

COUNTRY

CLUB

1992

issue 23

Hi,

First of all I have to say thank you on behalf of the Band and myself for all the Christmas cards received - they certainly went a long way to making the daily mail sack unmanageable! Now we are all eagerly looking forward to a great 1992.

It seems strange to be writing about the Country Club Convention because it now seems such an age ago but, as this is the first magazine since, and I've had so many letters from those who were unable to attend asking all about what they missed, this mag devotes quite a lot of space to the great day.

Thank you to all who badgered Radio 1 about the lack of B.C. air time. A couple of you have sent me your replies from the BBC, they are not terribly helpful being full of such phrases as:- "..... It is no part of their function to promote or restrict the interests of any particular artist. In practice, programmes normally include a proportion of new records and of new artists each week..... We do try to please our audience but I am afraid it is an impossible task to please everybody at the same time....." "..... Inevitably some records will receive more play than others. I think that is only right....." "..... not everyone will agree with all of our judgements all of the time....." etc. etc. but, at least, they replied and we can only hope that due note has been taken and we will hear future releases given more air play. In fact, Andrew and I are so fed up with the drivel that they do play that now we listen more and more to CDs and tapes etc.

A late date for those living in Germany, Holland, Belgium and wherever else you can pick up WDR3 television. On 1st February, WDR3 are broadcasting the B.C. concert from the Biskuthalle in Bonn. It was a great concert so, of course, well worth tuning in. Also, on the same date will be broadcast All About Eve and The Blessing so we are not sure how long the B.C. set will be.

As participants in the Hot News service will know B.C. were scheduled for some T.V. appearances during January but, as often happens with transmission dates - they alter! This always makes it very difficult to tell you in advance so, please, always bear this in mind and keep your eye on the press. Sorry. Anyway:-

9th February "Cue The Music" will feature Big Country. (I originally told you this was due on 26th January).

What is the position regarding Phonogram and a new record deal? The only person really able to up-date us on what has happened is Ian, so I did ask him to write a piece on this for us:-

"1991 was obviously a mixed year for Big Country. It would not be appropriate for me to go too deeply into my perspective of what happened as it would be too much like airing dirty washing etc. Suffice it to say that the relationship with Phonogram (or lack of it) played a big part in the disappointing results with "No Place Like Home". As with soccer, team playing is fundamentally important; no one person can hog the ball. In order to function as a team, there has to be an empathy and understanding between all players. Dealing with record companies is very much like playing musical chairs. People are headhunted, promoted, fired or just move on. At Phonogram, the original team had all gone, bar one or two and the new team, albeit experienced and, in most cases, good at their job, just did not grasp Big Country's past or future potential. It was certainly the band's contention that "We're Not In Kansas" was THE song on the album that was most representative of where they were musically and one of Stuart's finest songs. When the A & R department could not see this, let's just say, the die was cast from there on. In fairness to Phonogram, they did give a reasonable thrust to "Republican Party Reptile" but Big Country are currently blighted by a complete indifference at Radio One. The campaign started reasonably well; the Convention was a success, the first full show in Bonn was a triumph and "Reptile" debuted at 37 (28 midweek). Alas, the singles chart today is so soft (3,500 units for Top 40 entrance) that, without radio play, acts will quite often enter the Top 40 the first week of release and disappear a week later. At 37, "Reptile" received only minimal plays. The main other problem was the volume of traffic: Dixie Straits, Bryan Adams, U2, Guns & Roses, let alone the "Best of..." and dance records. We requested the album be held back until 1992. But with "Reptile's" midweek performance, the record company persuaded otherwise. At this point, the album crumbled. The band only received one week's exposure and that was it! As I've said, let's not go too deep. Phonogram and the band parted mutually. We are not far off concluding a new deal which reunites Big Country with Chris Briggs, their original A & R man (at Phonogram). The band are very enthused and motivated by the fact that Chris is around again and I'm sure there is a bright future ahead.

One word about the tour. There have been some "Smart Alec" comments about the routing of the tour. Firstly, the tour was booked very late indeed. At the best of times, a long tour may have to be re-booked and re-routed many times, due to hall availability. The dates were booked in Scotland to start with (due to demand being more immediate) and was routed accordingly, depending on availability. The second consideration is to have enough shows each week to cover weekly costs. There can only be three to four shows in a row so, although Hull, York, Sheffield were back to back, as per Bristol and Cardiff, I thought the agent (Solo) did an amazing job in pulling together the tour. The band were magnificent and the attendance was generally remarkable, considering the recession and the performance of a few other tours that were out."

Due to the move away from Phonogram, the German tour dates had to be cancelled. Likewise, future releases etc. have all been left in abeyance for the moment but we should have some good news shortly.

I'm sorry to have been unable to let you know of the very last minute arrangements (I was away when it was confirmed) for the Band to play on 2nd and 3rd January in Dublin. Both dates were, apparently, a great success and, even with the late confirmation were both sold out.

The provisional date for the availability of the book of lyrics, as mentioned on the sleeve of "No Place Like Home" is Monday, 17th February. The retail price in the shops will be £7.95 BUT we will, of course, be selling to Country Club members at a reduced price plus Post and Packing (price and P & P still to be confirmed). **Keep your eyes on the Merchandise list for full details.**

In previous news sheets and magazines, we have mentioned the possible release of the CD "Restless Natives". As you will know, this was postponed due to the release of the album but it is now thought that this will, in fact, be released during May or June of this year.

Unfortunately, "A Certain Chemistry" is now out of print and no longer available. This came as a bit of a shock as I did not realise they were going to take it off the press - I did not even keep a copy for myself!

We did not have prior warning but, "Fields Of Fire" was released during September 1991 on the "Old Gold Series" as a 7". So, sorry I was unable to let you know before.

COUNTRY CLUB, P.O. Box 59, Ashwell, Herts SG7 5NC

YOUR CHOICE

Following on from the last issue, and Gordon Smith's suggestion for a poll of the five records/tracks not usually played live by B.C. that fans would like to hear included in live sets, the results are as follows:

Winter Sky
Hold The Heart
Song Of The South

Eiledon
The Great Divide
Starred And Crossed

Flame Of The West
When A Drum Beats
Pass Me By

Gordon has asked me to pass on his thanks to all of those who took the time to respond to his survey:

THE BOYS IN BLUE PAY A VISIT!

Ian Grant has recently been visited no less than three times at the management office by the POLICE, and we don't mean Sting, Andy Summers and Stewart Copland!!!!

During the recording of "No Place Like Home" at Rockfield Studios, Stuart took along his weightlifting gear. When it was time to return home, Stuart asked Robin Walker, the guitar technician, to take the weights back to Scotland in the truck along with the recording equipment. En route to Dunfermline, Ayrshire police stopped Robin and took him to a weighbridge where, of course, they found the truck to be overweight! The band's "company" is called "Big Country Touring and Recording". Unfortunately, the relevant documents that had to be completed stated it as "Big Country Touring And Recovery". It has taken the subsequent three visits from the police and £200 of the band's money in legal fees to convince the authorities that they are not running an illegal haulage company!

The case has now been dropped.

● A Shader Pale Of White, as announced here some weeks ago, the original lineup of Procol Harum — Gary Brooker, Matthew Fisher, Keith Reid and Robin Trower — have decided to get back together again. The lineup that gave the world such weirdo classics as "A Whiter Shade Of Pale" and "Hom-Burg" has not been in the same room together for 21 years, until it started recording the upcoming *The Prodigal Stranger*.

The band is now augmented by bassist Dave Bronze drummer Mark Brezicki (ex-Big Country), Procol Harum's original drummer B.J. Wilson died in Oregon in 1985 after recording and touring with Joe Cocker (not as a direct result, we assume!). In fact, it was when they heard news of his death and started to ring each other up, that the reformation was first suggested.

WHERE ARE THEY ARE NOW?

Kevin Powell from Victoria, Australia (Membership No 003233).

Kevin sent in this little article which he found in "Juke" (their equivalent to "NME" or "Melody Maker").

So, for everyone who wants to know what Mark is up to, there it is.

As we enter 1992, it seems appropriate to give a very short précis of the:

LAST TEN YEARS OF BIG COUNTRY.

JANUARY 1981

The Skids appear on Noel Edmonds' "Swap Shop"

JANUARY 1981

The Skids feature on the "Old Grey Whistle Test"

FEBRUARY 1982

Big Country supported Alice Cooper but were thrown off after just two shows (original line up).

MAY 1982

Big Country signed to Phonogram Records, now with Mark and Tony on board.

FEBRUARY 1983

"Fields Of Fire" released, reaching Number 10 in the charts. Big Country open for U2 at Hammersmith Palais and go on to do Dingwalls tour of Sheffield, Liverpool, Hull and Newcastle.

JANUARY 1984

"Wonderland" released and reaches Number 8 in the charts.

FEBRUARY 1984

Big Country nominated for two Grammy Awards in the US for Best New Group and Best Single and perform at the prestigious awards ceremony at the Shrine Theatre, LA.

JANUARY 1985

"Just A Shadow" released and peaks at Number 25 in the charts.

JANUARY 1986

Kate Bush makes a guest appearance on title track during the recording of "The Seer" LP.

JANUARY 1988

The band fly to LA to record "Peace in Our Time" with Peter Wolf.

JANUARY 1989

Band do sell out tour of UK including three nights at Hammersmith Odeon.

FEBRUARY 1990

Big Country begin work on new material using Pat Ahern on drums.

THE CASE CONTINUES.....

COUNTRY CLUB CONVENTION

31st August 1991

Glen Pavilion
Dunfermline

Well, with hic-cups too few to mention, the Convention went brilliantly. Having reached a peak of panic on about the Wednesday before, and thinking to myself "I'll be glad when it's all over", I now wish it was still to look forward to!

At one stage during the journey up (having had to make a couple of detours to collect merchandise that could not be delivered prior to our departure from the office), I really began to wonder whether we would, in fact, ever get there but then, thankfully, the car was still managing to run on only two cylinders, loaded to the hilt with a very heavy, full trailer behind us!

Everything went off tremendously. The special carrier bags eventually emerged at 8.30pm on the evening before the event, having not arrived at the office on the Tuesday, as promised, nor on the Wednesday as further promised and after waiting until noon on Thursday for them before we just HAD to leave for Dunfermline with a promise that they would be redirected to the hotel for Friday morning! So, at 9am on SATURDAY morning at the Glen Pavilion, I started the FOUR HOUR task of "stuffing" the carriers ready to be handed out as fans arrived. Where was Stuart? (Not Adamson) As Andrew and I had never been involved with anything like this before, where was Stuart, our professional merchandise help?

So, with the band sound-checking etc. and all hands on deck getting set-up - a big thank you to **Andy Maule** (Membership No 000108) and **Jason Allen** (Membership No 000364) - you saved me having to get up the bloody ladder to black out the windows so that the videos were viewable. Thank you so much.

Did we promise an Acoustic set? During a telephone conversation with Bruce earlier that week, he announced, "What the hell, let's go for it, we'll probably do a full blown electric set." *Did we say it was going to be a set lasting between 30 and 45 minutes?* The band loved it and did a full one and a half hours which was preceded by about an hour of questions and answers and followed by a mammoth autograph session. The Band sat and the fans filed passed taking photographs by the hundreds, the queue at one stage went practically all the way round the hall but everyone was so orderly there was never a hitch.

A great time was had by all and the Band, us and all concerned would like to say a big THANK YOU to all of you who attended for making it such a great evening.

The video of the event was a little longer arriving than originally anticipated. The first edition was returned for a little re-editing and then, when the OK was given, the master mysteriously got lost somewhere between Scotland and the duplicating company in Hertfordshire - PANIC, but all's well and it is a great reminder of what a wonderful time we had, albeit difficult to capture the whole event, from 4pm until about 10.30pm-ish on a tape. I believe it succeeds in showing how relaxed and friendly the whole thing was. *A yearly event, did I hear Stuart say?* Let's hope that proves possible but, if not yearly, I feel sure we will be doing something along the same lines again in the future.

The only blot on the weekend was that it had to end. I woke up on Sunday morning with a little hang-over and the thought of the drive home - doom and gloom.

Andrew and I were so busy chatting about the whole event and playing B.C. cassettes in the car that several times we got ourselves well and truly lost in the lanes of Scotland and Northern England. Our car did not like coming home either - it boiled three times and then the trailer decided to show us how deflated it felt and had a bloody puncture. Spare tyre? Yes. Wheel brace? No. Trail for a couple of miles with a totally flat trailer tyre and the engine boiling with no water - were we going to get home? Eventually, yes. Was it worth it? Every bit of it. Roll on the next one and I hope that we will be able to give more notice - not only for those who were unable to make this one but to lessen the panic trying to get everything organised in such a short space of time.

A big thank you to Ian, Lynda and Tina and, of course, the Band - without their cooperation and enthusiasm, it would have been on a non-starter. And thanks, too, to Stuart and his chum for helping so efficiently with the merchandise stall.

It was great to meet so many of you, although I must admit that I did get a little confused as to which names went with which faces in the end but it was great to see so many fans who had travelled very long distances, not only within the U.K. but also from overseas.

A selection of letters received tell the story.

Jan

No place like home ...

Deafline Press, August 30, 1991

STUART ADAMSON this week had three reasons to be cheerful. The first Big Country single landed into the Top 100 and he had a new five live concert in Deafline's Deafline Arena. Adamson was their first guest of the first rock year.

"It's certainly looking up for the rock year," he said. "There's in our there."

Heart producer Peter Dinklage was at the concert, but Stuart said he didn't know him at all. It was a very subtle compliment. "I just felt that we were doing a good job of it," he said. "I'm glad to see you're doing so well."

Stuart admits that as a result of the success of the album, he's been "completely re-assessment of my career." He says he would never re-think that much.

Adamson truly feel Big Country is an act that has a lot of life in it. "I'm not sure if it's a long-term act or not," he said. "I'm not sure."

While the rest of the album is a collection of songs that are "country" in nature, the album is a collection of songs that are "country" in nature.

The opening "Where's My Mind" is a song that is "country" in nature. "Dynamite" is a song that is "country" in nature.

Stuart says he's never had such a good time as he's had now. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now," he said. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now."

Whether sleeping in Deafline's Deafline Arena, Stuart says he's never had such a good time as he's had now. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now," he said. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now."



Fans pay homage to their heroes

IT'S a small crowd of about 100 people that has gathered at the Deafline Arena in Deafline, Pa., for the first Big Country concert in the area since the band's debut in 1982. The band is playing a set of songs that are "country" in nature.

Stuart Adamson is the first to take the stage. He is wearing a dark jacket and playing an electric guitar. He is looking towards the camera and smiling.

The concert is a tribute to the band's music and the fans who have supported them over the years. It is a special occasion for everyone involved.

Deafline Press, September 6, 1991

It's not just the fact that it's the first Big Country concert in the area since the band's debut in 1982. It's also the fact that the band is playing a set of songs that are "country" in nature.

Stuart Adamson is the first to take the stage. He is wearing a dark jacket and playing an electric guitar. He is looking towards the camera and smiling.

Big day for Country Club

A FRIEND writes you over to his home in the mountains of the Blue Ridge Mountains. He is wearing a dark jacket and playing an electric guitar. He is looking towards the camera and smiling.

The friend is Stuart Adamson, the lead singer of the band Big Country. He is wearing a dark jacket and playing an electric guitar. He is looking towards the camera and smiling.

Stuart says he's never had such a good time as he's had now. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now," he said. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now."

Whether sleeping in Deafline's Deafline Arena, Stuart says he's never had such a good time as he's had now. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now," he said. "I've never had such a good time as I'm having now."

Radio Rectort

WEST LANSHIRE EVENING GAZETTE
 FEBRUARY 11 1991
 DATE 5/11/91
 IN THE 21st ANNUAL DATE
 CIRC. 21,702

STUART ADAMSON
 HEART
 DEAFLINE
 DEAFLINE ARENA
 DEAFLINE, PA.
 DEAFLINE PRESS
 DEAFLINE, PA.
 DEAFLINE PRESS
 DEAFLINE, PA.

Deafline Press, August 30, 1991

Deafline Press, August 30, 1991

Deafline Press, August 30, 1991

YOUR LETTERS:-

For those who were unable to make it: I hope next time you will be amongst the audience and what better way to illustrate the response from fans other than extracts from a selection of the hundreds of letters received:-

From Cameron Hogg, Cumbria (Membership No 000321)

"..... I should let you know whilst writing that the Convention was great - a brilliant day and I'm looking forward to the next one already. I got some severe earache for wangling my way out of going to a wedding in order to be there, but it was worth it!!....."

From Emma Jane Doherty, London (Membership No 001631)

"..... I went to the Convention, really good, made some new mates, quite funny as two people I met only live around the corner to me!!....."

From Julie Fazackerley, Surrey (Membership No 000328)

"..... to thank everyone for organising the Convention. I can honestly say it was one of the best days of my life and I got to meet the band (at last). I've waited very patiently for eight years for that!!! Thanks again, it's a day I'll never forget....."

From David Jones, Coventry (Membership No 000042)

"..... There's only one word to describe the Convention and that's GREAT. Everything about it was great..... I mean how many other bands have ever done it?"

From William Dalgliesh, Oxfordshire (Membership No 001837)

"..... congratulate you on the great success of the Convention. It was all worth the eighteen hour coach drive....."

From James Shadbolt, Devon (Membership No 003111)

"..... The B.C. Convention was absolutely brilliant, well worth driving twelve hours to see!"

From Amanda Giddens, Hertfordshire (Membership No 001583)

"..... thanks for organising the Convention. What a brilliant idea! The weather was great, the fans were extremely sociable and the band were absolutely fantastic. I loved the new set, especially 'Winter Sky'. The video showings were unbeatable, especially the T & C gig....."

From Gillian Kirby, Middlesex (Membership No 001541)

"..... thank you, albeit belatedly, for arranging the Convention. It was great fun and I really enjoyed it, even the long journey there and back. I was a little worried about going on my own but I wasn't the only one and it was good to chat to some other fans. It was brilliant of the Band to do such a long set....."

From Douglas Johnson, Newcastle Upon Tyne (Membership No 001706)

"..... how much I enjoyed the convention in Dunfermline a couple of weeks ago. Everyone I have spoken to since has said how good it was. I especially enjoyed the live set, it was nice to hear the new stuff, for the very first time, played live."

From Mark Kimberley, Birmingham (Membership No 003066)

"..... great day at the Convention (more like a private concert)....."

From Ingrid Van Laer, Middlesex (Membership No 000349)

"..... enjoyed the Convention. It was organised very well and I'm sure everyone had a brilliant time, I certainly did!"

From Peter Kay, Inverness (Membership No 003429)

"..... thank you very much for organising such a great Convention in Dunfermline. I had the great pleasure in meeting Stuart outside the Pavilion prior to the sound check and he didn't mind at all having his photo taken, unlike some other bands etc. He has to be one of the best guys I've ever met....."

From Karen Russell, Kent (Membership No 003016)

"..... congratulate you and Andrew for an event which will remain in my memory for the rest of my life. Words cannot really describe the impact it had on me, the emotion, the band and best of all, the wonderful Scottish people.... those who I spoke to thought I was mad to come up and go home virtually the same day and as the coach turned into a sauna, so did I. In all, I suffered approx. twenty two hours of travelling in just twenty nine hours! But, as I said to Stuart, it was definitely worth it. I have never been that close to the band before and, as some fans said, they'd waited the best part of eight years for that moment....."

From A Fan (Can't please everyone!)

"..... I think it's a total wank that the Convention is being held in Dunfermline. Why not somewhere in the Midlands or North of England where it's easily accessible by people all over the country, including Scotland? I think it's highly unfair on people who live in the South of England. Just thought I'd let you know it sux....."

Point taken, but it had to be somewhere and where else would have been more appropriate for the first Convention than the home of B.C. with an album entitled 'No Place Like HOME'? I think it's great that so many fans travelled the long distance necessary including fans from Germany, Ireland, Denmark, Holland etc. We even had one from America.

From Jason Allen, Bristol (Membership No 000364) (Inwards fanzine)

"..... Yes, Issue 1 DID carry a C.C. expose but it only summarised the problems that WERE evident at the time of writing it. The feed back C.C. now receives through Inwards readers is a feeling of much improvement. As for the Convention - bravo! etc. It shows every sceptic that the C.C. is well and truly BACK when you arrange something like this. Please don't think I've praised C.C. just to get an address printed - I have made my true feelings clear, that's all!"

For those who would like to subscribe to 'Inwards', the address is:-

Jason Allen and Andy Maule,
Inwards Fanzine, 131 Park Road, Keynsham,
Bristol, Avon, BS18 1AS

From Tony Moore, Merseyside (Membership No 001531)

"..... thank you and everyone else involved for a truly great day last week in Dunfermline. My two

friends who went with me to the Convention are now fully converted fans of the band, especially after they witnessed the live set which was far from acoustic.....'

From Graham Low, Germany (Membership No 000256)

'.....how excellent the B.C. Convention was. I travelled all weekend and it was worth every minute of it.....'

From Gill Dovey, W. Midlands (Membership No 000429)

'.....brilliant day on Sat. 31st August. After a long journey (a good deal more than the '400 miles' that was sung with great gusto on our return). We really enjoyed the atmosphere and informality of the whole event. It must have taken a great deal of effort to organise and was in our case greatly appreciated. We thought the set the band did was something really special, so relaxed, it felt as though they were enjoying the event as much as us! After standing at the end of a '400 mile' queue for autographs, it was great to see the band still smiling and chatting. I think Tony summed up the whole day when asked by our friend 'Aren't you fed up with all this?' he replied, 'Never, this is what it's all about.' Thanks again for a special day.'

From Jason Tarr, Bristol (Membership No 001703)

'.....what a great time I had at the Convention on Saturday. It was really great to be there and hear what the band had to say during the question and answer session, it was quite amusing. It was even better when they played the set, it seemed that they really enjoyed it and as always gave it everything they had. I reckon it was one of their best performances yet! The perfect end to the evening was to be able to get autographs from the band and also to have a quick word (and pinch Stu's glass of water). I really enjoyed myself. 'At home with Big Country.'

From Neel Gandhi, London (Membership No 000234)

'.....thanks for last Saturday - it was brilliant. It has got to be a definite for the future, possibly adopting a spot before every forthcoming album. The coach journey up, although tiring, passed quickly with B.C. videos creating the atmosphere. A lot of us were a little disappointed that the band were time-tabled for only forty five minutes live stuff but what a treat we got. question and answer session was a very good idea and worked very well and I was especially impressed with the band giving autographs to EVERYONE, no matter how long it took.'

From Liam Davey, Cleveland (Membership No 001593)

'.....great day I had on 31st - sitting in the park listening to the sound check and the evening was fantastic. Thanks to the Band and your organisation.'

From Lisa Wrangle, Surrey (Membership No 003004)

'.....thank the C.C. for organising the coach trip to Dunfermline which, although very tiring for nine hours there and back, was one of the best days of my life, having been able to talk to the band, meet them each personally and have my photo taken with them and obtain their autographs. Brilliant.'

From Iain MacCorquodale, Argyll (Membership No 003394)

'.....brilliant night, magic atmosphere it was a night I'll never forget and I hope it goes ahead annually, or bi-annually at least. Thanks for organising such a brilliant night.'

From Gordon Smith, Fife (Membership No 003097)

'.....Dunfermline was absolutely great. The full set was brilliant, especially the relaxed banter from Stuart between songs.'

From Susan O'Ferrall, Surrey (Membership No 001709)

'.....Congratulations on the B.C. Convention. I really enjoyed it, especially the questions and answers and, of course, the live set which is what music is all about.'

From Marion Nicholas, Hertfordshire (Membership No 000061)

'.....congratulations on the success of the Convention. It was worth the one thousand mile round trip, we all had a great time and I think the band did too. It was great of them to organise it so that we had the performance amplified. I was expecting an acoustic set as per the schedule so it was a great surprise to hear it electrified. Thank you boys!'

From Tuula Tanska, Finland (Membership No 000332)

'.....Thank you for the Convention. It was really something special. At least for me it was. It was wonderful to meet them at last. I have seen all their three gigs in Finland but never had the courage even to try to meet them, I'm such a shy fool. When I received your letter about the convention in Dunfermline, there was no one stopping me going. It wasn't easy but I simply had to go. I really couldn't afford it, now that I'm paying the mortgage. I took a one week tourist trip to London, the coach journey up to Dunfermline was great because I really enjoy watching your beautiful country. Dunfermline is a very nice town and Pittencrieff Park is beautiful. The Glen Pavilion was also nice and there was room enough for all of us. The questions and answers part was fun even though I didn't hear or understand all of the questions. Also, it felt great when Stuart mentioned my name and he even pronounced it pretty well. But the best part was, of course, the live act. It was wonderful to see them play after three long years.'

From Gailan Johnson, Northumberland (Membership No 001919)

'.....Thanks for a brilliant day and night last week. It was definitely the best day and weekend of my life so far.'

From Oliver Hunter, Berkshire (Membership No 000295)

'.....thank you for the Convention. I had an excellent time!'

From Tom Warrington, Glasgow (Membership No 003091)

'.....I don't know what anyone else thought about the Convention but I enjoyed myself immensely. I travelled the relatively short distance from Glasgow with a group of long time fans, none of whom had ever bothered to join C.C. but who, by the end of the evening, were only too happy to testify to its success. I suppose individual complaints may arise (God knows why) but you'll hear none from me. The album playback was a terrific idea and served to heighten my anticipation of the forthcoming release. The Q & A session was a real delight with no 'airs & graces' on display and, given the limitations of time and the size of the crowd, a most amiable and enjoyable experience. All of which paled into virtual insignificance after the stunning live set. I'd expected a half hour acoustic set and was surprised to see the complete rig set out on stage. With the obvious appeal of the signing session to end the evening in fitting style, I'd vote the event a resounding success and one which will hopefully be repeated.'

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

- Q** What size strings and picks do you use and of what are they made? From Michael Wolf (Membership No 003213) who is a practising guitarist and wishes to be able to sound like B.C. acoustically as well as electronically.
Stuart: *On the Levinson Blade and Fender Telecaster, I use Picato Extra Light (.009 E string)
On the Gibson Les Paul, I use Picato Light (.010 E string)
On the Godin and Martin Acoustic, I use Picato Western Bronze '20's light gauge.
Bruce: 10-46 gauge strings. Heavy gauge picks.*
- Q** Have you ever had voice/singing lessons? From Michael Wolf (Membership No 003213)
Stuart: *No.*
- Q** What other instruments can you play? From Michael Wolf (Membership No 003213).
Stuart: *I mess around with the piano and harmonica a little.
Bruce: Mandolin, banjo and anal flute.
Tony: I don't really play but I dabble with other instruments such as the saxophone, keyboard etc. I don't really play the bass, I do it.*
- Q** Do you plan to tour the U.S. anytime? All your fans here in the U.S. hope to see you very soon. From Stan Lenkiewicz (Membership No 000414)
Stuart: *We hope to tour in the U.S. as soon as we can get the album released over there.*
- Q** Where and what sort of holiday do you most enjoy? From Stan Lenkiewicz (Membership No 000414)
Stuart: *I like to lie around on beaches doing very little. I love to go to real touristy places with my children (theme parks, water parks etc.)
Bruce: Haven't had a holiday in years.
Tony: The last time I went on vacation was 1986. That was to Barbados. I have an aunt living there. It's a beautiful island. I'd like to take a trip around the rest of the West Indies including Dominica which is where my family are from originally. I haven't been there for over fifteen years.*
- Q** Where or what is "Eiledon"? From Angela Pilidis (Membership No 003342).
Stuart: *Eiledon is a completely fictitious place that I use as a metaphor for a state of oneness with one's surroundings. It also fitted well rhythmically.*
- Q** Have you ever tried to play the bag-pipes? Angela Pilidis (Membership No 003342)
Stuart: *I have fiddled around with a chanter (bagpipe trainer).
Bruce: No.*
- Q** Do you have a kilt? From Angela Pilidis (Membership No 003342)
Stuart: *No. In fact, I have never even worn a kilt.
Bruce: No, do you have a Davy Crockett hat?*
- Q** Are there any album tracks, from any of your albums, which you would like to have been released as singles? From Neil Fey (Membership No 003202)
Stuart: *I would like the version of "Slips" that we do live to be released.
Bruce: "Kansas".
Tony: I'm really not into the concept of singles, especially when songs like "In A Big Country" and "Republican Party Reptile" can't get into the Top Ten. I would have felt happier if "We're Not In Kansas" was released to present the last album. I suppose if Phonogram wanted a hit single, the first thing they should have done was ban the musicians from the studio.*
- Q** You once said that "Eiledon" was your favourite B.C. track. Is this still the case? If not, which track has over-taken it and why? From Neil Fey (Membership No 003202)
Stuart: *My current favourite track is "We're Not In Kansas". I like the way the lyric expands on the title and original idea.*
- Q** What is your favourite B.C. track and why? From Neil Fey (Membership No 003202)
Bruce: *"In A Big Country" and "Wonderland". They still work everytime we play them live.
Tony: I really don't like making that type of distinction between the songs of the past because they're all on record for a reason. I think "Steeltown" is still possibly my favourite because it possesses the true character of Big Country. Not very attractive, but hard and brutally frank. (The Great Divide). I found I was approaching euphoria every time we played "Wonderland" on the last tour. The only thing that stops me going a bundle on "Comes A Time" is the drums (funny that, eh?)*
- Q** Richard Fitzgerald (Membership No 001879) would like to know where you got your black shirt with the strawberry type design as his girlfriend thinks it's great and wants one!
Stuart: *I bought it in a store in Dunfermline called "The Turret" about three years ago. It was made by Gallagher and Egan and is actually navy blue with a red and green floral print. I really like it too. I have never seen another like it.*

- Q** Who is singing lead vocals on "Fly Like An Eagle"? The only way to describe the vocals is "different and unusual". From David Downing (Membership No 003371)
Stuart: This is actually one of Bruce's demos and he sings and plays everything on it.
- Q** Who is more responsible for getting the B.C. guitar sounds through the years? From Michael Wolf (Membership No 003213)
Bruce: Both Stuart and I were equally responsible and are paying for it now.
- Q** From where did you get your waistcoat with the Reptile on it which you wore at the T & C gig on Sunday 6th October? Any chance of this becoming available when you're bored with it? From Alison Hackers (Membership No 000468)
Bruce: It was made by Belinda Hammond Laing. Make me an offer.
- Q** You sing backing vocals superbly. I might add, but do you have any aspirations to sing lead on any upcoming songs? From Stan Lenkiewicz (Membership No 000414)
Tony: Thank you for the compliment but if I do decide to venture to front mike it wouldn't be for Big Country. Stuart's voice is so distinctive that it is a major factor in the B.C. sound. But, having spent fifteen or so years accompanying and harmonizing with very special musicians and artists, I do harbour an ambition to make a record of songs that have been influential in my life, mixed with my own material using musicians that I have worked with in the past but we'll have to wait and see. Big Country is still top priority.
- Q** Have the Band ever thought of making an album compiled of "B" sides because there are so many great tracks, especially "Restless Natives". From David Rorison.
Tony: It would be a nice idea to do a "B" side album, but I don't think it's a good time to do it because of the recession etc. Maybe if you hassle Phonogram enough they may do a special limited edition for fan club members. I don't know. That was just off the top of my head.
- Q** For the "newer" fans please could you tell us your birthdays?
Stuart: 11th April
Bruce: 11th March
Tony: 13th February

MORE WORDS FROM THE BAND

Andrew and I have received loads of letters from fans with their thanks and congrats to all concerned for organising the Convention - the general consensus of opinion is that it was a huge success. Please don't think I have only printed them to be conceited but we have been asked to put in a real selection. Of course, we learned a few things which, if the event is to be repeated, we would try to remember where we fell down but everyone sends you, the Band, a very BIG THANK YOU for your enthusiasm for such an event but, how it did you feel from your side?

Bruce: "The Convention was an exciting and yet nervewracking experience. A cross between playing at Wembley and appearing on Question Time at the same time. It was a good chance to introduce Chris and Colin to B.C. fans and I am glad they were accepted warmly. To me, it was a complete success because of the amount of people who turned up. As you know, we've had a few problems lately with exploding drummers and imploding record companies, so for me it was fantastic that you all turned up to meet us and show that you still care about the band and our songs. Anyway, sod off and get a job, you long haired degenerates."

Tony: The Convention? I'd just like to say thanks to everybody who organised and attended the Country Club Convention last year. I must admit I was terrified at the thought of facing a crowd of loyal fans in such circumstances but later returned to my hotel room feeling quite drunk (er, sorry, I mean proud.) Proud in the fact that so many people who share a common interest can gather with the perpetrators of that interest and have a laugh (especially at Bruce's expense). Would I like to see another Convention? Depends if we deserve it.

Bruce: You mention "imploding record companies". How do you feel about Phonogram and how do you see your future with the new deal?

Bruce: "I'm saying nothing until I've spoken to my lawyer."

Stuart: "I think it was inevitable that we would part with Phonogram. I think the relationship had gone stale on both sides for a number of reasons, changes of personnel, lack of imagination and vision from both A & R and marketing and a general disillusionment from within the Band. It has given me, personally, a huge boost to talk to people once again who understand and believe in what we are trying to do and I am sure some very productive and creative times are ahead. Hopefully, someone else may be able to hear the music in my soul."

Tony: "I've just a few words about the change of record company. To say that I am pleased about the change is an understatement. I still believe that this band hasn't reached its full potential but with renewed positive support from an interested record company we will be so much closer to achieving the un-achieved. I feel sorry for those who lost faith."





FROM BEHIND THE SCENES

by Tina Clarke (Membership No 003015)

It was a chance telephone call to Ian Grant last June that was to be the beginning of six unforgettable weeks.

A college feasibility study that I'd chosen to do on setting up a Band Management company first prompted me to contact Ian re "the role of a band manager". The lengthy reply I received, the only professional manager to respond to my questionnaire, persuaded me to ask what the possibility was of a "one-week" work experience over my summer holiday. At that particular time Ian was very busy with the fore-run of the "No Place Like Home" campaign but said that he had no objections and would contact me nearer August. Sure to his word, a phone call in July finalised details - I was to "work" for Big Country from 5th August.

Immediately I was made to feel like "one of the team" by both Ian and Lynda, his assistant. So there I was in the nucleus of Big Country's affairs at a momentous time for them - the release of their new album and single.

Ian's suggestion that I got as much "hands on" experience as possible was positive news, this was, after all, primarily a learning period for me, with the added bonus that Big Country just so happen to be my all-time favourite band!

Before the week was out Ian asked me if I would like to stay and work for him whilst Lynda took four weeks off to get married and go on honeymoon. How could I refuse?

During the weeks that followed, and it was a testing time particularly for the band, never once did I see enthusiasm fall. The band's spirits remained high, even with the disappointment of the Republican chart position dampened more so by the encouraging mid-week position. Those famous words "STAY ALIVE" really showed their true meaning.

Thus, my advice to the media critics who believe Big Country are dead is, **step into the Big Country management office and see that there never is a dull moment.**

The first day I was alone in the office Ian was uncontactable on his way up to Scotland to meet Stuart for an important radio interview. The problem arose when the flight Stuart was scheduled to return home on, from a family holiday, was delayed due to bad weather. Finally landing in Manchester after mid-day, Stuart phoned to explain the situation; no connecting flights to Edinburgh, a mound of suitcases and a radio interview to get to. His only option was to hire a car and drive the family to Scotland but the clock was ticking would he make it in time?

Time and time again we played the same verse, what was that word Stuart sings in the chorus of "All Of Us"? I'd been given the task of transcribing eighteen of the lesser known tracks for the Big Country lyric Book. So, helped by Kirsty (Ian's daughter), I sat down, pen and paper poised, and set about completing the task to which Stuart had once commented, "If you can't understand the lyrics, make them up, that's what I do".

The date..... 31st August 1991, the place..... Dunfermline, the event..... the first Country Club Convention. With

Lynda still on holiday it was my job to notify the national press, do itineraries, arrange travel and book hotels for the band, including Chris and Colin and the entourage, namely Ian, Bob Lopez, Nigel Luby, Joe Seabrook and myself. That's quite a task when everyone wants to travel at different times on different days using different modes of transport. Then there were the hotels, the majority of which happened to be full-booked probably with eagerly-awaiting Big Country fans.

It was at the Glen Davilion that I was introduced to Big Country. I'd been a fan after seeing them at the Guildford Civic Hall during the '80's and although I'd seen them many times since I'd never actually met them. Having spoken many times on the phone it was just like meeting old friends, the faces behind the voices.

That night I watched the set from the wings. It's quite different to be able to see the faces of the audience and the backs of the band rather than the backs of peoples heads, their fists thumping the air and nothing of the band. Also to see what really goes on backstage!

Being part of the behind the scenes team, even for a moderately short time, one can see the amount of time and effort that goes into even the seemingly "simplest" of events, from the timing of single release dates to the artwork of single sleeves to the September in-stores in London and Glasgow. Everything must be planned to the finest detail to create the maximum effect. The job's certainly not as glamorous as it's made out to be; the hours are long, the pace fast-moving and competition is very strong. **The music industry isn't just a job it becomes your life.**

During the months that followed I returned to Big Country's office on numerous occasions. Each time Ian and Lynda encouraged me to get as much work experience with music related companies as possible and it was through Ian that I received a phone call in late November. It was Alan Edwards - Ian's former partner. After a brief chat it was arranged that I could do some temporary work at his London Duplicity Company. Thus an unexpected phone call resulted in me sitting in the office that deals with, amongst others, Big Country, David Bowie, Paul Simon and Prince's publicity.

More recently I was able to go to Solo - Big Country's agents. They were busy promoting Paul Young's London gigs. It's amazing the amount of effort that goes into preparing "simple tasks" such as guest lists and accompanying seating plans, also making sure the working crew have the correct passes.

Looking back over the past six months I've had a memorable time, learnt a lot about the music industry and would like to think I've made some good friends. It seems an appropriate time to thank everyone at Doole/Edwards and Solo - I must say I'm glad John Giddings never put his Russian military hat to use (those of you who have seen the River Of Hope video will know what I mean) - for allowing me the opportunity of a look behind the scenes without being pretentious. Not forgetting a big thank you to Big Country and, of course, Ian and Lynda without whom the last six months would have been a lot less enjoyable.

RECORD COLLECTING

by Dominic Williams (Membership No 000325)

BIG COUNTRY U. K. LIMITED EDITIONS

There is a basic problem with an article like this -namely that, as most of the Big Country catalogue is deleted, they're all limited editions. However, for the purpose of this article, I'll stick to items that were limited editions at the time of release. I deliberately haven't included values of items as there is such a wide range of prices on the same item. For example, I have seen the "Fields of Fire" picture disc being sold for £3.00 and £25.00.

As far as LP's go, there isn't really anything of great interest. "The Seer" was only released in one sleeve. "Steeftown" and "Peace In Our Time" were both released initially as gatefold sleeves and then, subsequently, as a single sleeve. "The Crossing" was first released as a red sleeve, then a blue sleeve and finally a green sleeve. The latest edition that I have seen is a blue sleeve which isn't textured, unlike the early ones that were.

Now onto singles. The first limited edition to be released was the "Fields Of Fire" picture disc (COUP2). This disc was Scotland-shaped and played at 33 1/3 rpm. The tracks featured were: "Fields Of Fire" (alternative mix) / "Angle Park" / "Harvest Home". The next one was the limited 12" single of "In A Big Country" (count 313) which was a four track record in a red sleeve. Unlike the standard issue, it contained the additional track "Heart And Soul". "Chance" was released as a very limited 12" picture disc (coup 4) with an identical track-listing to the standard 12". I will just note that I have never seen the rumoured 12" clear vinyls of "Harvest Home" or "Fields Of Fire" that were mentioned in the "One Great Thing" almanac, nor do I know of anyone who has seen them. It may have been a record company plan that was shelved. However, feel free to drop me a line with the appropriate evidence if you know better!

Between the first and second albums was the release of "Wonderland". There was a limited double pack featuring "Lost Patrol" live in two parts. It was issued with a gatefold sleeve with a four page colour insert. There was a 12" clear vinyl issue (counx5) in a slightly different sleeve featuring "Lost Patrol" (live) instead of the 7" mix of "Wonderland".

"Steeftown" produced three singles. "East Of Eden" was released as a 7" with a limited edition poster sleeve (mer 175 p). Rumour has it that there was a 12" poster sleeve but, as usual, everyone has heard of it and no one's seen it! "Where The Rose Is Sown" was released as a double pack (merd185) in a yellow gatefold sleeve. The pack included "Rose" in its standard sleeve plus a three track extra single containing the live tracks "Wonderland" / "In A Big Country" / "Auld Lang Syne".

The first single from "The Seer", "Look Away", was released in five formats. The rarest of all limited editions was the 12" "Look Away" (outlaw mix) (bigcx11). I bought this myself when it came out but I have never been able to find it again for anyone else. It also contained the normal 12" mix and the track "Restless Natives" rather than the soundtrack part 1 that is on the normal 12". "Look Away" was also released as a picture disc (bigcp1) with the same tracks as the 7" and as a double pack (bigcd1) with the additional tracks "Margo's Theme" and "Highland Scenery" which are simply part of the Restless Natives soundtrack. "One Great Thing", the third single from the LP, was released in eight formats. There were two double packs (bigcd3 and bigcd3) which was a gatefold single with colour insert in the centre of the sleeve. There were two 12" limited editions. Firstly, the almanac (bigcx33) which is a gatefold sleeve with a twelve page insert. The second one, which is almost as rare as the "Look Away" outlaw 12" is the "One Great Thing" (Big Bad Country mix) which was coupled with "Look Away" (outlaw mix) and "Song Of The South". Lastly, there was a four track cassette single (bigcm3) containing "One Great Thing" (Big Bad Country mix) / "Song Of The South" / "In A Big Country" (pure mix) / "Fields Of Fire" (live). The fourth single, "Hold The Heart", was released as a 12" double pack with the extra single featuring an interview.

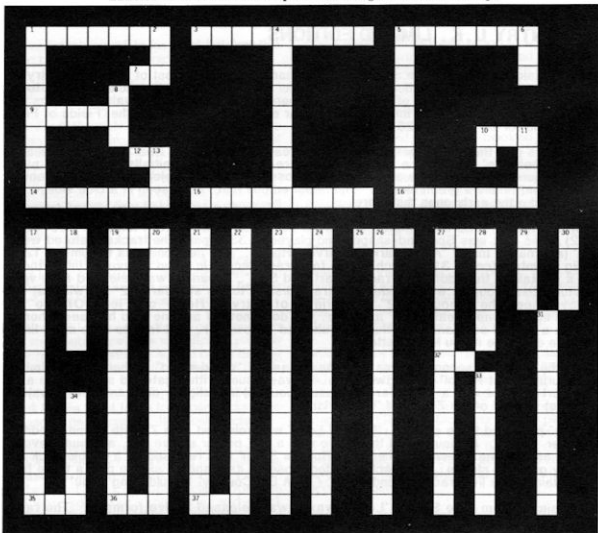
The second single from "Peace In Our Time" gave us three limited editions. Firstly, there was a limited edition CD (bigcd6) which contained "Broken Heart" / "Soapy Soutar Strikes Back" / "Made In Heaven". A limited edition numbered 12" single contained the first three tracks of the CD plus "On The Shore". This 12" was either in red or black vinyl with a poster. The sleeve on both was red embossed with a sticker. The single "Peace In Our Time" was released in two limited formats. Firstly, there was a 7" with two post cards (bigcp7) which we were supposed to send to George and Gorbie. There was a 12" single with a gold embossed red sleeve with three live tracks: "Peace In Our Time" / "Chance" / "In A Big Country" and the R.E.L. track "Promised Land".

"Save Me" was released as a limited 12" in a completely different gatefold sleeve (bigcx812) containing the tracks "Save Me" / "Wonderland" (live) / "Thousand Yard Stare" (live). "Heart Of The World" was also released as a 12" with different sleeve (bigcx912) featuring "Heart Of The World" / "Peace In Our Time" (acoustic) / "Thirteen Valleys" (acoustic). The gatefold sleeve contained a wraparound label and a poster.

Thank you, Dominic, for your article which I hope other fans will find of great interest.

CROSSWORD

Richard Cole (Membership No 001965) has obviously spent many hours working on this amazing crossword. I will be sending Richard a little something and, of course, the winning entry will also receive a prize from me.
 Entries in no later than 14th April. (Next magazine due out in May)



ACROSS

- 1 Who told of famous sons who write their names in peace? (3, 4)
 3 What would you be if the wave set you free? (3, 6)
 5 & 33 D 'Usa) _____' and '33ad) _____' like saints we never were! (7 and 7)
 7 From 'No Place Like Home' a rather explosive woman, initially speaking. (2)
 9 What the Country Club are offering for winning this competition (5)
 10 'We're at _____, all the papers say' (3)
 12 'From here _____ eternity' (2)
 14 I choose this place to call my own? (7)
 15 Produced 'Peace In Our Time' (5, 4)
 16 Is there anywhere 'like home' (2, 5)
 17 Post Mark drummer? (3)
 19 'Just as you _____, you shall reap' (3)
 23 'Look away' is Big Country's biggest so far! (3)
 25 Tony and Mark's former band, initially speaking. (3)
 27 Mr. Grant, of The Management (3)
 32 Initially, the leader of the band? (2)
 35 The video, Barrowlands - New Year's _____ (3)
 36 '_____ Waving, But Drowning' (3)
 37 Number of small Adamsons? (3)
 4 Tony Butler junior? (9)
 5 'There I stand with all my kin?' (9)
 6 'The beating heart will never _____' (3)
 8 Big Country's sex, gender-wise? (3)
 10 '_____ are right, who started this?' (2)
 11 See 29 down
 13 'Nobody smiled as we took back our _____' (3)
 17 The fourth album - a prophecy? (5, 2, 3, 4)
 18 One of Stuart's former bands, fortunately not permanent (6)
 19 Big Country cried out to this Motown Great (6, 8)
 20 'When a card is so high and so wild?' (2, 6, 4, 2)
 21 What was 'in his eyes' on a Steeltown classic? (5, 2, 3, 4)
 22 The town which Bruce was born in and in 'O' what a state? (7, 7)
 23 B. C.'s 'stoned' cover version (5, 4, 5)
 24 Bruce's schoolday band, minus Kylie Minogue? (3, 11)
 26 '_____ holds no shame, I will be coming home again' (3, 5, 2, 4)
 27 Author of Bruce's fave book 'A Day In The Life Of A Petrol Pump Attendant' (4, 10)
 28 One of the many 'Restless'? (6)
 29 & 11 'Save us all from love and hope, give us (29) _____, give us (11) _____?' (4 and 4)
 30 Colour of Bruce's eyes? (4)
 31 Some kind of Party Reptile? (10)
 33 See 5 Across
 34 Last single released from 'The Crossing' (5)

DOWN

- 1 'In _____, I will lay my life down' (4, 5)
 3 Peace In Our Time, self-produced tapes? (3)

JOHN GIDDINGS

Solo ITG

John, very kindly, agreed to answer a few questions for us about his involvement with Big Country over the years:-

Q How and when did you first become involved with Big Country as their agent?

Ian Grant managed The Skids and I was their agent but, unfortunately, the band split. When Ian came to me with Stuart's new band, I have to say that I wasn't really sure whether Stuart could sing the lead or not but we put them on the Alice Cooper tour through the PR man, Alan Edwards, who later became Ian's partner, but the band were thrown off the tour!! Things started to gel once Tony and Mark joined the band.

Q What is your role, as an agent?

As an agent, in conjunction with the manager, I put together their live work throughout the world (excluding the U.S.) to co-ordinate with record releases, deciding where they will play and how much they will receive.

Q Which show(s) stand out in your mind that you have seen by the band?

The Reading Festival. Especially when the smoke bombs went off while the band were at the microphones. Jersey, Mark's last gig - it was very sad. The Town and Country Club for their five year anniversary, which was incredible. Wembley with Elton John at twenty four hours' notice. The list is endless and I can't remember a bad one except a tape I heard of a show in San Diego the day after they discovered Tequila.....

Q Why do you think Big Country have not achieved the status of U2 or Simple Minds?

If I knew that I'd be a rich person. The records obviously didn't capture the public's imagination in the same way that the other two bands built from album to album. Perhaps they were promoted as too much of a pop band at one stage of the game which diluted their credibility for quick chart success. Jim Kerr and Bono are much more willing to push themselves forward as the voice of a generation, whereas Stuart lets his guitar speak for him.

Q What is your opinion of Big Country as

- a) songwriters
- b) players, and
- c) live performers?

- a) Great... and not just only just the rock anthems such as "Ships", "Chance" is one of the best songs ever written, it could stand up alongside David Bowie's "Heroes".*
- b) I'm not a musician.*
- c) They're one of the few bands I represent that you could put on at any festival in the world at 3 pm in the pouring rain and get the crowd raving. They send a shiver down your spine.*

Q What other acts do you, or have you, represented?

The Stranglers, Paul Young, David Bowie, Genesis, Meat Loaf, Iggy Pop, Ramones.

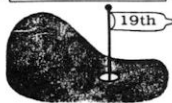
Q Who was the first act you saw and name your three all time favourite groups?

The first act I ever saw was The Herd and my three all times favourites are:- Pink Floyd, Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers and Stone Roses.



**COUNTRY CLUB
CONDOM**

MEMBERS ONLY



**When playing
a round, All
guests must be
accompanied by
a member.**

SOLD AS A NOVELTY ITEM ONLY

**PLAYING
SAFE!?**

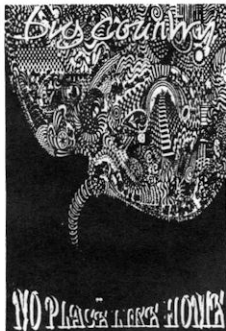
OLAF WARWELL
from Germany
(Membership No
003296) found this
"souvenir" whilst army
training in Canada.
Unfortunately, he was
not able to buy any
B.C. records from the
same place!

Thank you, this
certainly caused a smile
in the office, as you
can imagine.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Your views:-

I have received dozens and dozens of letters from you with your views on the latest album so I thought a small selection would be appropriate to show your reactions:-



James Shadbolt (Membership No 000311)

..... new album is the best since 'Steeletown', other than the sick cover.

Roddy Morrison (Membership No 000330)

..... album has been slagged off by the music press..... might sound biased but I think that it's the best album that they've ever going to make in their lifetime. I used to think that 'Steeletown' was their best and thought that they would never be able to beat that. I was shocked, to say the least, when I heard it. Normally it would take me a couple of listens to like an album but when I heard N.P.L.H. I was hooked on it the first time. The band have grown a lot, music wise, in the past few years and it comes out well in the album.

Ian Humphries (Membership No 0003297)

..... pass on my thanks and congratulations to the band for the new LP 'No Place Like Home'. From the very first track, the brilliant 'We're Not in Kansas' the whole LP is, I think, Big Country at their best since 'The Crossing'. Every track is brilliant and such a contrast to each song although shades of the Big Country sound are still there. Stuart's voice seems to get better and better, especially on 'Ships' and 'You, Me And The Truth'.

Adrian Vogler (Membership No 000308)

..... I'm not happy while I'm writing these lines, although I hoped I would be 'cos today's the day I bought the new album 'No Place Like Home'. But, it's sad to say, it seems that the group I've known as Big Country and the sound they were special for has gone forever - leaving no trace. There are some lights in the darkness 'We're Not in Kansas' is the song I like the most, it's a great rock song. 'Ships' is a beautiful ballad.

'The Freedom Song' and 'Kiss The Girl Goodbye' still let me get a glimpse of the former Big Country.....

I hope my letter hasn't got too dreary. Maybe you will not print it in the next issue but I really would like to get to know the other club members' opinion about the new album. I hope you publicise some of their letters they send to you and reflect their opinion about the new album.

Glynis Reay (Membership No 0003397)

..... I bought the new album this morning and have just listened to it all day, it's absolutely wonderful. I just love it, love it, love it, so it's congratulations to them for a fabulous album.

Jon Mitchell (Membership No 0003905)

..... As a Big Country fan since the first album, I had to write to express my disappointment. Like many others, I felt T.I.O.T. was a weaker effort than the previous three albums but at least it contained some strong songs such as the title track and 'King Of Emotion'. This new album, though, does not even contain that. 'Republican Reptile' barely passes but the rest of the album goes from bad to worse.

I know hands need to progress but to cast aside all that has made your music interesting in the past and churn out an album of bland pop songs that any other band could play is not the answer.

BUT, on 3rd November, Jon wrote again!

..... Well, I have just returned from seeing the band at Poole Arts Centre and I now realise how wrong I was. What I wanted was for the band to churn out the same old stuff which would, of course, end up in stagnation.

After seeing the gig, though, I now realise that growing into new styles and experimentation is what STAYING ALIVE is all about. Suffice it to say that 'No Place Like Home' is now in my CD player more often than not.

Mark Kimberley (Membership No 000306)

..... listening to the brilliant 'No Place Like Home'. It's taken its time coming but it's a work of art. 'Beautiful People' and 'Ships' are my favourite tracks so far.

Jeremy Yeomans (Membership No 000304)

..... just bought the new album which, I must say, on first playing was a little bit of a let down, with the new material being very difficult to come to terms with. That was on Wednesday; yesterday, I went along to HMV in Oxford Circus to see the guys play and they were absolutely brilliant so that the constant barrage of the album being played allowed me to listen at ease with a clear mind and I've changed my opinion. It's most definitely a grower and will improve upon every hearing.

Ingrid Van Laer (Membership No 000349)

..... The new album is great. 'Leap Of Faith' is my fav at the moment.

Ian Forster (Membership No 001547)

..... super concert and classic album 'No Place Like Home' should have been Number 1. No doubt about that.

Eric Van Der Struik (Membership No 000018)

..... I think that this, once again, is a great album. Big Country prove, as they did on the other albums, that whatever style or direction the band take they're just brilliant. Being a fan of Big Country is not only great but also very easy as they keep making music they like. As soon as you thought that B.C. sound was as pure and honest as 'The Crossing' they came up with a critical and more realistic album as 'Steeletown'. The 'Storm' and 'Porrohman' were replaced by 'Where The Rose is Slow' and 'Flame Of The West'. The critics couldn't quite follow but fans understood that Stuart would never settle down and make another 'Crossing'. He'll always be looking for ways to improve which he did with his voice on 'The Seer'. It was quite a step from 'East Of Eden' and 'Raindance' to the beautiful song 'The Seer' with Kate Bush and other beautiful songs like 'Eileendon', 'Hold The Heart' and 'Sailor'.

And the timing of the fourth album? 'Peace In Our Time', I'd be too much a fan and unrealistic if I thought that B.C. started any changes in the East but what a great feeling it must be for the band to be the only band to perform live in the Soviet Union as it started to go through all the changes the whole East is still going through.

And now, as there hasn't been a day since 'No Place Like Home' came out that I haven't played it, they once again came up with a new producer and a different sound. But still as beautiful and moving from 'We're Not in Kansas' to 'Into The Fire'.

Liam Shand (Membership No 000249)

..... The new stuff is brill. 'Ships' is my fav and I love the keyboards!

Geoff Robinson (Membership No 000408)

..... I think it is a truly excellent LP.....

Patricia Theisan (Membership No 000454)

..... Now I've had time to listen, I say it's a great album. The only track I don't like is 'Keep On Dreaming'..... I would say that 'No Place Like Home' is a beautiful album. It is rich as much for the music as for the lyrics and the meaning of the words. This album is a master piece.

SO, IT SEEMS, IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A HIT!

PEN PALS

Just write in to me giving your name, address, membership number and brief details of yourself and your hobbies and I will add your details to the list in the next issue.

Alan Simpson (Membership No 003411)

Scotland
Year of birth 1969
Also likes The House Of Love, U2, Simple Minds and The Alarm. Hobbies include football and snooker.

Kitt Curry (Membership No 000412)

Ireland
Year of birth 1968
Musical tastes include:- Stevie Nicks, Fleetwood Mac, U2, Skids, Sisters Of Mercy, REM, Tom Petty and 1960's music.
Would especially like to hear from Irish fans.

Jenny Stevens (Membership No 003527)

Australia
Year of birth 1965
Are there other members in Australia, specifically Brisbane, who would like to write to Jenny? She would love to share interests face to face, rather than purely through magazines.

Jameil Hill (Membership No 003321)

U.K.
Year of Birth 1967
Hobbies include reading horror books, playing squash. Also likes Japan, The Jam and just about every 1980's band.

Katie Nicholls (Membership No 003402)

U.K.
Year of birth 1974
Also likes INXS, Simple Minds and Energy Orchard. Will write to anyone, anywhere, any age with a good sense of humour. Interests include:- swimming, walking, listening to music and reading.

Simo Neiglick (Membership No 003377)

Finland.
Year of birth 1970
Interests include badminton and sports in general, movies, travelling, languages, fantasy literature (e.g. Tolkien) and music - including Sting and Iron Maiden. Simo would like to hear from B.C. fans around the world, especially females.

Gwenda Matthews (Membership No 003009)

Scotland
Year of birth 1969
Gwenda would like to hear from as many fans as possible and would like to trade items and hear reviews on past and present gigs etc. In her spare time she likes to travel around as much as possible to B.C. concerts.

Leigh Dalgleish (Membership No 003397)

Year of birth 1971
B.C. are really the only musical interest although Leigh also likes Big Dish and Cry Before Dawn. He would like to hear from a fan in the Aberdeen area, preferably female.

Adrian Vogler (Membership No 000352)

Germany.
Year of birth 1965
He would like to hear from any B.C. fans no matter where they live.

Paul Ryding (Membership No 003181)

U.K.
Year of birth 1971
Hobbies include:- mountain biking, soccer and listening to music - B.C., Bryan Adams, Fat Lady Sings, Hothouse Flowers, Simple Minds etc.

COMPETITION WINNERS

LAST ISSUE'S COMPETITION
sent in by **Gordon Smith** (Membership No 003097)

HOW MANY (LEGITIMATE) WORDS (TO BE FOUND IN THE OXFORD ENGLISH
DICTIONARY) CAN YOU MAKE OUT OF THE BELOW?

THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY

Well, the most words found, by a very long chalk, was by **Tina Hutchins** (Membership No 001481) with **1818 WORDS**

I do wonder, though, how many of these words Tina uses in her daily vocabulary - she certainly had me running for the dictionary to find such obscure words such as-

AGOUTI	Rodent related to the Guinea Pig
ARROYO	A brook or stream
BUTYRIC	Acid, colourless, syrupy liquid found in rancid butter
COTHURN	Buskin, thick soled boot of Athenian tragic actor
NORROY	Third King of Arms, jurisdiction North of Trent and N. Ireland.
ROBORANT	Strengthening (drug)
RYOT	Indian peasant
YURT	Mongolian Nomad's circular skin or felt covered tent with collapsible frame

Tina must have sat with a dictionary for WEEKS. Anyway, well done, Tina. I'll be getting a package together shortly and get it in the post to you. OK?

RUNNERS UP INCLUDE

Jameil Hill (Membership No 003321) with 611 words.
Alan Simpson (Membership No 003411) with 459 words.
Kirsty Stevens (Membership No 003539) with 411 words.

Also well done to all other entrants, you must have spent ages on this. It's always amazing, isn't it, how many words can be made from comparatively few letters?

FUTURE COMPETITIONS

Please keep those suggestions coming in for future issues! If your entry does not appear in the next issue, it could appear in a future one because I keep all entries for use later. OK?

CENTRE SPREAD COLLAGE

We made up this collage of selected photos taken over the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of the Convention showing in addition one or two of the tremendous helpers in sound, security, merchandise, the video filming etc. etc. - I trust all is self-explanatory.

MERCHANDISE

★★ PRICE REDUCTIONS ★★

DUNFERMLINE CONVENTION T / SHIRT L / XL REDUCED TO	£ 5.00 plus P & P
DUNFERMLINE CONVENTION BASEBALL CAP REDUCED TO	£ 2.00 plus P & P
CONVENTION MUGS. White mug printed in green - Reptile Dunfermline 31st August REDUCED TO	£ 2.00 plus P & P
CONVENTION MUGS. White mug printed in blue - "No Place Like Home" (as per the album cover) Dunfermline 31st August REDUCED TO	£ 2.00 plus P & P
Jumbo "Country Club" PEN REDUCED TO	£ 1.50 plus P & P
Convention LEATHER THONGED NECK-PEN. Printed in red "Big Country" and "No Place Like Home" REDUCED TO	£ 1.50 plus P & P
SPECIAL CONVENTION PACK which includes one T / Shirt, Leather thonged pen and Convention baseball cap REDUCED TO	£ 7.00 plus P & P

POSTAGE AND PACKING - SEE THE MERCHANDISE LIST

★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

Just in case you are unaware:-

COUNTRY CLUB EXCLUSIVE

Country Club Convention video. Includes arrival of the coach, some of the questions and answers, shots of the autograph signing and general events including a large part of the live set.

Running time 65 mins 53 seconds.

TRACK LISTING

Dixie
Leap Of Faith
Beautiful People
We're Not In Kansas

Fields Of Fire

Ships
Wonderland
The Hostage Speaks
Mannish Boy

PRICE £15.00 plus postage and packing (please see merchandise list for P & P prices)

Please note that the video is VHS PAL/625 (European system) but if any of the American fans would like a copy we can supply a converted version for American systems but this will cost £20.00 plus postage and packing (see merchandise list)

★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

CREDIT CARD HOT LINE FOR MERCHANDISE ORDERS:- 0462 74 2949

★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

TOUR MERCHANDISE WILL SHORTLY BE AVAILABLE
as will the LYRIC BOOK CONTAINING ALL SONGS TO DATE

★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE AN UP-DATED MERCHANDISE LIST THEN, PLEASE, SEND A STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE MARKED "MERCHANDISE LIST" AND I WILL GET ONE IN THE POST FOR YOU.

★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

NOTICE BOARD

Richard Fitzgerald (Membership No 001879)

U.K.

Would like copies of the promo vids for "Where The Rose is Sown" and "Hold The Heart"

Liam Shand (Membership No 000249)

Scotland.

Liam would like to set up a supporters club and organise group travel to gigs in the south. If you are interested in participating and having company when going to gigs, drop him a line.

Also he would like me to say "thank you" to Gwendra Matthews and Edward Rush for letting him travel down with them to the Convention.

Lesley Neilson (Membership No 001967)

Scotland.

Does anyone have any negatives of photographs taken at the Convention that Lesley can borrow. They will, of course, be returned.

Kevin Powell (Membership No 003233)

Australia.

Wanted:- 7" and 12" "Heart Of The World".

Harry Dipple (Membership No 000338)

U.K.

WANTED:- 12" "Just a shadow" (ext remix) / "Just A Shadow" / "Winter Sky" (BDO 812)
12" "Look Away" (outlaw mix) / "Look Away" (12" mix) / "Restless Natives" (B16 CX11)

CD "Broken Heart (13 Valleys)" / "Soapy Soutar Strikes Back" / "Made In Heaven" / "When A Drum Beats" (B16 CDR6) / "Soapy Soutar Strikes Back" / "Soapy Soutar Strikes Back" / CD "Peace In Our Time" / "Chance" / "The Longest Day" / "Promised Land" (B16 CD7)

Cassingle "Heart Of The World" / "Black Stained Blue Eyed Boys" (B16 MC9)

FOR SALE OR SWAP:-

7" "In A Big Country" / "Fields Of Fire" (German)

7" "In A Big Country" / "All Of Us" (Japanese)

12" "One Great Thing" (Boston mix) / "Song Of The South" (gatefold)

12" "Fields Of Fire" / "Fields Of Fire" (alternative mix) / "Angle Park" (German)

Original copies of Country Club magazine Issues 1 and 4.

Randall Davis (Membership No 003363)

Australia.

WANTED:- Copy of the Town & Country gig as televised. Copy of the REL tapes.

Leigh Dalglish (Membership No 003397)

Scotland.

Not only do we try to help track down records etc. BUT:-

Leigh is trying to find a beautiful young lady who was at the Convention. She was standing behind him, he had on a baseball cap (American) plus sporty shorts. She had a P.I.O.T. T/Sh on, auburn straight, shoulder length hair, about 5ft 1in/5ft 3in and he thinks she was with a girlfriend. I, personally, think this a very long shot but I said I would print his plea. Maybe she noticed Leigh?

WANTED:- "On The Air" material.

ON OFFER:- Copy of T & C gig or any 12" or "B" sides - just send a tape and he'll do the business.

Julie Fazackerley (Membership No 000328)

U.K.

Whist on the coach from Victoria to Dunfermline, Julie met a girl called Karen. They didn't remember to swap addresses but Karen lives in Tonbridge and is about 17 years old. Julie would like to stay in touch so could Karen drop a line to Julie.

Kirsteen Macrury (Membership No 003467)

Scotland.

WANTED:- anything on CD, tape or vinyl or anything that another member is willing to tape for her.

Roger Lett (Membership No 003486)

U.K.

A video recording of C4's "Play At Home" 1984 featuring Big Country.

Dominic Williams (Membership No 000325)

U.K.

ON OFFER:- Anyone wants B.C. records etc. drop Dominic a line.

Stuart McKay (Membership No 000050)

Scotland.

This is more an S.O.S. than anything. Stuart spent the duration of the gig at the Barrowlands on 14th October with a very attractive young lady but when things quietened down they got separated before exchanging addresses etc. Stuart would like to get in touch with her, for the record, he was wearing a grey Status Quo Rock Till You Drop T/Sh. She was with two friends and was wearing what looked like a green coloured shirt. If you are out there, please drop Stuart a line. Seems as though we are going to have start a "LOST PERSONS" section!

John Dobosz (Membership No 002336)

W. Australia.

WANTED:- "Peace In Our Time" 12",

CD single and 12" live. He is prepared to swap with anyone for some of the Skids records, Fanfair and Scared to Dance.

John Turner (Membership No 000379)

U.K.

WANTED:- "East Of Eden" 12" with poster sleeve (MERXP175). He is willing to buy a copy of this record or, alternatively, is willing to do a straight swap with a double pack of "Where The Rose Is Sown".

John has noticed that "Days In Europa" was released on Japanese CD on 21st September. He has seen it advertised in "Record Collector" at £17.49 plus P & P (VJCP 23105). "Scared To Dance" was also advertised at the same price (advertised as "Scared To DEATH"!)

Catherine Taylor (Membership No 001851)

U.K.

WANTED:- A good copy of "Where Sky".

Tracey Fielder (Membership No 003274)

U.K.

Tracey would like to get in touch with any fellow C.C. members who attended the gig at the Barbican Centre in York, especially any one from North Yorks.

Roberto Ghiberti (Membership No 003339)

Italy.

Roberto can not find any singles in Italy. Can anyone help?

Robert Barker (Membership No 001809)

U.K.

WANTED:- Cassingles "Save Me", "Heart Of The World" and "Broken Heart", 12" "In A Big Country" (red sleeve), 12" "One Great Thing" (yellow sleeve BIGCX3), 7" "Chance" and "The Teacher"

Geoff Robinson (Membership No 003408)

U.K.

WANTED:- "Just A Shadow" and "Where The Rose is Sown"

Daniel Ayers (Membership No 003376)

Daniel has dropped me a line to bring to my and any one else's attention who is unaware of the fact that there is a section of the music press which cannot be bought in shops. It appears on Channel 4 teletext, page 540, called "Best Box". Apparently, it tends to be favourable to Big Country and when "N.P.L.H." was released it was hailed as their best yet and received a rare four stars out of a possible five.