

Underage Venue Open

The Society for the Promotion of Alternatives in Music (SPAM) has opened a venue at 134 Symonds St. It opened this month after considerable work by society members to bring it up to council standards.

SPAM treasurer Jean Williams said it was hoped that the venue would be open day and night — in the daytime as a coffee bar and information centre and at night as a music venue. The society also plan to run workshops on skills like rigging up PA systems.

SPAM membership costs \$5 and entitles the member to the use of the club which is open at present, but will soon go members-only. SPAM is a non profit organisation registered as an incorporated society and administered by a committee of five. Membership fees going into upgrading facilities and paying for things like security. Membership enquiries to 14 Sefton Ave, Grey Lynn.

Williams said SPAM would be making sure sympathetic, tolerant security staff were hired.

For bands, PA and lights will be supplied and payment will be at musician's rates, \$9.30 an hour. Not a fortune, but better than the fat zero you'll get playing at a Mainstreet Buck A Head night.

After losing a good deal of money when a previous venue fell through, SPAM is hard up but hopefully membership funds and government grants will allow it to develop.

Fanzine...

Another manifestation of the current upsurge in things underground is *Alter Native*, a small but print-packed fanzine.

Issue One is a promising start, with the emphatic and enthusiastic feel that such a 'zine should have. It's definitely youth-orientated and its advent at the same time as SPAM's underage venue coming to fruition is fitting.

If you want to help in any aspect of production, contact Heather, ph AK591-482. Write to 5 Rangipawa Road, Onehunga, Auckland 6. RB

Netherworlds' horn section; Malcolm Black and Nick Sampson, Windsor Castle.



Toys to Go Pro

Dunedin's Netherworld Dancing Toys were in Auckland to test the water recently — and the water was just right.

The eight-piece band filled the Windsor Castle to capacity on two nights of their first Auckland pub fixture. They also played supports at Mainstreet and for DD Smash at the Esplanade.

Their Auckland success has confirmed the band's decision to go full-time after they finish university exams this year. But that doesn't mean they'll be shifting out of Dunedin.

"We like living in Dunedin," guitarist Nick Sampson explained. "We'll tour from there."

The band took the opportunity to make their first big-studio recordings while in Auckland. Their new single 'Don't Blame Me'/'Tears in My Eyes' was recorded at Mandrill with Trevor Reekie producing. More than one record company expressed interest in the band but they're quite happy to remain with the Flying Nun label.

"Flying Nun gives us total freedom about what we do," explained bassist Graham Cockroft.

"And we like the South Island, identity of it too," said Sampson. If all goes well they'll return to Dunedin, play a little, study a lot and write more songs.

The only non-student member is trombonist Philip Hurring and he's chosen to stay with his television job in Dunedin so the band is looking for a replacement. If interested, write to 97 London Street, Dunedin. RB

Gorgonzola?

Auckland musician Steve Roach has just released his first solo recording and it's called *Gorgonzola*. Why *Gorgonzola*?

"I like the smell of smelly cheese," *Gorgonzola*'s a smelly cheese, y'see.

Gorgonzola is a 45 minute tape of recordings made mainly on cassette recorders, using all manner of instruments. It's not really similar to the work of Roach's previous ensemble, the Squirm and even further removed

from his pop work with the Tech-tones.

Roach has applied for an Arts Council Grant to buy a four track tape recorder so he can make recordings up to pressing quality.

"I think cassettes are a good medium for quick release but they're very limited as far as distribution goes. And with the flexibility I like to work with I can't afford to work in studios."

Gorgonzola (reviewed in this issue) is available from House of Squirm, PO Box 47295, Auckland at a cost of \$6, for which price you get a fab 12 page booklet.

A Certain Bar Au Revoir

The following message arrived at the RIU office tied with black ribbon and borne by a sombre messenger who gazed at the floor through watery eyes and repeatedly mumbled "What will I do until Quays opens?" We felt it our responsibility to print the sorry document unabridged, but with the spelling corrected.

"After weeks of hesitant deliberation, we finally played the last record at the infamous ACB on Friday, August 26. The fact that several 'customers' were busy punching each other at the time made little difference and would be called circumstantial evidence in the post mortem.

"With the opening of other nightspots we felt the Bar had lost a certain potency, the clientele seeming to conserve their energies for later licensing. Although very unwilling to say farewell, we were also adamant not to be associated with a place that was not fulfilling its prime objective — to create an enjoyable atmosphere where good music could be heard. To be honest, we also felt the punters were not as open-minded, musically, as they had been and the attraction of playing 'anything we liked' was no longer there.

"We thank those who gave us their support and who helped make those magical evenings in our 18 month history." Signed Pierre and The Squire.

Propeller New Twist

After facing legal action which seemed likely to spell its doom Propeller Records is again live and well.

Difficulties arose when Harlequin Studios took legal action to recover debts outstanding from the recording of the Screaming Meemees and Blam Blam Blam albums. Label boss Simon Grigg had been preparing to travel to Britain but was forced to stay in the country.

But after a couple of uneventful court appearances an amicable settlement has been reached

Musicians on File

PAMSAB (Performing Artists Management Service and Advice Bureau) is compiling a computer listing of musicians looking for work. The listing details musical tastes, abilities and goals so that bands needing an extra player and individuals wanting to form their own groups can get the musicians they want with a minimum of fuss. The listing costs \$20 every six months to appear in.

PAMSAB will also arrange audition times and keep in touch with both parties.

The bureau hopes to keep on expanding its service and stimulate public interest in New Zealand music. It can be found on First Floor, Durham House, Durham St (opposite the car park).

Herbs Embark

Auckland's Herbs left recently on a tour that will take them throughout the Pacific and into Asia.

The tour, Herbs' second, includes a concert at the closing ceremony of the South Pacific Games in Apia, Western Samoa. In addition to covering the places it visited on its last tour the band will visit Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong (playing the 14,000 capacity QEII Stadium) and Japan. Japan Records will be releasing the Herbs catalogue to co-incide with the band's club tour of the country.

between the two parties. Their settlement involves Grigg representing Harlequin's Ze Disc Records in the UK.

Propeller's own structure has changed, with an Auckland man, Ralph Wells, taking over Paul Rose's half shareholding. Grigg has left for Britain and Wells will run the label in his absence.

Before he left, Grigg spoke to RIU about avoiding such large recording debts in the future.

"In future there's going to have to be a great deal more responsibility from bands going into the studio. But that doesn't mean they should go and find the cheapest studio possible. The big studio approach is still relevant. There's no way in the world you can make records financially viable in this country and support a record company without selling them overseas. And to sell them overseas they've got to be up to standard."

Grigg is considering having some of the Propeller catalogue pressed in Britain, probably beginning with a compilation album. He'll also be looking at picking up UK labels for local distribution.

Back home, releases planned soon include a Newmatics live and studio disc and a Meemees live EP. RB

Zagni: Life After PEP

Until recently all an unemployed musician could do with his or her skills was collect the dole until a paying ensemble chanced by or could be built up.

But last year, versatile Auckland musician Ivan Zagni was asked to sort through the 40 or so musicians registered as unemployed in the city and select a number to form a group which would work and be paid for six months under a government PEP scheme.

That first group was the Big Sideways and was an undoubted success, making a well-received album and continuing under its own steam with a core of original members.

This year's PEP scheme was called Avant Garage and, with its mixture of rock and classical musicians, had a different feel than Big Sideways.

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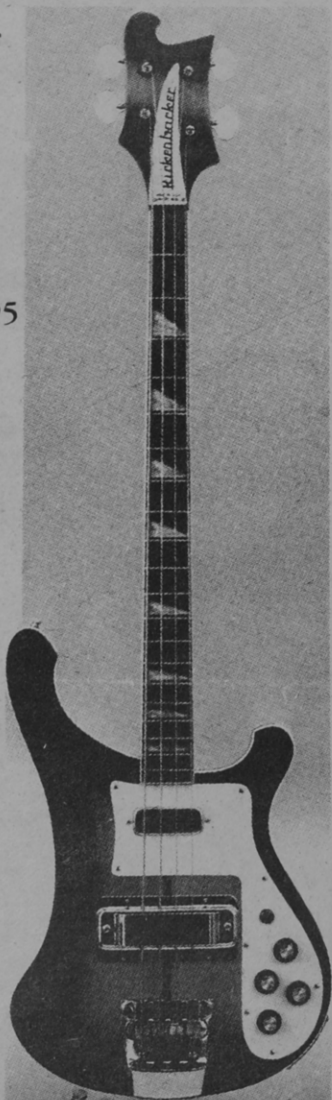
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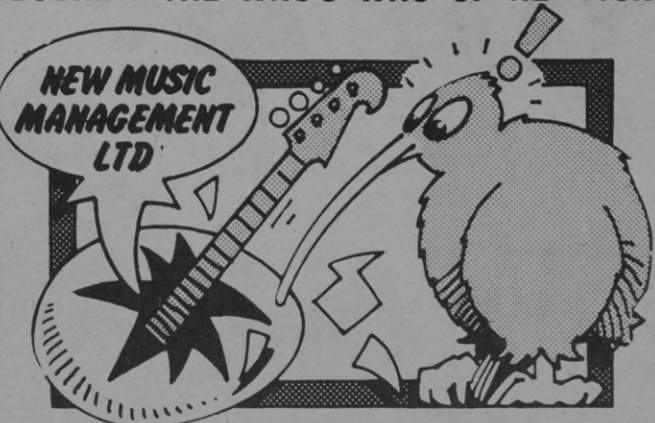
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