

Mick Gives It Heaps

Uriah Heep hit New Zealand near the end of a nine month global tour. The only respite during that time was a brief break over Christmas ("to check into the hospital") but guitarist Mick Box doesn't seem the least bit tired of the road.

"I love it. It might seem a bit odd to some people but to us it's just our way of life. We've visited 17 countries so far on this tour and some of them have been pretty bizarre. In Indonesia they went apeshit — they hadn't had a rock band there for about a decade.

"Of course we had to play in front of the censors there, just to make sure we weren't polluting the kids' minds or something. So they came along to the soundcheck and we turned off the PA completely and just played thru our back line and did one of our softer songs, at about half volume. They thought that was alright so they went away and on the night we turned it up and everyone loved it."

You've been in heavy metal ever since it was born as a genre — do you think it's continuing to change?

"It's changing but it'll always keep its fundamentals. You can't come out as a heavy metal or hard rock band and then start veering off in another direction, because you start to lose identity and all the people who like what you're about in the first place, you'll lose."

What about metal guitar specifically? Is it progressing?

"I think it's very much progressing. Someone like Van Halen came along and shook up the world for a bit. He came along as a very dynamic player, very versatile, he had every trick in the book. He was like a fresh guitar hero. I'm more of the old school myself. I've noticed that even in places like holiday inn bars in America, every night there's an Eddie Van Halen clone. I don't sway that way. I like to keep my own identity."

So how would you differ from him?

"Technically, we're both as

proficient. I think he goes for a bit more sensationalism in his playing. Upfront tricks all the time, in every song. When I heard Michael Jackson's 'Beat It' I immediately knew it was Eddie Van Halen playing on it."

You use wah-wah both live



and in the studio. I can't think of anyone else who uses it much these days.

"Yeah. I started using it back in the 70s, then dropped it for a little while then started using it again on *Head First*. I enjoy using it again — all the tones you can get, you can open up, make it talk. I like it because you can be playing along or doing a solo and you just kick

Hallowed Be Thy Name

The guy claims to be from a local music paper called *Melody Maker*. Except then he says it's an Australian rag. Then it's tied up with a six part TV series ...

He'd make a much better spy if he could get his story straight. Spy? Yessir — almost certainly a man on a mission from God. The Youth For Christ organisation's campaign to stop the band YFC, aka Youth For Christ (or Youth From Christchurch, as the ad in the paper had it) is stepping up.

The above conversation took place outside the Windsor Castle, where earlier a nervous grey man had presented YFC's Jonny Ogilvie with a legal letter of intent, threatening action if the band continued to use the name. The letter showed a significant shift from the organisation's previous stance, in that

that in on the frequency and it happens, it becomes exciting immediately, to me as a player."

What's your attitude to guitar effects in general?

"I like to keep them to a minimum. At one stage in my career I was getting all these effects racks and everything else and I noticed I was playing more with effects and sounds than with my guitar. And I believe I was a notch down in my playing because I was playing with all these bloody effects. So I cleaned them all out and went back to a straight-in master sound. And then I picked up on it again a little and got the wah-wah going. I've now got a chorus on some of the softer numbers because it's got a lovely 12 string effect and I've got a digital delay. But I don't play around with the delay; I've just got it on so that if I hit the chord it's got that one snap which gives the chord a lovely fat sound. I also put in an overdrive thing to give it a bit of oomph."

He forgot to mention one other technique that's vital to the Heep show. He plays that Les Paul extremely bloody loud. RB

it forbade the band to use not only the name, but also the initials YFC. Amidst its stern language the document contained a rather curious (and probably unwise) paragraph accusing the Christchurch three-piece of trying to falsely attract fans by using the name.

Letters threatening action have also been sent to pubs around the country. Progressive Studios (where the band recorded their soon-to-be-released EP) and others. The three band members remain a bit bewildered by all the fuss but haven't changed the name yet.

And the gig itself? A damn good hoedown — no frills disco, mate. But let's ask the man who stood out like a sore thumb, the "music writer" ...

"Well ... it's a good night out for the way out crowd, I suppose. But they wouldn't go down very well in a trendy nightclub, would they?" RB

Shake Summation

The Birthday Party Mutiny! (Mute)

A friend prone (all too often discovered prone) to frequent and copious drinking once raved "You don't need to change, just progress," of his former ensemble. The words come back listening to *Mutiny!* blues. The same basic elements were at work on the first BP LP (of 'Mr Clarinet', et al) but this EP's best moments fulfill them with hard grace. 'Jennifer's Veil' is about Nick Cave's fascination with the compelling desperation beneath that which is outwardly "hackneyed", "tired" or "bad". The lyric's rampant melodrama is acceptable because Cave is immersed in it. Like a slice from a fat romantic novel, an elegant

cliche. In some ways the Party's finest moment. Tracey Pew's bass-line drives 'Mutiny in Heaven', a startlingly frank piece of lapsed Catholicism that B Trays B Fart. (Percht on mah bed ah was ... sticken a needle in mah arm ... Ah tied off! ... Fucken wings burst out mah back!) Side Two, and Cave again creates himself a scenario in 'Swampland', (Come mah bounty hunters — for ah cannot run no more.) but the music doesn't quite carry it. Nasty but impressive. Last is 'Say A Spell', the Roland Howard song and it doesn't deserve to be on this record. Unexceptional backing to wet words — Cave doesn't sound interested. If that's the sort of thing Howard wanted to write it's no wonder the Party's over. Cave's work is purely idiosyncratic — another ego really only dilutes it. The year's best record.

The Great Unwashed Double 7" (Flying Nun)

Five songs in the fablest packaging you can imagine. The sleeve

has been made out of the plastic backdrop used in the neat video for 'Neck of the Woods'. 'Woods' features a great guitar sound but isn't actually the best track. That honour goes to Peter Gutteridge's gotten-past-waiting-now-I'm-looking-for-the-man tale 'Can't Find Water'. Or maybe Hamish Kilgour's curious 'Duane Eddy'. Whatever, even if it doesn't quite have the psychedelic intoxication of an Unwashed live performance, it's a refreshingly brash bracket of songs. Like, no bullshit, y'know ...? Play it, Duane!

Miltown Stowaways Invitation (Hit Singles)

As the Miltown say their good-byes one by one, this record is on playlist at 89FM — and it deserves it, too. The title track is the first time the band has taken a more measured and pared-down approach and let the song shine through the playing. Kelly Rogers' voice sounds a little affected but he is actually singing these days. 'The Bush' and 'Medieval' are more traditional Miltown fare but they're still memorable as songs and that's the difference. Syd Pasley's guitar is notable. Not perhaps an exceptional record but definitely a large step in the right direction.

Marching Orders The Dance (Flying Nun)

This song stands out live but they've played it just a bit slow in the studio — you feel like giving the turntable a helping hand. Jackie Clarke's voice gets a bit thin in places too, and her bubbling personality — an integral part of the band's appeal — naturally doesn't come across on plastic. 'Games We Play' is the better for being faster. A fun, if lightweight, record with a most accomplished production. Russell Brown

Late News

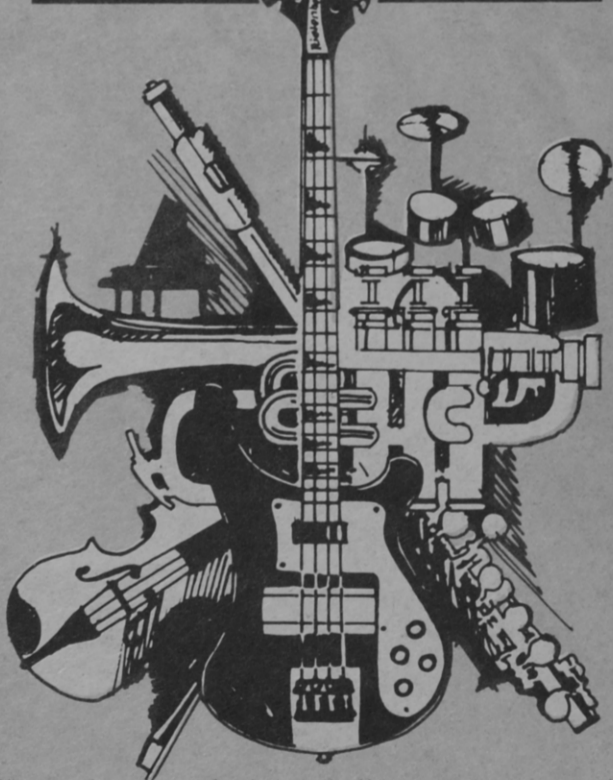
Steve Garden has become first engineer at Progressive Studios. Garden has worked extensively in his own Basement Studio, with artists like Ivan Zagni, Don McGlashan and Phil Bowering ... the new Sons in Jeopardy single 'Sign of Life' / 'Wax' will be out soon on Hit Singles. Expect to see a video too.

And East Village Eye and New York Rocker are now available at Record Warehouse, care of Ether Relay.



Pictured above is the new BIG SIDEWAYS lineup — at rear Tom (trumpet), Debbie Harwood, Stan Wood (bass), Tim Robinson (drums). Foreground, John Bongo (guitar), Jerry (sax). Tom and Jerry are known as the Newton Hoons. Absent is Philby (percussion).

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