

The Year of the Sailor

Ricky Ball Lyle Kinney



If 1977 saw a resurgence in NZ rock 'n' roll (and I think it did), it was also particularly Hello Sailor's year. In my reckoning of NZ rock awards for last year, they'd take best single — choose either "Gutter Black" or "Blue Lady" — and walk off with best album too.

Touring through the last few months of last year broke them to a wider audience but also took its toll on the health of singer Graham Brazier's voice. Voice trouble developed on the beach tour early this year and Graham confessed that the problems had depressed him so badly that he almost quit. But the success of their set at the Great Western Music Festival soon dispelled any such thoughts. Brazier's voice had largely recovered and they went down a storm.

Since that time, they've taken a well deserved holiday and this, together with the decision to quit constant pub gigging, has allowed Graham's voice to recover and also given the band a chance to review their repertoire — reworking existing material and introducing new songs. They've now accumulated more than enough new material for an album.

A single will be recorded first though, and most likely candidate is "Son of Sam", already an established stage favourite. "Blue Lady" has been released in Australia and they're working on video clips to back up the promotion of the single over there.

All in all, I'm prepared to bet 1978 will be Hello Sailor's year too.

Alastair Dougal

MORE Junkie Lovelies

Everybody knows what Norman Mailer meant when he used the word "fug" in *The Naked and the Déad*. Of course he wouldn't have to use that word if he had written his novel in the 1970s but then again his characters probably would have gone on to far more kinky things than this by the Age of Aquarius.

Anyway this is all something of a long-winded intro to the Fugs who were Reprise's resident group of shockers before Zappa came along. The group, which consisted of the basic trio of Tuli Kupferberg, Ed Sanders and Ken Weaver, were very much part of the mid-sixties New York underground scene — the post-Beat generation. Their E.S.P. material never saw light of day here, but nearly all their Reprise catalogue did — *Tenderness Junction*, *It Crawled into My Hand*, *Honest and The Belle of Avenue A*. It is almost impossible to describe the Fugs' characteristic melange of Rabelaisian obscenities, literary erudition, and hard-core country-and-western. All these albums are worth looking for although *It Crawled* is probably the best. Their last album *Golden Filth*, recorded live at the Fillmore East, never made it here, probably because of the extremely racy spoken intros to all the songs.

Another strange Reprise release was Mort Shuman's first album *My Death*. Now here's a man with a healthy 'pop' credential (remember "Save the Last Dance for Me" — well, he co-wrote it). However *My Death* was something of a change of pace. Inside a cover of hirsute butch Mort we have nineteenth century obstetrics texts read to the music of Handel, orgasms to the Clementi Piano Sonata, and lots of Brel and Brecht (trendy thespians take note!).

Another 'pop' man who has done some amazing work is the great Van Dyke Parks. Like Randy Newman, VD did lots of work with groups like Harper's Bizarre — "Come into the Sunshine" and "The Debutante's Ball" are probably his best known tunes. His initial Warner's album, *Song Cycle* was the floptro of all time money-wise, Warners ended up offering copies at a cent each, and it was five years later before VD was able to record his *Discovers America* album, a fabulous and funky calypso-ish treat with the hand of Lowell George all over the place. Parks' version of Little Feat's "Sailing Shoes" is quite magical. Incidentally, I suspect our local companies just threw up their hands in desperation when Parks' third album *Clang of the Yankee Reaper* was released in late 1975 — it certainly never made it here.

The more we delve into this, it appears that the music world is indeed a Jekyll and Hyde business with writers paying their dues with journeyman projects so that they can eventually 'do their own thing'. Jimmy Webb is such a man, although he managed to do some tremendously interesting 'con-

cept' albums with late sixties people — Richard Harris' *A Tramp Shining* or *The Yard Went on Forever*, Thelma Houston's *Sunshower* or the Fifth Dimension's *The Magic Garden* which is a lovely lovely album.

Webb's solo career has had its ups and downs too, and his first album is still his best. *Words and Music* appeared in the early seventies and was such a notorious bad-seller in New Zild that H.M.V. were scared off Jimmy Webb for a while. In *Words and Music* Webb played most of the instruments himself, and wrote some of his sharpest lyrics as well as one of his loveliest songs in "P.F. Sloan". And the deliberately stringy sound acts as a healthy corrective to his usual romantic tendencies.

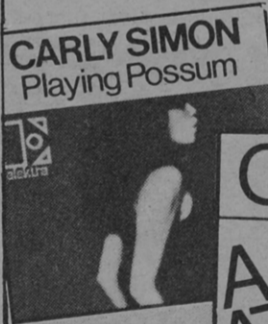
Space is running out so here are some odd left-overs: Geoff and Maria Muldaur's *Pottery Pie* (Reprise) still surfaces occasionally, and you should also look out for Geoff's first solo album *Is Having a Wonderful time* (Warners) before that vanishes forever. The Muldaurs were long-time residents in the Jim Kweskin Band, and Kweskin's *Garden of Joy* (Reprise) is a fine example of their work. In fact, after listening to *Garden of Joy* and *Pottery Pie* one can see where Maria Muldaur gets the formula for her solo albums from.

Now what about putting pen to paper, and giving us details of some of those favourite records that you are sure not enough people know about? Could make for a lively letters column.

William Dart

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