

INWARDS

£1.50

FEB 1991



THE OTHER BIG COUNTRY FANZINE
NUMBER ONE



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ISSUE TWO WILL BE ON SALE IN THE SPRING.
LOOK OUT FOR ADS IN SOUNDS, NME AND MELODY
MAKER OR CONTACT US DIRECT IF YOU WOULD
LIKE A COPY.

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BIG COUNTRY INWARDS

IN THE beginning there was Adam and Eve...well actually it was Stuart and Bruce with a wee portastudio. Misguided history lessons aside though, lets try to explain the roots, purposes and intentions of the fickle papyrus pages resting in your hands at present. Oh, and we hope you haven't hidden INWARDS cunningly inside a copy of BIG WET SWEDISH GIRLS just to avoid the prying eyes!

To cut a tedious, forlorn story short, the idea for INWARDS sprang mainly from two major points. The first of these was the growing dissatisfaction with the official fan club - The Country Club - which was getting to be a bit of a joke. Feeling undervalued and almost voiceless, as we're sure many C.C. members also do, we decided to do something about it; namely our own Big Country fanzine. There is an article about the rise and fall of the Country Club elsewhere in this issue.

Secondly, we were spurred on by the glowing achievements of Douglas Johnson who has already successfully set up his own B.C. fanzine "We Save No Souls". Initiated in May 1989, Douglas has currently at the time of writing, 7 issues under his belt with an eighth issue due out in the first week of January 1991. You'll find Douglas' address at the back of the mag. We hope INWARDS can extend the service already being maintained by Douglas, while at the same time taking a different perspective. We also hope that many of you will feel the urge to get involved in INWARDS in some form or another. Please don't hesitate to contact us (see the INWARDS Blue Peter appeal further on in the issue).

Issue No.1 of INWARDS is very much in some ways a look back over the past year of events - a kind of detailed 'Year In The Life Of Big Country'.

Finally, you should have received an A4 sheet of paper separate to this fanzine. Contrary to popular belief, this is not, unfortunately, the INWARDS FREE GIFT (we are working on it though, honest Guv!). It is in fact a B.C. questionnaire that we hope you'll decide to fill in. The questions are all entirely optional so feel free to leave questions unanswered if you don't wish to answer them.

One thing is for sure, unlike the Country Club, we do intend printing the results, pending on the number of replies (i.e. 2 or more).

We hope you like what you see of INWARDS and hope that you can contribute in some way to future issues.

STAY ALIVE.

Andy Jason

INWARDS COMMENT...

THE 1990 B.C. year in hindsight eh! A year that spelled success and part turmoil to some maybe. On one side the successes of the greatest hits package, the inclusion of new drummer Pat Ahern and the two tours. On the other side, the change in running (again) of the Country Club and more importantly the chart failure of the two singles.

In connection with the two 'corkingly good' singles, make no mistake. Had 'Save Me' received 20 plays on Radio One per week, breaking the Top 40 would have been a formality...FACT, NOT FICTION. To suggest that either of the singles wasn't up to scratch for inclusion on Radio One's playlist seems to be rather unfounded, if not absurd. Indeed, it's said that in light of a single falling chartwise, some people seem to be gripped by a sudden onslaught of artistic doubt more often than not accompanied by a statement such as "Well maybe it wasn't that good a single after all. Maybe it's time they packed it in or employed a songwriter." A response almost akin to post-natal depression. The initial joy of a release is quickly and coldly suffocated by the anguish of such so-called failure.

Turning our attentions to the Greatest Hits package, many may have applied the same negative reasoning i.e. a cop-out, a sign of lack of confidence in new material and a move taken by a seemingly insecure band. BOLLOCKS! The hits package was, with the help of hindsight, a very valid release bringing the first seven years of B.C. output neatly up to date and in so doing, leaving B.C. at the crossroads of their musical development. A development that has been assisted with the inclusion of new drummer 'made to measure' Pat Ahern. The next turn at these crossroads will be the forthcoming 5th album and new single.

The Hits package also served as a device to get Big Country back into the public eye in readiness for the new album and also to build up funds seriously reduced by the financial loss incurred on the Russian trip in 1988. One negative effect it may have had was to possibly mask the chances of the single releases. Many may have plumped for the album expecting both the singles to be included, when in truth, only 'Save Me' was included.

With the two tours also putting B.C. in good stead for the future, they would have hopefully gone into the studio in the right frame of mind to record a forthcoming album which many will see as being their biggest creative and artistic test to date. One thing's for sure; they know they can't appease all of their critics. This is a waste of effort. It seems that they just can't win. Sounds journalist Richard Cook's criticism of the 'Peace...' album perfectly sums this up when he stated, "Take away Big Country's clumping tread and you surrender the heartbeat of the band."

When all is said and done, the message must remain that for as long as Big Country enjoy creating the music they do and the possibilities it evokes, then that's more than enough to provide widespread fulfilment to others. Oh, and watch out any of ye of little faith as the men from the glen will be riding back again !!

GOOD LUCK FOR 1991 BIG COUNTRY !!

MUTTERINGS - NEWS, VIEWS & REQUESTS

IN OCTOBER of last year it was rumoured that B.C. were to take part in a Saudi Arabia gig for all folks out there preparing to give Saddam a good thumping. Other names linked to what now seems to have been a flash in the pan 'event' were Tears For Fears, The Cure, Stone Roses, Clapton and Phil Collins. Phil has since stated that he knew nothing about said gig - wake up Phillip your chirpy cockney barrow-boy! Tears For Fears manager was quoted as saying that Stuart was very keen to take part in the 'Desert Donnington'.

STU'S GUITAR that he used on the two 1990 tours is the aptly named Levinson Blade (plays as close as a blade or your money back etc.). Apparently it comes in a choice of colours (yawn - muso's talk) such as translucent purple, red blue and honeysuckle and costs a mere 800 quid, 900 smackers if you want gold hardware. We suggest you check your local retailer, wheeler dealer or the back of a rather nice lorry for price reductions. Failing that, ask that strange bloke up the pub called Paddy or see your bank manager. If you're still blade-less after all that, cheer up...you can get the strings for a fiver !!

THE 'PEACE in our time' live in Moscow video has just been released on Polygrams 'cheap' video label SPECTRUM at a budget price of just 5.99. Buy now while stocks last!

ANOTHER POSSIBLE release for this year is a mid-price CD of the 'Restless Natives' soundtrack. Once again, if you want to send Phonogram a demand for its release, we'll gladly send it on.

RELEASE NEWS

OR MORE aptly known as 'No News Is Good News' as quite frankly there isn't any yet! On contacting Phonogram just prior to publication of INWARDS, a spokesman said that as of yet they have no release dates for the album OR single and consequently no titles either. So now that the Country Club's prediction for a January single release has been passed, we at INWARDS have gazed into the old crystal ball and are cadging our bets on a Merch single release followed by an album sometime this side of the year 2000, depending entirely of course on the stars and whether Orion enters Uranus !!!

'RIVER OF HOPE'

THE MUCH rumoured 'River Of Hope' documentary which at present is only available on C.D.V. is now possible for release on VHS pending on whether demand is sufficient enough - according to the Country Club. If anyone would like to send any letters in to 'demand' its release, we'd be glad to pass them on. The only snag is that the C.Club are thinking of making it a members only offer.

E-BOW NUMBER

IF YOU still can't get an E-BOW after all this time, here is another reminder of the number of where I got mine...

*Bristol Guitar Workshop
(0272) 742675*

IF ANYONE has the video of the T&C gig as shown on BSB, could they contact us with a view to us getting hold of a copy. The same goes for a tape of the Jerry Lee Lewis gig from 1989 which featured Stu on guitar. Usual address if you will...

F-WORD

IS THAT an F-Word that can be heard during the payout of the STEELTOWN version of 'Where The Rose is Sown'? Probably not, but it makes a good filler piece anyway.

□ THE GREAT DIVIDE...

JASON ALLEN attempts to investigate the split between Big Country and Mark Brzezicki and tries to dig a little deeper than the music press did.

AND SO it came to be. After seven years of harmony (not to mention peace), someone had to do it. Leave. In the end it was that man they call Brzezicki. We all know the story. Mark got bored with bagpipe guitars and military drumming, bored with tartan troosers. But was everything mentioned by the the powers that be? Were we told everything about the split ?

Word first hit the street about the split in autumn 89. It was reported in Melody Maker as a main news item and in the NME as a filler piece. Sounds were notably absent in the scoop stakes. Rumours were also doing the rounds to the effect that B.C. had spilt or were going to split etc. MTV did a piece saying that Stu had decided to break the band up due to money problems and that the tour of May 1989 was the last. This is half true. The split story is bo****ks but it is true that the Russian Promo Trip for "Peace..." was a financial dsaster. Rumours also circulated that The Management had actually fleeced the band in an attempt to raise funds. Hedd Records, which was was co-run by Grant/Edwards and Billy Keane suddenly went bust after the trip. Their main band The Seers were dropped over night with an album hanging in the balance. Is this a strange co-incidence or is it connected ?

At the time of the split with Mark, Tony was quoted as saying "One doesn't consider marriage so soon after divorce", when asked who the replacement was to be. I 'phoned up Phonograms press office on the day that the story appeared in MM and they said, after a long pause, that they couldn't deny or confirm the story. If the article in MM was official, which it looked to be because of the band quotes, then why did Phonogram know nothing of the split or why could they not confirm it when they were the ones who would have been most likely to have issued the press release in the first place? Something FISHy going on??

The next written chapter of the story came in March 1990, when an interview with Mark appeared in the drummers magazine 'Rhythm'. It was a very long six-page effort with colour photo's to boot. Mark spoke of how he got into drumming and subsequently On The Air etc. and of how he came across B.C. (if you don,t know this story then either buy A Certain Chemistry or write in and tell us and we might do it in issue two). Eventually, the subject of the split was raised.

Mark said, "Big Country almost ground to a halt last August ('89) and I felt it was time to move on really. I was a little bit disillusioned with certain things but it was amicably agreed that we should go our own ways, ALTHOUGH IT NEVER QUITE WORKED OUT THAT WAY IN PRACTICE. I decided to do something new in August."

What was Mark referring to when he said it never quite worked out in practice? Did he have a bust-up with the rest of the band? He continued to say,

"I'd already done an album with Fish before the last B.C. tour and I knew Fish would be ringing me up to ask if I wanted to tour with him. So I rang him and said, look, B.C. have ground to a halt, it looks like we're going our own ways, so I'm making a positive decision to actually remove myself from the band. The band virtually stopped, whether it actually split up or not is ambiguous and at the end of the day it didn't, but in my eyes it had. I felt it was time to move on."

Mark then went on to say that he had visited Simon Townshend (of On The Air), and that they were going to do the album that never was. On The Air Mk.II threw up a few surprises. Mark takes up the story...

"I thought Tony was going to be involved, but what's happened now is that B.C. have kind of drifted back into a demo situation, with a friend of mine, Pat Ahern on drums. We've also got the keyboard player from B.C., a guy called Josh. We did some brilliant demo's, Simon on guitars/vocals, Tony on bass, Josh on keyboards and myself. We've got some of the best stuff I've ever done in a new band situation and we're in the process of getting a record deal. This is kind of bubbling under me as my main career."

The article then goes on to say that Mark has done sessions for Fish, Terri Nunn and Tears For Fears to name but a few. This is where I make a few assumptions. Firstly it would appear that Mark wanted Tony in On The Air as a permanent bassist. Tony obviously refused. Coupled with the fact that Mark nicked Josh from the B.C. line-up, these look like the reasons why the split "never worked out that way." The demo's Mark referred to were the 'Save Me' and 'Heart of the World' demo's.

So it seems the split was a little more complicated than Phonogram would have us believe. Mark wanted to do his own thing, but in the process tried to relocate most of B.C. into his new project. Rumours did do the rounds that Mark would do the new album and tour with B.C. but this is very much a long gone prospect now that Pat has fitted in so well.

As a last word, here is some food for thought. The interview states, "The On The Air album has a very american sound." So did "Peace in Our Time." Recently, Stu said in an interview that he thinks 'Peace...' is the album he would most like to change. Mark obviously has a large say in O.T.A. so would more than likely be partly responsible for the U.S. sound? Was Mark at all responsible for the U.S. sound of 'Peace..'? Is this why Stu has now started to reject the sound? All of this is probably another strange co-incident but it makes you think.□

Thanks to 'RHYTHM' for the use of the interview extract.

Whilst talking to Pat after the show in Doncaster he told us that Mark had expressed regrets about leaving Big Country and probably wished he had not done so. He would re-join, but the others wouldn't have him back.

W.S.N.S.(7)

CAUGHT IN THE ACT...

BIG COUNTRY - BIRMINGHAM HUMMINGBIRD 22-05-90

A NIGHT in 'Brum with the boys on the occasion of the 'BIG COUNTRY NOSTALGIA EXTRAVAGANZA' was one invitation that myself and Jason weren't going to pass up. From the opening rhythmic grind of 'Restless Natives' to the highway rock finale of Neil Young's 'Rockin' In The Free World', B.C. played with the bluster and spirit that fuels their every performance. The boys showed just why the last 8 years have been so invaluable in a stirring rendition of hits old and new which were sprung forth with an undying enthusiasm and commitment.

Hearty and in superb spirits, Stuart, aided by some enthused scissor kicks-a-plenty, turned in a blistering vocal performance more than aided (and abetted) by an electrifying dose of characteristic guitar playing that at times resembled more the moaning and groaning of Hendrix than the skirl of the pipes of the Dundonald Pipe Band. This was probably best displayed when Tony's bass packed-up midway through a storming 'Wonderland', leaving Stu (the mad axeman he cometh...ooer missus) to jam on, knocking out some awesome axe grinding while Tony frantically 'played' with his tackle (oo-bloody-er).

It was a great night out and the breadth of Tony's grin said it all, as did the crowds rabid chants of 'Stuart give us a wavel' to which the man duly obliged. With so many peaks and highs, it seems hard to know where to begin or end. One very noticeable achievement was new man at the back Pat who slipped into what was a mammoth hole that he had to fill admirably and with virtual ease. His thunderous beat on 'Lost Patrol' laid down the law. Watch out ye of little faith! Other high spots included the joyous, gospel-like singalong of an acoustic version of 'Peace In Our Time' in contrast to the last single 'Heart Of The World', which seemed coarse and harsh (until the rap part in the middle where I had visions of the boys producing Uzi's and innocently proclaiming 'F*ck The Police!')

Never mind. 'In A Big Country' still shone bright. Ever a real crowd pleaser, it saw Tony doing an emphatic moonboot jig with the grin to match of course (it's the shrink-wrapped, paint-on spandex strides that does it!). Meanwhile, Stuart was parading his whimsical wit when he enquired "How many people listen to Radio One?..." followed by a mass of cheers and chants ranging from a simple "yesss!!" to the more intricate "I like Gary's bit in the middle" and "Nah man, it's a load of Gobshite Crap". "Then you probably wouldn't have heard this next one" was Stu's reply as he led us into 'Save Me'. And he didn't forget the fans as he depicted three unexpected individuals from the crowd to do some 'vocals' and general prattling about on 'King Of Emotion' - shades an' all.

As we came ever closer to the end, the gallons of sweat dripping down in the moshpit were obviously a sign of what was to come as Stuart came back for the encores TOPLESS!!!! Howay an' shite man, what a pair o' jugs on the lad (no offence to the girlsies!). Glad to see his mammoth 38DDA's didn't effect his playing though as we ended on a better than ever 'River Of Hope' and a great version of The Equals 'Black Skinned Blue-Eyed Boys', finished by the aforementioned Neil Young classic. What a corker of a gig, which only leaves one question; where the bugger was 'Flag Of Nations' eh?! It's a funny old game, Saint! [ANDY]



LIVE IN SWEDEN - 1988



THROUGH A **BIG** COUNTRY



GREATEST HITS CD · CASSETTE · LP

Save Me	Look Away
In A Big Country	King Of Emotion
Fields Of Fire (400 Miles)	East Of Eden
Chance	One Great Thing
Wonderland	The Teacher
Where The Rose Is Sown	Broken Heart (Thirteen Valleys)
Just A Shadow	Peace In Our Time

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Video Selection Also Available On 



THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY

BIG COUNTRY Through A Big Country (Greatest Hits)

MERCURY 946 022

A greatest hits package often signals the end of the road for an act and it would be no surprise to find Big Country suffering from at least some sort of creative hiatus, give the musical tunnel vision displayed on this 14-track collection. It comes as something of a surprise to find that they'd racked up 10 consecutive Top 30 hits but here they are, discreetly omitting the debut Harvest Home and pulling together the singles from their 12 LPs plus *Save Me Best* by far are those from that first fine careless rapture that was *The Crossing*—especially *Fields Of Fire* and *Chance*—where the refreshing simpler arrangements show off the passionate songs best advantage. The rest is a rather forgettable clutch of intense but very similar sounding anthemic guitar songs, where Stuart Adamson's personal dynamism and compassionate lyrics lose out to weak melodies and leaden arrangements. Given cynical lack of informative packaging here and the fact that Big Country's singles simply do not equal *The Best Of*, the non-crossing might do better to seek out *The Crossing* instead. **** (Q)

Ian Craigs

BIG COUNTRY *Insight*

THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY

Mercury, all formats

It's almost impossible now to understand why at least 11 record companies turned down this quartet before Mercury offered them the deal that made them stars. The combination of Stuart Adamson's thoughtful songs with Bruce Watson's scorchingly melodic guitar hooks not only gives the lie to the notion that heavy rock is invariably for dummies but also results in songs of extraordinary power and conviction. From the soaring energy of early hits like *'Fields Of Fire'* through the heartache of *'Chance'*, to their most recent anthem *'Save Me'*, the quality of Big Country's output has remained remarkably consistent, and always uplifting. *Johnny Black*



BIG COUNTRY

Through A Big Country

(Mercury LP/Cassette/CD)

OH GOOD. Just what the world needed, a completion of Big Country's greatest hits. Contractual obligations can lead to the most tedious consequences. But hanging on a minute—didn't Stu and the boys support The Jam at the letter's farewell gig? Didn't they once mount a much-chauvinised Peel session? Didn't Big Country inject the rock scene with a healthy dose of spirited reality when their competitive enough pompous grandeur and overblown pompance? Yes, yes and thrice yes.

Shame, then, that *Through ...* starts off with current smash *'Save Me'*, a lurid re-ender across Gary Moore's builder's yard terrain which taints the subsequent clutch of tunes from *'The Crossing'*. The likes of *'In A Big Country'*, *'Fields Of Fire'* and *'Chance'* reveal the band at their best, emotive and toying with their bonkers goth-don't-they-sound-like-bagpipes? guitars.

Thereafter, the formula becomes a touch repetitive, as a few shades duller as The Biggies started socialising with rock's royalty (Phil Midge et al) and pandering to thrill-seeking bank clerks. Curiously, both *'Just A Shaver'* and *'East Of Eden'* threaten to turn into Cossack classics, shimmering tan second false promises which ultimately follow the traditional Big Country pattern of thump-pounding beats and choruses of twaddly plume-bits on top.

So it's loud but safe, invigorating without ever being intimidating. Rock music with neither exceptional qualities nor truly evocative characteristics. Which is quite possibly the worst way to be. *Safety horns (B)*

Simon Williams (NME)

HIGHLAND FLINGS

BIG COUNTRY THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY — GREATEST HITS

It's no easy to scoff at Big Country... the big hearts, the big gestures, the 12-track... the big issues! So, so easy. But it's easy to forget that Big Country were once widely regarded, once more-or-less dead, when they'd moved forth, were to guitar rock music what Geoff Hurd was to English football. They were the lone heroes, the sugar solo, the four straggled lads that came down from the Highlands armed only with their, took one look at the opposition and let rip, with riffs that mimicked bagpipes, drums that boomed like mules, hearts that throbbed like gold, and one that tore us apart.

Big Country emerged of a time when guitar rock was at its, the radio dominated by a mix of pop, soulful and fat, American AOR, and the idea of a rock as rock was being re-created by production and a desire to make "big". *'Fields Of Fire'* blew the charts wide open, paving the way for songs like *'The Smiths'*, *'The Rembrandts'* and *'Hiro'* to follow, but towards gold. And *'In A Big Country'* (I dream they will you) brought passion back into chart music. Stuart Adamson would talk in interviews of the many hours he'd spent in the Highlands, just taking in the atmosphere, and of real openness, that total purity, living out his songs like a rock star.

Adamson aimed to touch the ordinary man. His songs were eloquent and stirring, rarely crass. *'Lord Avoary'*, *'Just A Shaver'*, *'East Of Eden'* and, in particular, the superb *'Windmill'* touched our hearts and

laddled our dreams. I'm an honest man, I feel the winter too," he sang and Big Country's music reflected the ongoing struggle of ordinary, honest-working people against a classless of harsh economics and brutal social structures. Flat out I'm ad and on the radio, Big Country's music made you feel alive. The emotional, spiritual guitars combined with the pounding, heart-beating rhythms and Adamson's sensitive vocals as a chorus of optimism. Big Country gave us hope.

Their golden dream lasted on the cynicism of the late Eighties (at its, somehow, later Big Country records lacked the spark of authenticity that had fired their earlier effort, Adamson's ardency had, by *'King Of Emotions'*, slid into a rock'n'roll attitude more akin to Prince than to a former *'Dad'*. They'd set themselves up as the positive *'Blinkers'*, and passion was out of style. Big Country 're-oriented' with a string of the show-stoppers and a first down the road towards straight-ahead corporate rock and musical cliché. The new single, *'Save Me'*, packs a little of the best Big Country sound of old, yet overall sounds world-weary and weather-beaten.

It's no coincidence that the 14 tracks on here, only four date from after '82. Whether the group can regain the creativity of their early days is debatable. Listening again to the achingly beautiful *'Chance'*—probably the finest track they ever recorded, its resonance still acute. It's hard not to read new meaning into the lullaby chorus: "Oh Lord, where did the feeling go?"

A new decade upon us, borders coming down around the world, maybe Big Country can again team with optimism, fire and small shyness. But whatever, they're left as with some golden memories and platinum status. And time has not touched them. They shall never grow old. DAVE SIMPSON (NME)

BIG COUNTRY

FLY Magazine 28th Apr '89

Interview

by Gavin Starling

Big Country playing Coliseum

Promoting their forth coming concert at the Cornwall Coliseum Stuart Adamsen visited Plymouth where Fly caught up with him. When asked whether their new album 'Peace in our Time' had been inspired by the Reagan/Gorbachev summit, he denied that the album was directly written about improving East West relations but he conceded that the album as a whole had been inspired by the Gorbachev initiative and the more responsible attitudes which had prevailed. He said that it was important for him to write about and reflect the things going on around him. He pointed out that alot of modern pop music tends to be about escapism but that his own writing needed to have a more realistic base.

New album

The new album is a much quieter affair than the old, louder epic productions under Steve Lillywhite and which has a more environmental outlook. When asked if he was tempted to branch out into more standard pop lyrics he replied that he didn't feel that it suited him personally, and that he felt that the music he writes needs to be rather more intimate. The new album has a bit more of a lyrical bent than before and he felt that he might tend to go even more in that direction since he feels that the only real satisfaction when writing is in pleasing himself with the product.

Return to "heavy" era

When asked about his opinions of bands like U2 and Simple Minds and how they had developed their music he stated that what these bands are doing is definitely very unique. They've become very stylised in their own right and that it is important that bands are like that, they have an identity which they can put into their records and also take on stage with them. And that music seems to be going back to that era when it was very heavily machine based, with synthesisers and the like.

Stylised approach

The Fly reporter then focused onto the new album itself, in particular the song 'In This Place'. Stuart commented that the song is very much like many other Big Country songs, in that the musical motif is the same in the verse, melody and chorus and that he had deliberately intended in doing this, because it is a very stylised way of writing songs. He wanted to see if he could make it into something rather more personal but which still had a sense of past, present and future. He said that he was very pleased with the song but that he was greatly disappointed by its lack of air play on radio stations, particularly Radio 1.

Damaging labels

Unfortunately they seem to have the attitude that the Big Country sound is one of loud guitars with a twinge of folk to it. And that anything which is not like this is not the real thing. However any song which does have this feel to it is immediately dismissed as being samey. This is an unfortunate state of affairs, since the relationship with Radio 1 is so productive. They have released 15 singles, out of which Radio 1 have played 12, all of which have reached the Top 20 and the 3 which they have not played have not fared so well. It's a shame that this sort of labelling takes place and that their work is held back because of it.

Live work progressing

He was then asked about the tour and about his own feelings towards continuing the live act. He replied that essentially Big Country were a live band and that they needed to be appreciated as such. When he was younger he thought that as he got older then live music would hold much less significance for him, just as it had for other bands, but this has not been the case. In fact, the longer he has been performing live the more important getting up there and doing it live has become.

Radical change

The forth coming concert at the Cornwall Coliseum is to incorporate some more radical changes in the band outlook. They are trying many more new ways of experimenting with their music, in particular they have been travelling to the extremes with a venture from an acoustic style on to a new more PR orientated style like 'Chance'. When asked what their future plans were in the long run, Stuart said that after three concerts in the Soviet Union which had been very well recieved by the ordinary Soviets and the responses which he had recieved from those who could speak some English, he would be happy to return there. China is also another place where he would like to take their music although he is prepared to go anywhere. Its just that its something he would like to be able to do even if it was just as a tourist.

European tour

The British tour will be taking place in the coming month, after which they will be touring Europe for a while before settling down to writing a new album in the summer and recording it this autumn. They hope to release this album before the end of the year.



WE'RE ONLY JOSHING...

JOSH WHO ? I hear you all cry in unison ! He of ex-keyboard fame that's who. The long haired one that had a fleeting glimpse of the limelight during the 'Peace Tour 1988-89'. Where is he now ? you all ask. We'll tell you. He's tinkling the ivories in Mark B's new band On The Air.

Adding keyboards to the Big Country sound was a controversial move met with praise and concern alike. Here we print just a few of the many letters that appeared on our desk after the Peace tour dates. The validity of these letters cannot be guaranteed....

Dear Inwards...

Keyboards..What are they doing? Josh? Hell, if B.C. must use a keyboard player, why can't they use one with a B.C. style name...like Hamish or Murdo. Josh sounds like some kind of joke !!!

Yours confused,

M. Smith, Leeds Mental Institute

Dear Inwards...

Glad to see that Big Country have got rid of that wee lad with the ironing board. Och, I never did like the ones with the funny hair-cuts. Why don't keyboards play a part in the B.C. sound? Because they don't - that's why.

B. Watson, Dunfermline

Dear Inwards...

What's all this nonsense about Big Country and surfboards eh? When I was a lad, it were the music that did the er, talking, not what the image was. Bloody surfboards...

P. Townshend, London School for the Deaf

Dear inwards...

Always plant lettuces at least two inches apart, to avoid excessive damage by slugs. The gaps in between confuse the blighters. Failing that, slug pellets are a good bet.

P. Thrower, Mars.

STU's world cup winners tip...

STUART: "West Germany. They've been ominously quiet and I think Italy'll give 'em a good game but the Germans'll win it."

BIG COUNTRY 'Save Me' (Phonogram) Clearly he impending World Cup has et terrace rock guru Stuart Adamson's heart racing. After he puny MOR bleat of the Peace In Our Time' album, BC come roaring back with some anthemic roustabout rock. As blusteringly overblown as ever but, hell, that's the point of Big Country. C'mon, lad, pou an' me against the world. . Go on, 'ave a sip o' me beer.

Music Week
STOCK IT

BIG COUNTRY: Heart Of The World. (Mercury (12/T/CD) BC 9). Now back in the public thanks to some canny publicity id a timely Greatest Hits collection, their profile couldn't be her. A small hit is therefore on cards for this standard, slightly thematic, Adamson composition.

BIG COUNTRY HEART OF THE WORLD (Phonogram) DAN REED NETWORK STARDUST 1990 (Phonogram)

THERE are very few groups I despise more than Big Country, with their chunky-knit, corduroy rock, their perennially windswept eyes aloft gaze and their touching belief in the power of love to irrigate an arid world. I suspect that people like me feature in the Stuart Adamson/Jim Kerr worldview as the enemy: think too much and you lose touch with the full-bodied folk blood of the land, those simple(ton) words like love and faith and understanding where all argument comes to a halt and whose ritual incantation can supposedly make a change. I'm glad to perform such a role, proud to be out of touch, happy that my feet aren't firmly planted on the terra firma of common sense, the common fund of platitudes.

Don't you just hate the positivity-peddlers, the Dan Reeds and Karl Wallingers with their cheery conviction that being a positive role model doesn't mean you can't be fun? The clean-cut, tidy-minded funk metal of "Stardust 1990" is not my idea of fun. Prince can get away with such wishy-washy positivism because he lives in cloud cuckooland. Dan Reed would clearly buy you a beer.

BIG COUNTRY SAVE ME (Mercury)

IT'S been 15 months since the last Big Country single. Have any of us slept a wink since? Who can honestly say they haven't lain awake every single night, wrestling with the possibilities of what these remarkably creative people are likely to come up with next? Well, your purgatory is over. "Save Me" is yet another clod-hopping anthem, scraped off the sides of what must now be a very worn toilet-bowl. I've seen pensioners hawk up phlegm with more panache. Mind you, I have to admit that I'm aching to know what their next LP is going to sound like. Never underestimate Big Country. That's what I say. Not really.

BIG COUNTRY -- POSITIVE OR POSITIVELY CRAP?

RE Simon Reynolds' singles review MM, 14/7/90: Excuse me, but what do you mean by Big Country's "chunky knit corduroy rock"? Is this some new musical category I haven't heard of? As it happens, I don't think you feature in Jim Kerr or Stuart Adamson's thoughts at all except maybe as a small, unnecessary irritation. I would think the thought of people as negative and cynical as you only reminds them of the acrid smell of a stale turd.

What is so bad about positivity? Were you deprived in childhood? If so, my heart goes out to you. Were you beaten up at school? School can be rather cruel and leave its mark on an individual so as to lead to an outburst of negativity in later life.

I can promise you I practise positivity as much as I can, not always successfully I admit, but I assure you, I make sure I have loads of fun. Do you? It doesn't appear so.

Obviously, I have no problem with people not liking Big Country, each to his own. But a cynical review, based on a writer's disdain of "positivity peddlars" suggests the writer has a rather large chip on his shoulder.

Remain miserable in your wretched world if you must.
IAN GRANT, Ian Grant management, Redhill

"POSITIVITY"? Sounds more like totalitarianism - endorse unconditionally Big Country's big, vacuous, teeth-grindingly and relentlessly sanguine records or else be subjected to a ruthlessly amateurish psychoanalysis by their management. As it happens, Simon Reynolds had a deliriously happy childhood, most of which he spent as the school bully, threatening to tweak the ears of younger Simple Minds and Skids fans unless they gave him their pocket-money.

MELODY MAKER, August 4 1990

BIG COUNTRY

⊕

SAVE ME

LIMITED EDITION
12" GATEFOLD

Features Live Versions of
WONDERLAND &
THOUSAND YARD STARE

Recorded in Moscow 1988
Includes Full Colour
4 Page Booklet

BIG COUNTRY HEART OF THE WORLD
The New Single - Out Now

on 12"

SINGLE REVIEWS...

'SAVE ME' and 'HEART OF THE WORLD'

SO WHAT did you think of the singles? 'SAVE ME', the first new single from ver lads in about 13 months was the first to feature new boy Pat Ahern on the drum stool. Jason aired the view that the keyboard and guitar solo start resembled 'Shine on you crazy diamond' from Pink Floyds 1973 album, 'Wish you were here'. Was this a lament for Marky B..? This was a view that a Glaswegian kiss* soon put paid to..! Oh, and was that Mr. Hendrix doing the whammy bar dives on 'HEART..'?

On a more serious note though, the reviews seemed to be downright predictable (an accusation the "hacks" usually angle at B.C. - if it's not the bagpipe guitar bullshit). In reference to 'SAVE ME', one Melody Maker 'pop guru**' accused Stuart of scraping the toilet bowl while a Sounds somebody seemed to think that B.C. revolved around the central importance of who was going to win the World Cup..!

And as if to add insult to stupidity, Simon 'fairy' Reynolds, from the Maker in a 'HEART OF THE WORLD' reveiw (which carried no signs of an attempt to even comment on the song) likened B.C.'s music to 'chunky knit corduroy rock'! A suggestion that pre-empted a verbal return volley from myself and Jason along the lines of 'ASSHOLE!!!...Uzi 9mm..rat-a-tat-a-tat!

Funnies aside though, Mr/Mrs/Wanker/Reynolds' (delete as applicable) remarks certainly put the back up of someone BIG! namely the boss himself, Ian Grant who put pen tp paper in reply to said comments in a letter that was duly printed in the following weeks maker (letter printed elsewhere). Amongst other things, Mr Grant questioned the debatability of Mr Reynolds' childhood upbringing - nice one Ian, nice one son etc. etc.

Returning to the reviewers, it seems that these blockheads will be entering Steve Wright's Mr. Spoons competition with a view to wiping the floor with the opposition. May the most incontentant, oops, incompetent win !! It would also appear that B.C. are committing three fundamental errors:-

- (i) They don't come from Manchester (although Stu was born there)
- (ii) They don't wear flares (usually)
- (iii) They're not called the STONE ROSES - Hoorah!

Meanwhile, from an analytical point of view, we managed to glean these following facts, aided by the Gallup Research Department. 'Save Me' appeared on the Radio One playlist for just ONE week, which was actually the week BEFORE its release, a week which only saw it get four plays. In the mean-

time, out of the 53 independent Local Radio stations, 28 of them playlisted the single for the week commencing 18th May. In stark contrast, Fleetwood Mac's single of the same name released a week prior to B.C.'s was playlisted on up to 45 of these stations in one given week, yet it fared worse than than B.C.'s single in the charts.

Another interesting fact is that the 12-inch of 'Save Me' peaked at number 27 in the Gallup 12-inch chart while the single could only manage a disappointing number 41 position. 'Heart..' fared even worse, only reaching number 50. The radio play figures for 'Heart..' were presumably so bad that they weren't made available !! Dave Lee Travis appears to be the only Radio One D.J. who is at present flying the B.C. flag. Unfortunately, he doesn't have a daytime weekly show, except when he covers for Steve Wright and that's only when B.C. don't have a single out !

For a final thought on the subject, kiddies programme '8:15 from Manc.' featured an item on 26th May where they compared the national top 10 to that of a record shop in Ullapool, North-West Scotland. 'Save Me' was at number 9 in the Ullapool chart, yet only at 47 in the national chart. This shows the strong following that the boys have North of the Border.

Well, we hope that gives you something to ponder over. If you have anything to add to the debate or simply disagree with what's been said, write it down and let us know. We'll print the best replies next ish.

* Glaswegian Kiss: A form of physical contact of the unpleasant variety involving making abrupt contact with another's forehead with one's own!

** Pop Guru: A complete moronic idiot with no dick.

COMPACT

disc	
DIGITAL AUDIO	
1	THROUGH A RED COUNTRY, My Country Mercury/Phonogram
2	1 ONLY YESTERDAY, The Coasters A&M
3	THE CLASSIC EXPERIENCE II, Various EMI
4	2 ... SHE SINGINGLY, Phil Collins Virgin
5	4 LABOUR OF LOVE II, U2 DEP Int./Virgin
6	13 JUST THE TWO OF US, Various Epic
7	3 NUMBER ONE BANG, Restonated Star Warner Brothers
8	4 VIVALDI FOUR SEASONS, Nigel Kennedy EMI
9	7 HOME 171, Various EMI/Virgin/PolyGram
10	5 ALANBAR REFLECT, Alan Barbery Atlantic/Warner

ALTHOUGH FAILING to make it to number one in the 'real' album charts, the 'Through A B.C.' album did make it to the top of the compact disc charts, and here's the proof.



THE CLUES...

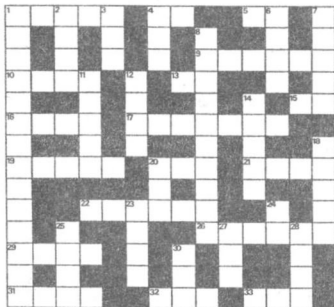
ACROSS:

- 1 YOU'RE ADVISED TO HOLD THIS (5)
- 4 QUICK, EASY REFERENCE TO BIG COUNTRY (1,1)
- 5 INITIALLY, MR. BRUCE WATSON (1,1)
- 9 THE BOYS WENT HERE, ONLY TO RETURN SKINT (5)
- 10 EMOTIONAL MONARCH (4)
- 13 STUART ADAMSON IN SHORT (1,1)
- 15 I COULD - HAPPY HERE (2)
- 16 DOES THIS MEAN PEACE OR ARE WE LEAVING ? (4)
- 17 STU'S FAVOURITE SEER SONG (7)
- 19 OPPOSITE TO 14 DOWN (5)
- 20 THESE TAPES FOLLOWED TEXAS (1,1,1)
- 21 IF YOUR BOAT'S NOT THIS BIG IT WILL NEVER GO (4)
- 22 THIS LAND IS (6)
- 26 IS THIS LARRY LUREX AND HIS BAND ? (4,2)
- 29 STU AND BRUCE'S ORBITAL CUSTOM GUITARS (4)
- 31 HOW MANY SCOTS IN THE SEER LINE-UP ? (4)
- 32 BACKING VOCALIST IS PRODUCERS WIFE...WHO ? (3)
- 33 SAILOR/TEACHER/RED FOX/SEER...WHAT'S MISSING (3)

DOWN:

- 1 A GIN-SOAKED BAR ROOM QUEEN FROM MEMPHIS (5,4,5)
- 2 AND 30 DOWN. MR.EDWARDS AND MR. GRANT - THE OLD MANAGEMENT (4+3)
- 3 - GREAT THINGS ! (3)
- 4 IN THE FILM, THE COUNTRY WAS ALSO...(3)
- 6 ON STEELTOWN, THE LADS WENT EAST AND - (4)
- 7 BIG COUNTRY'S '88 CRY FROM THE SIXTIES ? (5)
- 8 NOT DION'S WANDERER (10)
- 11 THE THING OR THE DVIDE ? (5)
- 12 CRYSTAL BALLS OUT FOR THIS SONG (4)
- 14 SONG WAY DOWN (5)
- 18 IN THIS...(5)
- 20 ONE HALF OF SLY SONG AND CHRISTIAN NAME OF WONDERLAND
SLEEVE PHOTOGRAPHER (3)
- 23 STUART HAD 'EVERYTHING L...' (4)
- 24 COME BACK TO DOH RAY....(2)
- 25 ONE WAS A PRARIE, THE OTHER WAS... (4)
- 27 TONY AND MARK CAME IN FROM ON IT (3)
- 28 FILM AND SONG THAT WAS CREATED IN HEAVEN (4)
- 30 SEE 2 DOWN.

BIG COUNTRY CROSSWORD



ANSWERS PRINTED NEXT ISSUE

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{SWIMMING}



STU



DAVEY



TOM



PATSY

THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF THOSE LONABLE AGES, BIG COUNTRY
(Gosh! Aren't they bankers)

BY
KEVIN
PAYNE...

AT WEMBLEY...

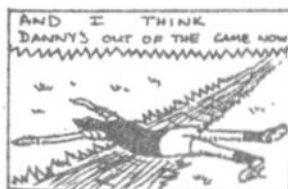
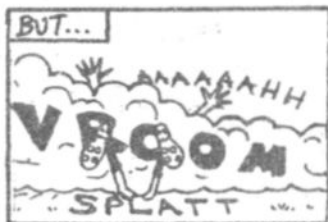
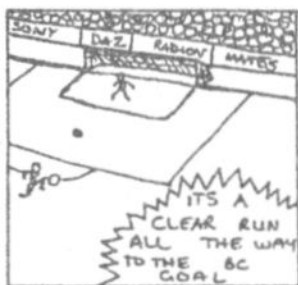


IT'S BIG COUNTRY
AND



THE NEW KIDS
OFF THEIR BLOCKS
OR SOMETHING.





STUART'S T.V. INTERVIEW AT GLASGOW GREEN 1989

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A SHORT T.V INTERVIEW WITH STUART AT WET WET WET'S GLASGOW GREEN GIG ON SEPT. 10th 1989. THE INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY TRACEY MACLEOD (SHE OF 'THE LATE SHOW' AND 'RAPIDO' FAME) JUST AFTER OUR STU HAD DONE HIS SOLO SPOT.

STU: I was very nervous obviously, being without the band. I've only ever done things like this before on radio, y'know. When something like that happens it makes you feel very humble and very sort of brilliant. I mean, I had to cancel a few shows in Glasgow this year because of illness and eh, it was great just to go out and do something and to be received like that.

QU: It's nice that there's young bands on and also, people like yourself who maybe were an inspiration to the Wets in the first place ?

STU: I think it's great yeah! I mean, I think bands like ourselves and the Minds and stuff have inspired a lot of younger bands and made people see that it's still possible to live in Scotland and to be successful on a world-wide basis. And eh, I think that's important, not only for the bands themselves, but for Scottish people and for Scottish culture because culture's not something that died out 50 years ago. It's an ongoing thing y'know ?

QU: So you're going to be ditching the rest of the band now you've seen how well it goes solo ?!

STU: No...no danger !!...No chance !! (laughs)

ALBUM REVIEWS:

THE ALARM - CHANGE

It's easy to feel a sense of regret with The Alarm. While the boys from across the pond in Dublin city, under the guise of U2, have soared to even greater heights of success, this admirable Welsh troop have, if anything, been stalwarted by the '2's' achievements. Like B.C., they've often been set up as the whipping boys over the years since their emergence in '83 as a "powerful" force in rock. 'Pompous' and 'Clash-like' (and of course U2-like) are just some of the more common complaints, but they've stuck at it and no matter how naff it sounds - good on 'em, as the fruits of their labours are more than evident on 'Change'.

'Sold me down the river' opens up this box of gems with its thrusting and biting chord sequence, pumped along by Twist's mighty pulsating thump! What's more than noticeable on their latest vinyl outing is the striking effectiveness and edge of Dave Sharp's guitar playing. Greatly underestimated Sharp weaves his rich, trebly lines through the framework of such delights as the tense emergency of 'Hardland' and the harmonious cry and plea of 'Prison without prison bars'.

In my minds eye, Mike Peters vocal and lyrical input has never been better since their first album, 'Declaration'. Just listen to his delusions and assertions on the torrid 'Where a town once stood'. Overall though, throughout this collection, the feeling is one of a great band effort; 'Scarlet' is for me, the pinnacle of this bonding, eloquent but harsh in nature. (You've been reading too many books - Jason)

With only one "banana" to report - 'Rivers to cross', 'Change' remains one Alarm L.P. you shouldn't be without. It even ends with a good ole' stirring Welsh sing-a-long boyo in 'New South Wales'. Not bad for seven quid eh? (or whatever Gorby charges in the Eastern Bloc for your "cute honky-tonky rockity-roll muzak comrade"). If you've been living in a cave with only your SONIA pink flexi-disc for stimulus and relief, then it could be time to wake-up to the Alarm (groan -Jas).

To quote the title-track, "it's been a long time coming and it's good to be back". And so say all of us. (9.5 + 0.5 for the intelligent omittance of any sheep songs...BAAA!!!) [ANDY]



15 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT BIG COUNTRY, AND NOR DID THEY !!

1. 'ELEDON' is the name of a small pub on the outskirts of Glasgow. Apparently they serve a mean pint of real ale and there's a good C.D. jukebox as well. And they've got 'THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY' on it as well.
2. Stuart wrote 'JUST A SHADOW' in the light of a candle during a powercut one night in Dumfermline.
3. On their first tour, the 'Alice Cooper Sucks Tour', B.C. played in a cattleshed in Lower Diddlethorpe, England. The crowd were apparently a bit subdued, but 3 cows and a castrated bullock (that's BULLOCK!) did join in with the singing bit during 'CHANCE'.
4. 'SOAPY SOUTAR STRIKES BACK', the B-side of 'THIRTEEN VALLEYS', is an anagram of 'I NEVER COULD WRITE LYRICS'.
5. Pat Ahern once played drums in a band called PAT AHERN. However, he was fired but won a high court battle to keep the name.
6. BIG COUNTRY all eat Quaker Oats and wear KILTS.
7. Oh yee! They always have double helpings before a gig...(ooooo missus!)
8. B.C. once released a song called 'STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN' under the false name LED ZEPPELIN. The band still deny it to this day. 'Percy' Adamson says this is a heap of lies (or words to that effect).
9. PRINCE joined B.C. for a couple of days as keyboardist/guitarist/bassist/drummer/vocalist. He was soon removed from the band when he asked the rest of the band if they wouldn't mind taking a short 'holiday' while he recorded a couple of albums, did a short world tour and mixed the new 12-inch by up and coming Manchester band 'The Dog's Bollocks'. He wrote the funky emotion-soaked bit in 'HOLD THE HEART'.
10. Anthony Earl Butler used to be the school milk monitor.
11. Before joining B.C., Bruce was a stunt double for Jamima the doll in 'wacky' kids prog. Play School.
12. The 'lads' new stage clobber is apparently from the Desmond Lynham autumn/winter 90/91 catalogue. The boys are extremely happy with the products which they endorsed whole-heartedly at a recent press conference which Des himself attended. Stuart was heard to announce:-
'Hey...tell you whst...here's the runners and riders for the 2:30 at Newmarket'.

Mark Brzezicki's place in Big Country has been taken by Pat Ahern (see pic), who's previously hit things for Ultravox and Midge Ure. He's even played with bassist Tony Butler before, in the Simon Townshend band, pre-Big Country (as did Mark himself).

13. Pat is a self-confessed tupperware party addict. He has also led the rest of the band down this road of deprivation, proclaiming "it's magic - just pack the wife off to the pub while us fellows break-out our much-loved little plastic friends". As if to add insult to injury, Bruce then chipped in:- "It's amazing what bargains ye canna pick-up like. Here, see this carry wee receptacle here (proudly holds aloft a 4 x 12 inch lunch box). Go on, how much d'ye think this cost me man? No? I'll tell ye...two bloody bob!! Aye, ye have to get up pretty early in the morning to catch Mr. Brucey "Bargain" Watson out!" (Eds' comment - a socially unacceptable practice - disgusting)
14. The lads still eat Quaker Oats.
15. The contents of this article are in no way guaranteed to be not untruthful. In fact, the main bulk, if not all of this piece, is what we in the trade would consider to be an outsiders view of an inside happening, taking place outside the legal restrictions of a horse and trap requirement. ie Bollocks.

BIG COUNTRY "EXPOSED"!!



There are one zwillzwillion *fascinating* facts to be known about the ones they call Big Country. And *Bitz* now brings you... er, none of them, actuallement. But *these* completely useless facts (below) are nonetheless... TRUE!!!!

- Stuart Adams got his car seat on his forehead from falling on a lead soldier when he was about 7
- When Bruce Watson gave up drinking recently, he had to convert his home bar into a video cabinet
- Mark Unpleasantable and wife made on planes in his youth that he could tell the make flying over him just by the engine sound - his bedroom was full of "mocked up" cockpit" made out of cardboard boxes and old Sney wearing in a liquid bottles
- Tony Butler claims he dropped his wanted to play the base when he saw Norman Greenbaum perform the original version of "Spinn In The Sky" on *Top Of The Pops*
- Stuart once wrote a song for Eddie "John Abba"
- Calvin Stuart's son burst into Court when Stuart wouldn't let him come with the band to the TV programme "The Bitter Few"
- None of Big Country are really Scottish, even if we're born in Manchester and Borneo is a lovely
- Stuart was present at the birth of his daughter Kirsten and it was "magic"
- Bruce used to clean the radioactive ballast out from nuclear submarines but gave it up when his boots "started glowing in the dark"
- Sandra, Stuart's wife, is the sister of Bruce's school pal Raymond!!
- The two other musicians (apart from Stuart and Bruce) at the Big's first concert in Dunfermline in 1983 were brothers Peter and Alan Wishart - but they got the boot!
- Stuart hasn't got very much hair under his arse!
- Stuart's many previous jobs include a) potato picker b) student environmental officer c) production controller in a knife factory d) accountant of roof tiles e) roadie for the Alvin (Aze you size about the last one - Ed)
- Stuart sponsors Lin Dalbee in motorbike races - Lin is the only one in Stuart's line of bike shop
- Mark once abandoned in the backing band for "Sneaky Wee Sneaky" "musicians" "inhabitant" Paul Denny
- Stuart used to go to Dunfermline Athletic football matches with our own Lin "Jack E." Cranna!

WILD IN THE COUNTRY...

ANDY MAULE takes a look at the rise and fall of the COUNTRY CLUB and asks the question - where next for the fan club ?

SO WITH the return of the boys in May of last year came a refit in the management of the Country Club. I'm sure you all rushed out and had a street party on receipt of these joyous tidings eh ? Sarcastic quips aside, let's get to the heart of the matter (the bollocks as Eric Blyton might not have once said). With the new Club partnership of Andrew and Jan Bremner at the helm comes the reaffirmed promise of a more operational and organised club - a promise that has all too often been broken in the past.

The facts. Since joining in November 1985, I myself have received only 8 copies of the official mag (up to and including issue 19). This works out at a disappointing average of just over 1.5 copies per year. Even after having to renew my membership more than two years after I first joined, the club failed to keep the supply promised even though the membership deal had been cut to three issues per membership stint. Even this has now gone out of the window with a straight one-year package in force. Should we see this as a ploy to evade previous problems ?

Another worrying factor in previous Club outings has been the almost useless and at times, non-existent notification of gigs. I received a list of upcoming tour dates for the "Peace..." tour literally weeks before the tour was due to start, by which time I had already bought my tickets after the dates were listed in the national music press. It's very worrying when you still have to rely on keeping your nose, eyes, ears, feet and other bodily parts to the ground because you can't rely on prior notification of concerts from the official fan club. If that wasn't bad enough, they even printed an asterix next to the gigs that had sold out - very useful I don't think.

However, Ian Grant (The Boss) enthuses in issue 18, "There is no point dwelling on matters of the 80's. More to the point, let's get up to date. How more aptly up to date can we get than issues 18 & 19 themselves I hear cry and heckle? On the matter of single and gig notification etc., I have absolutely no qualms. An excellent service has been maintained, perhaps indulgent i.e 4 promotional 'Heart of the World' postcards (did any members receive more than four ?)

So it's unfortunate that in light of these marked achievements that the Clubfolk are so badly let down by the magazines output and input. Personally, I think that the official mag's purpose is, amongst other things to divulge general, otherwise unobtainable info (the meat) to the fanclub member (the punter). Issues 18 and 19 certainly didn't include the meat I was looking for.

Personally, the idea of combining issue 18 (the first by the new club) of the fan club mag with the "Through A Big Country" tour programme is an idea that to me, adds up to a birrova con!! At least when this was first done on the '87 "Under Wraps" tour, the issue carried some warning on the cover informing Club members that their copy was in the post. This statement was also aided by the fact that Country Club was printed boldly on the front of the mag (something that issue 18 was missing). I'm sure that many fans bought issue 18 unaware of the situation. Jason takes up his story...

"I was extremely amused at forking out three quid only to read on page five that a copy would be in the post to me shortly. There was a double twist to the story in that I had not received anything from the C.C. since issue 16 although I had been a member. I had been forgotten about, lost at sea, missing in action (O.K. Jas, calm down!) I notified the new Club bosses and told them that I didn't really want them to send me the back issues as I had already read Andy's copies. They admitted I had got 'lost' in the numerous changes at the Club and told me that my membership would run for another two magazines, so in effect, I had (or will have) issues 19 and 20 instead of 17 and 18. I do praise Jan for sorting out this cock-up so quickly, but at the same time, hope that it doesn't happen again. If it hadn't been for Andy also being in the club, I would have never known there was an issue 17..."

As for issues 18 and 19, I found them to be for the most part stale and lack-lustre, fuelled by:-

- (i) Lack of volume (talk about 'Thin Air Issues'!)
- (ii) Lack of general info. Much of what was printed was just as readily available through the music press, if not more. And then we had to make do with the crumbs of info in ish 19.
- (iii) The uninspiring layout. Although very professional, very dull. Big, bold spacey layouts fill pages but don't fill heads. Oh, and why in ish 19 did they print newspaper 'cuttings' of B.C. stories in such a way that you couldnae read them. Aaaaargh!
- (iv) Lack of printed fan input (letters etc) Either every member who writes in is writing the same letter as the ONE that gets printed, or.....or what? The current C.C. has yet to prove to be a channel for the voice of the fan at large....
- (v) Lack of Balls (ooooer missus, titter ye not!)

Anyway, with a new single and album just around the corner, I only hope that the C.C. MkIV (?) will do full justice to a great band as I'd dearly love my assumptions to be turned around (or shoved where the sun doesn't shine - Jas). Until then, I'll remain concerned...very concerned.

DO YOU have any criticism OR praise concerning the Country Club. Do you disagree with what's been said here or do you have a funny story connected to the Country Club, like the time you were sent a bag of radishes by registered post instead of issue 12. If so, write it down and send it to us at INWARDS. We will print the best replies in a follow-up article in the next issue.



A VIEW OF THE BIG COUNTRY

ANDY MAULE reviews the long awaited video compilation...

SO EVENTUALLY it came, over three years since first speculated about - THROUGH A BIG COUNTRY - THE VIDEOS (PMV 55 mins). It proved to be an exciting chance to view videos unseen by some and only glimpsed at by other folks. A vision from the past, or so to speak...

The compilation starts most notably with the omission of the well made 'Seve Me' video. Whether this was due to the video being shot too late for inclusion or just restrictions on running time is a bit of a conundrum (I thought we weren't going to use big words -Jas). Answers on the back of a postcard to...if anyone out there does know the reason, please let us know...

Anyway, back to the vid and the Boy's Own style adventure of 'In A Big Country' which sees our Stu getting clocked on the chin by some brazen hussey (nowt to do with chuffin' Wayne from the Mish I might add!). It's the almost naïve innocence of this video that makes it such a timeless classic. The same could be said for 'Fields Of Fire' with its stirring combat scenario. The vid then rolls on through the lamenting beauty of 'Chance', a studio vid with our Bruce looking 'ard with his acoustic guitar while Stu (minus his wee axe) dances like a Jimmy Summerville understudy!

'Wonderland' takes us back outdoors while 'King Of Emotion' takes us far out back - the Aussie Outback to be precise dingo! 'Wonderland' is a real passion thriller set in the snow-blushed hills of Oregon, USA. Full 'Aura Of Cool' marks here to Tony, bespectacled with headband and flasher mack. If it's flash fashion that you want, then look no further than Stu's black booties on 'King...' Following on from what are essentially two performance videos comes the rather bemusing 'Just A Shadow' which appears to centre around some sweet young chappie rescuing some old dear's puddy cat - all together now...! It's definitely a video that duly falls short of the needs of a great song. Not to worry though. The fabbo 'Look Away' and 'East Of Eden' flicks quickly reassert the balance. Both

Over at The Haugh, **BIG COUNTRY** are by turns hilarious and magnificent, a fine role model for Glasgow's young to aspire to. There's kids singing along to every line, parents too, and Adamson's men play with an energy and a real heart that belies their lengthy service. "Chance" is monumental, the whole of Glasgow echoing the song's sentimental imagery and bold aspirations... "He came like a hero from the factory floor". Big Country, heroes here, can still move mountains.

AT LAST! A
DECENT GIG
REVIEW, THEIR
APPEARANCE
AT THE GLAS-
GOW BIG DAY
TO BE PRECISE.

and especially '...Eden' drape themselves in aura and atmosphere to good effect and take a journey back through time - 'Look Away' to the 19th century and '...Eden' to Kilmacolme in 1952. The former's use of enhanced scenic lighting is a complete contrast to the tense, sullen images that the latter spawns forth. The pessimistic, industrial and rural wasteland of '...Eden' shapes it into what must be the band's most meaningful opus to date.

What follows in 'One Great Thing' is in complete contrast. The video resembles a British Gas advert and stars a cast of thousands...plus four others - whoever they may be? It's a video that you definatley need to be in the mood for (ooh! la! la! - alcoholic intoxication adds to the effect, or so I'm told). The quick snappy interaction between clips of various Joe Bloggs' certainly gave my pupils major problems. 'The Teacher' brings those worn eye sockets to some kind of Karma, and so it should because the song is about getting stoned and wanting to know just about everything (don't try this one at home kids! and anyway, I always found a quick glance through the Encyclopedia Britannica cures this passion!). The video itself involves our man Stu picking up some wee alien blokie (I can just see Stu's line now, "Would you like to see my puppies?") and driving him here, there and everywhere before he shoots off back to Pluto for his tea. Or something.

Um, yes, well reality is retained somewhat by the awesome, rich auburn scenery of the Australian landscape in 'Broken Heart', and as in 'King Of Emotion', it's just got to be seen... a definat peak of this video compilation. It's just a shame that the affairs are wrapped up with the meander of 'Peace In Our Time'. Again, sadly another video that just is not truly representative of such a great song.

And that's it, which prompts a few questions like what happened to the 'Where The Rose is Sown' and 'Hold The Heart' video's (the former being a straight performance video and the latter filmed in a room full of mirrors with a sexy chick an' all!). Perhaps they were deemed 'not up to scratch'? Anyway, even after the omissions, "Through A Big Country" remains a stirring and humourous look at the career of the greatest band in the land. Etc. Etc. Don't be without it! It's NO BAD!



BIG COUNTRY

THE NEW SINGLE
JUST A SHADOW

ON REMIXED 7"
AND EXTENDED REMIX 12"
7" & 12" INCLUDE BRAND NEW
TRACK WINTER SKY
7" BCO8 12" BCO812

↑
J&R MUSIC INC.



FACTS AND FIGURES...

THIS IS a section which we hope to make a regular feature. Some of the facts were 'from the horses mouth' when Jason met the band in Bristol in May 1989. Other bits of trivia were gained from just about any source that you care to mention. If you have any bits of news or amazing facts that you wish the world to know, write them down, lick the envelope and pop it in the post to the usual address. Oh yes, don't forget to put a stamp on the envelope and don't forget to put your clothes on when you go to the post box !

- The photo on the cover of the 'Look Away' single was, according to Stu, taken in his back garden in Dumfermline. Shame about that nasty pylon eh Stu ?
- The planned fourth single from 'Peace...' was either 'River Of Hope' or 'Thousand Yard Stare'. The idea of releasing a fourth single was shelved after the poor airplay that the 'Peace..' single gained. Contrary to the reports in one of the Country Club magazines, 'From Here To Eternity' was never planned to be a single.
- The first Big Country song ever written was 'Harvest Home', which in turn became the first Big Country single. It never charted.
- The keyboard player in the very first line-up of Big Country was Peter Wishart who went on to become the keyboardist in Runrig.
- When the band played 'Time For Leaving' on the "Under Wraps" tour, Bruce played harmonica. His efforts were not to be heard on the album version of the song. Likewise, 'Peace In Our Time' featured a completely different verse to the version that appeared on the album.



INNERDS

NEWS STRAIGHT FROM
THE HORSES ARSE



(RIGHT)
MARK CONTEMPLATES THE TRUE
INNER MEANING OF THE CLASSIC
CLASH CUT, "SHOULD I STAY OR
SHOULD I GO?"



still on a footie note, TTT will be waving its scarf in the air next weekend when **STUART ADAMSON**, the big lad at the back for **BIG COUNTRY**, plays for his local Dunfermline amateur team in the Scots Amateur Cup Final ...



Big Country's Stuart Adamson (centre) lines up for a team shot with the rest of the Dunfermline boys

NATIONWIDE

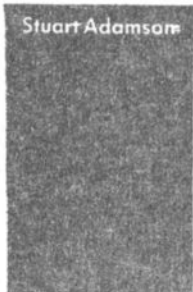
WE AT INWARDS
THINK THAT THIS
YEAR HAS BEEN
INCOMPLETE IN
THE MUSIC CHARTS
OF THIS GREAT
NATION OF OURS.
WE BELIEVE THAT
THERE IS ONE
VITAL ELEMENT
THAT IS MISSING
FROM OUR GLOR-
IOUS TOP 100.
'FLAG OF NATIONS
(SWIMMING)' SHOULD
BE UP THERE WITH
THE BEST OF THEM.
WHAT DO YOU SAY
PHONOGRAM...A '91
REMIX AND A CHART
TOPPING HIT. COME
ON, PULL YOUR
FINGERS OUT...OUR
NATION NEEDS THIS
SONG.

(LEFT) Simon Reynolds gets
to meet his MAKER !!

(BELOW) A typical M.M. live shot -
must have been a powercut



Stuart Adamson



ALBUM REVIEWS:

ROBERT PLANT - MANIC NIRVANA

Robert Plant found his form with 1988's "Now & Zen" opus, an album of thought-out, melodic songs and Zep samples that waved the proverbial V-sign in the face of the many bands sampling Zeppelin songs for their own financial gain.

It took two years for this follow-up to appear, but it's been worth the wait. Plant has now firmly established his young band (which was put together for the 'Zen album and tour) and judging by the amount of song-writing credits the band get on this showing, this album should be credited to the Robert Plant Band.

The show kicks off with the first single, Hurting Kind (I've Got My Eyes On You), a very Def Lep style drums and vocals verse leading into a catchy, if not a little too repetitive chorus. The second song, Big Love is another anthemic stomper complete with Prince-style perv lyrics. Indeed, the influence of the Purple Perv of Pop is quite strong on two or three tracks. The third song S.S.& Q. starts in Plant-style but evolves into a mid section that could have been an out-take from the Lovesexy sessions, complete with 1999-era percussion sounds. Next-up is the first slow song I Cried, bringing back memories of Going To California from Zep's fourth L.P.

The album then enters the "mid-section lull" with She Said and Nirvana, both excellent tracks (even if the guitar riff is almost identical) but lacking that memorableness, lacking punch. However, all is redeemed by the excellent Tye Dye On The Highway. "What we have in mind is breakfast in bed with 400,000!" (I'll go for that ! - Andy)

The second single Your Ma Said You Cried... is catchy but a strange choice for a single in my book. The final three songs are not as memorable as the rest of the album but don't lower the albums standard.

Overall, this collection of songs is a great follow-up to 'Zen, even if it doesn't have as many potential hits. Manic Nirvana. You'd better believe it. (7/10) J.A.



SUPER WORDSEARCH!

EVERHADTH
EFEELINGT
HATYOUIMG
HTJUSTBEP
ISSINGINT
OTHEWIND?

THE SONGS TO FIND...
WHERE THE ROSE IS SOWN
BELIEF IN THE SMALL MAN
IN A BIG COUNTRY
FLAME OF THE WEST
COME BACK TO ME
HEART OF THE WORLD
I WALK THE HILL
I COULD BE HAPPY HERE
HOME CAME THE ANGELS
PEACE IN OUR TIME
BROKEN HEART (THIRTEEN VALLEYS)
TRACKS OF MY TEARS
SONG OF THE SOUTH
FROM HERE TO ETERNITY
WHEN A DRUM BEATS

(THEY'RE ALL IN THERE SOMEWHERE
FOLKS...HAPPY HUNTING!)

THE FIRST CORRECT ENTRY THAT WE PICK
OUT THE INWARDS THAT WILL RECEIVE THE
ORIGINAL ARTWORK FOR THE FRONT COVER
OF THE FIRST ISSUE OF INWARDS (photo-
copied of course).





QUESTION TIME ...

YES WE'VE come to the bit in the mag where we attempt to increase our knowledge of Big Country just in case we have to go on Mastermind and chose B.C. as our specialist subject. The questions are in two parts - a section aimed at anyone who knows the answers and a section that contains questions for the band, if they are reading ! If anyone knows any of the answers, let us know and we'll do a feature next ish. Send any answers to the usual INWARDS address.

ROUND ONE - ALL CONTESTANTS:

1. Who is the female singer that supplies backing vocals on 'Made In Heaven', the bonus track on the limited edition C.D. of 'Broken Heart (Thirteen Valleys)' ?
2. In the book 'A Certain Chemistry', the concluding chapter states that the band 'have demo-ed 12 tracks for the next album'. The album was 'The Seer' which contains 10 songs. The eleventh song we assume to be 'Song Of The South' - B-side of 'One Great Thing'. What was the 12th "lost" song and where did it go ?
3. What was the date and venue of the last date on the 'Peace' tour - a gig which we reckon was Marks last with the band.
4. Was Stuart called William as a boy and was Tony called Anthony ?
5. What happened to Les King ?

ROUND TWO - THE BAND:

1. Do you still keep in contact with Mark or Peter Wishart ?
2. Does the management have a great say in the image and clothes worn by the band. If not, who does decide ?
3. Do you have an extensive B.C. collection at home ? Do you have lots of stuff that isn't available in the shops ?
4. Will we ever hear the delicate tones of Bruces harmonica again ?
5. What happened to the Seer castle stage set ? Is it in your back garden at home or did you put it back where you found it !?
6. Who is 'Beeg Al, Neil' - from the 'Peace In Our Time' credits ?
7. Have you ever read an interview and thought - I never said that !?
8. Who designed the classic Big Country logo ?
9. Stu - how many guitars do you own ?

We won't be giving away major prizes or anything, but we're sure there's a lot of you out there who would like to know the answer to some of the questions on this page....



OH LORDY !!!

● AND FINALLY, mere milliseconds before INWARDS was due to go to press, shock news (measuring size 12 on the Richter Scale - ooooh! that's bad) has reached us that after hearing Stuarts comments in Sounds (19-5-90) where he stated that 'The Teacher' was like 'The Shadows meets the Velvet Underground', new kiddie on the block Pat Ahern has, after long deliberation, SACKED the rest of the band. Unofficial early reports suggest that Hank 'If you aint got that twang then you aint got that thang' Marvin will be occupying Bruces now vacant spot while Lou 'God, I'm happy' Reed will be relieving Stu of his vocal duties.

Luckily though, at such short notice, we managed to collar Pat and get all his answers on the scam. One of our more searching questions to Pat was:-

WHAT THE FUCK'S GOING ON MATEY ? - to which Patty replied:-

"Stewpot's comment in Sounds put something in my head and from then on there was just no turning back. To be honest, they were boring the tits off me. I mean, who wants to play with an anorexic gingy-mingy guitar-slinger and a singer-cum-guitarist who wears STONE ROSES hand-me-downs. Not me matey, I can tell you. I run a tight ship and there's no room aboard for any lilly-livered land-lubbers AAAAAARGH!. And d'you know what? This is the most embarrassing thing...they weren't even Scottish!! Och eye an' a double dose o' whatever you're 'aving."

US: But what of the boy Tony - the nicest man in Rock and the future of World golf and global harmony??

PATSY: Well, after some thought, I've decided to keep little Anthony on. I just couldn't bear to wipe the wee smile from his face. Plus he's an invaluable security prospect. I mean, with moonboots the size of his, any 15-stone nutjob who's hellbent on getting on MY stage and putting his Glaswegian Kisses about the town is in for one hell of a good kicking.

US: But surely that's totally out of character for Tony. He's a real sweetie at heart. He helps little old ladies across the road.



PAT: Bollocks man!! Not before he's helped himself to the contents of their purse. He's a total fruitcase, two drops short of a piss.

US: Erm, er, well...yes. Um, anyway, how come this stunning shake-up in the wake of you replacing Mark an' all that?

PATRICIA: Well originally I was drafted in to help Markypoos out because his kit was getting so bloody huge that he couldn't see all of it let alone hit the damn thing. I was an extra pair of hands and feet so to speak. Kind of the Cannon and Ball double-act of the drumming world eh?! However, the constant pressures of being chairman of the Airfix Modellers Club (U.K. Division) forced Mark to quit.

US: So it wasn't because of boredom with the band and Mark's session work that caused him to leave then ?

PAT: No, no. You didn't believe that did you? What are you, stupid?

US: YES!

PAT: No, anyway, apparently it also gave him the chance to fulfil his other great ambition, to work 'ON THE BUSES' like his hero, DAME REG VARNEY had done on T.V like. Yeah, apparently he does the Slough to Hammersmith route 50 times a day. Lucky bastard! It's a larf innit?

US: Yes, but what of the band and more importantly, the music ?

PATSY: Well now that we've got rid of those two old fossils from the punk ages, the band will concentrate on moving towards a "being and genre" associated more with the quasi-spiritual renaissance of post-modern egotistical standards.

US: You mean you're going to sound like The New Kids On The Block !?!

PATSY: Well...yeah...only with pubes though.

US: Well have you anything else to add then Pat ?

PAT: Oooh! Don't you start missus. Titter ye not! Mocking Francis eh?

US: Aha! An imposter.....rock 'n' roll eh! Phew!!!!□

THE END (But you can turn to the front for the beginning)



REED: HAPPY?



THE 'INWARDS' BLUE PETER APPEAL

Yes I'm afraid we've come to the point in the proceedings where our lives become extremely sad as we ask, nay plead on bended knee for help in many natures with 'INWARDS'. If you feel that uncurable urge to write into us to enlighten us about the time when you lept onto the stage and did a mooner in Bruce's face, then please do ! Or maybe you'd like to tell us about the time you bought a copy of BIG FUN's 7-inch vinyl classic "Blame it on the Boogie" only to find a copy of "Fields of Fire" the 'S.A.W. - stuff it up yer kilt mix' cunningly stuffed inside on returning home.

Ideas, suggestions, artwork, articles, letters, pen pals, crosswords, reviews or just plain abuse - they're all welcome and appreciated. The future operation of INWARDS can only be strengthened by YOUR invaluable input. We don't intend to keep INWARDS under lock and key. It's public domain. It would be great to think that INWARDS is a fanzine written by fans for fans, and not just a manuscript thought up entirely by two boring old farts (That's us - Eds).

So please don't hesitate to get in contact with us, even if it is to find out the time of the last bus from Chiswick Bridge.

There's no need to send a S.A.E. if you want something to be returned to you, however, you must let us know that you want it back or we won't send it. Photocopies of artwork are best and black & white photo's are better than colour ones. Nevertheless, if you only have a colour photo of your attractive 18 year old sister, er, I mean of the time you met B.C., then do send it. Please write your name and address on each piece that you send so as we can guarantee that you get your own work back, not a photo of a complete stranger's 18 year old scantily-clad sister ! We await your replies and hope to see our local postie struggling with the mail sack soon.

STAY ALIVE....

Valerie Singleton
(a.k.a. Andy)

Peter Purves
(a.k.a. Jason)



INWARDS
Andy Maule/Jason Allen



● WE SAVE NO SOULS
Douglas Johnson

● COUNTRY CLUB
Jan Bremner



ISSUE TWO WILL BE OUT IN THE SPRING. WATCH THE PRESS FOR DETAILS.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are not yet available for INWARDS although we do intend to have a subs facility as soon as we know what the response to INWARDS is. Watch this space for further details...

THE EDITORS of INWARDS would like to thank the following people/papers for the use of material; Sounds, Melody Maker, Insight, Music Week, Q, Country Club, N.M.E., Kerrang!, RAW, Fly Magazine, Smash Hits and anyone else that we might have forgotten. Lawsuits are useless - we own nothing.

COWABUNGA YA BIG JESSIES!



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