart from loose ideas about what such a box could contain.

We also had a look at Simon's new tasteful Giant's head t-shirts and purchased the last lot he had left. He assured a new batch was on the way. I browsed through his impressive stacks of used vinyl records and filled a huge box with mostly progressive LPs to bring back to myself and other vinyl-hungry friends in Norway. There was even some used Giant Vertigo albums. I was also presented with a load of remastered Truck CDs to be reviewed in *Proclamation*. Mighty fine work there! I actually used so much time in the shop talking and browsing that Dan became restless, he wasn't used to snooping around for used vinyl as freaks like me do!

TUESDAY 2. APRIL, PART 2: WITH STRANGE FRUIT IN KENT

Heading south from Terrapin, we experienced the queues of the British traffic most of the time, but not of the distance. There was, obviously, some emergency up on the road ahead. Finally, after one hour at snail speed, we decided to break out and drive parallel back streets, which helped tremendously. Suddenly, we had crossed the Thames and could start the search for *Strange Fruit* near Orpington in Kent (I once knew a girl in this town, but she preferred Prince and to my best-of Giant tape she replied that Derek's singing was very muddled). This record company was set up in order to release various BBC recordings that still hadn't been wiped out, to flood the market with gems for the collector. Their somewhat complicated address, combining two different places, led us astray for a few minutes, until at nearly 4pm we parked – at the wrong side of the building, actually later obstructing the loading port for the vans. We nearly got a parking ticket, it is in fact a mystery we didn't get any that week as Dan

always insisted to park in the most impossible spaces. However, we found the entrance, stranded in the reception area and were forced to listen to some blasting modernities while waiting for our contact to arrive.

Jo-Ann, the lady whom we had been talking to on the phone and who had been working with the In Concert CD, was not available. She had just had a childbirth, so we discussed the BBC Sessions CD with Brian O'Reilly who was now in charge. He told us the *Windsong* CD had sold very well (the different labels are used for the different series at the BBC, but are within the same company) and they therefore looked forward to the new CD. Dan had a great idea for a cover that could be done on a computer and I came up with the title I had thought out the day before while travelling to London as Dan wanted to know if there was a suitable saying in English that would correspond with his wooden design. *Out of the Woods* coincided both with the design, with the Giant coming out from the wood where he lives, and 'Out of the Vaults' with new material coming out of its hiding-place, bringing forward the brilliant live side of the group which had not been sufficiently

Brian O'Reilly at Strange Fruit, with the archival folder for *Out of the Woods*.



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

documented earlier. We agreed on the details for the booklet and that we would rush to the job as soon as we got back home. Although we were excited, we hadn't yet listened to the tape from Ray, and would need some time to get into the material. Dan tried to press the company for a see-through tray, but they opinionated that such a small production didn't justify it. However, they agreed to Dan's proposal for a fold-out cover, giving us 6 pages instead of the measly usual four. At the end of the day, we could nothing but share the excitement generated by a new release and the fact that it could be faithfully supervised by eager fans.

The CD was planned to be produced late April and I received my copy late May, but it was officially released the 15th of July.

TUESDAY 2. - WEDNESDAY

3. APRIL:

WITH MALCOLM IN SUSSEX

After having finished the talks with the two record companies, we headed for the south coast. We had not been able to reach Malcolm at his old phone number and therefore he was not notified about our trip. However, we found from the map that it would not cost much to drive the extra few miles to see where he was living if we could find it before it grew dark. We also felt that as I had communicated with him earlier, we might even knock on his door and chat a little before continuing. We were to meet Phil the day after, so we had some time to spend. Off we went on tiny rolling English roads, asked for directions at a petrol station and found the farm 50 meters down the road. OK, we said, we have seen the house, a beautiful old 15th century farm house with large trees, what now? Do we dare to knock on the door? We did!

First a tall young woman with long brown hair greeted us. She turned out

to be Malcolm's wife Lynn, his partner for more than 25 years, even from when he was with the group! So she was in fact older than me, you couldn't believe it. She possibly was a bit surprised by

on the phone. That was quite natural, he said, because he had chosen to have an unlisted number. However, we were welcome to stay overnight and ask all kinds of questions and talk about that



Malcolm behind the drums in the studio.

two unknown tramps, but led us into the largely unchanged 15th century kitchen and fetched Malcolm for us. In he came with a big smile and an unshaven chin, not the least bothered by this unexpected visit. Luckily for us, an engagement had just been cancelled, so instead of being in Germany this evening he was at home! He was not much like the few photos with the group taken 25 years ago, and he was sorry that he had cut his hair to be even less recognizable. As all Giant members are relatively small, between 5 foot 8 and 5 foot 11, he must have been the tallest in the group at his nearly 6 feet.

At once, he talked kindly of *Proclamation* and of the *Gargantua* CD Pete and me got him. That was the only item he had got from his time with the Giant, apart from a test press of *Three Friends* and a newly purchased CD.

We excused ourselves and explained that we hadn't been able to reach him

very limited span of his life that possibly would appeal to us. Little did he know that we wanted to have the full overview. We were shown around the wonderful house and surroundings, and especially his fantastic studio facing the back yard and the woods, with huge French windows on two walls, drum kit, pads, grand piano and recording equipment, along with his collection of vinyl. Then the four of us took a trip twenty yards down the road for dinner at the Royal Oak, which turned out to be another glimpse of eternity.

When we came back to the farmhouse, we settled down in their living-room for some interviewing. Dan brought out the minidisc player and the camera and an hours-long interview was taped for a future Malcolm Mortimore issue. We will also reveal Malcolm's discography and various engagements. I will be communicating with him via email for more details.

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN



Malcolm Mortimore remembers the old days.

Malcolm bid us of the liquor we had presented to him and we talked far into the night while he played various music for us, all from his own work to various drummers he enjoyed, a good instance being *Sepultura's* *Roots*, to which Lynn asked if he could turn down the volume while shaking her head over her kid husband.

Dan wanted to play *Three Friends* for Malcolm to discuss the various pieces of drumming he had done, for after all, that album was Dan's first falling in love with music. Malcolm told us details about how each track was recorded, about the drum roll for the *Prologue* which was done after the rest of the track, or when he didn't make it to the studio for some last drumming on *Schooldays*, which meant that Gary had to record some additional drum parts that Kerry wanted. I asked him

about an obvious insecurity in the title track, it seemed to me as if he didn't know what he wanted to say with his drumming there. That was correct, he answered, he didn't really know what to add to that particular track. He had always been concerned about what he himself could bring into the music with his drumming. He also agreed that at the time he had a problem with the timing, but he rather played over the top to create something than just playing straight.

On tours, nobody wanted to share a room with Phil, so as Malcolm was the youngest, he had too. He felt that Phil was very demanding, that he sometimes deliberately wanted to keep him down, and that the brothers quarrelled very much after each concert. The motorcycle accident in March 1972 hadn't killed his love for motorcycles, but it was very

difficult for him to get his drumkit back when he got out of bed again. Whenever he went to Portsmouth, the van had just left or he was served some other silly excuse. At last, he turned up at a concert and demanded it back right then and there!

On my question about whether he had had any help in his career from having been in the group, he could safely say: "Absolutely nothing." Gentle Giant was the first real group he had been into, as he was only 18 when he auditioned together with 300 other drummers in 1971. The group picked out 10 drummers to come and play one day each with them in Portsmouth. He was probably included because he was very creative in his playing and because he had decided not to be insecure but rather persevere if he missed something of their weird timing and signatures. Of all the drummers, Kerry and Phil finally chose Malcolm! I would say no other recommendation could possibly be of more worth! However, it never helped him for the rest of his career. More about this in the special issue.

Far into the night we went to bed in a room where the original door was still in use, being so astonished at how incredibly nice these people were. The next morning we continued interviewing and also browsed through Malcolm's collection of photos related to his musical career, from the first photograph behind the drums at age approx. ten. Because of his lack of items connected with Giant, I presented him with one of the Giant t-shirts purchased the day before and Dan videotaped him playing with the t-shirt on – to see if it would help! And at last, we ran the obligatory photo session, including a family portrait. Paul and Jim, their two boys, both played, in metal bands. I was presented with a demo from Paul's band where he played the drums, a cassette from one of Malcolm's recent projects and most fantastic, his test pressing of *Three Friends* with his own titles

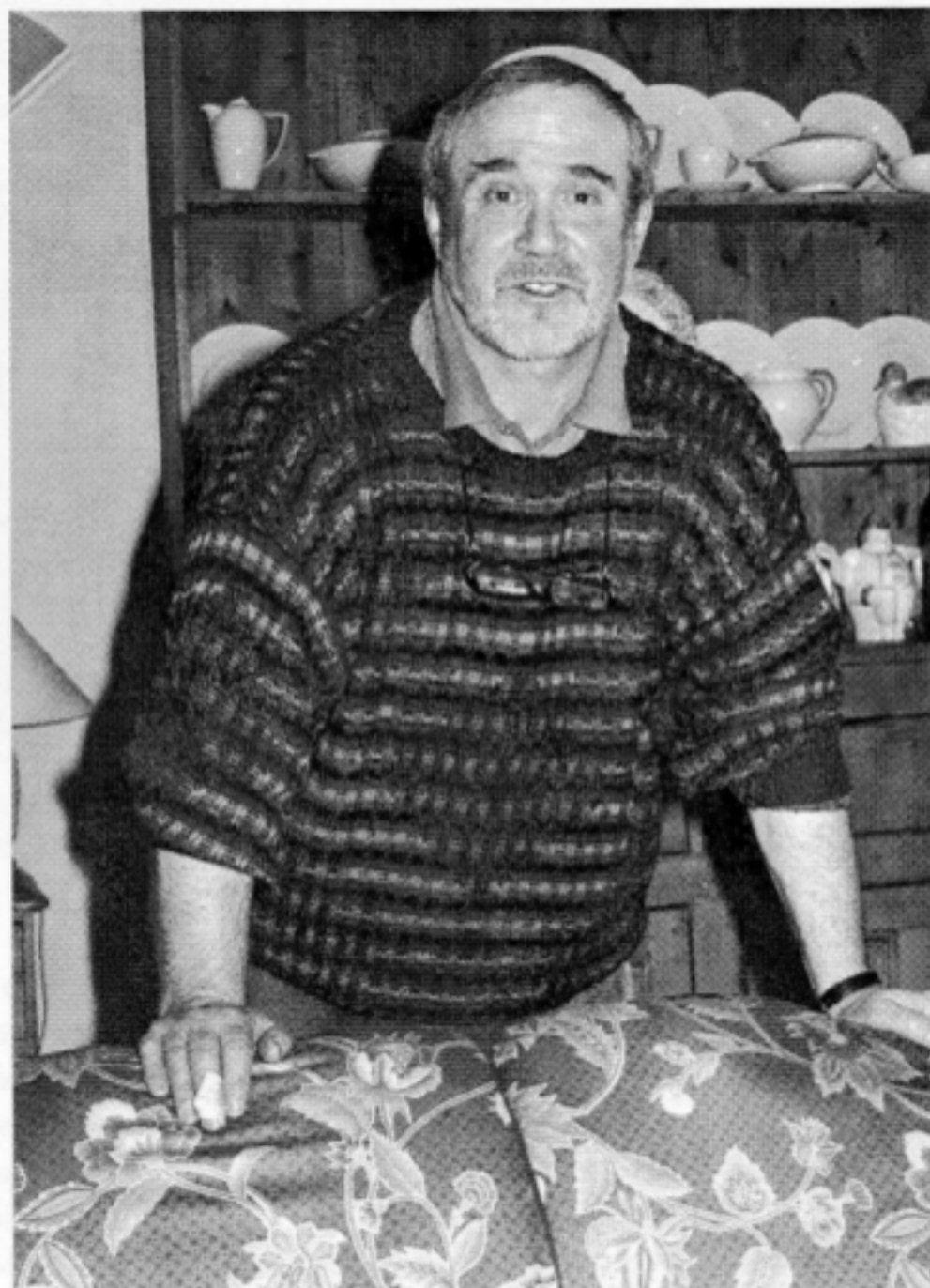
THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

on: "Prolog", "This is Kerry Minnear", "Phil's Fumble", "In His Fart", "Classy Devils" and "Theme from Ben Hur"! He didn't need it any longer, but now I have to find a copy of the vinyl album with the sleeve to send to him. At last we managed to rip ourselves loose to let Malcolm go to his work in the studio, and with many greetings we headed for the south coast and Phil's place.

WEDNESDAY 3. APRIL: WITH PHIL IN GOSPORT

Some hours later, we drove into Gosport where Phil and his wife run a gift shop in one of the more or less main streets. We chose eating first, with Dan putting his CBS sign on his coat before we entered the Castle Tavern. As we got lots of curious looks from the local gentry, we agreed we were looking just like a journalist team out to cover some world event. Then we found the gift shop, *Rainbow's End*, and the man behind the counter recognized us at once. Phil was much smaller than I had expected, with grey hair and a full beard – he was hard to identify having seen only early 70s photographs. He was very energetic, although much smaller than I had imagined, and he started talking at full speed at once. He continued while searching for the albums with *Simon Dupree* press cuttings he had retrieved for me to be reproduced in *Proclamation* – look out for a future *Simon Dupree* special. We handed over the liquor, a Grieg CD, and just as Dan was to present Phil with his own CD, in came a young red-haired girl with her two small red-haired kids. It was the wife of Damon, Phil's musician son, and his grandchildren. The kids of course received their own copy of Dan's CD, too. Then Phil's wife Roberta arrived and we continued chatting with them all. Roberta is the boss of the shop, stately and with thick blond hair, and Phil just gives a hand when she needs help.

Phil Shulman at home.

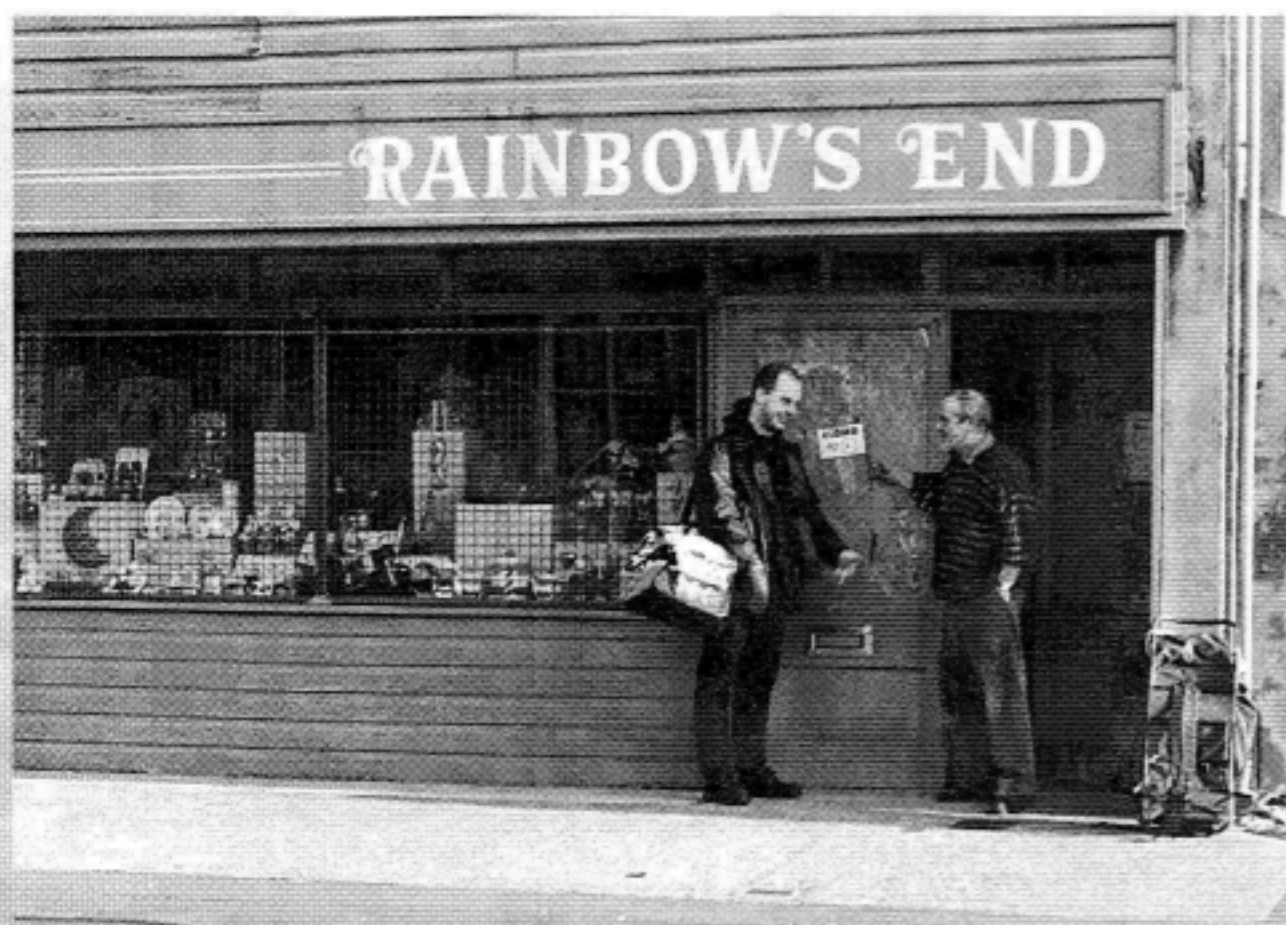


However, Phil was sorry to say that he had got our arrival date wrong. Today they were celebrating the 80th birthday of Rebecca, his mother. He would have loved talking to us and having us stay overnight, but the guest room was occupied and he had to go to Portsmouth to the family party or else his older sister, Evelyn would give him a terrible treatment. The oldest of the sisters and brothers Shulman, she was born in 1935, two years before Phil. She is of some interest for us Giant fans as she penned nearly half of all the *Simon Dupree* singles – or their B-sides – in the 60s. Ray, the youngest of the five children, also was to come along with Barbara, and Terry, the boy born between Derek and Ray, whom preferred to play jazz instead of being one of the Duprees or Giants. Even Damon and his family were to go, so we missed

talking to him about his future plans with *Different Trains*.

However, we had some time yet and used it well. Phil continued talking as he sat behind the counter and watched the customers. He also showed us a copy of the first album which a friend had bought him one month earlier. It turned out that he actually hadn't saved the old albums, as he had been too busy writing and touring. We were relatively shocked. For many years he had written nothing, but the last years he had been working with a project, describing episodes in his childhood and youth in Glasgow and Portsmouth, which Damon had put to music. We got to listen to some of it and I was presented with a cassette in order to describe it for the Giant fans. Another demo tape copy was at the BBC for consideration at the moment, as Phil was hoping to

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN



Phil and Dan outside "Rainbow's End".

have it properly orchestrated and broadcast.

Phil led us upstairs to the family's flat and even showed us the room we were meant to sleep in, which was occupied at the moment by a French student who was to have private English lessons from Roberta. He led us into their living-room, showed us family photographs and personal treasures of art, among them some collected while touring with the groups. Dan rigged the minidisc player so that we could start recording the conversation. We will run a special issue on Phil in the future which will be of great interest for you as Phil needed little or no input to go on elaborating on the pop and rock scene of that day.

As we mentioned we had just come from Malcolm, Phil could tell he was still sorry about the way he had treated him at that time. Actually, Phil felt he had been quite arrogant in those years, very demanding, in fact quite impossible. The brothers had quarrelled very much, especially after each concert, to get the details of the performance right. They had maybe treated Malcolm especially badly, as he didn't always do what

they wanted him to do. In the long run, it seemed very meaningless to be so fuzzy about small details. Phil had left the group in order to concentrate on the family, he had even turned down an offer from Ian Anderson to join *Tull* at that time. Phil emphasized that he had no religion although the Shulmans were a Jewish family. He felt that meaning was to be found in a good family life and with lots of friends and thus he had felt that it was more important to stay with the family than with the group.

Phil also talked much about the phenomena of the rock world. As a travelling pop group, they could not use the usual nice clothes because they would have been destroyed by the touring. They did not have the time to cut their hair and chins properly either. To their astonishment, their audiences turned up in the same way, to be uniformed like their idols. It was certainly not meant like that. He also talked about how youth discovered sex in the 60s and how the pop and rock groups were instrumental in that development. He certainly felt that the two first albums of Gentle Giant were the most honest and not formed by a commercial pressure,

because after that, they had to think about earning money for their products. And he emphasized how important it was for a musician not to become arrogant and self-indulgent because many people enjoy what he is doing.

While we videotaped Phil talking and showing us things and while the obligatory photo session was done, Phil added that he was very grateful for the work with *Proclamation* and that the music still was living. It was exciting to see the albums out on CD and to know that new people discovered it. He didn't think, however, that it would be easy to get the band together again. In that case, it would probably be without him. He could not see how they would be able to cooperate while living so far from each other. Two years ago, when Kerry sent him a tape with music, he couldn't relate to that because Kerry had tried to be too simple in order to reach more people. It certainly didn't reach him. So Phil was relieved to hear that Kerry had finished that period now. Phil meant that it was important that the music they had made should be transcribed and worked out as classical pieces for chamber ensembles, in order to reach a wider audience and have a longer life. More about his wide range of interests in a special Phil issue.

Phil had to run to dress and we thanked him for everything, got into the car and started driving. Suddenly, I remembered that I had both the *Acquiring the Taste* and the *Octopus* albums in the back of the car. So we turned around because Phil really ought to have them, if not for anything else, so that his grandchildren can be proud of what he had done in his youth. Phil had already left as we reached the house, but his wife and daughter received them after I had spoiled them by writing on them a dedication to Phil, from a brainless, devoted fan!

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

WEDNESDAY 3. APRIL:

INTERLUDE IN SOUTHAMPTON, SALISBURY AND AT THE SEVERN.

Out on the motorway again, we headed for Wales. We had really wanted to meet Martin Smith, the first drummer who also had been in the later line-up of *Simon Dupree* and is currently living in Southampton. We had not been able to reach him on the phone – his old number led us to an old lady whom had never heard about him. The Telecom had no new number for him either. As the motorway passed very near to Southampton, we drove off, found his earlier whereabouts in a few minutes, asked for him, but still of no use. Later, Lesley told us that she had just got his new address, only a few houses down the road, which he hadn't yet mailed to me in order to get fresh supplies of *Proclamation*. Bad luck, Martin. Hopefully we will see you the next time.

We proceeded to Salisbury, for a late dinner, a full tank and a stroll to the beautiful cathedral. People were streaming out so we went inside and suddenly had it all to ourselves. It was a time to relax and think about those fantastic people we had had the possibility to meet and talk with and how undeservedly we were welcomed. We could also ponder about how they had chosen to live their lives and how *Gentle Giant*, which was still so alive in our minds, was so far away in these people's lives. And it dawned on me how much a creative life craves of the creative person. They have enormous energy and creativity which is hard to tame after years on the road. This realization made us silent for some minutes. In the stillness of the cathedral with all our thoughts, we experienced yet another glimpse of eternity.

The full moon was up, but as we approached Bath, it disappeared more



Dan reunited with John, his wife Carol and one of the two very black dogs.

and more. What is happening, we thought. Do we drive that fast? The next day we were told that yes, it had been an eclipse, a fascinating accompaniment to our only nocturnal ride. Into the night, we tried to find a place to stay, but obviously it was too late for B&B people to stay up so nobody answered our calls. We drove further, inquired in hotels which were too expensive, and I was so tired I could have fallen asleep on the dance floor in a gay club! At last we found a motel at the English side of the Severn, with spare beds and low prices.

THURSDAY 4. - FRIDAY 5.

APRIL:

WITH JOHN IN WALES

Late in the morning, we drove into the green world of Wales and its weird names. After some hours, far into the Welsh highlands, we suddenly found ourselves in the middle of remote farmlands, driving on winding mud roads between stone cottages and barns looking for John Weathers' home. As it turned out, the last part of the road was

closed, and so we drove to the wonderful Copperbeech guesthouse a mile or two away, where we aimed to set up base camp. Dan walks in and starts talking to some old people sitting there and suddenly it dawns upon me, it is Pugwash's parents, John and Gladys! They were celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary! What a coincidence that Pugwash was born nine months later almost to the day.

John was working on his parents' home, totally renovating it, so we called him, said we had arrived and agreed to meet him in the local village pub. There he was when we arrived, totally bald except for a thick moustache, with thick eye-glasses and looking like he always had done, bursting with energy and determination. He was straightforward and friendly at once, started talking about the other guys and asking after Ray and everything else, the only breaks being to fill up the glasses with the beer that was local to the village. (I always asked for the nearest-made beer.) Contrary to popular belief, possibly grounded in wild behaviour on the stage, John is the most business-like of all the band members, very clear both

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

on memories and opinions.

After a few pints, we drove to John's stone cottage. The reason for the road closure was that a team was filming a movie about Welsh miners in the 19th century in the area. Actually, John even played a part in the film! Just perfect, I thought. We removed the road signs and reached the cottage just 100 yards away. First, we encountered John's two old dogs, who were excited to have someone throwing pins for them. Then we went in and met John's wife Carol, a teacher in a nearby town, with thick, curly hair with gray streaks and a friendly smile at once. We hadn't expected the hot meal which she had prepared for us, so we were very excited as we sat down around the small kitchen table chatting continuously about everything. Carol is very interested in folk music and folk dancing and was going to attend and perform at a festival in the summer.

John had to take the dogs for a walk and soon we were strolling along the road with a beautiful view of the heath and the mountains in the distance, with the occasional tree and cottage nearby. We then went through a wooden gate and down into a gorge, clad with trees on each side. It had been formed through thousands of years work by a small river. Now, a beautiful waterfall was coming down from the plain heath above into a small lake. John led us behind the waterfall, and as we were standing there sharing a pint of lager, the sun set and gave us a wonderful view with magnificent colours. It was another touch of eternity with our fantastic host and his kind dogs. John told us that they used to take tourists here until some years ago, when a large stone fell down. This was the same stone I was sitting on. We just had to look up above us to make sure we were safe. While climbing up the gorge on the other side, John had to tell me not to throw so many twigs, for the dogs were growing older and could easily become exhausted.

Back home, we sat down talking in his living-room. On the wall we could see ourselves in the *The Power and the Glory* mirror which had been made as a promotional gadget in 100-some copies. Each band member had their own copy of what is probably the largest promotional item for the group. I was so fascinated that when we left, John assured me he would sit guarding the mirror until I had left the house. We came up with our gifts, and as we shared the liquor, John related to the Bartok CD and showed us his small stereo to the right of him. He listened to all sorts of music, also a lot of classical, but more importantly (for us, that is), here he had been sitting with Kerry's and Ray's tapes, making the drumming part for each tune, working it out in detail. Nobody else had made him drum like he did with the Giant, for nobody else used the drums like them. So he really looked forward to playing in the band again.

When we asked why he didn't do drum solos while in the group, he said he wasn't interested in showing off. For that reason he didn't like jazz. Those players only wanted to show how well they played. For him the great challenge was in getting it right each time. The interplay was so important, as he felt the group had played a sort of classical music, where the music itself was in the center and not the musicians. After Giant was dissolved, Ian Anderson took contact with John, wanting him to play with Tull. John auditioned, but refused on the grounds that the drumming Ian wanted was too simple. According to John, Ian chose the only other drummer auditioning, Gerry Conway.

We invited John and Carol down to the guesthouse for dinner and another long chat. As we left first, Dan could let me out so that I could put out the road signs again in front of John's car. We laughed loudly as we drove away. Down at the guesthouse we dressed

and then had a wonderful meal. John knew everyone – and that evening the house was full as so many people had come home for Easter. John and Carol told of their wonderful meeting with Kerry, Lesley, Gary and Judy last autumn and how fantastic it was to find that the old spirit still was there. They had met to see if they could find the tune again and if they could make music together. There was no doubt about that now. They were also sure that they could at least ask Ray for some help, although he has his own projects. A few months earlier, John had received a copy of all the nearly 300 answering letters I had received so far from the *Proclamation* subscribers concerning a reunion. He had read all of them and it strengthened his self-confidence and the confidence in the group enormously. He felt that the fans as with one voice said that they wanted to give the group *Free Hand*, just as it had been in the 70s. This, he felt, was very important for both Kerry and Ray to know.

Carol assured us that all the wives of the group wanted their husbands out on the road again. Not that they were tired of them, but they all knew what made their men happy. My dark humor on that occasion better be left untouched – it is good to know that the women stand behind their men. As John was really interested in our viewpoints, I told John what I meant was the best strategy to strengthen both interest and self-confidence in the various band members. With this conversation I suddenly felt that in some way I now know too much about the relations between the band members to be able to easily going out talking about how a reunion may take place. They have been away from each other for many years. They respect that all of them lead different lives with different aims and goals and projects. Apart from motivation, the problem is very much the distance between the band members.

Money obviously is no problem for a

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN



In the backyard of John Weathers' cottage, with the old Massey Ferguson.

reunion. John had had lots of phone calls from festivals where they had stated that money was no problem if the group could reunite. John was not interested in continuing with Man, the Welsh group he had been with since the break-up. He had done lots of studio work for other groups, but really wanted to go out on the road again. He started telling stories and went on for hours, so it seemed like the tours were continuous parties. We got to hear about how Gary, John's soul mate, when he was fishing from the hotel room window, landed a shark in the bathtub. How Kerry always sunbathed with his socks on. How Gary in Italy, being somewhat moisty, managed to break the furniture of one bathroom in one fall. It was very late when John and Carol headed for home and Dan and I went to bed, our heads ringing with all the fun and excitement.

When we at last managed to crawl out of our bedsheets the day after, we packed and then went straight to John's cottage. It was time for another interview. John answered our questions and talked for hours. It will, however, all be printed in the special Pugwash issue of *Proclamation*, of

course, so at this spot I will say nothing more. We had a photo session and a video session, and John showed us his treasures from the time with the band. He had used to put his stage passes on the inside of his travelling suitcase, and wow, how many he had collected. Not to mention those in his collection of photographs, articles, Giant stickers, *Missing Piece* matches and other unbelievable items. I was able to bring with me all he had that I hadn't seen yet, to reproduce it for *Proclamation* and then mail it back to him, for which I was extremely grateful.

At last the time came to say goodbye. Kerry had already called to ask about when we arrived – it was hilarious to hear the guys joking with each other. John guarded the mirror while we packed into the car. Then we went outside for some last minute photos and videofilming. John was to go filming after we had left, but his heart was one hundred percent for a reunion and I asked him to rehearse and be ready on short notice.

FRIDAY 5. - SATURDAY 6.

APRIL: WITH KERRY IN THE MIDLANDS

We then left the outskirts of the Welsh national park with some hours driving before us. From John and Carol's cottage we first drove along a narrow stonewalled road more giving the impression of being a bobsleigh course, then winding through the naked valleys of Wales before speeding out on the English motorways for Kerry in the Midlands. We had been given good instructions of how to find Kerry's house and only had one stop, on a roadside inn, to have a Mac and a pee, as the advertisement says.

In the afternoon, we arrived in front of Kerry's new house, just ten houses down the road from where they lived when I had visited them earlier. It was easily recognizable on the old station wagon, but the typical suburban 2-floor English house (don't they have any imagination in England?) was a little bit larger than their old one. However, Kerry still has to have his studio in the garage and we could hear sounds from that direction. As it turned out, it was his son Samuel who was working with his school task. His oldest daughter Sally waved to us from the window and then Lesley met us, Kerry's very small and thin wife, who seems to be laughing always. I have seen photos of her from the late 60s where she looks just like the models that were the beauty ideal at that time.

Soon came Kerry, too, with more grayish streaks in what is left of his hair. Lesley has made him grow it again, in the back, which she feels is justified by him being a musician. Smiling as usual, he at once asked us about how we were and how the other guys were. This I felt a little paradoxically, because we came to them to hear how they were and especially if something was happening to his muse. We were quite uninterest-

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

ed in talking about our own conditions. We presented a Bartok CD and Dan's album and were sorry about being short of liquor, to which Kerry just laughed while he showed us that they were not able to empty what they already had of glass fodder.

Dan had brought with him some sound cards he wanted Kerry to try and soon they disappeared into the studio while I chatted with Lesley. Kerry has bought a Roland JV 1080 which has made some of his older equipment superfluous, and he and Dan were toying away, while Sam was eagerly looking. Kerry became especially interested in an expansion card called "Keyboards from the 60s and 70s". Later, Dan let Sam too find sounds, for his school project. Dan also presented Kerry with the advertisement from the local workers of Ray's neighbourhoods, which made Kerry even more glad that he didn't live in that part of the country. Lesley was also eager to hear of the other band members and she praised the meeting they had had the last autumn. She showed us photographs of Gary, John and Kerry obviously having a fantastic time together, and could only agree that the boys need to come together to make music and that it, of course, would be fabulous. She said Kerry had such a high threshold before he could enjoy what he was making, but the last days, he had emerged from the studio with a smile, clearly satisfied with what he had done.

The evening before, the family and some friends had been out eating. Lesley didn't feel well because of that, so Kerry simply invited us out to dinner after we had been properly lodged in Sam's room. I noticed the old white cello in Sally's room and would soon be asking Kerry for other items and their whereabouts while we were driving to an Indian restaurant. Kerry started asking us about the other band members. He was especially glad to hear about Malcolm as he hadn't seen

or heard from him since 1972. Kerry could tell that the royalties for the BBC In Concert CD had enabled him to concentrate on composing the whole day now. He had no obligations, neither any contracts, he only had to have some pupils in the afternoon or evening. He has been teaching both piano, guitar and drums, and I feel there is some irony in it when he gladly teaches the 12-year old how to play the riffs from heavy metal records they bring with them. They have no idea whom their teacher is.

Kerry was always very fascinated by the songwriters who reach other people with their simple, yet charming songs. For many years he strove to achieve the same, but in February 1996 he felt that he had done what he could do in that respect. He then decided to become more quirky, more polyphonic and contrapuntal, as with the old Giant stuff. I was extremely relieved to hear that, as I have always been quite sure that this is what is deeply rooted in his soul. We told him that we had heard his new tunes at Ray's and asked if he had something more. Kerry said he had some bits and pieces, but he also asked us if we had heard the expression that if it is born too early, then it dies. That is, if someone hears it before it is finished, then the tune dies. He went on to explain that if someone hears his tunes while he is working on them and then utters that it is OK or something to that extent, then he loses his faith in the tune. He feels a need to get the structure right and then to make it not only OK, but brilliant, at least in his own ears. One problem is whether he is satisfied with it himself, another if he has got something to say with his music, and how to say it. This is what he uses his days to find out.

Kerry was also very interested in the control the group might have over their own products in the future. The band members felt that there was a renewed interest in the group thanks to the CD

reissues, but this didn't necessarily give high royalty rates. They had to fight for that. Kerry had also started reading some of the letters from fans regarding the reunion which I had mailed him. He had found that the interest and the message about a *Free Hand* was quite clear. However, Kerry thought there was a problem in letting so many other hands take care of production and distribution. One thing was to exercise more control over their old CDs, another was how to do it if new albums were to emerge. Kerry was very interested to hear how advertisement and distribution could be done through Internet, because that would enable the group to do all this themselves, not being dependent on a record company. I thought it would be splendid, provided that they would be able to run it as a family business and not have to employ other people. At some times, the work load could get out of hand and might even hinder Kerry's composing, for instance. He also listened willingly to what I could refer from the fans and all their letters and email to me, and to what Dan and I could opine about a possible reunion. It was nearly embarrassing to sit there and give him our ideas, but we also brought the other band members' ideas about what could be done.

Much more was said about the actual logistics of bringing the boys together and about the way everything would work. These are things that need to be worked out, which is not easily done. We will just have to wait and let it all develop naturally. Kerry, however, was really glad that the three of them had found each other so easily when they met the last autumn. He could also reveal that tapes had since been exchanged. He said that they had been careful not to invite Ray because the main motive for the meeting was to see if it was possible to play together again, which Ray hadn't really been interested in at that time. They all really want to

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

have Ray with them, because of his musicianship, inventiveness and not least his friendship. Kerry emphasized that Ray had always been such an inspiration and help to him. We had to remember that Ray had made approx. 40% of the group's music and that he was indispensable in the studio, both at producing and at the instrumentation of Kerry's tunes. Kerry was very glad that he had been allowed to work for Ray with the computer games music and that Ray had updated him on new things within music technology. He regarded Ray as a very close friend now and phoned him quite often.

Kerry also told about the first days of the group, when he quit smoking and started jogging and doing physical exercises. We laughed heartily of all kinds of reminiscences, although being in the restaurant was like sitting in a steam-bath. We returned late in the evening and went to bed, very happy about Kerry's thoughts for the future and that he could use all his time on composing.

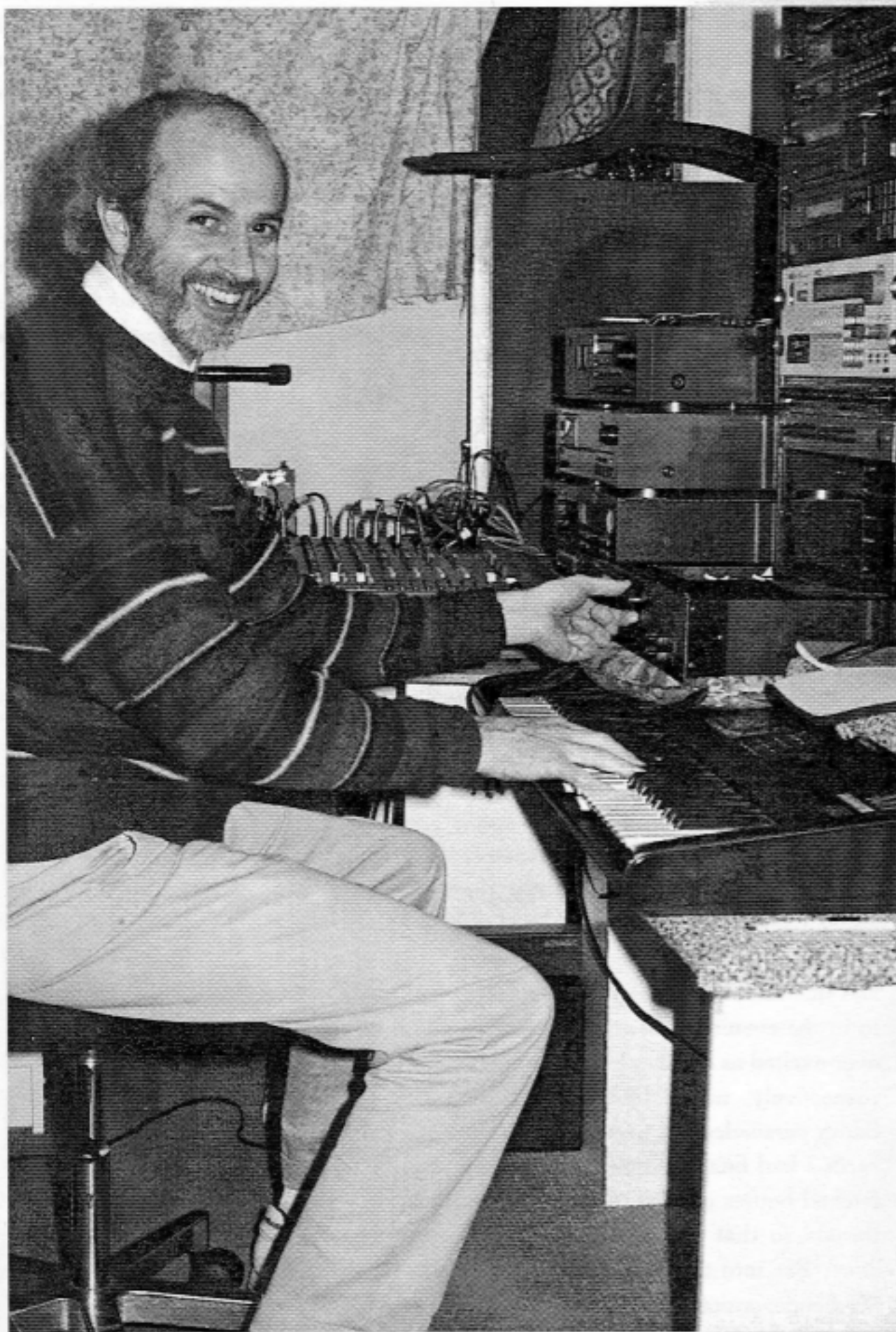
The next day, however, did not go as we had thought. Kerry didn't feel well, for he had obviously caught the same bug as Lesley the day before. We had to leave out the interview and instead, Dan went into the studio with Sam while I worked through the royalty statements and had some talks with Lesley, Kerry and Ray on the phone because of that. Then Lesley found some old photographs in a large suitcase, including Kerry as a child, in youth and with the band, and even Simon Dupree photographs from the time when Lesley was their friend, years before Kerry was brought into the gang. I borrowed some, but we agreed that I would come back for material to reproduce another time. They would have to bring down a large trunk from the attic, but as Kerry was linked to the bed, it was not a good idea to push that now. As I told about John's promo mirror, Lesley found theirs in the bedroom to show. I scolded them

because they hadn't put it on the wall. However, when we packed our bags, Lesley was waiting upstairs to secure it – that it didn't end up in my rucksack by mistake. How could such a thought enter her head? I wondered and am still wondering.

Sally showed us a video of Wallace and Gromit, a weird and obviously a prize-winning animated movie, before

she and Sam took us into town so that we could do the proper tourist shopping. Dan found his piles of various rhyming dictionaries so that he can go on writing more clever pop songs and I found Wally books and the obligatory country jigsaw puzzle for my children and postcards and stamps for my Norwegian friends. One has to do one's duty, although we had had almost no

Kerry in his new studio



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: ONE WEEK IN BRITAIN

time to play tourists this time. A trip to the local music store revealed no trace of Ray's maxis, however. Then it was time to go home and say goodbye and all these other things, being a little sad because we had to leave all these fantastic people. However, Dan had started thinking again about an old idea of his, of setting up adat players and transferring all the 16 and 24-tracks of the Gentle Giant tunes to adat cassettes in order to transcribe it all to sheet music so that it can be played by other people. We talked with Kerry and Ray about that and they agreed that it would be possible to do that in London, for instance, provided the material would not be misused. Ah, we would never miss any excuse to come back!

SATURDAY 6. APRIL -

SUNDAY 7. APRIL:

BACK TO PETE AGAIN

We left in the afternoon, had a quick meal in town - then Dan found he had forgotten his bag and we strove terribly to find our way back to fetch it. Finally, we were heading for Huntingdon, to deliver the car, pick up the records and find the material from Pete to reproduce. After the more or less usual driving off at the wrong junction, we arrived just in time to avoid the first rain of the week. Pete and Sarah were glad to see us, as they had had company with children of their relatives the whole week and consequently done nothing else than sip the whisky bottle and quarrel over which music to listen to in the evenings. Dan and I were as over-excited as one can expect and, retrospectively, not a little wound up. Sarah persuaded me to write the postcards I had finally acquired while they fetched bottles of beer to oil our eager throats so that we could tell the full story. Far into the night, Pete fetched his Fender guitar and we sat down to play. He should have done that some

hours earlier. Exhausted, we went to bed for a few hours sleep before the immoral leave at sunrise.

SUNDAY 7. APRIL:

BACK HOME

Early in the morning Sarah drove me to Stanstead, as she feared Pete might be over the limit still. Dan would leave some hours later, that lucky guy. I was sad to leave Britain, the week had just gone too fast and there was so much more to talk with people about, not to mention all the musical projects. Pete and Sarah had lent me an old bag to carry some of the 100+ albums I had brought with me, the others were in a huge box. Well inside the plane, I remembered about the postcards and ran out to ask if some of the personnel could post them for me. Wow! The most pressing problem now was: Am I going to get through the customs with this load of vinyl records? Down on Mother Earth again, I simply loaded my back and arms and mingled with

some people who looked like being a family, even talking to them, so that it looked like I was carrying the burden of some members of the weaker sex or some of the old people or whatever. Then, the rest is of little importance to the reader. At home, my friends soon arrived to hear about what had happened and the music I brought with me and after some days I had managed to sort out all the items I had brought with me and everything was as before. Or was it? It had been a wonderful time, spawning many articles and projects, much listening and lots of ideas. When will I get the time for all that? Yet more self-inflicted work - *Proclamation* will be well-fed for many years to come.

At least, here is the first article. There will be more photographs and interviews and promotional material in future issues. Which is, for you, a poor compensation for not having been able to follow in my footsteps (OK, wheel-marks) to some of the greatest guys and gals I know in ye olde Britain.



Pete Gray showing a children size **Giant for a day** promotional t-shirt.

In the Fall of 1987, Jethro Tull released one of their finest albums in recent years. Crest Of A Knave went gold in a short period of time and was quite a boost for a band that had remained obscure for the best part of three years. The Tull fan club was 2 years into its inception and growing all the time. Subscription paid, I made contact with several other fans through that newsletter and began trading several audio- and videotapes back and forth. Surprising thing was that the quality of these tapes ranged from very poor to very good. A few extremely exceptional sounding board tapes could also be found. Sparking the interest once again, this got me asking myself "What other tapes may lie about in the tape trading world?"

About four years ago or so, in a quest to find more good Tull tapes, I set forth sending out want notices, self addressed envelopes and answering ads placed in collector's magazines. I must have sent out dozens of letters. Then this one particular list hit the porch. Opening the envelope, reading quickly through the pages I noticed a Gentle Giant tape from the Roxy, 1980. I ordered it, not believing that this could be that show – the Giant's last stand together on stage!

DESIGN: THE LAST STEPS

by Dave Armas

The tape arrived a month or so later, labeled with no date, no time, only the venue. Once I put it on and heard it, it confirmed what was suspected. Again, surprised by its extremely good quality, it quickly brought back memories of those "Old Days" having seen the gig.

The tape was a house/board mix recorded at the monitor by their roadie 'Ritchie'. Part of the audio is fed from the soundboard to the monitor (left channel). The other part comes from the microphone hung above the audience and captures the sound leaving the speakers (right channel). It has its own reverb effect and a more 'live' sound compared with the tape flat off the board. The concert was also recorded at the board by Chris Rankin, the venue sound engineer. So this gig had been floating around in the bootleg mill for quite some time! Ritchie had given this tape to his friend whom I bought the copy from.

This last Roxy gig was a three night, six show gig, the nights of June 13th, 14th and 16th, 1980. According to the tour itinerary, Giant went to San Francisco the night of the 15th and then back again to L. A. on the 16th to finish the tour. It seemed strange to do it this way, therefore we thought that the S. F. and the last L. A. show were ditched. Gary Green couldn't recall one way or the other, but a recent subscription contained a letter that revealed that they played upstairs at the Old Waldorf Hotel in Frisco. This means that the 16th held the final bill.

Since the quality of the tape was amazingly decent, a copy was immediately sent to Geir Hasnes. He wrote a letter back to me and also to Kerry Minnear suggesting that this would

make a nice CD release. Then it dawned: What will be done for the CD sleeve cover? I asked Kerry about this and he simply said: "You do it." All of a sudden, a million different ideas pop into your head, just too many to list here in any great detail. Then I began wondering: "Just how am I going to do this - something I've never attempted before?" Well, you just throw these ideas up into the air and see which ones hit the floor the hardest. Picking through the pieces, thoughts went in all directions. While sifting through a few dozen colour photographs that could be used, it came to mind that there was a serious lack of good colour photos of the band members on the covers of any of their albums. The first album had them in drawing form. Playing The Fool had that small photo from what looks like a half mile away. Subsequent releases as compilations like the Italian Superstar series had a partial shot on the front cover and nice photos inside. The re-release of Acquiring the Taste on the Mercury label had a colour photo on the front cover of them just standing together. So, best it be one good shot of everyone on the cover doing what they do best.

The first step was to come up with some sort of an arrangement on the outer cover with these photos. With a twist of fate, a timely stroke of luck, this work got interrupted by a short phone call one night. Chris Hoard, a local subscriber from Long Beach, rang to talk about the newsletter. He mentioned that he saw this show and had photos from the gig. We decided to meet and discuss the project at hand and see if he would like to use these photos for the album. Looking over them, I realized it

DESIGN: THE LAST STEPS

would be a perfect fit. His friend, Jeff Burke, who is in the professional photo business, helped with the digital imaging on the photos. The photos were positioned in their proper place for the cover. Jeff then scanned the slides into his computer and re-touched the faces to give them their effect. Gary had a microphone stand cutting across his head, which was removed with a few strokes of the computer pencil. Kerry's lips were almost obscured by shadows, so they needed to be more defined. The smoke effect, colour dissemination, lights and the structure behind the band's name was also added. For the lettering, a nice looking font was already found in the computer called Duc De Berry. This is not exact, but very similar to the "Old English" type writing found on the first album and the four subsequent releases starting with *The Power and the Glory* and equates well with the band's most successful period.

The next page displays two types of tickets. The small green one, front and back, were printed by the venue and purchased at the box office window before the show and used by my friend. The longer multi-colored one could be bought at Ticketron outlets and was the one I used. Scanned into the computer, they came out too small. Instead, they were rearranged in camera-ready form.

Then, the text page were to carry a text by me. Being a bit personal, my thoughts in the first paragraph were to try to portray an idea of the excitement, ambience and atmosphere on this particular night. I deliberately simplified it, staying away from writing another bloated piece about the band's whole history – which I am sure most of you know about – and tried to stick with something that has a degree of relevance for the moment at hand. Chris had come up with a very well written piece, but after completing the layout, it turned out to be a bit lengthy. It would have taken a little work and more time to edit it down, so it was left out of the

booklet, but is instead printed here in *Proclamation* for the benefit of the readers. Chris then wrote a shortened piece that could fit into the booklet, provided the record company would use it.

Inside the cover on the middle pages, a photo of the band on stage was planned with their full names underneath. Chris chose the best out of his three shots. This photo was not re-touched.

Another page of the booklet was planned to contain, of course, a photo of an iron-on, another image most fans assimilate well with. The photo was enhanced a bit by adding the pink colour in the lips with a red grease pencil not found in the iron-on due to cost control. I thought it best to immortalize it in some way, via this release, in case you guys outwash them. Buying four different colored pieces of fabric measuring 5' x 5' square, the iron-on's were put on each piece. The white background was 100% cotton Bull denim. The rear CD cover was supposed to have another iron-on placed on a green background of velvet material, giving it a shiny texture. To shoot them, 100 ASA Kodak colour reversal film was used to make slides. I used my new Pentax PZ-10 35mm automatic camera in the front yard of my home on a bright sunny April day last year. Changing back and forth between several different exposure levels, 36 frames were clicked in all. The four best ones were picked, of which two were used. The third was put on a black background on 100% cotton and the fourth on a purple piece of velvet. Both of these were set aside as a standby in case any colour or layout discrepancies emerged. Originally, two other slides with white and magenta colour background were scanned into the computer, but I decided against them and went with the raw photos instead. This particular design of Gargantua is a good modern version, its detail and quality

teetering somewhere between the original artwork by George Underwood and the cartoonish-looking version of *Giant For A Day*.

The front cover work was loaded onto digital tape and sent to a record company along with text, slides and layout plans. They would exercise their judgement on the final positioning of and fonts for the lettering. One of the slides could be used to make a suitable picture disc. The most difficult decision to make was the title. The original title was stated "Our Last Time". Derek reminds us twice during the show that it is the "last of the tour". Some have said that it sounds too definitive, meaning that the boys will never play again. Admittedly, it does have that ring to it, certainly not meant as such, but more or less intended to poke some fun at them, create a hurdle that we all would like to see crossed, considering the amount of time that has passed. Other titles include "The Last Step", "A Giant's Last Stride" and "Giant's Last Step".

Then suddenly, a very unfortunate thing happened. A little bird bearing bad tidings told me that this layout plan got nixed at the last moment, along with the title. I called the record company and asked why. It was stated to me that they felt they could make this cover "better" and proceeded with their own design, because the images sent on the DAT tape were "too dark". This could have been easily corrected. Upon release, I bought the CD with the new design and while thumbing through the ruins of this decimated project, my first thought was one of dismay. How could this be? Here we are, back to the dark ages again, dealing with record company fiddlings that just aren't supposed to happen. Then I started to laugh. Why someone would use parts of a previously released compilation album for a brand new release! Good thinking! The cover of *Giant Steps* is most unusual and the least attractive of

DESIGN: THE LAST STEPS

all Giant covers to be found. Put side by side – “Dumb and Dumber”. The Giant’s face photo behind the clear tray shrinks in four gradients until it’s almost indiscernible, covered behind the tray’s holding flanges instead of leaving it in its fullest dimension. What for? What was the point? In my text in the second paragraph, second line, a spelling deviation makes the word ‘combative’ instead of ‘combinative’. The release added the text by Chris, but fails to credit him for his venue photos used in the middle pages and me for the three Giant’s face photos. The release could definitively have been nicer than what it turned out to be. For my own personal reasons I have decided to forget it, walk away and leave it at that. However, the picture disc is quite nice, as well as the music – for that’s pure Gentle Giant.

I met Chris Rankin recently and asked if he would let us use his board tape for a release. He agreed, provided he can find it, as it is packed away in boxes at his home. The recent earthquake rearranged his belongings into a stack of more organized confusion. As he couldn’t find it, the houseboard mix had to be used instead. Kerry and John worked on the mastering, before two other engineers brought it further. The audience noise in this small venue is very prominent and all that shouting and whistling is picked up by the house mic very well. During production, it was kept to a minimum and the audio from the board was brought up a bit more.

It was somewhat of a reward for me to bring this find to the attention of the proper people. At the time it was worked with, it was supposed to be the first release of new GG material since the split. It was done with the thought that all fans would like this offering of relevant artwork and photographs from the actual venue, rather than the usual misunderstood covers from record company officials. That all the fans

should be able to enjoy the music throughout the years to come, rather than let it sit at a dead idle in someone’s moldy old tape collection turning to oxide, falling to the ground as white powder and being swept away with the wind forever (as is the case with some other near-priceless works). I thank Chris and Jeff, despite the fact that it did not turn out as planned. I thank Geir for his advice and consultations. And many thanks to Kerry and John for the studio work. One great album by another great band did light this fire! Remember: Peel the quality, Mister class, – and paint!

Editor’s note: After nearly three years of wheeling and dealing and

moving back and forth and standing still for the greater amount of the time, the CD was at last released on the Red Steel label in London late November last year. Sadly, the artwork differed in many ways from David’s original plans. However, we feel it important that the readership of *Proclamation* should be able to follow a CD from idea to release, to see what it requires and also that the fan support is very important if one wants to see more gems out on the market, both with regard to musical content and to attractive packaging.

For the illustrations see colour pictures on cover (p2 & p67).

The photo for the final attempt to create a cover to the CD “The Last Time”.



MEMORIES OF OLD DAYS: GENTLE GIANT AT THE ROXY, JUNE 1980

by Chris Hoard

By 1980 the “progressive rock” musical genre had suffered severely from entropy and creative decline for several years. Rock music had become thoroughly indoctrinated as the product of large corporations, and thus dispersed in the hazy nebulae of confusion that ended the turbulent 70s. Disco had gone the way of the dodo, laying rigid in coffin, donning a yellow polyester suit; the new wave was old news; the punks were either suiciding, locked in asylums or selling out and learning how to play their instruments with passable competence.

Progressive rockers survived by either courting pop-formulas or reverting to heavy metal. Nestled on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood, the Roxy Theater provided a venue in which all these musical trends took stage and gave life to their finest moments. Yet given all of rock’s casualties and seasonal fashion swings, one band had weathered the previous decade largely intact from their 1970 inception: Gentle Giant, undisputedly the artistic champion of progressive rock.

1980 proved one of The Roxy’s stand-out years – a resurrected King Crimson would debut there that year; Genesis finally in command of the pop charts treated fans to a rare, small club gig after selling out two nights at the Forum. I attended dozens of Roxy shows that year as a college journalist – and remember none better than Gentle Giant. Several months later, in a phone conversation with the band’s lead vocalist, Derek Shulman, I realized sadly what had really come to pass during that show. The ecstatic audiences, who were so bedazzled and fulfilled on those warm June evenings, had sadly witnessed the last manifestation of a

musical power so unique and powerful, that such a potent musical chemistry has not since been approached.

The Shrine Auditorium/Playing The Fool show in 1977 still stands out (as it does in the minds of many other Southern California aficionados I met years later) as one of a handful of the most memorable concerts in rock’s entire history. Ken K., a friend and former L. A. Times rock critic (and perhaps the only critic I’ve known with a real grasp of musical theory and technique) attended the Giant’s first L. A. gigs at the Whiskey – he had seen the Stones, King Crimson, Genesis in their prime, and still will rattle on about the Shrine show with undiminished enthusiasm. Comparatively, the Roxy shows were vastly different to the Giant’s large scale stage show – lacking the visual props and elaborate lighting, but delivering the band in-your-face. I remember in particular the first set Saturday night, where perfect renditions of **Free Hand**, **Knots**, and **Underground** blew away all the hardcore fans – even **Giant For A Day** generated furious cheers from the crowd with Derek Shulman donning a paper giant mask.

Derek’s vocals throughout cut through the complex mass of musical alchemy with the high-voltage that only a handful of rock vocalists could physically attain – singers like Peter Gabriel, Roger Daltrey, and Stevie Wonder would occasionally thrust out majestic voices that could, like a launched saber, pierce one’s very heart. Two of the most striking examples of Shulman’s vocals captured effectively in the studio were **Civilian’s Inside Out** and **Experience** from *In a Glass House*. On re-listening (and reflection), the tape made from the room mixer of the Roxy finds Derek’s voice at its peak in performance. Considering the three of six Roxy sets I attended, the most amazing aspect of the event in retrospect, was the strong note upon which this band ended their career.

Many Giant devotees agree the group saw their prime in the mid-seventies. 1974 unfolded as one of progres-

MEMORIES OF OLD DAYS: AT THE ROXY, JUNE 1980

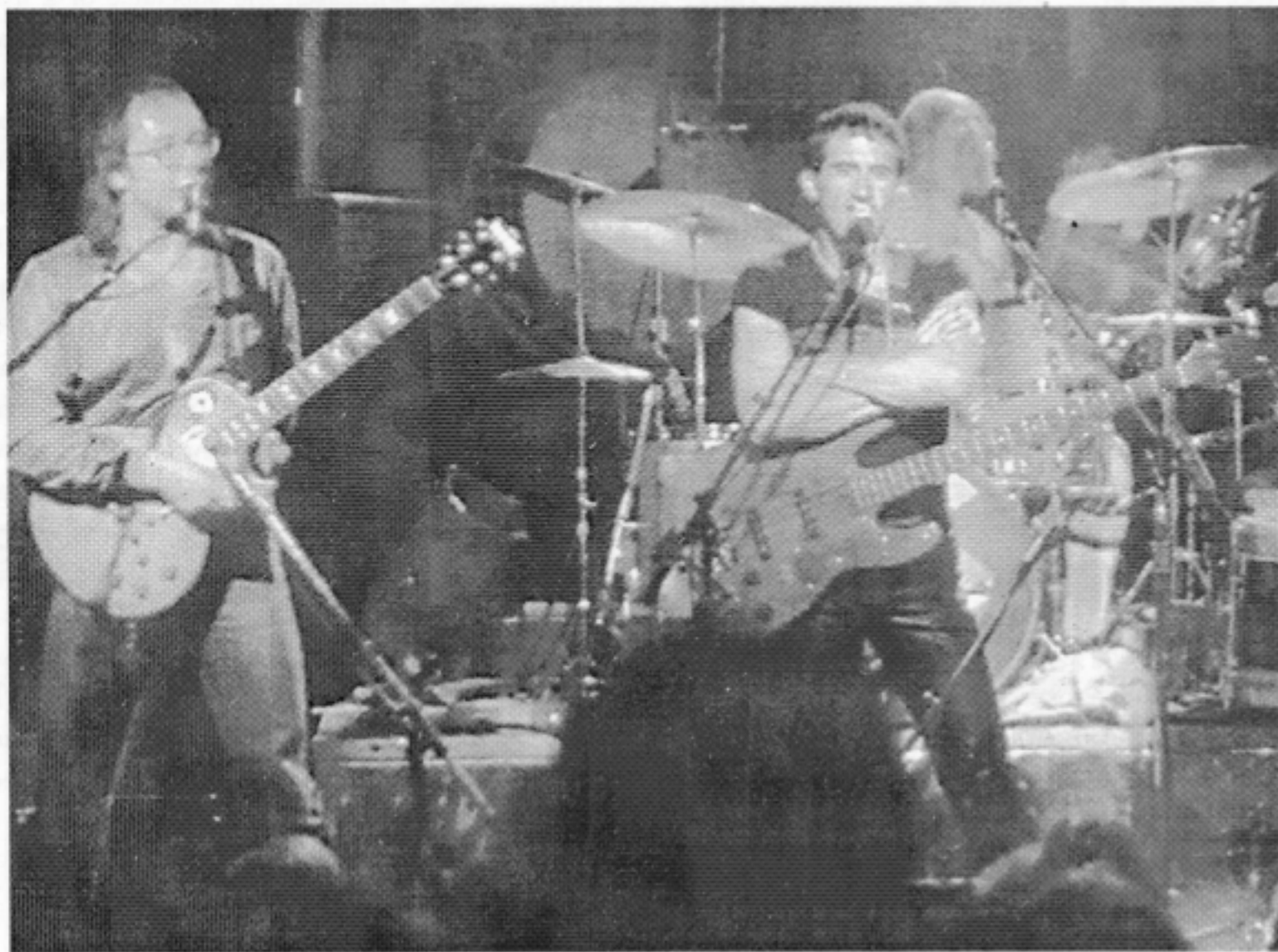
sive rock's holiest of years – melodious days of miracles and wonder. The year marked a period when Gentle Giant came into their prime as a singular artistic force in contemporary rock, commanding increasing respect, as other prime players in this genre faltered. The band, having formed in 1970, by then dazzled a cross-section of critics and a mid-sized, international cult audience was swift enough to catch on. 1974 saw the release of *The Power And The Glory*, a mythical treatise on political gamesmanship and corruption that ironically predated the Watergate scandal by a few months. This was arguably one of a handful of the most brilliant rock concept albums, relatively unsung in terms of mass acceptance, much like Genesis' 1974 epic *The Lamb Lies Down On Broadway*. Power demonstrated innovative studio techniques, visionary musicianship, and sophistication which succeeded on musical levels even the most successful productions of the genre (Pink Floyd's *Dark Side Of*

The Moon) couldn't approach. The Giant became universally hailed by ranks of rock music lovers able to appreciate – in particular – classical and jazz idioms.

Their live performances became legendary because of musical inventions – five part vocal fugue sections found in *Knots* from 1973's *Octopus*, or *On Reflection* – or the haunting, cascading choruses of four guitars and bass as in *Memories of Old Days*. To those uninitiated concertgoers familiar with Gentle Giant in June of 1980, these pieces were known as examples of the cutting edge in studio production. Unlike Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*, here were five guys – mixing different lyrical phrases and harmonies, each performing at advanced levels on multiple instruments, virtuosos on one or two – delivering as no other band could in concert. More often than not a piece of music that could assume the jubilant or dark character of an inspired renaissance chamber piece locked into a

gut-grabbing, bluesy vamp, swinging rock-hard as the rhythmic undercurrent beneath daring, precarious, and eccentric intricacies.

For all their embellishments and elaboration, Gentle Giant never relied on technical gimmickry or music for the sake of sportsmanship – their riffs, however spectacular, arose from a superb and keen sense of melodic and orchestrative inventions. They took on some extreme technical challenges and deftly used advances in electronics – but only in the service of music. Their interest in lyrical allegory, literary legends, and dark psychological conundrums never failed to produce a compelling lyric or frame a delightful, mythic story. Their reputation in England as overly intellectual was both truth and an undeserved exaggeration that could have been applied just as easily to the most successful British groups of the seventies; it demonstrated more the whimsy and fashion-consciousness rock critics whose idealism



Ray and Gary at the Roxy
(see full color picture on the
second cover page).

MEMORIES OF OLD DAYS: AT THE ROXY, JUNE 1980

was mired in a fixation on a few of rock's earliest and best-known pop-culture oriented personalities. Gentle Giant provided an artistic response to what was wrong with pop culture and what was right about a musical approach founded in the European tradition of experimentation coupled with classical training.

To music's young intelligentsia their reputation grew to gargantuan proportions as the reigning ensemble of "musicians' musicians" (to quote Stereo Review). The decline for the Giant began with the 1978 release of **Giant For A Day**, a record that struck most fans as an overtly commercialized reaction to new wave and artistically uninspired when measured against previous works. Yet Gentle Giant went out with a nuclear-meltdown of a gig – their six sets at the Roxy bore triumphant testament to a body of work spanning twelve studio releases and one double-live album.

The difficult transition their music underwent in the late seventies, beginning with *The Missing Piece* ended in one of their best and most accessible works, 1980's *Civilian*. Progressive purists argue that *Interview* was the last great work of the band, never mind that *The Missing Piece* contained several of their best realized pieces. Like *The Power and the Glory*, *Civilian* ultimately proved another uncanny social harbinger – its lyrics brooded on an increasingly ruthless corporate mentality, and the urban alienation manifested later in the decade of junk bond mergers, crack houses, sound bites, and shadow governments. Gentle Giant proved keen observers on many occasions. Though their obsession with medieval legends may have seemed laughable or impenetrable to some critics, the band's music was always a reflection of the times in which they toiled – and a reminder that the likes of Rabelais understood more about our own time than most of our politicians

do. Perhaps the prospects of attempting to continue an idealistic career as a talented artistic ensemble in this hostile music-biz climate were just too daunting for five humans – all band members had by then been married – a human tradition entirely at odds with the circumstances of professional, touring rock artists.

Perhaps after all the hard work, hotels, and meetings with music industry lawyers, the art this band produced just wasn't worth the toll on their humanity. After all, one of Hollywood's great megalithic organizations maintained the band still owed them money – despite their lame and mostly spurious efforts to promote and market the band, and in spite of a better than "modest" international following.

Gentle Giant opened their last show with **Convenience**: Clean and Easy, the first track from *Civilian*, their 11th studio release. When you have the live Roxy CD in hand, listen to the closing bars of structured, contrapuntal mayhem flying via the jet fuel of Kerry Minnear's synthesizer runs – they were playing so tight an amoeba couldn't slip backstage. The set they played that night differed greatly from the one heard on their 1977 live double-album *Playing The Fool*, as it concentrated on the best material from their post-*Interview* period. Here Kerry's singular keyboard talents were diverted to guitar once (**Memories of Old Days**), xylophone and drums during the five-man percussion bash following **Underground**. In **The Advent Of Panurge**, four of five members each playing recorder, wove a delightfully humorous and harmonically embellished Yankee Doodle into an interlude framed by the song's earth-shaking nuclear riffs. Derek had forgone the sax played on all previous tours, strapping on brother Ray's bass during **Memories of Old Days**, and plucking his rare, Irish-like electric two-stringed percussion instrument (trivia question

– what was it called? [Shulberry - ed.]) which propelled the infectious, funky pulse of **Playing The Game**.

While there may be a long awaited resurgence in popularity for progressive music amidst the current aimlessness and apathy surrounding MTV, alternative grunge, and hip-pop, new listeners discovering the Giant will find in this release one of the early, primal forces of rock eclecticism – a band that drew early on from jazz, blues, African, European, and even reggae. Their finest albums produced a series of tracks that seemed to be distinct genres unto themselves. This CD set provides a large, still active group of loyal followers – and hopefully the uninitiated – with a rewarding document of one of the most dynamic musical ensembles that ever performed live.

Many years later, the Giant's legend still grows as does their following – groups of new fans share their fascination from Kazakhstan and Scandinavia to Argentina and Australia; the more fortunate of us to have witnessed the spectacle of a live Gentle Giant performance will rejoice at the chance to relive or discover the greatest progressive rock band's last known performance in June, 1980. An unparalleled level of refined musical finesse and high-voltage rock enveloped the club that evening. The band imparted to live audiences a grand and forceful vision of the true possibilities of rock music. On this, their last voyage, they left their loyal audience with an indelible impression, one that resonates and echoes every time I hear great artists communicating musically on stage. The band ended the Roxy set with their sinister tribute to corporate egos, **Number One**, and I'll wager not one soul in that audience had any doubt as to where this band placed in terms of true rock artistry.

Ian Anderson was on tour supporting his wonderful new solo album and I caught up with him in Boston, MA, at the Orpheum Theater on June 1st 1995. His newest solo effort was an extreme departure from the Tull arena, yet strikingly Tullish in its Ian'esqueness. In other words it's everything the true Anderson fan could hope for and more.

12:33am the night before the Divinities show I used my computer to type up this quick interview while thinking how incredible these things are really. After all, it was my computer which proved that there is still a lot of devoted Gentle Giant fans out there (considering their demise in '81) in cyberspace and most are big Tull fans as well. It may seem odd that anyone would want to interview a modern day minstrel such as Ian about a band that doesn't exist anymore except in the fond memories and dusty record collections of its devoted fans. But that is the essence of it all – their music seems to (if I may borrow a phrase from Ian) have a «timeless quality».

AW: Hello, Ian. In '72 Gentle Giant went on tour with Tull. Do you remember them?

IA: Yes, I remember Gentle Giant well and still own many of their records. *Their music is described*

EXPERIENCE: IAN ANDERSON REMEMBERS GENTLE GIANT

by Arlo West

frequently as being quirky, complex, and hauntingly beautiful. Does this in anyway rekindle your recollection of them?

My recollection places them in the "research and adventure" category and, at their best, they found exactly what they were looking for!

Do you own any of their CDs? If so, which is your favorite?

I own 10 CDs of Gentle Giant, only original vinyl copies and somewhere I think there is even a single of "Kites" by Simon Dupree. A "Pictures of Matchstick Men"-like moment which some devotees might wish to forget.

Kerry Minnear, the keyboard player, would have made a great member of Tull! Were there ever any thoughts of hiring him when you were looking?

Yes, we considered contacting Kerry, but were told that he had, more or less, given up thoughts of music as a full-time profession along with Gary Green. I am not sure if this information was entirely accurate, but that's what we heard at the time.

Did you know that in the fanzine "Proclamation" which is about G. G., Derek Shulman, the lead vocalist, listed Aqualung as one of his most liked albums, and Gary Green the guitarist lists you personally as one of his favorite songwriters, and also in a "Proclamation" poll of G. G. fans Jethro Tull was voted #1 band in best other groups category?

No, I didn't know about the comments in the fanzine "Proclamation", but I am sure the mutual respect of the members of both bands would rank high.

I have heard some traces of Tull in Gentle Giant, but it seems to be a subtle interplay and not a blatant plagiarism. Does it feel strange to know that Tull and Gentle Giant seem to attract the same audience and share some similarities?

Many of the influences common to Jethro Tull and Gentle Giant will have come to bear at around the same time in our separate musical developments, and there is bound to be some similarity here and there in our musical styles and



This picture is extract from Jethro Tull's 25th anniversary box.

EXPERIENCE: IAN ANDERSON REMEMBERS GENTLE GIANT

phrasings, as well as attention to detail and the concern to improve as musicians.

Can you share a moment or highlight that you would remember about Gentle Giant from the '72 tours?

I have never heard a band scream, shout, rant and rave at each other like they did on an almost nightly basis as soon as they returned to their dressing room. In this respect they did not give the impression of being happy bunnies. *Would you have thought in 1972 that both Tull and Gentle Giant music would be so incredibly important to people and that the computer would play such a big part in the transfer of information about the bands to the extent that it has?*

No, I would not have anticipated the ongoing reverence for such bands especially in the light of technological communication, but I guess you also find gun collectors and paedophiles on the internet if you look hard enough. I think, on balance, I would rather discuss and/or reminisce regarding Gentle Giant over a civilised glass or two at a cocktail party rather than journey in disembodied trance through the mysterious world of, as you put it, Cyberspace. However, each to their own.

I find myself listening to Tull and Gentle Giant all year round but they seem to take on a special feel in the Fall. Do you find this to be a mere coincidence or is it that the music takes on a magical, almost mystical quality during that time of the year?

I do not understand this question. Is this when the Magic Mushrooms ripen! *In the last years of Gentle Giant's existence they put forth a couple of albums which were considered to be pop or commercially oriented, that were heavily criticized by the progressive rock crowd. And I have myself got into a few heated discussions with folks about the reasons why a band does this. Having been accused of this yourself, do you have a few words of advice to these armchair*

critics who only see one side of a band and are not receptive to change?

I remember a great deal of pressure on the part of Chrysalis Records and their management being exerted on Gentle Giant at the time, to attain a more commercial level of success. I suspect some return on investment was required by record company and management alike, and I would guess that at least some of the band would have really liked to enjoy the tangible benefits accruing to such a move for having struggled for so many years to support themselves as musicians. Personally, I believe their finest song to have been "I'm Turning Around" from the final part of their career, embracing as it does all the legacy of their musicianship and eclectic interests together with a direct and relatively simple approach.

* P.S. I did actually call Derek Shulman with regard to a possible reformation of Gentle Giant with a view to playing a few concerts together with Tull. As I expected, he did not think that it would be possible, but, as I equally expected, he was very, very pleased to be asked. I am sure all the

boys from Gentle Giant are most flattered of the longstanding interest and affection demonstrated by their numerous fans in many countries. I am happy for them.

Yours sincerely,
Ian Anderson

Well that's it for now, Ian. Thank you for your thoughts and time, and good luck on the Divinities tour. We all will look forward to hearing the new Tull CD which is being released this fall!

This interview that I conducted with Ian was done in a rather strange way. I first typed up the questionnaire and brought it to the Divinities show thinking I might not be allowed a person to person interview as I was afforded in 1991. This was the case and upon entering the backstage area and meeting briefly with Kenny Wiley, I was assured that Ian would receive the script. I enclosed the questions in a self-addressed envelope and awaited its return, not knowing if there would be a response or not. There was today! Thank you very much, Ian, for taking the time.

Gentle Giant supporting Jethro Tull in the States (photo by Neil Sharrow).



In issue 13 TP featured an extended piece on the music and history of the iconoclastic aggregation called Gentle Giant, based on an interview conducted in October 1975. Much water has passed under the bridge since then, and the group are much sleeker and more self-assured than at that initial encounter at a Holiday Inn, so at this point some catching-up seems in order.

Giant's seventh LP, *Free Hand*, was an artistic success, neatly coinciding with its being the group's best seller here. At last it appeared all was beginning to come together for them.

The eighth record, *Interview*, was, in Ray Shulman's words, "an incredible flop". The band fully agreed with critics who called the LP a step sideways, an inferior rehash. The whys and wherefores were explored by the band over coffee in an empty boardroom at Capitol's NY offices. Though guitarist Gary Green and keyboardist Kerry Minnear were both there, neither said more than a handful of words unless spoken to, thus ceding the floor to the Shulman brothers – the initially aloof (vocalist) Derek, and the always voluble Ray (bass and violin) – and that gracious Welshman, drummer John Weathers, attired in his Holmesian best, replete with deerstalker cap and knickers.

We warmed up to the subject while passing the non-dairy creamer, and after Derek sat down with the rest of us he got to the crux of the matter: "*Free Hand* was a good album, and what we should've done was sit down and say, 'OK, where do we go from here?' Instead we kept on touring." But the demand for product was pressing, so

INTERVIEW: DOUBLE TAKE → → GENTLE GIANT

By Jim Green

[This article is taken from the US magazine *Trouser Press*, probably at one time in 1977. The interview was conducted in March or April that year. I have only got a clipping of this article, which shows that it was featured on pp. 3 and 32.]

they took three weeks off to crank out an album. And this meant they'd have to write the material then too, because "we can't write on the road, in hotel rooms." Smiling ruefully, Ray said that everyone knew something was wrong, but none said a word. "We had three studios at Advision. Gary's downstairs doing a solo, I'm upstairs doing a vocal, Kerry's in another room writing something – it was insane."

This tour they've had some breathing space in which to write, owing to their putting out *Playing the Fool: The Official Live Gentle Giant* (the "official" is due to the many bootlegs issued which mostly use some permutation of *Playing the Fool* in the title; "We're just making that title official"), in lieu of an LP of all-new material. In addition, for the first time they're playing new material on their tour prior to recording it, part of a new policy of recording songs as they'll be performed live, rather than tailoring studio arrangements for the stage.

Said Ray, "We've often done tracks in the studio where we're playing backing tracks blind. And when the vocal goes over the top, it seems alien to everyone, we've never heard it before. An example is "*Design*", for *Interview*, for which we were handed parts – a great technical exercise, but so what? That's not a performance, it's like studying overdubbing."

In any case, they have a fine double live album which bulletted into the charts at 129 in its first week. "It gives

newer listeners a good idea of where we've come from", said Derek, and John added, "The arrangements are different from the studio ones, of course. It's what we need now. The next album we do is gonna be a killer."

What does it sound like?

"Peter Frampton meets Ted Nugent", said Derek, looking bored.

Next we came upon a topic we'd touched on 16 months before, the possibility of the first and fifth LPs, unissued here as yet, coming out as a specially-priced set. It is still out of their hands; Phonogram still has control, and isn't interested just now. "So many copies of *Glass House* have been brought over", said John. Derek amplified: "Hard to believe, innit [? -ed.], but apart from *Free Hand*, *Glass House* is our biggest seller in the States! And it's an import!... EMI were going to issue the *Simon Dupree* [and the Big Sound, the Shulman brothers' band that turned into Giant] album, but I stopped 'em". Derek stated with a satisfied smirk.

"That's good", I said. "It was a terrible record."

"Hey! Wait a minute! After all, it was 1967!... Well, it was a crappy record." I mentioned that I'd acquired "Kites", which *SD* & *the BS* were cajoled into cutting and which went to the Top Five. It's still rubbish, I contended, with its silly lyrics, maudlin melody (they didn't write it, at least) and insipid interlude spoken by a young woman in what sounds like Chinese. "What was she

INTERVIEW: DOUBLE TAKE →→ GENTLE GIANT

saying anyway?"

Ray chimed in immediately: "No. 32, chop suey and rice, no. 33, chow mein... who knows?"

Earlier I'd asked about *the Moles*, who appear on the recent EMI anthology, *My Generation* (see last issue [of *Trouser Press*, of course - ed.]), singing "We are *the Moles* and we live in holes...." *The Moles* were *Simon Dupree and the Big Sound*. Why? What was the essence of Mole-ism?

"We were a pop band and we wanted to make a hit record that wasn't a pop band's, for a laugh", which they did. It's a neat track, far better than *SD & the BS*. "It was just to make a mystery single. The record was left in a locker at a station and a dj was phoned up to go and collect it so as not to reveal the identity of the group. Funny thing, a group really called up and claimed to be *the Moles*, some band from Cheltenham..."

I thought as long as we were delving into the past, and since John Weathers was around, unlike the last interview, perhaps it was time to look into his own past. "Your first band was *the Eyes of Blue*?"

The Eyes of Blue also featured keyboard player Phil Ryan (later of *Iorweth Pritchard & the Neutrons*, and *Man*), vocalist Gary "Gazzy" Pickford-Hopkins (who has done some touring with Rick Wakeman), and bassist Ritchie Francis - "He's now a Jehovah's Witness.... We had a reunion gig on January 10, where we all got together to rehearse for two weeks at my house in Wales. Ritchie too, although he was the worst of the band, because he's neglected his music for religion for so long. It was fun, though."

The Eyes started up in Neath, near Swansea, in '65, in which year they topped the Melody Maker new band competition. "We began recording in '67 and put out two albums. We used to work with Lou Reizner [who was responsible for the London Symphony

and assorted all-stars' recording of *Tommy*, and recently for the abomination known as *All This and World War Two*]. We got a lot of work as a backing band: Buzzy Linhart, Miriam Makeba, albums, tours. We'd do it cheap - we didn't know about union rates. We made about 14 albums in three years." The dread disease of obscurity became fatal in '69, and they broke up. John and Phil joined Piblokto just after *Thousands on a Raft* came out. They lasted about nine months, playing often on the Continent.

"Then it was Wild Turkey ['71], which I started up with Glenn Cornick [ex-*Jetbro Tull* bassist] and with Gary. But I didn't like the way it was going, and didn't stay beyond the rehearsal stage. Next it was Graham Bond, Ray Ennis on guitar, who's now with *Racing Cars*, no bassist and a new tenor player every night, almost. Then, the *Grease Band* - McCullough, Hubbard, Spenser, Mick Weaver, assorted drugs, assorted drinks, a twisted manager.... We only did a couple dozen English gigs and Leon Russell's European tour with Freddy King. Then I went to work in a carpet factory and these chaps called me up."

The Shulmans had never had to bear such hardship, but at the end of *Simon Dupree's* days they'd had to play cabaret. "The worst", Derek recalled. "The money was great but the work was horrible.... Those tour circuits used to stand theatrical guest houses for all the acts. Amazing people, really weird - musclemen, ventriloquists..."

Ray jumped in. "You'd come down to breakfast, at a communal table and get like, these three show dancers, all about 50 years old, and if you sat facing them in the morning you could not eat your scrambled eggs. Or these out-of-work comedians who'd have you in fits at the table, then go out on stage and be terrible."

"The food would be fucking awful, you know", said Derek, "and there'd be

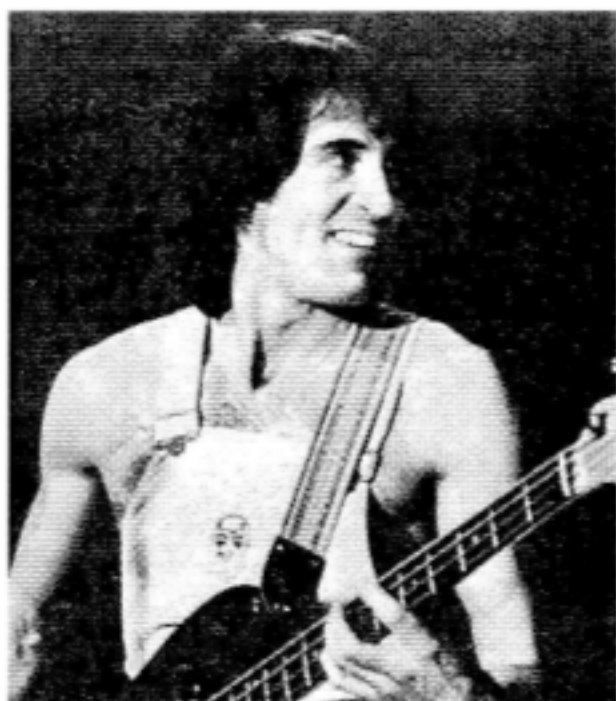
all these pictures on the walls, so you'd take some food, say a steak, which would be disgusting, and you'd stick it up behind the pictures." Everyone at the table was laughing by now, and getting into the spirit of things. "A favorite one", John recalled "was nailing a smoked fish in the back of a wardrobe."

"Much better than breaking up a room", said Derek. It's more subtle, after all - "The full effect comes after you're gone."

John remembered the third Shulman, Phil, who left *Giant* after *Octopus*. Phil's piece de resistance was eating a glass. "He'd fill it with Scotch, drink it, and start eating it." Did he have iron teeth or what?? "No", said Derek, "He just spit [spat? -ed.] out a lot of blood."

More reminiscences ensued: *Robert Fripp and his League of Gentlemen* soul band, *SD & the BS's* main rival on the south coast. *Manfred Mann* were there as well. "Those were the days, aye", sighed Derek.

This *Gentle Giant* lot are honest, have a sense of humor (how many groups had a sign that said "PRETENTIOUS" flashing behind them on their last tour), and they make great music when they set their minds to it. They're now ready to prove that once and for all to the US at large.



THE BOYS IN THE BAND:

A CONVERSATION

WITH PHIL SHULMAN

Conducted by Arlo West

Today, 9th March 1995 at 1:15pm EST, I conducted an interview with Phil Shulman over the phone – and the Atlantic. Phil is a really nice person and has opened up a few new areas of interest and enlightened me to things that I didn't know about the man himself. So without further delay, here it is!

::RING RING::

Phil: Hello!

Arlo: Hello, Phil?

Hello there!

How are you?

Fine, thanks. And you?

Fine as well. First off I want to begin the interview by saying thank you very much for allowing me to do this.

That's no problem.

Before we begin I want to ask you a quick question about your son's album and how he's doing, as well as his band.

The albums are going to be promoted by a close friend who has always been a sort of patron of my son. He has actually helped to finance their recording over a period of years in various

ways, and the next year or so he's going to have a bit of an advertising blow-up on the album. The great problem in this country is that – aah, its like anywhere else, I guess – it's pop-orientated in Britain, and Damon is not into pop music and never has been [a collective sigh of relief], you know, and rather than pop versus rock music, he's just into music, you know, and it's a reaction here again for what we'll call comp rock, or people who try to do a little bit more than three chords. Britain is terrible with its "heroes", if you like, they are there to be sniped at at all times, you know? America sort of heralds its heroes forever, which is no bashing; in fact, people like remembering. But here it's like as soon as you try to do something uniquely different people are sniping. It doesn't work with Damon in the slight at all, he's just into music desperately.

It's probably especially true if you are original and trying to be unique sounding?

He's got a very good attitude towards music, and he's not a baby anymore. I mean he's 28, he's in a serious band, he's been through the whole shlamoozel, you know. He's doing his own thing and he loves it.

I see.

I'm doing something with him at the moment myself, actually. It's got nothing to do with pop or rock music. We're writing a piece about my childhood.

Oh, cool! Maybe a "three friends" kinda piece?

It's very much what we'll call in the minimalist composer's sort of way, a short melody continuo. There's a whole variety of things going on there and we're right in the middle of that at the moment, Damon and I.

Very exciting indeed.

It is very exciting and dramatic as well as musical, with dramatic voices being used, etc, etc. My original upbringing in Glasgow, Scotland, was in a ghetto, and my memory's still very strong of the ghetto, which was called The Gorbals. It's considered to be what you would compare it to in the USA. Anybody who knows Great Britain at all and knows Glasgow will know that this is the, if you like, the hardest place on Earth. It's the equivalent of Watts [not sure I got this right] in Los Angeles or the damn East side of New York. It was a very hard place.

Is that where the whole Shulman family comes from?

Ah, no, Derek and myself was born there, but he came to England when he was one year old, to Portsmouth, and I was ten years old.

So you were nine when Derek was born?

That's right.

Isn't that something?

That's the formative word, but tells you something: my father was away at the war, you see [very hearty laughter], so there was quite a gap between

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: A CONVERSATION WITH PHIL SHULMAN

seeing my mother and fighting a war.
Tell me what it's like to have a son who plays music? I just had a son since we last talked.

It's delicious because, in fact, we meet on a level which is exclusive, of course, because we talk and we feel and sort of understand. It's just nice, it's a lovely meeting point. Music is such a mysterious thing, it contains a mystery, you know.

Do you see parts of yourself in your son?

Oh, yes, matters of me, he's very much like me in some ways. He's just a little more violent and less, well, I am quite extroverted in my personality, nothing in particular worries me. I don't think I've been phased in the past by personalities or people or situations. But Damon is a bit quiet lad, he can perform, but he doesn't like blowing his trumpet. He just likes making music. But your kid should be into music as soon as possible, it's a great meeting point with youngsters. If anything else goes wrong, music will always be there.

I've tried to play guitar and sing to my kid already, and he started crying. Actually, I don't think he quite understood what was going on, ba ba ba!

Ahh, yes, they do that.

I know my voice is terrible but - ba ba ba.

Ohh, it's not that at all, it wasn't the amplifier, was it?

Oh, no, it was acoustic!

Acoustic was it, ha ha ha!

Ok. Let's get back to the Gorbals. It was really quite interesting that you were saying that it was a hard life, etc.

Yes, it was a notorious area. There were these very large tenement buildings, of course, and of which I was born into. Life was poor and there was a kind of warmth as there always is with a common lot, which was poverty. And you had to look after yourself in a particular kind of way.

Do you think that this affected your writing in GG in some way?

One can never tell that. I think only other people can analyze that sort of thing. But it made a big impression on me. I mean, I'm the one who experienced it. Of all the boys in the band, in fact none of them had a similar experience.

They were a little young to remember, I would think?

Yes, and also the fact that after the war things improved quite radically. The overhang in Glasgow was still from the 30s. If you know anything about British history it was a very, very somber time in this country. Great things were going on with great strikes and anti-establishment and a variety of things.

Almost like an industrial revolution?

Well, it was quite close to at one time in the late 20s, but unfortunately it didn't work out, so we still have the same capitalistic - ah, can you hear my politics coming through?

That's OK! It's really great to hear your views on these subjects.

It's trivialized with a short conversation, but let's put it this way. My initial experience is what we're writing about now, and the combination of my experiences is the fact that... Well, I don't know if you know, but we're Jewish.

No, I didn't know.

Derek, Raymond and myself were born into a Jewish family, but I have no religion as such. Religion was never forced upon us by my father, which is unusual for a Jew. He himself had enough of it, you see. Derek is fairly into it, I think, and Ray and myself have no religion. I've got the capacity for it, but being a Jew coming from a very hard area of Glasgow and a bit of Scotsman as well... My father was half Scot, his father was Jewish and his mother was Scottish. I was brought up as a Jewish kid with strong Scottish influences.

This is an interesting aspect of your life. I'm sure a lot of people will be interested to know these things about you. I

wanted to ask you while we were on the subject of growing up, about the concept of the album Three Friends. The concept of three friends really touched a lot of us here on the Internet list. Can you reflect upon that period for a moment and tell us all how you came about making this album?

Yes, we didn't make the album, we just recorded it, of course, I'm not being glib, but that's a fact. The idea: When I came down to England at the age of 10, I came down to a fairly working class area because there was people there with money. I teamed up as boys will with other lads who mucked about and played around and we went to what's called in this country a junior or elementary school. I made friends with various lads in the locality and we in this country at that particular time, I think it was 1948 or something, - when I was about 11, we had a national examination called Eleven Plus which made all children in that particular age 11+ sit in examination to see what stream of schooling they required. Now myself and my friends were given a scholarship to what's called here a public school, not the same thing as in your country; a public school here is a scholarship school, a private school, and I got a scholarship to a school called Portsmouth Grammar school and one other friend of mine went to a technical school and the other went to a secondary modern school which was for the vast majority of children. It was a bit of an age to be, in fact you were actually selected and streamed for a whole life and project, and there was no way out of it. It's exactly what happened to me and my friends. I still maintained my friendships with the other lads up to a point and you do have to separate at one time because I was embarked at the time - I'm talking about the early 50s - towards what we'll call an academic career. My friends were embarked on different careers as laborers, trades-

THE BOYS IN THE BAND: A CONVERSATION WITH PHIL SHULMAN

men, being engineers, shipwrights, you had this part of the world where I was, Portsmouth, the dockyard was a great employer where some of my friends became apprentices and some laborers. *Was it your idea to come up with the concept of Three Friends?*

It was totally my concept. I remember doing it. When you get into making a little album you couldn't possibly convey everything you want to say.

It would take 10 CDs to get it all then?

You're talking about a fairly large opera.

I think so many of us fans can relate to this piece because it reflects our own lives.

That's right. You know I did keep in touch with a few of my friends. In fact, one of them was a roadie for Gentle Giant named Frank Covey. Now Frank was at Junior school with me at 11. We had kept in touch all the way through my 20s. Frank had gone into the dockyard and had become an apprentice or a boilermaker or something, and left all that and joined the band on the road. In fact we kept up our friendship. We actually employed him although our roadies were more like friends than employees.

Speaking of roadies, I have a question here: Did the band (or roadies) really have groupies? Any funny stories?

Well, er, ahh, I am on the phone in my own house, you know [His wife is not far off – I can hear her talking to someone]. Ha ha ha.

It would be kind of hard to answer, I guess?

Very hard, ha hahh [you can sense uneasiness and also a great yearning to tell all]. But in fact, before the band was called *Gentle Giant*, we had a roadie, a very well known roadie with a very popular pop band called *Dave Dee*, Dozy, Biki, Mick 'n Tich. Now you may not have heard of them, but they were very popular and sold as many records as the *Beatles* in the 60s [not quite - ed.]. This roadie came to us

through the usual stages of shenanigans of management and his name was Brian West [no relation to me]. Brian really fancied himself and before the gigs he would get his hair done where the group wouldn't, you know? He saw himself as a pop star, and it used to be that way they loved coming on to the stage to mend a fuse or whatever. One particular gig Brian – he loved himself so much – I think it was in South Wales, the place was absolutely jammed – this was with *Simon Dupree and The Big Sound*.

I just picked up an unopened virgin vinyl copy of your album the other day.

You're kidding. Ah, hard luck, is it? [chuckles]

Ha ha – anyway, back to Brian [I think that that album will stay virgin, well, I only played it once].

So he was called onto the stage and the place was packed with these Welsh screaming dervish women who were wilder than anywhere else and I just couldn't resist kicking him into the audience. He was bent down and I just gave one to the ass and I swear to you, man, he didn't get away with his underpants! They stripped him naked.

A great roadie story! Were the roadies and band close enough so that the roadies weren't offended by the words to "Dog's Life"?

No, they weren't. "Dog's Life" was written in particular for Frank Covey, my old mate! He's a big old dog of a chap. He's still around, actually. He's been busted quite a few times, unfortunately.

Now this didn't offend him?

No, not at all. The roadies got along great with the band. But, uhm, we had temperament in the band and one member in particular [whom he did mention by name and I felt it wouldn't do any good to print] could be a bit headstrong or spiteful.

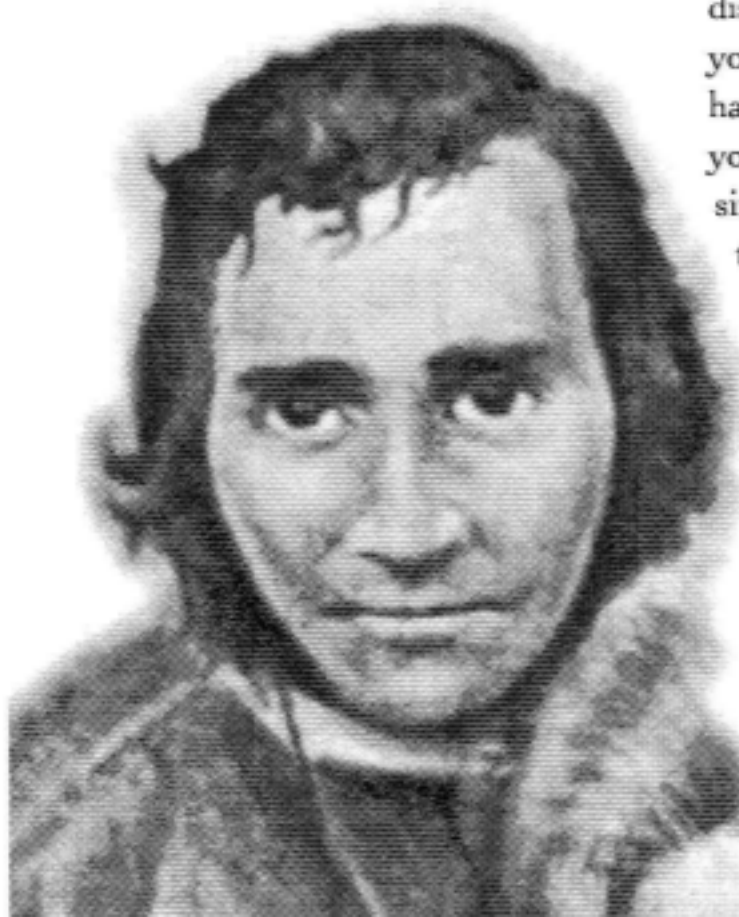
I won't print that....

I couldn't give a monkey's, actually, ha ha!

Ok. I have another question here: Where did you learn to sing acappella the way you did?

You must remember that myself and my brothers had always sung three part all the time with *Simon Dupree*. It's not really difficult, if you have a good ear you sing. More importantly, Kerry could produce marvelous moving parts rather than straight harmony. He'd give you a part to sing which in fact was more fugal counterpoint if you like. Unlike the normal pop method of singing in 3rds and 5ths, all singing the same lines, Kerry's parts in fact made it certainly not easier, because you had to listen to yourself all the time and almost disregard who's around you, provided you can hear it. I think all in the band had very good ears. You can't sing if you can't hear, you know. All musicians sing. Some of us have sweeter voices than others, I can't tell you about that, but all the band could sing reasonably well.

Ok. Let's move on to another question: There are some rumors about a reunion and I feel it is our task and duty to lobby you into it. Do you feel that there is hope of a reunion someday or do you think that the world should be satisfied with what they have of GG material? The current music scene is



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: A CONVERSATION WITH PHIL SHULMAN

really abysmal.

We lead such disparate lives now and have so different lifestyles and different attitudes, so I think it's impossible.

I kinda got the impression that logistically speaking, it would take a great deal of money and effort just to locate you all in one place. Now that you are all scattered throughout the world makes it downright impossible to rehearse and all that. But it's every GGsters fantasy to see a new album, I must say.

I'm sure, but the practicalities are really difficult. I think I will leave it to my son.

There is a mailing list on the internet called On-Reflection and it is dedicated to the memory of GG. Are you familiar with this?

Not at all.

Well, it's a daily ongoing discussion of all things GG. I get on the average 5-10 pieces of mail a day from around the world. My question to you is how do you feel about this new uprising of all things GG?

You'd be a liar, anyone would be a liar if they said they wouldn't be gratified by that of course. It boosts not so much ego though because you get beyond that at my age. It's a case of it's nice to know that something that was so awfully important to me so long ago is hitting other people.

And still today, here we are in the 90s and...

That's nice! I wouldn't be the only one to say that believe me. You've read Gary's interview in that magazine [referring to Gary Greens interview from *Proclamation* #4]. Well, Gary has been in and out of a variety of things

and different scenes, and for him it was the biggest musical thing, as you read. All of the band would say it's gratifying to know there is still interest in us.

Did you follow the progress of the band after your departure? If so, what did you think of the work they produced?

Uhm, to begin with I didn't. We had a falling out, to say the least. It's a very personal thing so it's hard to go into, but I didn't really. But eventually about three years after I did.

If you could have been a part of each of the albums, what would you have liked to have done differently, if anything?

Well, I certainly wouldn't have popped it off. There was a lot of things which became very poppy to me.

That's the one thing that gets the most criticism on the list, the fact that they did pop up a little too much towards the end.

There was a reason, of course. I

With Phil in the band, 1972. Photograph by Neil Sharrow



THE BOYS IN THE BAND: A CONVERSATION WITH PHIL SHULMAN

know what the feelings must have been – one feels it oneself, you know. We played to great audiences and a whole variety of places. Still you've got to eat, live, buy new things, new instruments, have families, etc. We still didn't make what we'll call a reasonable breakthrough financially. I'll be quite frank about it. Any attempt that band made towards what we'll call poppy or popping it up a bit was a way to rake some dough up. It wasn't distasteful to them, either. I'm sure it's stupid to say that it was deliberately crap or anything like that.

There is a lot of people on the list that are very critical about the so-called popping up, and GG's music tends to attract a very musically learned audience. Most of them feel that this was total crap, Giant for a Day that is, and should never have been made.

Yeah, that's absolutely right. *Well, I spend a lot of time defending that album because I think that it's better to have that album than not. And there are some real good pieces on that one*

On every album there is something worth hearing. You have to understand something else. As the band went on making records and albums, they eventually became self-financing in terms of actually making the records whereas the record company used to pay to make the albums. Now the band had to pay this back. I found this out later. Consequently, what often sounds very thin and un-GG-like was, I think, often the case of simple finance. You don't want things deliberately complicated, but more arranged and more fun, had you been given the time to exploit an idea. But often I don't think they had the money, not so much the time, but money, to exploit fully what often was a good curve or a good nut, a good seed. You're right, on *GFaD* there is one or two really good seeds that you could rearrange and make something of. I can see what happened – they

didn't have the finance. They let go an album which was too thin.

Ok, that was very insightful and attention will be paid to this. One of your fans here in the states has commented on seeing you play and remembers that the band actually had a Giant person who would dress up like the GG and dance around the stage. Was this true and did he actually die while on the tour?

No, no, no! Listen – when we first went to the states this was lined up, the guy was lined up for us. Unfortunately, before the band got there the guy died. I can only speak for the '72 tour, but the guy actually was supposed to be the tallest guy in the US, and he died before we got there. That was the first tour, I can't speak for the other tours.

Here is another question. What was it like to be in a band that was so diversely different in the 70s? Did you face a lot of scepticism and ridicule at first for being so unique?

Well, scepticism always from the press, especially from the head press, the hip press. The particular head guy who disliked prog rock was a guy named John Peel in this country. He was a DJ who hated any thing that looked... I mean, he despised Yes, ELP or anything which tried something different, and his victual didn't help in any way. However, there were one or two journalists who rated the band terrifically, but they wrote, believe it or not, for the more elevated press. One guy called Derek Joel who was a fairly well known jazz critic for the Sunday Times, rated the band tremendously, but that didn't really have an effect on the public in this country. But we were much better received other places, as you can probably gather from your list. I don't know what your internet in terms of people contains of nationalities, but I'll wager very few are English.

The majority are American, I think, and you guys were really big here, but

there are a few English as well as Norwegians, and other countries as well.

The fact is, in Europe we were very popular as well, but you have to remember there was something else holding us back here in England. My brothers and I were very much remembered as what was called a pop group [Simon Dupree] and it's very hard to discard those old clothes, and people were very suspect of the fact that we would get pissed off at what we were. It changed things radically.

One final question: You obviously have seen Proclamation. What do you think of Geir and his magazine?

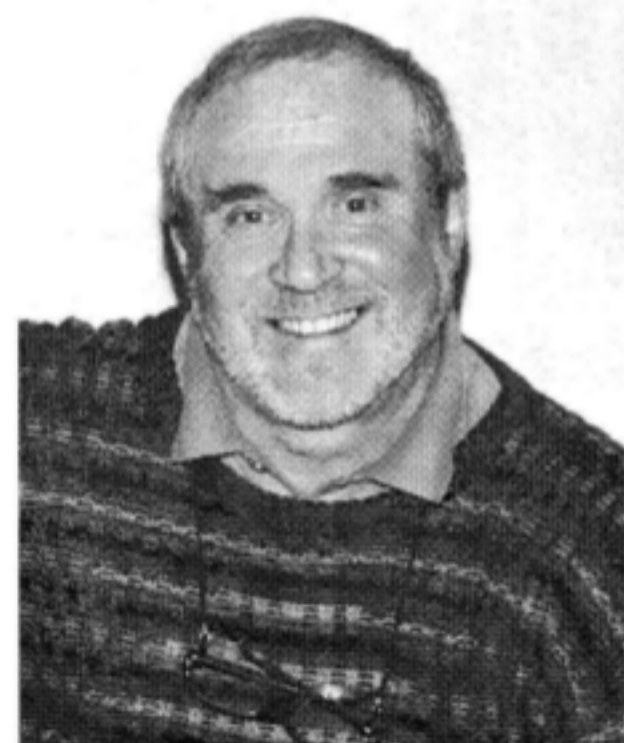
Smashing! He really has done a tremendous job! His enthusiasm is very, very captivating!

He certainly is a true GG authority, no doubt.

Well, Phil, thanks a lot for granting me the interview and the people on the list all give you a collective Thanks! See you again soon.

Thanks, Arlo. Nice talking to you and I will send you Damon's album, and the rest of you should check it out also! Bye bye!

:::Click.....dial tone:::



THE MISSING PIECE: SIMON DUPREE AND THE BIG SOUND

by Geir Hasnes

The British pop/rock/soul group Simon Dupree and the Big Sound existed from 1966 until late 1969. It consisted of the three Shulman brothers and some friends.

They managed to release a string of 10 singles and one album, leaving many other recorded tracks unreleased. Derek was called Simon Dupree by the management, and was the front man of the group. They reached the Top 10 with the "Kites" single, which was a psychedelia single in the Beatles vein, hated by the band! This is hard to understand today, but the tune was not the kind of music the group wanted to do. Most of their material are a mix of English 60s pop and soul, much of it cover versions, but in fact with more than half of the tunes originally written for the group. Only the best things they did point forward towards Gentle Giant. Most of the tunes are enjoyable, though. The band hated being a sort of cabaret band in the late 60s, and Derek hated more and more being marketed as Simon Dupree. They fired the band personnel and changed direction of their musical ventures late 1969, but didn't form GG until early 1970.

SINGLES

All singles were released on Parlophone in the UK, on Fridays, by

LINE-UP

Derek Shulman as Simon Dupree:	vocals
Phil Shulman:	vocals, sax, timpani, etc.
Ray Shulman:	guitars
Eric Hine:	keyboards
Pete O'Flaherty:	bass
	later replaced by Gery Kenworthy
Tony Ransley:	drums,
	later replaced by Martin Smith

the way. Picture sleeves were not commonly in use in the UK until the mid-70s, thus the Simon Dupree singles were released in a green Parlophone sleeve with white lettering. The variations of these will be shown in a later article. The first demo singles were

issued first with a white label with a red A crossing the label on the A-side, from no. 3 onwards with a green label with a white A crossing. At least one demo single came in a different, green and white sleeve with green lettering.

1:R 5542	2. Dec. 1966	I see the light	(Ezell - Rabin - Durrill)
		It is finished	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
2:R 5574	24. Feb. 1967	Reservations	(Albert Hammond)
		I need a man	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
3:R 5594	5. May 1967	Day time night time	(Mike Hugg)
		I've seen it all before	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
4:R 5646	27. Oct. 1967	Kites	(Lee Pockriss - Hal Hackaday)
		Like the sun like the fire	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
5:R 5670	8. Mar. 1968	For whom the bell tolls	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
		Sleep	(Eric Hine - Simon Dupree)
6:R 5697	24. May 1968	Part of my past	(Paul Smith - Evelyn King)
		This story never ends	(Eric Hine - Simon Dupree)
7:R 5727	20. Sep. 1968	Thinking about my life	(Derek & Ray Shulman)
		Velvet and lace	(Derek & Ray Shulman)
8:R 5757	7. Feb. 1969	Broken hearted pirates	(Michael Anthony)
		She gave me the sun	(Shulman - Shulman - Shulman)
9:R 5816	14. Nov. 1969	The eagle flies tonight	(Tony Hazzard)
		Give it all back	(Shulman - Shulman - Shulman)

As The Moles (The well-known "Is this The Beatles in disguise?" single):

1:R 5743	29. Nov. 1968	We are the moles (Part 1)	(The Moles)
		We are the moles (Part 2)	(The Moles)

THE MISSING PIECE: SIMON DUPREE AND THE BIG SOUND

ALBUM

1: PMC 7029/PCS 7029 1. Aug. 1967 *Without Reservations*

Tracks:

Medley: 60 minutes of your love	
/ A lot of love	(Hayes/Porter)
Love	(Edwards)
Get off my back	(Evelyn King/Ray Shulman)
There's a little picture playhouse	(Eric Hine)
Day time, night time (Single 3-A-side)	(Mike Hugg)
— — —	
I see the light (Single 1-A-side)	(Ezell/Rabon/Durill)
What is soul	(Gallo/King)
Teacher, teacher	(Shulman/Dupree/Shulman)
Amen	(Sam Cooke)
Who cares	(Evelyn King/Derek Shulman)
Reservations (Single 2-A-side)	(Albert Hammond)

USA release: Capitol's Tower records, ST-5097.

2: See For Miles CM 109 1982 *Amen*

3: See For Miles CM 109 1986 *Kites* (repress of 2, new cover)

It contains the whole of *Without Reservations* except **Teacher, teacher**, and in addition the singles nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and A-side of 7.

A recent compilation on CD:

Kites, See For Miles SEECD 368, 20 tracks, Same as LPs *Amen* and *Kites*.

There is a total of 26 released tracks with Simon Dupree and 2 with The Moles.

We will bring a detailed presentation of the various tracks and issues with picture sleeves in various countries, in a future issue. We will also bring the story of the band with press cuttings and the band members' reminiscences.

The idea of the Moles came from the group's manager John King. He was married to Evelyn King, the older sister of the Shulman brothers, who penned many songs for the group together with Paul Smith, a relative of John King. "The Moles" single was actually written by the whole group (nobody wants to take the full responsibility, said Phil).



**SIMON DUPREE
& THE BIG SOUND**

Bron Artists
Management Ltd

Simon Dupree and the
Big Sound in 1969.



Derek as Simon Dupree in 1967.

PEEL THE PAINT: IN PRAISE OF EXCESS: CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY IN GENTLE GIANT'S "SO SINCERE"

by David Palmer

In American popular culture, one of the legacies of the seventies is excess: trouser legs, ties, stripes, and lapels were too wide; hair was too long; heels were too high; shirts were too loud; and certain rock songs were too long, serious, and complicated. The eighties saw a turnaround in many of these cultural emblems: straight-leg trousers; narrow ties, stripes, and lapels; flat-tops; spiky, mousse-infested hair; Birkenstock sandals; solid-color shirts; and the unmarketability of rock songs longer than four minutes. As so often happens on a personal level, society seems to hate its immediately previous incarnation.

With a decade separating us from those excessive times, many have reexamined and revived the aesthetics of the seventies. Members of the Southern-rock group, the Black Crowes, have sported bell-bottom trousers and platform shoes. Rock singer-guitarist Lenny Kravitz has invoked the spirit of Jimi Hendrix ("Are You Gonna Go My Way?") and Earth, Wind, and Fire ("Sittin' On Top Of The World"). The Heavy Metal group, Dream Theater, has several compositions clocking in at over ten minutes. Many of the popular tunes on Radio One of the BBC have what could only be described as seventies' disco beats with nineties' production techniques.

It should not surprise us then that, in the small world of progressive rock,

there has been a revival in interest in the excesses of an innovative band from the seventies. Gentle Giant's excesses were not so much a matter of their clothing or hair as they were a matter of their compositions: at a time when certain groups were showing off their intellectual muscles with music of complexity previously unheard of in rock circles, Gentle Giant appeared to be trying to outdo them all in cerebral prowess. The group's music made use of extended tonality, chromatic harmony, mixed meter, and contrapuntal polyphony. At times, the lines of counterpoint were piled up, as if the composer(s) were trying to see how many lines the listener could comprehend before being overwhelmed by too much information. Yet for all its complexity, there was (and is) something simultaneously orienting and disorienting about Gentle Giant's music. In this paper, the interplay of musical orientation and disorientation in a specific composition from Gentle Giant's 1974 release *The Power and the Glory*, "So Sincere" will be examined in terms of continuity and discontinuity. An eclectic blend of theories (music perception, tonal, and post-tonal) will be invoked for the analysis of the work's glorious excesses.

I have played Gentle Giant's studio version of "So Sincere" twice for students of mine, once before class and once as the token rock composition in a

survey of developments in twentieth century music. The first time I played the recording, one student commented that she didn't like it because the music was "too choppy," because it kept starting and stopping. This student is bright and creative, so I considered for a moment before responding, "You're right; it is discontinuous. I love it!"

This experience reveals to me that not only is discontinuity a subjective perception but that, even when subjects agree on the discontinuous content of a piece, they may disagree on its relative merits. Rather than pursue the often fruitless task of trying to persuade others to my aesthetic position, I will try instead to explain why the students in my class and other students in Europe and North America might perceive both continuity and discontinuity in "So Sincere", how they will probably perceive more continuity with some familiarity with Renaissance and early twentieth century music, and, how, even after listening to it for twenty years, they may continue to perceive certain discontinuities.

The experience of discontinuity is the result of the mind's tendency to infer that, once things are set in motion, they will go on as before (Leonard Meyer's "law of good continuation"). Musical discontinuity has a lot to do with expectation; if an unfamiliar piece of music offers no surprises, we experience continuity. Some listeners seek the comfort of

CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY IN GENTLE GIANT'S "SO SINCERE"

the expected in new music; others seek to be challenged by surprises; most listeners probably seek a combination of the expected and the unexpected. But what about those pieces which are familiar to us but which retain a certain sense of surprise? A researcher in music perception, Jamshed J. Bharucha, has reported that there are two types of expectations, schematic and veridical. Schematic expectancies are created by familiarity with a musical style, whereas veridical expectancies are created by familiarity with a particular composition. Once we are familiar or «competent» with a style, a musical schema has been learned which interprets new musical information. An unfamiliar piece written in a style with which we are stylistically competent will fulfill or deny our expectations depending on how easily it is accommodated by the learned schema. Once we are familiar with a piece, even if we haven't learned a schema to interpret it, we will have certain expectations as the result of knowing the actual piece; surprises that are the result of not knowing the piece become fewer with repeated listenings.

Why is it that, having heard «*So Sincere*» since 1974, many of us still experience that delight in its discontinuities? Since we have heard the piece many times, veridical expectancies should have removed all feeling of surprise. A continuing experience of discontinuity must be the result of the music's play against schematic expectancies. But what are the schemas we typically bring to a listening of «*So Sincere*?»

Most, if not all, of the students in the class for which I played «*So Sincere*» are stylistically competent with common-practice tonal music («classical» music, the Bach to Brahms «canon») and with

the popular music of the past two or three decades of this century. In fact, their stylistic competency with pop music enables many of them to perceive subtle distinctions between different styles of pop, between compositions in the same style, and even between different versions of a single composition. Even a person who does not actively listen to music will probably acquire some competency in these styles owing to their use in television and film music (the musical lingua franca for Europeans and North Americans). So it is safe to assume that the vestiges of classical or pop music in «*So Sincere*» will probably act as points of orientation, invoking the schemas associated with those styles. What are these vestiges of classical and pop music?

Both classical and pop styles have certain rhythmic norms such as a generally steady beat, a metric regularity, a re-use of rhythms, and even phrase lengths (generally four or eight measures long). A radical deviation from a norm, as in a sudden shift in tempo or the introduction of a new meter after a period of metric regularity, is experienced as a specific discontinuity. A constant introduction of new rhythms will be experienced as a state of general discontinuity.

One of the issues I was immediately confronted with in transcribing «*So Sincere*» was the question of meter. In fact, considering the first measures of the piece in isolation, as we might have done when first hearing it, we have a good example of metric ambiguity. (Example 1, measures 1-5). The first note of Example 1 will probably be perceived as the downbeat, so the ensuing music will be heard as having a triple meter (e.g. 3/4); this works fine until, just before the return of the initial gesture,

measure five is shortened; the location of the downbeat is now confused (a wonderful moment!).

While «*So Sincere*» has a steady beat and re-uses a number of rhythms, the changes in meter at the fifth and ninth measures of every verse will be perceived as discontinuities. Owing to the absence of the traditional cadences of classical and pop music, metric and pitch (discussed further below) discontinuities and continuities denote phrases in «*So Sincere*». The meter change at measure five and the repetition of the first measures in measures six through eight (thereby creating a parallel melodic design) indicate respectively the ending of the first phrase and the beginning of the second. (Example 2, measures 6-9). A consistent use of the nineteen-beat (five-bar) length of the first phrase (the antecedent) would ensure some continuity, but the change in meter at measure nine gives the second phrase (the consequent) a fourteen-beat (four-bar) length. (Example 3, measures 10-14).

Measures ten to fourteen can be considered a second consequent phrase (the analysis I prefer) giving the first period an asymmetrical structure, or can be considered a phrase extension, as if the interruption at measure nine were brought to completion at measure fourteen.

As is the case with much of Gentle Giant's music, the drum part is a cohering force in «*So Sincere*» owing to its simplicity in relation to the other parts. At their entrance, the drums clarify the downbeat, their slow groove of bass-on-one and snare-on-three imposes a quadruple meter against the apparent 3/4 meter, and the downbeat is clarified. While the predominance of the 3/4 meter

The image contains two examples of musical notation, labeled 1 and 2. Example 1 shows measures 1-5, and Example 2 shows measures 6-9. Each example features three staves: violin/kybds (top), sax/guitar (middle), and cello/bass (bottom). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and bar lines, illustrating the complex rhythmic structure of the piece.

CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY IN GENTLE GIANT'S "SO SINCERE"

up to this point and the strength of the drum part present a conflict of meters, a clear preference is shown for 4/4 at the chorus. (Example 4, measures 13-15: Note: the drum part in the chorus seems to contain little improvisations, so I have written down what I perceive to be the essence of it.) In retrospect, the 3/4 of the verse appears to be triplets imposed on a 4/4 meter. I prefer this representation, as it reveals something of the tension-and-release relationship between verse and chorus.

Both classical and pop music have

certain norms for the use of pitches. A certain amount or melodic redundancy (i.e. thematic development) is the norm for most classical and pop music. Melodies show a preference for stepwise motion; even the underlying structure of melodies shows this preference. Leaps often delineate two separate melodies two stepwise melodies on different strata («compound melody»), and, when they don't, they are usually balanced by a «corrective» filling in of the gap marked out by the leap. Harmonies are tertian (built in thirds); harmonic progression

and cadence are predicated on the movement away from and to the tonic and dominant harmonies or, as in the case of some popular music, the tonic and subdominant harmonies. Both the melody and harmony are oriented around the tonal center; leading tones and dominant harmonies have a particular key-defining potency.

In the pitch realm, «*So Sincere*» demonstrates an economy of stepwise materials. The stepwise filling in of the pitch-space from E-flat down to B-flat in the violin part of the initial gesture is developed in various ways. This descending fourth motive becomes the vamp for the guitar solo. The contour of the first phrase's melody and bass line can

be described as generally ascending until the octave leap down from the the violin's B-flat. The first phrase is divided by rest into smaller melodic cells that highlight certain notes. (Example 5, voice leading graph, measures 1-5. This graphing technique is modeled on that of the twentieth century Austrian theorist, Heinrich Schenker. Beams set off the stepwise motives; parentheses indicate notes that have been transferred to a different register in the graph; slurs indicate either a prolongation or a transfer of a note to another voice; «N» indicates a neighbor note.)

By prioritizing certain notes in the first phrase according to whether they are the first and longest notes of the melodic cells, Example 5 shows that the descending fourth motive has an inversional relationship with the underlying structure of the melody in the first phrase, which fills in the pitch-space from E-flat up to B-flat. Example 5 also shows that, while the outer voices form parallel tenths until the lines fuse at the B-flat, B-flat's neighboring relationship to C is chromatically reinterpreted by the slide up to B-natural.

The upward motion by step also initiates the voice's melody for the verse, seen in Example 6, vocal part, measures 20-22.

In a sense, the chorus's simultaneously rising and falling vocal lines, represent a fragmentation and synthesis of the motive's normal and inverted forms. (Example 7, vocal parts, measures 44-46.)

Unlike the meter, melodies, and melodic structure in «*So Sincere*», the harmony does not clearly resonate with any classical or pop schemas. To begin with, it is not consistently tertian, a fact which seriously undermines the establishment of a tonic-dominant or tonic-subdominant axis. To further frustrate the invocation of classical or pop schemas, the piece exemplifies an independence of melodic lines typical of Gentle Giant compositions, which makes harmonic comprehension difficult and

Example 3: A musical staff showing a melodic line with various intervals and rests, including a triplet of eighth notes.

Example 4: A musical staff showing a complex melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, including a triplet of eighth notes.

Example 5: A musical staff showing a melodic line with a descending fourth motive, including a neighbor note (N) and a slide up to B-natural.

Example 6: A musical staff showing a vocal line with the lyrics "wise and know - ing what to do".

Example 7: A musical staff showing a vocal line with the lyrics "so sin cere".

Example 8: A musical staff showing a complex melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, including a triplet of eighth notes.

CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY IN GENTLE GIANT'S "SO SINCERE"

occasionally irrelevant. Without invoking a harmonic schema, it is impossible to explain specific harmonic discontinuities. If the work has a harmonic continuity, it must be the result of a schema which is independent of classical and pop conventions. (More on this below.)

In spite of the lack of a classical or pop schema to facilitate understanding of the harmony in *«So Sincere»*, the song's form (introductory verse, two verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, verse, chorus, end) is fairly typical of pop music. Likewise, the piece uses a conventional rock band instrumentation (drums, bass guitar, electric guitar, keyboards). Even the use of the acoustic trio would not have been considered outlandish in rock circles, since by 1974, the instrumentation was often expanded to include violin (remember *It's A Beautiful Day*, *Seatrains*, *Papa John Creach*, *Mahavishnu Orchestra?*), saxophone (King Crimson, *Traffic*, *Joe Cocker*), and cello (*Lighthouse*, *ELO*). What might be considered unusual, even discontinuous, is the constant change of orchestration: the introductory verse lays down the foundation of the acoustic trio; at the entrance of the voice, the bass guitar doubles the cello part; at verse two, the piano doubles the violin, and the guitar doubles the sax; at verse three, the latter couplings are reversed.

There are certain aspects of *«So Sincere»* that might be understood according to schemas that lie outside of classical or pop music. The independence of the melodic lines, their lack of correlation with bass-up conceptions of harmony, and the band's free intermingling of tertian and quartal harmonies are reminiscent of early Renaissance polyphony (Josquin des Prez) and the music of some early twentieth century composers (e.g. Stravinsky, Hindemith, Bartok, Berg). Several areas of music theory may be applicable here: 1) The analysis of Renaissance polyphony where the tenor is invested with greater importance than the bass. 2) Stravinsky

analysis, owing to that composer's ironic musical commentaries on common-practice schemas. (Chris Buzby of the group *echolyn* recently said, «when I listen to bands like Gentle Giant, it reminds me of Stravinsky.») 3) The theories of Ernst Kurth and Paul Hindemith which might explicate the manner by which clearly defined harmonies, or «harmonic pillars,» are connected by passages of so-called linear counterpoint. 4) The theory of interval cycles, as originally applied to the music of Alban Berg.

Although the harmonic language of *«So Sincere»* is not accommodated by classical or pop schemas, it nevertheless demonstrates a certain consistency: while the piece seems to move freely from tertian and quartal harmonies to other types of pitch collections, most harmonies can be explained in terms of symmetry. A harmonic symmetry is defined here as a pitch collection that is a segment or a nearly complete segment of an interval cycle (a succession of intervals of the same size, measured in semitones. An interval class includes pairs of intervals which are inversionally equivalent, so that an interval of seven semitones is a member of interval class 5.) Harmonic progression occurs as a result of moving from one interval cycle to another or as a result of departing from the symmetry of interval-cycle collections.

In the chorus, the cadence that punctuates each phrase results in part by the bass's switching from one whole-tone scale (a 2-cycle) to another. In the case of the verse, after a consistent use of 5-cycle collections, the departure from symmetry highlights the return to a 5-cycle collection at the end of the first phrase. (Example 8, cyclic language, measures 1-5. Parentheses indicate gaps in the cyclic collections, and black noteheads indicate notes that fall out of the prevailing 5-cycle collections.)

However, there is more to the harmony of this passage than can be explained from a purely cyclic basis. The

vestiges of classical and pop music that are evident in other parameters are polarized in the harmonic parameter by novel techniques:

1) The assertion of non-root chord members as having priority. The bass's arpeggiation of the F minor triad in measure one would be interpreted according to a classical or pop schema as asserting the priority of F. In Stravinskian fashion, the location of C as the first and lowest notes of the arpeggio casts into doubt this interpretation. The importance of C is confirmed by the completion of the first verticality, a C minor-seventh chord, when the voice enters. It is interesting to note that, at the a cappella section of the live version of *«So Sincere,»* the first note of the melody is harmonized with a C-minor triad.

2) An interval cycle collection as the leading tone harmony. Given the priority of C, B appears to be, not just a neighboring note, but the leading tone. Yet the fourth chord (a 5-cycle collection) on B does not conform to the classical or pop conception of leading tone harmony. Even when the voice is added to make this chord a major triad with added second, it still does not conform to classical or pop conventions. Given the cyclic language of the piece, it would be better understood as a 5-cycle collection with a single gap that has simply been planted on the leading tone.

Ultimately, there are aspects of *«So Sincere»* that are best understood in relation to a schema learned through familiarity with the unique combination of elements that one could call the *«Gentle Giant style.»* Even then, there is no guarantee that my students or anyone else wouldn't continue to hear discontinuities in it, even after listening to it for years. And, in a way, if we could lose all sensation of discontinuity, *«So Sincere»* would cease to surprise us, to make us laugh, to excite us. After all, to cease to be disoriented by Gentle Giant's music would be to miss the point of its perceptual excesses.

KNOTS: SO SINCERE

by Derek Shulman, Ray Shulman and Kerry Minnear
 Transcribed by David Palmer

Andante - 119

voices
 violin/kyoto
 sax guitar
 cello/bass
 drums

KNOTS: SO SINCERE

KNOTS: SO SINCERE

Musical score for "KNOTS: SO SINCERE". The score is written for a single melodic line on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems, each containing five staves. The lyrics are written below the notes.

System 1 (Measures 1-24):

- Measure 1: *and*
- Measure 2: *know - ing what*
- Measure 3: *to do what*
- Measure 4: *what*
- Measure 5: *be*
- Measure 6: *mean,*
- Measure 7: *a - ny - thing*
- Measure 8: *be*
- Measure 9: *eyes*
- Measure 10: *and*
- Measure 11: *but*
- Measure 12: *a - ny - thing is*
- Measure 13: *and*
- Measure 14: *and*
- Measure 15: *and*
- Measure 16: *and*
- Measure 17: *and*
- Measure 18: *and*
- Measure 19: *and*
- Measure 20: *and*
- Measure 21: *and*
- Measure 22: *and*
- Measure 23: *and*
- Measure 24: *and*

System 2 (Measures 25-40):

- Measure 25: *Let,*
- Measure 26: *be*
- Measure 27: *us - ly tells*
- Measure 28: *the*
- Measure 29: *truth,*
- Measure 30: *for*
- Measure 31: *be*
- Measure 32: *mean*
- Measure 33: *and*
- Measure 34: *and*
- Measure 35: *and*
- Measure 36: *and*
- Measure 37: *and*
- Measure 38: *and*
- Measure 39: *and*
- Measure 40: *and*

KNOTS: SO SINCERE

First system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The system contains measures 1 through 10.

So Sincere, verse 3, chorus 2

Second system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The system contains measures 11 through 20. The piano part includes staves for voices, saxophone, violin/guitar, bass, and drums.

Third system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The system contains measures 21 through 30. The piano part includes staves for voices, saxophone, violin/guitar, bass, and drums.

Fourth system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The system contains measures 31 through 40. The piano part includes staves for voices, saxophone, violin/guitar, bass, and drums.

Fifth system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The system contains measures 41 through 50. The piano part includes staves for voices, saxophone, violin/guitar, bass, and drums.

Sixth system of the musical score for 'So Sincere'. It includes staves for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The system contains measures 51 through 60. The piano part includes staves for voices, saxophone, violin/guitar, bass, and drums.

KNOTS: SO SINCERE

Musical score for the song "KNOTS: SO SINCERE". The score is written for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems, each containing four staves. The first system covers measures 1 through 16, and the second system covers measures 17 through 32. The piano part features a prominent bass line with many triplets and a more active upper line. The vocal parts have lyrics written below them.

Lyrics:
 1. knots his pet
 2. knots his pet
 3. knots his pet
 4. knots his pet
 5. knots his pet
 6. knots his pet
 7. knots his pet
 8. knots his pet
 9. knots his pet
 10. knots his pet
 11. knots his pet
 12. knots his pet
 13. knots his pet
 14. knots his pet
 15. knots his pet
 16. knots his pet
 17. knots his pet
 18. knots his pet
 19. knots his pet
 20. knots his pet
 21. knots his pet
 22. knots his pet
 23. knots his pet
 24. knots his pet
 25. knots his pet
 26. knots his pet
 27. knots his pet
 28. knots his pet
 29. knots his pet
 30. knots his pet
 31. knots his pet
 32. knots his pet

A CRY FOR EVERYONE:

THE RECORD COLLECTOR POLL

by Geir Hasnes

The UK Record Collector magazine ran its yearly poll in March 1996 and the results were given in May. The progressive acts made upward leaps, and Gentle Giant climbed to 67th, their highest position ever.

The table below shows the most collectable groups according to the voters, for the last 11 years, with the position in 1996 at right. My reason for showing this table is that you can now see how the progressive acts have become regarded as more and more collectable during these years. I have to admit I do not collect all these so-called progressive acts myself. As for Gentle Giant, an article about Vertigo albums in 1985 in *Record Collector* stated that the group were not particularly collectable. The writer, now a subscriber to *Proclamation*, has changed his mind.

Other more or less progressive or in

other ways familiar acts or artists that came within the top 500 list, were Man at 305, Kansas at 331, Camel at 337, Robert Fripp at 374, Rick Wakeman at 380, Pekka Pohjola at 390, The Nice at 397, and Renaissance at 479.

Buy *Record Collector* in March, keep on voting, to show record companies and record collectors that progressive music is interesting and collectable, and that Gentle Giant is a group that deserves more attention than it got in the 70s.

For the record, here are some of my personal progressive, folk or jazz favourites that didn't make it to the Top

Artist	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Jethro Tull	59	54	36	24	18	20	22	15	19	18	13	6
Genesis	15	19	11	11	16	30	19	17	14	26	26	22
Fairport Convention	95	71	95	60	57	68	66	57	58	51	43	32
Yes	91	82	92	85	142	116	94	34	39	53	45	35
Marillion	66	30	29	18	25	37	52	65	41	50	46	49
Rush	97	75	66	76	71	86	106	50	45	67	92	61
Gentle Giant	-	-	-	-	387	254	187	232	140	77	94	67
Mike Oldfield	112	130	103	111	122	198	140	111	112	87	112	68
Emerson, Lake & Palmer	-	-	-	187	268	464	-	490	205	132	115	84
Peter Gabriel	96	-	58	41	59	63	105	139	94	122	188	95
King Crimson	167	186	-	118	215	239	424	131	117	84	106	96
Peter Hammill	80	85	-	201	169	162	149	116	163	95	-	150
Caravan	-	-	-	212	248	274	221	162	166	181	377	165
Van der Graaf Generator	(80)	(85)	129	217	224	319	227	251	321	250	195	194
The Strawbs	-	-	-	494	271	260	177	321	180	98	170	217
IQ	-	-	-	262	428	320	185	170	144	118	176	277

A CRY FOR EVERYONE: THE RECORD COLLECTOR POLL

500: Anekdoten, Bruford, The Dixie Dregs/The Dregs, Simon Dupree and the Big Sound, Focus, Folque, Gryphon, Steve Hackett, Happy the Man, Hatfield and the North, Merit Hemmingson, Kayak, Steve Morse, Made in Sweden, National Health, Oregon, PFM, Popol Vuh (Norwegian group)/ Popol Ace, Steeleye Span, Ralph Towner, Weather Report, Wigwam, Yezda Urfa and Änglagård, to mention just a few.

I also enjoy various more commercial acts, whom I do not dare to name here.

The last one and a half years I have listened especially to classical music while not being able to use my eyes to read or write. I have studied the following composers extensively, also because I enjoy them immensely: Bela Bartok,

Claude Debussy, Gabriel Faure, Edvard Grieg, Paul Hindemith, Sergei Prokofiev, Sergei Rachmaninov, Maurice Ravel, Dmitri Shostakovich, Igor Stravinskij and Fartein Valen. This reflects my interest in music of the last 140 years. I have also studied at least ten works each by Bach, Britten, Duparc, Elgar, Franck, Honegger, Janacek, Mussorgskij, Poulenc, Rimskij-Korsakov, Roussel, Skrjabin and Vaughan Williams, and been into works by 120 other composers, nearly all of them active in this century. It has been a fantastic musical journey and has been of real help through this period of pain and depression. I have a personal taste for counterpoint and can safely state that my love for the music of Gentle Giant has not been diminished

by learning so much about the so-called serious music. It is rather the other way round, that I now respect Kerry and Ray even more than before. Gentle Giant made true classical music and is a part of musical history, and I can only hope that Kerry and Ray will continue to make true classical pieces.

The polls from the returned subscriber sheets will be presented in future issues.

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GIANT

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So SINCERE

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



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The magazine 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 photoset material.

All correspondence and material should be sent to my private address:

BIG HELLO: WEEKNIGHT WARRIORS

By Tim Steil

On a recent Wednesday night in Lincoln Park, four of Big Hello's faithful are working the street. Two hand out flyers, the others paper cars with band calendars.

Formed back in February by drummer Brad Elvis, Big Hello has already developed a loyal following and a unique policy. In a city with hundreds of bands scrambling for the same handful of decent bookings, they can't work weekends. They already play weekends with other bands.

"There are more days in the week than there are on the weekend" says Elvis, a familiar face on Chicago's music scene. His "other" band the Elvis Brothers have been together for almost thirteen years. Bored by only playing on weekends and with a stack of new originals burning a hole in his trap case, Elvis recruited two friends from downtown to complete the power pop trio.

Bassist Rick Soens is from LaSalle, the same musical hot bed of feed caps and farmer tans that spawned Geller's latest Next Big Thing, Loud Lucy. While his band The Craigs have been area favorites for years he also performs solo acoustic shows, and has still another side band. A gifted songwriter in his own right, Soens has self-released two eerily Dylan-esque collections, *Diablos in Distress*, and *The Roller Barrel 400*.

Guitarist Gary Green has lived in Princeton for years. Having played steadily in a bands like the Blind Dates, and most recently Mad Cow, his neighbors are probably used to seeing him with a guitar case. It's a safe bet though that most of sleepy Bureau County town hasn't heard his tales of touring with Black Sabbath. As a member of 70's progressive rock behemoth Gentle Giant, Green toured the stadium circuit sharing bills with The Moody Blues and Yes among others, and acquiring a perfect play by play analysis of the way in which Ozzy Osbourne vomits. His soft English accent has faded little over the years.

"It's pop music" says Green. "Short, concise, to the point tunes. Not a lot of wandering ten minute drum solos." Having

spent years in the more open ended format of Gentle Giant, he finds the transition refreshing. "It's just different. I've always been a sort of rock and blues player, that's where my roots are." Looking out at Lincoln Avenue as he absent mindedly changes his guitar strings, Green spots one of the faithful handing a calendar to a passing couple. "Look at that," he

While that may put the fear of Mark Chapman into others, Elvis just chuckles "It's a sort of late seventies/early eighties thing." Beyond the pre-MTV sartorial trappings, lies the fact that Elvis is a damned good songwriter.

Think back to the Who's maximum R&B days, or maybe Marshall Crenshaw backed by the Ramones. Big Hello pummels their way through songs like "Your Mad, Mad World," "Baby Take A Bow" and "Riot Grrr" with such enthusiasm you would swear they were 13 years old and just learned the chords to "My Sharona." Soens and Green share lead vocals, and are skilled interpreters of the new music.

Interspersed throughout the set are some true pop gems. Todd Rundgren's "Couldn't I Just Tell You?", "Big Sky" from the Kinks, and The Clash's "Train in Vain" are standouts. The music is smart, snappy and danceable. All that is missing is the fade out ending after two and a half minutes. The overall effect is like listening to a pile of old 45's.

They spent some time in the studio in June, and hope to have an EP out by the end of this month. In between Big Hello gigs, all three continue to rehearse and play weekend shows with their main bands. Elvis has also just finished a new batch of songs.

In the grand scheme of things, Big Hello covers no new ground. Their time tested power pop format is comfortable and fun, because it contains so many of the elements that turn people on to rock and roll in the first place. It is refreshing to see a catchy song still seems able to hold its own with all the hairspray and flannel induced angst that has passed for popular music in recent years.

"About 10:30 guys" announces a voice from above. Upstairs the faithful, having finished their missionary work for the night are planted with beers and ready to dance. "What can I say" concludes Elvis, "we play good and we're wet bathed."

"You know I don't think Nixon should have died" Soens says heading for the stage.

"Really?" Green replies, "Who?"

Big Hello is at the Cubby Bear July 13, & Cue Club July 28



Gary Green, Rick Soens, Brad Elvis - Big Hello
Photo by Tim Steil

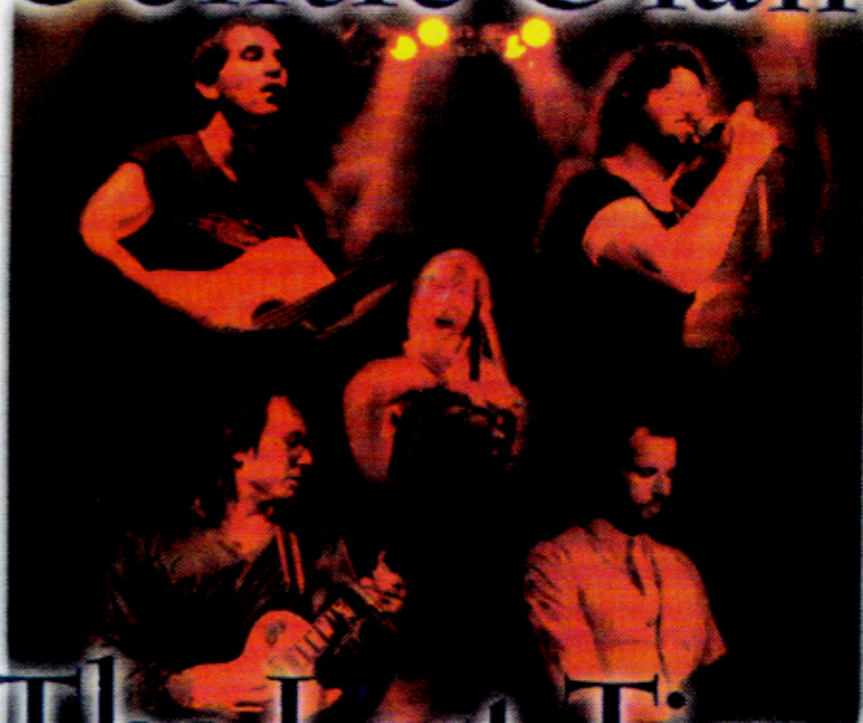
says incredulously, "she just walks right up to them."

Elvis has been eyeing my ancient tape recorder. "Is that a four battery?" he asks. "Man I'd pay big bucks for that." Soens looks down at it and smiles sheepishly. "Can I borrow it for a couple weeks?" Green is undecided.

It is that same quirky love of all things retro that focuses much of the band's energy. In their matching black suits and skinny ties you're not sure if they just finished lip syncing on American Bandstand, or if they're waiting for Debbie Harry.

"If we would have done this kind of thing five years ago, we probably would have been crucified," says Elvis of their wardrobe, "but it looks so different now people are really digging it." Soens reports a few recent shows have even seen members of the audience showing up dressed like the band.

Gentle Giant



The first attempt
to create a cover
to the CD.

The Last Time

LIVE AT THE RØXY

Gentle Giant



The final
proposed cover
to Our Last
Time.

Our Last Time

BRAVO

Deutschlands
größte Zeitschrift
für junge Leute

Seit zwei Jahren spielen Gentle Giant zusammen, doch ihren Sound fanden sie erst vor drei Monaten. Da kam Malcolm Mortimore als sechster Mann und brachte Dampf in die Gruppe. Noch im Frühjahr wollen die drei Schotten und drei Engländer eine LP im harten Jazz-Rock herausbringen. Von links: Malcolm Mortimore (19), Gary Green (22), Ray Shulman (23), Phil Shulman (35), Derek Shulman (24) und Kerry Minnear (24)

GENTLE GIANT

Cover of "Bravo", a German magazine, in 1972.

The caption says: "Since two years Gentle Giant plays together but they found their sound three months ago as Malcolm Mortimore rejoined the group and brought steam. This spring the three scottmen and the three englishmen want to produce a hard jazz-rock album.

From left: Malcolm Mortimore (19), Gary Green (22), Ray Shulman (23), Phil Shulman (35), Derek Shulman (24) and Kerry Minnear (24).

Hey, look. What it is! It arrived June 19th. Finally, after 2 1/2 years. Whew! Betcha thought we couldn't do it. As you can see, there is a format change. Magazine style, with the layout and printing done in France. I like it very much and I certainly hope you will too. It sure seems well worth the wait. High praise to all those who have re-subscribed and remained patient for the most part. This issue was sent to everyone, including those who did not re-subscribe. It is in the hopes that you will, now that you have tasted the new product. If you haven't re-subscribed, this will be the last issue sent. A note is included for those that didn't as a reminder. Again, thank you.

I am sad to announce the death of Gentle Giant's first drummer, Martin Smith. He passed away on May 2 from an internal hemorrhage. We may print a memorial issue at a future time.

This issue concerns all the releases to date that have happened upon us in the last year or so. As you know, the Roxy finally reared it's ugly head. I don't like the sound. A bit high on the bass. An adjustment at the receiver is almost necessary. And I wanted to say about my text - please give me a break. I know it's not the greatest in the world but it was what I felt was right in relation to this last show. It always hurts when a band packs it up for good. Geir touches on the progress of the possible reunion and does a lengthy essay on his trip to England to visit the band members.

There are some small problems with this new format and we will have to correct them. I had to use a heavy duty staple machine to bind the spine. These big staples are not pretty, but the glue is not strong enough and mine fell all apart in one day! I can't have that happening, so we did what was needed to secure them. We will continue to make other design improvements as we go. We may opt for a paper cover with staples instead of the plastic coated waterproof cover.

I know, the lateness of this issue, it's been frustrating. But there have been some people who continue to contact me concerning "when is the magazine going to come out." I asked Geir in August and he told me "in a few more weeks." I even sent letters stating such. Well, here it is on my doorstep nine months later. So, in this same breath, I can only say "I feel your pain." I have had late-night phone calls and other disturbances that are not appreciated. I can only answer letters concerning the handling of subscriptions and related info, but I can't give accurate information on when the next release will be, simply because I don't have it. I only do the proofreading and some co-editing and the final distribution. So break down and put two 32 cent stamps on a letter and mail it to Geir in Norway. Again, letters mailed to me will not be forwarded, phone calls will not be returned.

Geir planned a convention for January of this year. Many people contacted him to say they couldn't make it. January is a piss-poor time of the year to hold one in freezing Norway! So he will try to reschedule it for another weekend. That brings me to my next question. For those who cannot go to Norway, would you like to have a convention here in L.A.? It would be a more like a mini-convention - a one day only on Saturday type thing. It would be held in a small hall. Any ideas. Suggestions welcome. I would like to have a band or two play. You want to have yours? Let me know.

A box set looks like it will happen, probably next year. So the next magazine will be my special Audio/Video issue. We will be going over all concerts we know were recorded, bootleg or otherwise, that may be of some use. There are a few studio bits and pieces like backing tracks, rehearsals and demos that just might fit the bill. Geir will also give you a glimpse of some of these various materials set aside for possible inclusion into this set. I can't tell you the title as of yet, for all this is "being worked on."

Who would like large embroidered sew-on patches of the Giant's face for their jackets. Big 14" round, same size and quality as the iron-on's. If enough people order them from me, they can be done. Let me know. Will run about \$20 to \$25 each.

Send me a quick letter when you move and your address changes. Some of your forward mail orders have expired at the post office and you are not getting communications mailed out by me. Don't rely on the post office to always follow through with notifications. Always notify me as soon as you can.