

# Rumours

'RUMOURS' FROM PAGE 4  
United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid in London late June (no NZ release set yet) bears a soundtrack by Diatribe. The band plans an EP soon and film director Geoff Murphy is reportedly interested in making a video with them ... Greg Brice at Last Laugh Studios is interested in hearing from anyone who has written songs with a CND theme. Send a cassette demo to him at PO Box 6884, Auckland 1.

TVNZ is looking for three guys and a girl in their late teens or early twenties to star in a series about some young people who form a rock band. You'll need some musical and performance ability (and have to be prepared to base yourself in Auckland for five months next year). Write to *Heroes*, Drama Dept., TVNZ, PO Box 3819, Auckland.

New are Peking Man (Pat Ulrich, vocals, keyboards; John Fearon, drums, percussion; Neville Hall, sax, wind instruments; Perry Marshall, guitar; Tim Calder, bass). They have a 30 minute cassette out soon and will follow that up with a single 'Venetian Blinds'/'Living in Bits' ... Fourplay are Alex Moffat (vocals), Dave Kerr (guitar), Rob Van der Land (bass) and Craig Harvey (drums).

Kiwi Animal's play, *Who's Having a Birthday Today* (written by Brent) has been recorded for radio and has already been played on Campus Radio. It's available to other interested stations. KA worked with violinist Simon Alcorn on a song called 'Union Song'. The duo expects to release

a 12" soon.

Hip Singles' 'After the Party' video was recently shown on British TV. The band has a new drummer (again) in Brendan Fitzgerald (ex Mockers).

Gisborne's Capture Records has a new compilation album *Fast Sides Always Get Played at Parties* featuring the city's finest. Includes Marching Orders, Peter Stewart, Mike Bradley, Andrew Kirk, Ruinz, Langley Gerrard and Paul Turney (now with Body Electric) ... Alpha 2 will launch a cassette album *Phenomenal!* at the Gluepot June 21. Available from Ocean Records, PO Box 876, Auckland.

Last and First Cafe has a new photographic Gallery to join the regular art installations.  
Russell Brown

## Christchurch

The future of Christchurch Battle of the Bands winners Sleeping Gass is uncertain after the departure of singer-keyboardist Geoff Hopkins the day after the band completed their *Shazam* video.

Max Quits' *Janet* LP is at last being pressed and will be out on Flying Nun by the end of June. A release party is planned ... much-loved Gordons have given up with short-lived band Sheep Effect and returned to their original Moniker with Vince Pinker (ex En Can MA) filling the reclusive Alistair's place ... intriguing new band to reside early week at Gladstone (from June 25) is *Caught in the Act*. Line-up: the inimitable Annie Davies (vocals, sax), Paul Frame (keyboards), Wayne Martin (bass), Mark Kahi (ex Nude Wrestling, Zero Bars; guitar), Alan Johnson (ditto former; drums). Malcolm McNeill will guest with the band whenever other commitments allow. Repertoire will cover reggae.

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# HUNGRY as Anything



Quite a party, we have found ... Beautiful people drinking, talking, laughing, falling over. Music, video, blacklights, gaily dressed waitresses flitting about with bowls of jellybeans. It's swinging and Mental As Anything are in the kitchen.

"Can we eat these?" says Reg Mombassa, pointing to several plates of plastic-wrapped sandwiches and rolls.

Greedy so. So what's the best thing about being back "home"? (Reg was born here more years ago than he probably cares to recall.)

"I like the bacon and egg pies. In Australia you can get quiches, but not the real thing. Here, they're everywhere."

Yes, the Mentals did get a reputation for liking some of the local tucker the last time they were here. Especially Greedy Smith ...

"Look!" says Greedy. "The only reason I'm called Greedy is because I ate too much once, five years ago and Reg called me Greedy! I'm not really! Mr real name's Andrew."

Stick with Greedy. But what was this story we heard about the band's appetites getting them into trouble on their North American

Tour with Men At Work last year?

"That's been blown out of all proportion. We just ate the crew's food. You see, in the States they've got this union rule that the road crew gets an hour break and dinner. We came in and saw the food and thought it was for us."

And were almost lynched by angry roadies. So how was the tour?

"We enjoyed it. It was good being two Australian bands together. Of course the crowds were ready and waiting to lap up Men At Work but we had a few more cheap tricks than them, so we got along. We try and make friends with the audience."

"Australia's the latest thing there," comments Reg. "It's trendy to like koala bears and that sort of thing. The next thing you know you'll be able to get a meat pie. You can't get a meat pie in America. The thing we didn't like about the place was the fast food, it turns to concrete in your stomach."

"If you tour a lot one of your main preoccupations is finding a good meal," Greedy says. "You can become preoccupied with food."

The Mentals are to do the USA-Canada bit again soon - again supporting Men At Work. It can't be a happy lot for the support band on these cross-continent treks?

"Yeah, but I enjoy seeing the places and people," says Greedy. "The people are different but the same. If we get preoccupied with the music it'd be silly - we get preoccupied with the audience."

"Half the time we're pissed anyway - no, no we're not really. We've had to cut back a little bit on our drinking. You just end up drinking all the time ..."

There follows discussions on the best late night burger bars in town ("That sort of local knowledge is very important"), shorthand, cricket, rugby and ... food. Martin Plaza wanders by and gives the inside dope on international fast food chains. He worked in most of them in his student days. The kitchen crowd has grown, but eventually it's time to go back and mingle. It's sort of expected of them.

And anyway, the sandwiches are finished.  
Russell Brown

# Wink!st

## Al Green Greatest hits Volumes 1 & 2 Hi

Between 1972 and 1977 Al Green wrote one of the finest chapters in the book of Soul music. These 19 tracks are drawn from 10 of his Hi albums. Two of his songs here are known to new music listeners by cover versions - 'Take Me to the River' (Talking Heads) and 'L.O.V.E. (Love)' (Orange Juice).

Though Green chooses to speak of singers as diverse as Jackie Wilson, his cousin Junior Parker and Nat King Cole as influences, Green appears to be the obvious successor to Otis Redding and Sam Cooke. Unlike Redding and Cooke who met untimely deaths as their careers peaked, Green abandoned his for the church.

Many a foolish writer has attempted to define Soul music and name the day it died. Where ever you start, "Soul" music of the sixties was a music of tension - black/white, spiritual/secular, ballad/dance, rural/urban, etc. - and a music of compromise as black artists strived to reconcile these tensions in making black music for a mass market.

The best soul men have been the country boys - James Brown, Otis Redding and Al Green, all Georgians and all act a mite "peculiar" on stage - spontaneity and abrupt tempo changes reflecting a shifting solution to the dynamic of Soul music.

The spiritual/secular tension basic to Green's recordings is obvious on *Explores Your Mind* (1974) where 'Take Me to the River' (about baptism) and 'The City' (the heavenly city) appear alongside 'One Night Stand'.

On the classic song 'Belle', his 1977 letter of resignation, he reflects on his position:

*Belle, the Lord and I have been friends for a mighty long time  
Leaving him has never really crossed my mind...*

*Belle, I know you can understand a little country boy  
He's brought me safe thus far through many southern country bars.*

Popular music suffered a great

loss when Green ended his flirtation with making hit records. Listening to his recent (often remarkable) gospel recordings, there's not the same achievement as there's not the same tension.

This set is a definitive collection, a bargain priced double (in a tacky cover) from one of the great soul singers of our time - a man with something to sing about, who found his own way to sing it. Essential.  
Murray Cammick

## Sister Sledge Betcha Say That to All the Girls (Atlantic)

While Chic men Nile and Bernard gave Sister Sledge both danceability and relevance, producer George Duke heads them up a different street and ends up with an album of slight and frothy stuff that rarely rises above well-crafted. Exception: 'Let Him Go', which has real urgency. You know, it sounds like somebody wanted to record this song rather than just thought it might make money. Overall result: mildly propulsive music with little beneath the sheen.  
AD



Gwen McCrae

## Gwen McCrae Keep the Fire Burning 12" (Atlantic)

Nobody's kid sister now, this former 70s TK label artist returns with a tough performance on a Willie Hutch song. It builds into a biting funk groove and Gwen is as soulful as ya can get - can't get enough of this - even with a seven minute, 12" spin. Flip 'Hang In' is compulsory funk, too. This lady's gonna make a few soul sisters seem like Doris Day. I hope the album *On My Way* makes these shores.  
MC

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