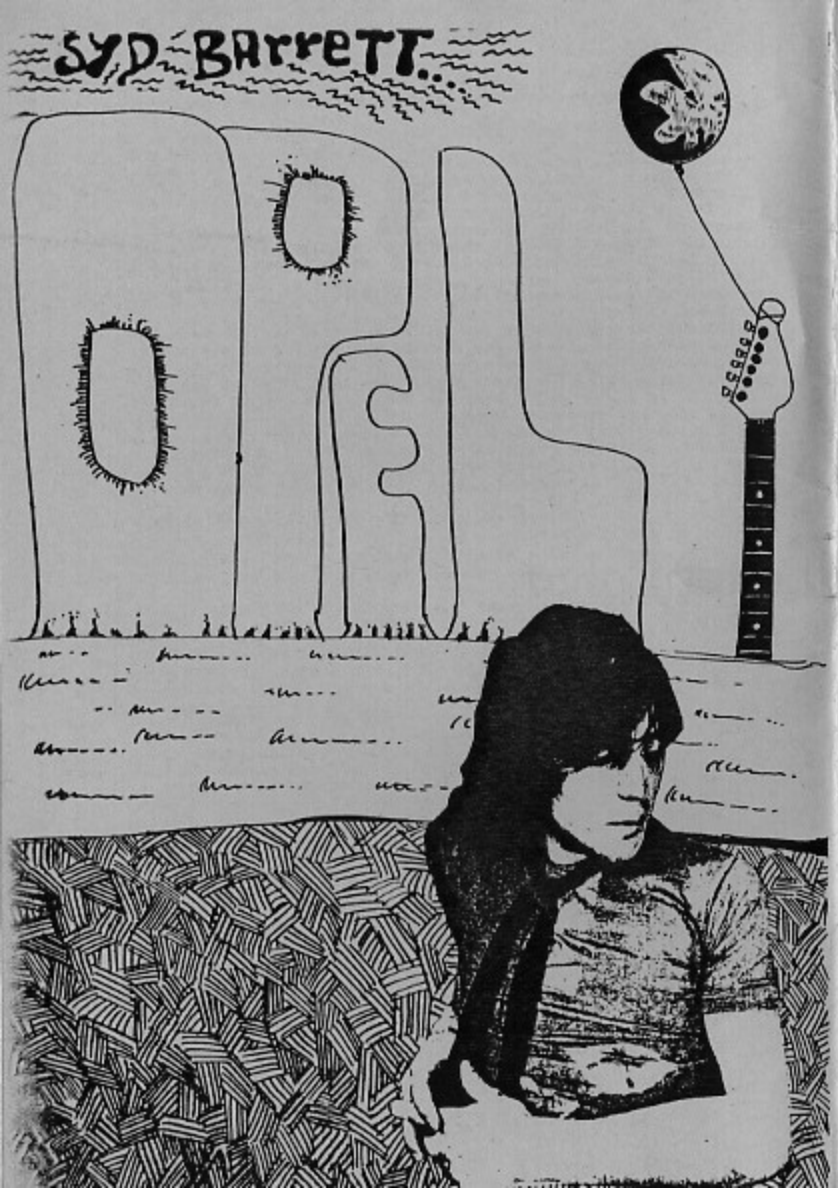
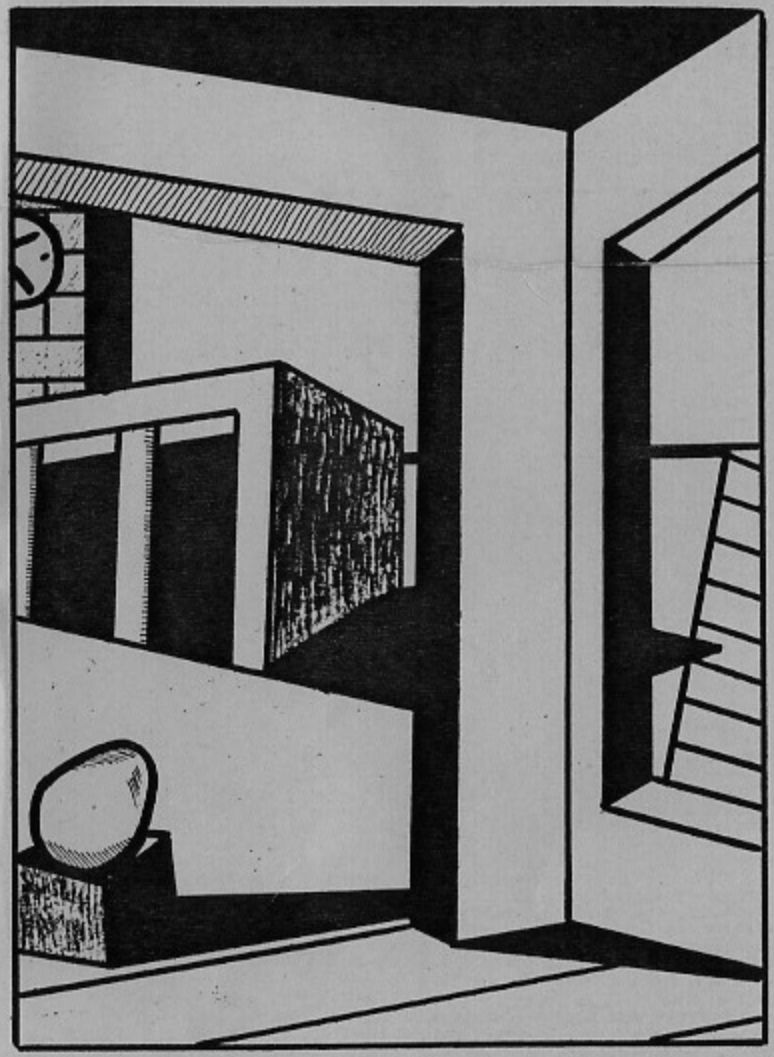




OPEL

OPEL No 10 News & Letter

Rather a stodgy issue this time;but I felt it necessary to get the Zig Zag No25 interview,the CBC one & our very own Peter Jenner Andrew King interview all in the same issue.A more balanced No 11 should be out in about 6 weeks.
Now the other bits:

News from Bam Carouso.Right then,there's good & bad news;it doesn't look like there will be as much material emerging as was previously thought.EMI want Syd to remain on the Harvest label for prestige reasons-thus Bam Carouso wont be allowed to license any material from EMI.However the EMI album is seemingly taking shape & Bam Carouso are helping out with a decent set of sleeve notes.The album however is still not definitely 'on',two cassettes have been compiled by EMI with every outtake suitable for possible release & EMI/Bam Carouso are to have a meeting soon to decide on a track listing.

One of the guys at EMI believes that the material is sub-standard ..or at least he's hesitant..this is certainly not the case with the outtakes that I've heard.EMI got the petition by the way,they haven't acknowledged it but Phil Smee of Bam Carouso says they got it & apparently took them quite by surprise.It is one of the things that is twisting EMI's arm to release this LP.

Because the future of the album is still hanging in the balance I've decided to bring the petition campaign back from the dead. Please if you can get any signatures-and quickly- do so.It could just make the difference in getting this outtakes LP out.If the album is to appear it probably wont be until next spring.

Going back to Phil Smee he also says that the Stars tape didn't turn out to be what it should be.In actual fact it's a tape of the Eddie Guitar Burns gig,Syd joins the band half way through the set & jams through a blues tune,Phil says that the guitar isn't very good & the band aren't really together.Syd sings a little as well but this tape wont see the light of day because it just aint good enough.

Luca Ferrari of Dark Globe fanzine came to London to interview Peter Jenner/Andrew King/Storm/Duggie Fields/Lindsay Korner etc for his forthcoming 'Personal' biography of Syd.He also went to visit Syd & spent 10mins talking to him on the doorstep of his home. In Luca's letter to me he wrote:"It's been a real shock to me because he wasn't very together & his talking was confused.""His hair was so cut..he had a very long bear(beard?-IT) on his face".The encounter seems to have disillusioned Luca somewhat;he is still planning to make his book but says he may now stop Dark Globe.

I am sad that Luca feels this way,but I wonder just how many of you either don't realise that Syd is mentally very ill?The Syd Barrett story is very sad & tragic but someone's got to provide an alternative to the Syd Barrett-Acid Casualty-Madcap-Lunatic image. Syd deserves to be remembered for his music & I know Luca feels the same way,I sincerely hope Luca keeps on producing Dark Globe.

From The Acid Tapes camp,Sherrif Jack's "Wolfpack" has been recorded properly,Eddie Phillips has had to drop out due to commitments with The Creation,The album is scheduled for November release Also on the subject of acid tapes could you please note that the address next to the ad in OPEL 5 is an old address for OPEL & not Acid Tapes...

Andy Mabbett says that in 1972 the NME ran a short series called "Rock Wall Of Fame",in which musicians were asked to name the people they considered the masters of the instruments they themselves played.Syd gave his top three guitarists as 1) Jeff Beck(Yardbirds) 2)Keith Richard(Rolling Stones) & 3) Elvin Bishop(Paul Butterfield Blues Band).

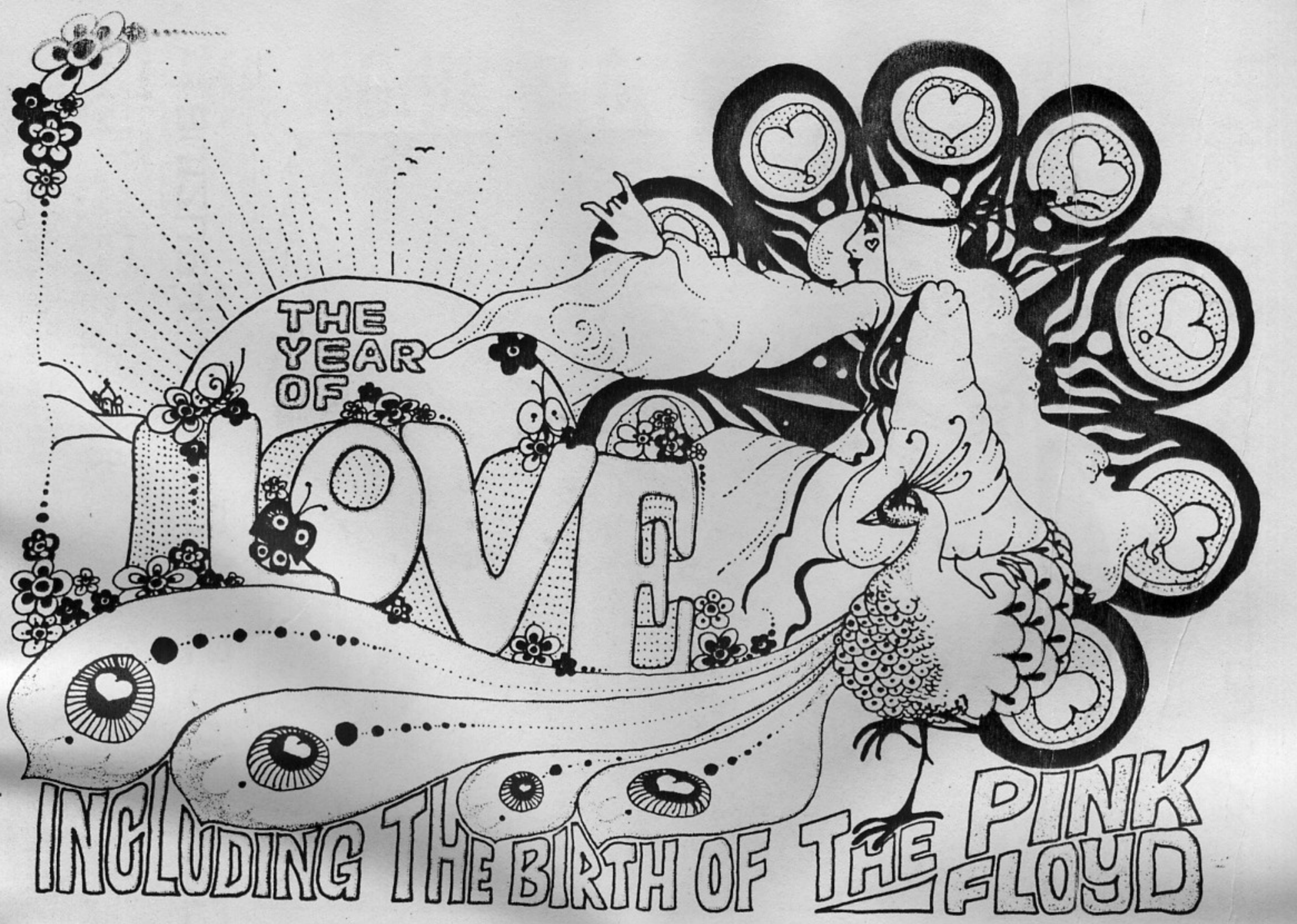
Phew..Subscriptions are still availiable for OPEL & it's Big Brother TAP.The details are:

Opel The Syd Barrett Fanzine

Six Issue Sub	Great Britain	Europe	USA & Canada
OPEL	£2,70	£3.20	£5.00
TAP(Waters Floyd)	£3.00	£3.50	£5.25

Subscriptions should be ordered from Andy Mabbett,67 Cramlington Rd Great Barr,Birmingham,B42 2EE & he'd like cheques Po's or cash in a registered enevelope.

As usual anything else OPEL wise should be sent to me,Ivor the Mystic,23 Parkside Road,Hounslow,Middlesex,TW3 2BD.



INTRODUCTION

We've often featured articles on the San Francisco psychedelic eruption, but we get loads of letters asking us to explain how the "underground movement" started up in Britain - with particular emphasis to the rock aspects. Obviously, you could fill a book (and indeed many people have) if you wanted to explore every nook and cranny, detailing how the feeling grew out of a wide variety of influences - poets, protest, folk music, the Fugs, playwrights, authors, CND, student revolution, Provos, Peace News, marijuana, Lysergic Acid, publishers, bookshops, Kesey & Leary, Kerouac & Ginsberg, Quicksilver & the Dead - and for a much more complete history, I would refer you to certain tomes on the subject (see reference list at the end).

As far as rock is concerned, however, I think we can cram it into a concise 4 page nutshell, providing we don't try to dig too deeply. It'll be enough to be getting on with, anyway.

PREFACE (you can skip this bit if you want to....you won't miss much).

I lay back in the sumptuous luxury of velvet upholstery and gazed across the panoramic skyline from the penthouse suite of the Blackhill Enterprises Mayfair offices as a gorgeous nymphet poured coffee into bone china cups and offered After Eight mints. I casually mentioned the Pink Floyd, and the words seemed to cut through the vapid atmosphere like razor blades. Jenner's face, his clean cut features aglow with interest, paled as he ground his cigar butt into the big diamond studded ashtray resting on the polished mahogany desktop. "The Pink Floyd?" he repeated, as he casually straightened his tie and picked a stray hair off his mohair suit....

That had you all going, didn't it? In actual fact, the way it happened was a little different. I had stumbled up to Blackhill's crumbling Bayswater office to meet Peter Jenner as arranged, but had to wait on the doorstep for almost an hour before Jenner (half of Blackhill Enterprises) and Andrew King (the other half) arrived, as usual, on their tandem. As Andrew began to unload rain-sodden contracts and documents from the panniers, Peter hustled me through the chaotic mountain of strewn papers into "the back room", where he invited me to make myself comfortable on one of the most austerely designed wooden chairs in the history of furniture. He disappeared, leaving me to stare out of the window at the mass of leaking drainpipes clinging to the wall of the tenement block which backed on to the yard, and returned with a cracked Woolworths mug of tepid radiator flushings; "here's some coffee" he grunted, plonking it down on the formica kitchen table which served as his desk. He took a worn tobacco tin from his pocket, selected the half-smoked remains of a Park Drive tipped, and peered at me through his cracked national health spectacles. "Now then" he wheezed with considerable hostlity, "....what is it you want? Make it snappy....I'm a busy man".

"It's the Pink Floyd" I stammered, "I want to know how the Underground started ....I was told that no-one in England knew as much about it as you do; that you're the acknowledged authority on the subject".

His chest swelled with pride below the holey vest which hung on his bony frame, as his disposition changed to one of great charm. "They say that, do they? Well, er, yes, of course I'd be delighted to tell you all about it...but it's a long story".

"That's ok" I replied, "just give me all the facts as well as you can remember, and I'll go back home to distort and rehash your words into a vaguely coherent article".

THE LIST OF PLAYERS

Mr Underground..... John Hopkins
An underground journalist.....Miles
A shady LSE drop-out.....Peter Jenner
A pirate disc jockey.....John Peel
A psychedelic music ensemble.....
the Pink Floyd
An unemployed person.....Andrew King
A finger in various pies.....Joe Boyd
An East End pixie.....Marc Bolan
All other parts played by Mick Farren.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE PINK FLOYD

If you can cast your mind back to the dying days of 1965 (which most underground stalwarts find impossible because their drug-addled memories can't remember further back than last week), you'll recall that the chartbound sounds were "We can work it out", "Eve of Destruction", "Get off my cloud" and "Turn Turn Turn". Around that time too, Smithy had just declared UDI in Rhodesia, President Johnson was showing his gall bladder operation scar to the waiting world, the Post Office tower had recently been opened, and the Government had just abolished the death penalty.

Right, now that we've established some sort of departure point we can begin our narrative.

Peter Jenner had been set for a very distinguished carrer in the field of education; an assistant lecturer in the Dept of Social Administration at the London School of Economics.....but he was bored with that. He was also a passionate avant garde jazz freak....but he was bored with that too; "most of it was becoming so unpleasant on the ear that I just couldn't get off on it....John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman were the last two to really interest me". His tastes changed towards R&B (of the Bo Diddley type) where they remained for some time...approximately up until this end-of-65 period.

Apart from music, his head was buzzing with ambitious notions of founding a free school and a record label, on which to record his freaky-jazz musician mates whose virtuosity offended the ears of all civilised record company executives. His partner in crime in cooking up these wild schemes was a bloke called John Hopkins (later to be known as Hoppy), who he had known for years. Now, Elektra Records had just set up an English office under the astute auspices of Joe Boyd, who Hoppy got to know, and a deal was worked out whereby Elektra would assist them in matters of finance, pressing and distribution. Subsequently, an album by AMM was released (on the Elektra label rather than their bizarre DNA label, the logo for which, Mike McInhery, later a well known poster artist, had taken great pains to design), featuring Keith Rowe, Cornelius Cardew and various other musicians in the "avant garde/classical/weirdo scene....and it was a very very good, far out record".

It sold about a thousand copies, but nevertheless turned out to be the first and last album they made. However, not only did it re-open the madcap Jenner's head to electronic music, but it also set his economics oriented mind to work on the facts, figures and percentages of the record industry. He did his sums and came to the momentous conclusion that the only way to come out of things with a profit was to get hold of a smash hit - and even a person of his musical illiteracy (he could hardly differentiate between the Dave Clark Five and the London Symphony Orchestra) knew that freaky sax-blowing weirdies were not about to set the singles chart on fire. The problem caused a great deal of anxiety and he was on the point of consulting a psychiatrist, when it happened.

At 3am one morning, it came to him in a blinding flash. He threw the blankets from the crude framework of his camp-bed and rushed downstairs to make a drink. He could hardly control his excitement as his trembling hands cupped the steaming Bovril....."a pop group", he finally ejaculated (not a pretty sight).

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The fact had been staring him in the face for several months, but it was not until early 1966 that he recognised it.... the ideal vehicle to strap his energies to. The previous summer, one of his closest friends had been Eric Clapton, but Jenner at that time was totally disinterested in English pop music; compared with jazz and bona-fide American Blues, it was just a load of trite, ephemeral rubbish - and, to a degree, I suppose his bigotted opinion was just about right....there was very little integrity in pop.

Clapton (though this has nothing to do with our story) had suddenly decided to leave John Mayall's Bluesbreakers (in August 66, though he rejoined 3 months later) and had formed a new band which he was going to take to Europe to get it together in a Greek country cottage, man; there was Jake Milton on drums (now in Quintessence), Ben Palmer on piano (later Cream's roadie), a sax player called Bernie, a bass player who subsequently became leader of the Communist party in Birmingham, and John Bailey (who was in McGuinness Flint for a while). They all went off from Jenner's flat in a big American car.

Anyway, to revert to the main body of the narrative, Jenner began to look for a tasteful pop group. No, that's a lie.... he wasn't that enthusiastic. He still had his secure job at LSE and he merely decided to wait until the right group presented itself to him.

His first probings were abortive - and little wonder. Hoppy had got hold of a tape of one of the Velvet Underground's first gigs in New York and it was concluded that if the Velvets played their cards right, they could enjoy the patronage of Messrs Jenner and Hopkins. Such naivety! (this story is true, by the way). They phoned New York and spoke to John Cale, who tactfully pointed out that a Mr Warhol was already handling their affairs.

Now inevitably the sequence of events is going to get a bit blurred and jumbled if we don't stick to the music, but let me just mention a few other things. In these early months of 1966, the thoughts of various poets, painters, writers, musicians, etc, were all funnelling in the same direction.....the seeds of the Underground were sown and everybody was waiting for the harvest, so to speak. The Free School idea had taken root and was being set up in Notting Hill, and the All Saints Hall was becoming the central meeting place during this fermentation period. To finance the school, which was run on donations, it was decided to put on a few concerts, and these developed into the odd gig at the Marquee in Wardour Street.

Jenner:"It was in June, I remember, because I was in the middle of the cruci-fyingly boring chore of marking examination papers; I always used to leave it until the last minute so that I'd be impelled to rush through them rather than go through the laborious agonies of wondering if a paper merited an A or a B+. Anyway, I decided to pack it in for the evening and go along to this mad gig at the Marquee, which was being run by people like Steve Stollman (who's brother had started the ESP label in New York) and Hoppy. Well, I arrived around 10.30 and there on the stage was this strange band, who were playing a mixture of R&B and electronic noises....and I was really intrigued be-

cause in between the routine stuff like 'Louie Louie' and 'Roadrunner', they were playing these very weird breaks; so weird that I couldn't even work out which instrument the sound was coming from. It was all very bizarre and just what I was looking for - a far out, electronic, freaky, pop group.....and there, across the bass amp, was their name:"The Pink Floyd Sound".

HOW TO MAKE A MOUNTAIN OUT OF A BLACKHILL

"I didn't know anything about pop music" recalls Jenner. "I just can't tell you how little I knew.....I mean, I hardly knew about the Beatles even, and I didn't know anything about the Stones - and it was only at that time that I started trying to become aware of what was happening in pop music. Anyway, after thinking about it, I decided I'd like to record these Floyd geezers, and I finally tracked down Roger and Nicky who were living in an obscure flat in Highgate. It was the typical student scene - they'd bought a £20 J2 van and some gear with their grant money but were on the point of splitting the band because 1/ they weren't getting any gigs, 2/ they were going off on their summer holidays, and 3/ it was interfering with their studies; Roger and Nick were training to become architects, Rick was going to a music school and Syd was at art school and more interested in painting than music".

Peter merely introduced himself, said hello, and said he'd be interested in talking to them when they re-convened after their holidays, and it was only at this stage that he discovered what an amateur set-up the Pink Floyd was; no contracts, no agency or management, no gigs, and very little gear, most of which was either extremely decrepit or else encased in home made cabinets - but still, the seeds were there.

Enter Andrew King, a lifelong friend of Jenner's, who had resigned from his position as an educational cyberneticist (I don't know what one of them is either); he too had become bored and found it much more gratifying to hang out on street corners. He entered into loose partnership with Jenner and jointly, as Blackhill Enterprises, they took on the management of the Floyd, which was more than they'd planned to do because the original idea was merely to find a group for their label idea....but now they determined to go the whole hog and make the Pink Floyd into a top band.

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Carnival time arrived at the Free School and part of the festivities included a rock concert at the All Saints Hall - and what better choice for the group than.... the Pink Floyd. As well as that, some American friends of Hoppy's came along and projected coloured slides on the group as they played - not moving whirlpools of colour; just static slides, but it was the beginning of the "mixed media" idea, and it started Jenner thinking. Snippets of information about the San Francisco scene had been filtering over the ocean; the West Coast psychedelic scene was much more together and advanced than its Notting Hill counterpart, so why not try to find out about the sophistications such as acid, light shows, peace and love, flowers and all the rest of the paraphernalia and implement some of them here?

The light show idea really appealed, but as no-one could tell them about the refinements, they had to improvise. Peter and Andrew, a right pair of mechanical duffers, took instruction on the way to hold a hand saw and constructed a very primitive, Heath Robinson device consisting of domestic spotlights from British Home Stores, operated by domestic light switches, shining through coloured perspex pinned to this crude framework they'd nailed up out of lumps of wood. (This remarkable triumph of carpentry skill is now an exhibit in the sculpture hall of the National Museum of Early Psychedelic Art in Chicago).

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The Floyd needed help. They needed encouragement, equipment, rehearsal, roadies, work, recording contracts, direction and all the rest of it, and their new managers didn't have the first idea about the roles and attitudes of the established managers, but they waded in at the deep end. Now, there's an old adage which says:"fools rush in, and get the best seats" - and that, by a strange quirk of good fortune, is exactly what happened.....over the next few months the Floyd seemed to waltz into the charts, onto the television and into clubs and theatres without any problems at all.

Here's an example of their luck: Peter was still at work, so Andrew did most of the day to day management and also, from the remnants of an inheritance, paid for a thousand quids worth of gear....which was promptly stolen. So they had to get another load of new gear, this time on hire purchase.

By this time, things were happening fast. In October 1966, the International Times (later abbreviated to IT) was launched and the Roundhouse was taken over for a celebration party, where 2000 odd people (most of them were odd) were given free sugar cubes and assailed with the raw sounds of the evolving Underground's two top groups, The Pink Floyd and the Soft Machine, both of who's reputations had spread via regular gigs at the All Saints Hall. All the different factions of the underground were represented and it was as if the net had suddenly tightened round all the loose ends, bringing them together, literally under one roof.

"At that time, the Roundhouse hadn't ever been used as an entertainment venue and it was just FILTHY. On top of that, there was virtually no electricity other than an ordinary domestic supply and wires dangled here and there.....so our puny light show looked magnificent in all the darkness".

Celebrities abounded; Antonioni was there, Paul McCartney was there - to name but two, and it was "an incredibly fashionable affair....probably the most epochal party you could ever see, and the bands got noticed, particularly the Floyd who blew up the power during their set and consequently ended the evening's entertainment. That in itself, to be cut off in the middle of 'Interstellar Overdrive' was a bummer, but at the same time it was incredibly dramatic".

The Floyd had, by this time, dropped most of their R&B repertoire in favour of the more electronic/freaky stuff and I, in my blissful ignorance, had assumed that this was a result of acid experimentation and the like, but this was not so. It was done at Jenner's insistence; he directed them off the 'Louie Louie' trip towards the 'Saucerful of secrets' style, and it turned out to be the perfect managerial move - although it was done largely out of ignorance .....Jenner merely thought the electronic stuff sounded better than the American imitations which he'd never really been keen on. Also, thinking that there was nothing difficult in composing new numbers, he impressed on them that they should write more original material of a "weird" nature but, at the same time, bearing the requirements of the singles market in mind. So, their style evolved to the satisfaction of their managers, who thought it was good but had no idea how radically different it was from anything else that was happening in pop music.

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IT rapidly became the official organ of the Underground (supplemented by Oz which started up a couple of months later) and then, in December 66, Hoppy and his associates opened UFO, the first regular Underground club (and the best). Here's a brief description of what went on, borrowed from IT/29 and written by Miles, who's interviews and reviews had become so influential:

> December 23rd saw 'Night Tripper' at Tottenham Court Road, advertised by a poster and a display ad in IT/5. There was no indication as to who would be there performing, the audience attended because they 'knew' who would be there and 'knew' what was happening. The name-change to UFO occurred the next week and the first UFO advertised the Pink Floyd, Fanta and Ood, the Giant Sun Trolly and Dave Tomlin improvising to government propaganda. UFO was created by and for the original 'underground', posters from messrs. English & Waymouth and an IT stall by the cloakrooms. The first UFO also had a Marilyn Monroe movie, Karate and light-shows. It was a club in the sense that most people knew each other, met there to do their business, arrange their week's appointments, dinners and lunches and hatch out issues of IT, plans for Arts Lab, SOMA, and various schemes for turning the Thames yellow and removing all the fences in Notting Hill. The activity and energy was thicker than the incense....

Miles also ran Indica Bookshop in Southampton Row, a veritable goldmine of goodies; a whole new world to be discovered by emerging hippies (like me).....full of books, underground papers like the San Francisco Oracle and the East Village Other, magazines, posters, marvel comics. Phew! And the International Times was born out of and published from their basement, which for a while was the nerve centre of the Underground.

By the beginning of 1967, UFO was already bulging to the walls with freaks - and the Pink Floyd, their music becoming increasingly stranger by pop music standards, were the big musical draw. Jenner: "At the first two or three UFOs, the Floyd were on 60% of the gross to provide music and lights, and my first managerial blunder was allowing that to be altered so that we got straight bread instead of a percentage, because the place instantly became very fashionable - I've never seen anything like it, before or since. And the band had become even more fashionable; without any records or any exposure outside of a couple of places in London, we got a centre page spread in Melody Maker".

If you know anything about the workings of the pop music industry, you'll know that any manager or publicist would sell his boyfriend to get a centrespread in MM, but Jenner wasn't at all surprised....he assumed that this was the normal routine thing to happen to any band. But the Floyd were becoming red hot; the word was spreading like a forest fire - all the record companies were interested and suited executives were lured into the addict infested filth of UFO to see the band in action. Eventually they signed with EMI who offered them the best deal, including an advance of £5000, which was just unbelievably astronomical in those days; more like a telephone number than a sum of money - and, surprisingly, EMI really got behind them and did an incomparable promotion job.

1967....WHAT A YEAR!

Back to the scene in general. The media was latching on to the more sensational aspects of hippieism/flower-power/beautiful people, and what was going down in San Francisco was now on everybody's lips. There were more gatherings here too; on January 29th, IT sponsored an Uncommon Market spontaneous happening thing at the Roundhouse and a little later came THE ULTIMATE in drawing together the Underground.... the 14 Hour Technicolour Dream, held at Alexandra Palace. The Uncommon Market's main attraction was a 56 gallon jelly (if you rolled around naked in jelly, you were considered very far out and grobvy and gained great esteem and fame), but the Dream, which took place during the night of April 29th and was originally to be a benefit for IT which had been busted for obscenity the previous month, not only attracted 5000 longhairs, but featured almost every underground group in England.

I remember it well; the whole thing just burned into my memory for ever.... it hit you as soon as you walked into the place - lights and films all over the walls and blitzing volume from 2 stages with bands playing simultaneously! On one stage you had the completely unknown Arthur Brown, this crazy whirling painted lunatic accompanied by a hunched up speeding organist and a thrashing drummer, and on the other you had the Soft Machine, with Daevid Allen wearing a miner's helmet and staring like a weird zombie and Kevin Ayers wearing rouge on his cheeks and a black cowboy hat surmounted by giant model glider wings. I just couldn't believe it; outside, the straights of Wood Green were watching their tellies and sipping their tea, and inside this huge time machine were 5000 stoned, tripping, mad, friendly, festive hippies.....talk about two different worlds!

At the time, one of the things that impressed me most was the lack of any sort of physical or mental barrier between performers and audience; when a band finished its set, the members got off the stage and wandered into the crowd to sit on the floor. It was all so very unlike the usual pop gig where a group arrived on stage via a back passage, played and went off by the same route - never mixing with the inferior rabble.

What else did I see? The Purple Gang, with mandolins, washboards and amplification troubles, bashing out their 'Granny Takes A Trip' - one of the early hippie classics, Dick Gregory and Pete Townshend and Yoko Ono were there, Savoy Brown, the Social Deviants with Mick Farren singing Chuck Berry standards against a monstrous cacophony of discordant rock, and Denny Laine was there too - but, though he had his guitar and Viv Prince with him, he didn't play (which was sad, because 1967 was his supreme year of creativity).

Hoppy was there, never without a smile and Suzie Creemcheese, and they were giving out free bananas (because it was around the time of the US underground great banana hoax; they conned everyone into believing that you could get high by scraping the pith from the inside skin, baking it and smoking it).

As dawn started to shine a shimmering eerie light at the windows, the Pink Floyd came on: "it was a perfect setting" says Jenner. "Everyone had been waiting for them and everybody was on acid; that event was the peak of acid use in England..... everybody was on it - the bands, the organisers, the audience - and I certainly was". Of course, the Floyd blew every body's mind.

But this was a special occasion; the Floyd, though "the psychedelic band", were not really into psychedelics at all - they were much more booze oriented.....and this was generally the case with the early underground bands; it was the pop groups of the time, the teenybop raves like the Small Faces, who were doing the drugs.

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Around this time, the pirate radio stations, whose lifespan was already being limited to months by the Marine Offences Act which was being rushed through the Commons, were at their most influential in shaping the pop charts: "we start 'em, others chart 'em". Radio London, by far and away the best, refused to play 'Arnold Layne', the Floyd's first single, because it was about a transvestite, but Radio Caroline, once the payola had been handed over, got behind it and supplemented EMI's big promotional campaign. Before long, it had got to number 23 in the national chart, which, of course, was no surprise to Peter Jenner who thought it was only natural for a single to go into the charts, but due possibly to the 'dirty song' ban, it never quite reached the top twenty and thus the essential Top of the Pops boost eluded them.

Their second single, they were sure, would be even more successful, but there were doubts. Joe Boyd, who had left his Elektra job to become involved in a variety of enterprises including record production, running UFO and group management, had produced and made an excellent job of 'Arnold Layne', but EMI decided to rub him out in favour of Norman ('Hurricane') Smith, who had just been promoted from engineer to staff producer. It was a very unpopular move; everybody, especially the fuming Joe Boyd, was choked off and Norman knew it, but his experience with the Beatles, his exacting demands, his ideas and ambitions, turned up trumps and it turned out to be a very productive combination.

The song they selected was 'See Emily Play', which Syd had written (as 'Games for May') specially for a concert which our intrepid managers mounted at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. It was a staggeringly successful event - a solo performance, which was totally unheard of, because the big groups of the time would never do more than a 30 minute set - "and we got this guy from EMI to erect speakers at the back of the hall to, which was like the predecessor of the Azimuth Co-ordinator. We had an incredible light show by then as well, and the concert, which was the first pop show ever held in the hall, was just unbelievable. At one stage, one of the roadies came on dressed in Admiral's gear and tossed armfuls of daffodils up in the air....it was just amazing, and every body went beserk". Everyone except the owners of the hall, who went absolutely bananas because the bubbles which had filled the place, had left marks all over their posh leather chairs, and some of the flowers which had been handed out to the audience, had been trodden into the carpets.

Anyway, everybody was knocked out with 'Emily', especially Radio London, who felt that they were missing out on the flower power scene, and they went crazy; the first week out, it was number one in the Big L Top 40, a chart which bore no relation to anything other than the fevered imagination of the programme director.

In actual fact, far from "missing out on the hippie scene", Radio London was a distinct pioneer in that area, with John Peel's 'Perfumed Garden', transmitted two weeks out of every three (as far as I remember) between midnight and two am. Prior to getting this programme, Peel's "Climber of the week" was always worth hearing (among those that stick in my mind are 'Tiny Goddess' by Nirvana and 'Somebody to love' by the Airplane), but once he got this midnight thing going, it was

SYD BARRETT
Summer 67

compulsive listening. It was for me anyway; I used to lie there listening to the Doors, the Incredibles, Donovan and all the others, and arrive at work the next day with great bags under my eyes - and he used to get hold of imports and play unheard of grist like Catain Beefheart & his Magic Band and Country Joe & the Fish. It was an amazing period - one I wouldn't have missed for the world.

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By the time June rolled around, the unity of the Underground was already disintegrating, with the different sections criticising the ethics of each other, and the bread minded entrepreneurs had begun to step in and promote flower power festivals and happenings on a very obviously commercial basis. There were no so many 'Underground bands' that you couldn't move for them, but the thing that caused most discomfort to the hard core of the old school was the arrest and sentencing of Hoppy for dope posession; he got nine months.

Though many avant garde musicians (not to mention people in other spheres) had been smoking marijuana for years, the public image of drugs was the wicked black man prosecuted for selling reefers to unsuspecting teenagers. But all of a sudden, all the mods were gulping down handfuls of pills, and the longhairs were either getting stoned or else trying out this incredible new acid stuff which had newly arrived from the laboratories of America, where it was still legal until late 1966. The sunday papers feared for the future of the nation's youth, the police got pressured into paranoia and they went beserk with their arrests; Jagger, Richard, Lennon, Georgie Fame, Joe Cocker, were all busted for posession, but the first really big purge came in the early hours of March 3rd 1968, when 150 police suddenly plunged into the depths of Middle Earth, which had opened as a rival to UFO in early 67. They took 5 hours to search 750 people and made only eleven arrests, though one heard grapevine reports of the vast tonnage of hash that was swept up from the floor afterwards.

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Back to the Floyd, who were now just about world famous due to a combination of luck, talent and a miraculous series of events. "If we had started out with just any old banger group, we'd have been finished within a year, because we had so little idea of what we were doing, but fortunately, the Floyd had all this talent. Andrew and I just played everything by ear; goodness only knows what the established record-biz people must've thought about us....I suppose that when we left their offices they just looked at each other and collapsed in disbelief at our naivety".

They cut their first album in studio 3 at EMI whilst the Beatles were constructing 'Sgt Pepper' next door in studio 2, and that sold well too - so everything was going along smoothly - but at the London School of Economics, where Peter still taught, he was one of the junior staff in favour of the student revolution which was beginning to erupt and he eventually got a sharp reprimand; either he curbed the nature of his extra-curricular activities or else he could tender his resignation. So he compromised, and took a year's leave of absence.....which has so far extended itself to 5 years.

It was around this time that the pressures of the world started exerting themselves on Syd Barrett, who was really the genius of the group; he was writing, arranging, creating the sounds, singing, but he was, as everybody who ever followed the Floyd knows, cracking up a little. Peter accepts some of the responsibility for what was happening; he was always demanding greater effort, more productivity, more songs for future singles and so forth, but the gig scene was probably more to blame. In the London long hair haunts, everything was fine - perfect vibes between audience and group - but once they got out into the world they found that their music had hardly been accepted; gigs were disastrous. Kids who turned up purely to hear a "top twenty group" could not come to terms with feedback and the like - so they booed and threw pennies.... Jenner's face contorts in agony as he recalls the general miseries of touring in that summer of 67.

Finding a suitable chartbuster to follow 'Emily' proved impossible; loads of material (much of it amazing classics like 'Scream your last scream old woman with a basket' and 'Vegetable Man' which have yet to be released) was recorded, but no obvious single surfaced to keep them buoyant, and a tour interrupted the proceedings. It was an epic theatre package tour of the type we'll never see again - seven groups in one show.....and they did two shows a night! A roadie's nightmare! Jimi Hendrix had 40 minutes, the Move had 30, the Floyd had 17, Amen Corner 15, The Nice 12, and so on, and it was all bound together by compere Pete Drummond, who's main success lay in alienating the fans.

That tour did wonders in popularising them, but a subsequent tour of America was decidedly very strange; they'd arrive at a gig and someone backstage would invariably induce them to sample the latest line in synthetic drugs and some extraordinary music would ensue. One of the aims of the early Floyd was to achieve the San Fran/psychedelic stance, which they thought they were doing quite well, but it transpired that their music was far removed from anything the Americans had ever seen before. With few examples of the West Coast sound to take their lead from, they had just guessed and assumed what the more progressive groups might be trying, and in doing so had evolved a style entirely their own.

THE END OF AN ERA (AND THE START OF ANOTHER

Within a year of the first stirrings of love, peace and brotherhood, the Underground had passed through its period of togetherness.

UFO, under the control of Joe Boyd, had closed down, and Hoppy, just out of prison, was now much quieter and there was no-one to assume his pivotal role as coordinator of underground activities. Jenner: "I think it was a tragedy for the hip community when Hoppy was put in jail and I don't think it ever recovered, because it was his energy which fired so many schemes....he held everything together and helped to maintain a unity".

Everyone withdrew into his own camp rather than think about the underground as a whole.....a very harrowing bandwagon period during which hypocracy was around on a very big scale.

Meanwhile, the Floyd was falling apart too; the pop press were coming out with rapturous accounts of how Syd would do a whole number strumming just one chord, but the other three weren't so much amused as troubled, and they decided to make a few changes because they could never be sure if Syd was suddenly going to change the rhythm or structure of a piece - and things stretched just a little too far.....

Syd stayed with Blackhill, who had plans for a solo career, and the Floyd recruited Dave Gilmour and went off to a new management in March 1968. The end of an amazing, but very weird era.

"We were always convinced that they were going to be as big as the Beatles - we were sure of that - but the way we ran things was so hap hazard. For instance, at one time we had the 4 Floyd, Andrew and me, June Child (who worked in the office and later became Mrs Bolan), 2 roadies and 2 lights people - they were all on salary, and we didn't keep any sort of control over expenditure....ludicrous amounts were spent on ridiculous things, and the money scene got very unstable as a result of no hit record and no gigs, a situation which had arisen because of the reputation they'd gained for being unreliable."

"Basically, the Floyd left us because they thought we'd have no confidence in them without Syd, which was true, even though it was a mistake for us to think like that. We just couldn't conceive how they would be able to make it without Syd, who put all the creativity into the group".

So off they went, leaving the financial position approximately as it had been 18 months earlier.....everybody was broke. Jenner: "If I'd known then, what I know now, things would've been very different .....the Floyd would have made a lot of money much sooner than they did, and I'd be a very rich man".

By this time, however, Blackhill had just taken on the management of an unrecorded duo who had no gigs and survived mainly because of John Peel's interest and help....they were called Tyrranosaurus Rex, but that's another story altogether.

Pete

References:
For a fuller picture, read 'Play Power' by Richard Neville and 'Bomb, Culture' by Jeff Nuttall. Also see Glen Sweeney in Zigzag 4 and Mick Farren in Zigzag 5. Old copies of IT and Oz are interesting, and a snoop around Compendium Books in Camden Town is always worthwhile.

ZIG ZAG 1973

Excerpt from A Continuous Performance

Intro: Well, what do you say? Getting to meet Andrew King and Peter Jenner is not exactly an everyday occurrence - at least not in the lives of Andy Mabbett & Ivor Trueman. We asked them a lot of questions & talked a lot. The interview took place at Peters house on 5/7/85 and though it was planned to interview both Andrew & Peter together this did not prove possible.

But before we get submerged into all that we'd like to say thanks to Sumi & Peter & Andrew for their co-operation. Also just remember that it is nearly 20 years ago and that's a long time to dig through the memory banks, plus as Peter says it is more difficult to see things from a historical perspective.. anyway lets begin.

Andrew King-- AK
Peter Jenner-- PJ
Andy Mabbett-- AM
Ivor Trueman-- IT

AM. Before you started with the Floyd what were you doing then in the music world?
AK: I wasn't doing anything.
AM: The Floyd were your first venture?
AK: yeh
IT: I read that you were an educational cybernetiscist.
AK: yeh, whatever that means. That was just something I used to have so when policemen asked me what my job was it really sort of puzzled them...
AM: We've been arguing what that means..
AK: Well, if you really want to know, I worked for British Airways training & education department basically, I worked for a weird specialist industrial training firm & I was contracted to work for British Airways; or what was then B.E.A.
IT: Did you know Peter Jenner at the time?
AK: Yes. Peter, I'd known since I was ten or eleven. We were at school together from the age of eight I suppose, but we didn't really know each other until we were 10 or 11. And I lived with his family for a short time, when I was about 12, so we were more like brothers really. And we went to university at the same time, both left university at the same time; he then had a job in Cambridge for a bit & then at the LSE in London. I had a job in London, we were both living in London & we hung around together a lot.

I was bored, very bored with my job. Peter had decided that he was not going to make it as an academic, or didn't want to make it as an academic, so we both thought it would be a remarkable combination of trendiness & wealth to manage rock groups.

Initially the idea was that I was going to manage them & Peter with Hoppy, John Hopkins, was going to run a record company to which the Floyd were going to make records; and also marginally involved in all this was Joe Boyd, who had some attachment to Elektra records - which was a very different kettle of fish to 'Elektra' records today. Then they were just an eccentic American called Jac Holzman who'd recorded Love for instance, and was beginning to market those records in England & had a small office; Joe Boyd did a few things for him, & Joe Boyd was a friend of Hoppy so...

IT: Do you keep in touch with those people, Joe Boyd, John Hopkins?
AK: John Hopkins I haven't seen for a long time, I haven't seen Hoppy in at least five years.
IT: Do you know what he's doing now?
AK: Peter might know more than me, but last time I heard he was involved in community video; that sort of thing, what you might call radical liberation community video.
IT: So he's still doing the same kind of thing that he was with International Times then really.

AK: Well,he was involved with I.T. yeh;he pretty well disappeared, Hoppy really,had his back broken by the system really.He got put away for two years on a drug offence & he was not the same bloke afterwards;they did crack him,I would have said.

AM: 'cos there's an unreleased Syd Barrett track called Birdy Hop that's supposed to have been written about Hoppy.

IT: Do you remember any of the early Floyd recoding sessions?

AK: Yeh.The first time I ever went into a studio was with this group called AMM who were recoding a record for Elektra & that was done at Sound Techniques,and that was the first time I'd seen multitrack recording.Sound Techniques was about the first 8 track studio in London,at that time Abbey Road was only 4 track.

IT: Is that why you recorded Arnold Layne there?

AK: Arnold Layne was done at Sound Techniques yeh,AMM were sort of an early influence on Syd in fact,they were playing electric guitars with steel rulers & things & they were very much into random noise of all sorts.

IT: Why didn't you follow them up more?

AK: I mean we were going to be show biz moguls;although AMM were very interesting they,ummm had their own scene;Cornelius Cardew who was their leader really was a respected avant garde composer...

IT: But you needed something more mainstream to finance recordings.

AK: I can't remember how we financed the recordings

IT: That you actually went to the Pink Floyd,because you thought that they were more commercial.??

AK: No.we didn't actually think in those terms,we thought it,I think we weren't altuistic particularly,but we weren't sort of thinking 'this is going to be a quick buck'.In retrospect I can sort of see that,obviously,the thing that is attractive about the pop business is that it's trendy & you can make a lot of money all at the same time-particularly in those days;it was a lot trendier then than it is now.You tell someone you're in the music business now & they probably think oh y'know it's probably more exciting to be an accountant.But in those days it was pretty unheard of stuff.

AM: Talking of money-if you'd stayed with the Floyd when Syd left, rather than following Syd,you'd have made a lot more money.Do you regret that?

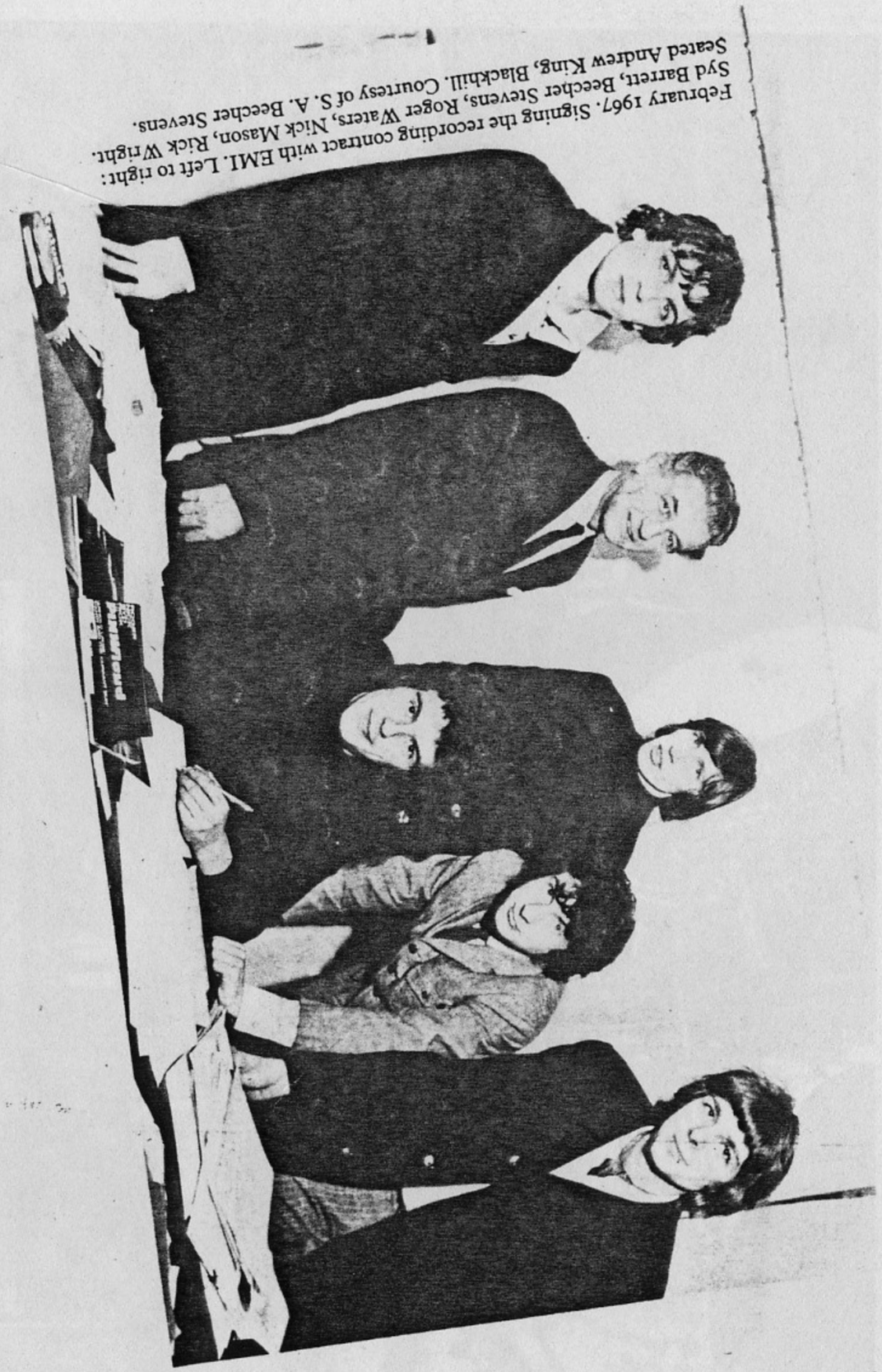
AK: If it would have been the case that we would have made a lot of money then obviously everyone would like to make lots of money, but everything would have been different anyway...and it wasn't really a realistic option so....

IT: It must have been rather confusing at the time.

AK: Oh,it was totally confusing,terminally confusing to watch this process of disintegration at all levels.

AM: It must have been pretty frightening for the group too I should think.Can you remember them ever playing as a five piece?

AK: Yes,I remember going to a gig in Birmingham which Tony Palmer came to.The big thing was Tony Palmer was going to come to this gig and he was going to make this film or whatever,some...I dunno it was going to lead into something or other and that was a five piece gig & I can remember the support band.I remember there was a terrible sort of pseudo soul band,they were probably a bit like Style Council are now;and they had this lead singer who kept saying 'Sock it to me,sock it to me sock it to me' & no-one was taking any notice and he said 'Is nobody going to sock it to me' & nobody was,I can remember that very clearly...That was the one five piece gig that I can remember.I don't know if there were others,I think there may have been...This was Birmingham Poly,or Birmingham Uni or Birmingham somewhere;it was a college gig in Birmingham.But people weren't really talking to Syd then so it was really a four piece & Syd;all very random.-



February 1967. Signing the recording contract with EMI. Left to right: Syd Barrett, Beecher Stevens, Roger Waters, Nick Mason, Rick Wright. Seated Andrew King, Blackhill. Courtesy of S. A. Beecher Stevens.

Ganz frisch dem Untergrund entsprungen: Pink Floyd 1967

SKR

Mike Chavez

Top & Left. Pics from
Edoardo Bertoletti

Letter Contd

Nineteen is a brilliant magazine, like Bucketfull of Brains except it's in French. Write to Nineteen BP 33 31012 Toulouse Cedex France. Costs 8F per issue.

Southern Lifestyle is a sort of newspaper thing & very strange stuff too..reminds me of the early 70's underground mags, Costs 50c plus $1.12 postage. From PO Box 10932, Rayleigh, NC 27605, USA.

Revenge No2('Barretts Revenge') is a fanzine with a big section on Syd. Also has Specimen interview, Sid Presley Experience interview just before they split, Ejit Power, The Prisoners interview(hip hip) & The Volcanoes(hooray). Send 20p to Revenge 237 Wendover Rd, Aylesbury Bucks HP21 7BB..don't forget the A4 SAE either.

Peter Huntbach reports that Cpt Sensible when asked about the Barrett influence in his work replied that he wanted to form a band with Hitchcock & Cope & call it 'The Syd Barrett Review'

There is a new Bootleg out called 'With Without' which includes tracks with Syd & without. The Syd lineup of Pink Floyd do Stoned Again/One In A Million/Reaction In G from the Copenhagen/Rotterdam tapes. On the rear sleeve there is a dedication to Dark Globe, which is a bit of a give away as to who produced it. Rumour has it that the same guy is next going to bootleg the 'new' tape. Has he no patience? Will he wait & see whats going to be on this official album? Or is his ego bigger than I'd previously estimated?

Some guy's also been charging £10 for tapes of the above album so shop around & find someone who'll do it free..

Unforgotten Hero makes a welcome return though this time it's in a plain white cover with a black/orange insert which gives the track listing & has various pistures of Syd & lyrics to The Word Song/Untitled Words. This could be some of the original pressings without the deluxe sleeve, it's rumoured that when Unforgotten Hero went to press they did too many LP's & not enough sleeves...

On the subject of Rush In A Million/One In A Million, Dave Smart has assured me that 'Rush' was introduced as 'One' with Roger making 'One' sound like 'Rush' by laughing whilst saying it. Well listening carefully to the submerged lyrics it does seem like they're singing "would you like to be one in a million?" "Would you like to be one in five"...

Now, merchandising. Please note; James Daly has moved from Holland & the T shirts are no longer availiable. All of the badges have been sold except 20 or so without pins. If you want a pinless badge then send me an SAE & you'll get one free, but write quickly cos they'll be gone soon. More badges are in the pipeline details next time.

Posters are also being planned & it does look like there may be a cheapo cheapo black & white ltd edition job availiable before the new year.

It may also be possible to get some iron on felt patches showing some kind of design. We haven't got a design as yet so if you can think of one the send it in. It should be no more than 4" square & should be drawn black on white, a further constraint is that all the black bits have got to meet up, ie it's all gotta be cut (eventually) from one bit of cloth.

I also need good black & white badge artwork.

Right-Donor cards everybody. If you bought this mag by mail & you live in the UK you'll have got a donor card with this issue. I'm told that they make good emergency roaches so be sure to carry one at all times. Seriously though, please think about carrying one.

In the latest issue of Bucketfull Of Brains(the one with Robyn Hitchcock & the Plasticland flexi) is a bit about Dave Roback & Kendra Smith who've formed a band called....OPEL..I'd give more details but I've lost my copy.

The Word Song/Untitled Words has been spotted by Tim Vass having been taped of the radio when Bam Carouso did their bit in Cambridge(see last issue) (contd last page)

IT: Before you did Arnold Layne, there's a story that you actually went into a studio in Hemel Hempstead; a place called the Thompson Private recording company, you made a demo tape or something?

AK: Yes, we did two songs there, one of which I think was...might have been Candy & A Currant Bun and the other of which never came out which was called 'I get stoned'; which I think was really probably the first song that Syd ever wrote.
"Sitting here all alone, I get stoned"

AM: You haven't got a copy of that demo still have you?

AK: No. I'm sure that,...he's a very dodgy geezer that Thompson & we ended up, that's my first experience of lawyers coping with that bloke.

IT: What was the quality like?

AK: Mmmm, not bad. Comparable with the sort of thing people do these days with Portastudio's.

AM: One of the tracks on this tape here is credited as being Candy & A Currant Bun from a 1966 rehearsal, just occurs to me that that could be it.

AK: Quite possibly..you've never heard of this song 'I Get Stoned' have you?

AM: There's an instrumental called Stoned Again or Stoned Alone

IT: Just two chords,

AK: Yeh, just a very simple little song.

IT: Do you remember the Tonite Lets All Make Love In London film?

AK: Yes

IT: Do you remember when it was recorded?

AK: I'm very bad about dates, don't ask me about dates, but that was done outside of Abbey Road.

IT: What about an interview with CBC way back in 66?

AK: Yes I remember that, that was done in a little recording studio underneath where Ian Dury had a flat about 15 years later.

AM: Oh, so it was recorded in London then.

AK: Yes.

AM: What's the last contact you had with the band.

AK: I saw Roger Waters a few months ago, borrowed the Arnold Layne film of him.

IT: it was amazing

AK: Did you see it? It was good wasn't it.

AM: It's a pity that can't be released on a video.

AK: Well I don't know, I mean Roger has now, as far as possible made sure that he owns it... I don't know if Roger...

IT: Do you think that's just because he finds it embarrasing?

AK: No I don't think he finds it embarrasing, there's plenty of things around which he might be embarrased about but I don't think that is one of them.

AM: What is?

AK: Well some of his playing might embarass him now.

IT: How did Syd get that slide sound?

AK: Syd was certainly the first guitariest that I knew of that used that gadget the Binson Eckerette. Which is sort of a precurssor of all the digital delay systems that people use nowadays which is very much like...everyone used a Watkins Copycat-people still do, you'll still find virtually every heavy metal band still using Watkins Copycats, which is now a very crude little revolving tape. But there was a more up market version of that based on hardware I think originally built by the G.P.O. for recorded messages & things. And this was this solid lump of metal with a recording head all the way round the outside of this lump with a tape all the way round the outside & as the tape moved round past different heads you could get all sorts of different echo effects, and Syd used that on his guitar & I don't think anyone has ever done that before.

IT: Could you tell us a little about the Games For May Concert?
AK: The Games For May Concert was in two parts,there was a Floyd set and then there was a number of individual efforts.I think the individual efforts,recorded tapes n so on came in the first half and the Floyd set in the second.
IT: What did the individual efforts consist of?
AK: They were basically pre-recorded tapes,Roger & Rick got some together but no-one else did really because Syd was right in the middle of writing See Emily Play which was written as like a theme song,like a song for that show,"Games For May" comes in the lyric.
IT: Was Emily very different from what was released on record?
AK: Yes,probably.
AM: Lyrically or?
AK: I don't know.Lyrically altered a bit,but it was basically the same song.There were probably a few alterations...And at that time I lived in a flat on top of Richmond Hill,and that became the sort of...I think Syd was occasionally staying there,Rick actually had a room in the flat with me...and Roger used to come over to work on the tapes & we had all these tape machines & things up there..and that's where they were put together and that was the original precursor of all the things that they did later on,'cos we did handle them rather badly..but actually not that badly considering.We had sound in the round at that concert these pre-recorded tapes,we had speakers around the hall We learn't about that from various French avant garde geezers whose names I can't remember.
AM: You mean it wasn't an original idea of yours?
AK: No.There's no such thing as an original idea,that was taken from concerts that we'd heard about;I don't think we'd attended them but I think we'd met some of these avant garde French composers who had done a lot of experiments using sound in the round. Perryphonic sound we called it which is Greek.It's not a very new thing and various classical composers like Willie Walton had had brass bands in each corner of the concert hall playing live n things like that.

The thing was that at that time one had an awful lot of interaction with the avant garde generally,we were very much part of the avant garde & not very much part of the rock n roll bussiness..the only rock star I knew was Eric Clapton;I'd known him from when he was in the Yardbirds n Peter I think,at one time shared the same flat as him;I new of people like Robert Stigwood & so on but we had much more in common with all these sort of weird avant garde artists & musicians & wotnots than we did with the music biz.

IT: This is the 1966 rehearsal coming up on the tape now... (imagine if you will what it sounds like)
AK: Is it really,...God...(lower jaw drops & goes into vacant stare)
AK: You could never tell with Rick what number he's playing;it always seemed to be the same,whatever hes's playing;we used to call it the 'Ricks Fry's Turkish Delight Lick'.

(End of tape)

AK: If I listened to something like that now,I would find the musicianship extremely inept really...
AM: When was the last time you saw Syd?
AK: .....A long time ago,I couldn't even give you the year.
IT: When was the first time you saw him?Was it down at the Marquee?
AK: No,I think it was at his flat in Earlham St.
AM: Oh,you met them before you saw them play then?
AK: They did this gig at the marquee,I didn't go to that,I was away or something,that was sometime in the spring of 66;no,the winter of 65,that's when I'd first heard about them and they then disapeared doing various things and then summer holidays came & by that time we had in fact decided to manage them,but we didn't really meet them until sometime after that & I think probably the first gig I saw them do was probably one of the London Free University ones at All Saints,Powis Sq.
AM: We've been talking about that today-trying to find it.
AK: Well it's not there anymore,the hall.
AM: Which could explain our difficulty.
AK: It's been re-developed,it was right next to the church in Powis Square.
AM: Other than Doctor & The Medics what are you doing yourself now?
AK: I manage Dr & The Medics,I manage Ian Dury & I manage Marie Wilson.
AM: Just the three.
AK: yeh.
AM: Blackhill was a six way partnership;after the Floyd split did Syd continue to be a partner?
AK: Syd was not a partner after the split,Blackhill became a Ltd company with Peter & I as the only shareholders,
IT: What gave the name Blackhill?
AK: Well,along time ago.More than 20 years ago now I bought a cottage down in the Welsh borders -Herefordshire,which I still have,which is called Blackhill farmhouse.And at the time I didn't have much money & Peter had a half share in it to help pay the mortgage, mind you,it only cost a £1000(laughs).So we just took it from the name of that cottage,& Syd stayed there a few times-probably wrote a few songs there-used to go down with all his dodgy friends It got quite notorious that cottage there was sort of various incidents involving the law which took place there & apparently the local police nearly closed it,sort of put a seal on it as a dis-orderly house,so one copper told me some years later.But I've managed to re-instate myself with the police by growing a vegetable garden.Once they saw there was a vegetable garden, they decided all must be ok,
AM: All strictly legitimate vegetables.
AK: yeh.
IT: Do you know if any of the songs that turned up on Syd's solo albums were originally Floyd songs?
AK: I don't actually,I think some of them must have been,I mean like all good songwriters Syd would have a load of half finished ideas in his mind all the time,which he would call upon when he needed them.Iexpect a lot of those songs were sort of flopping around in his head & then he'd take a bit from that idea & a bit from another & a finished song would emerge;all good songwriters seem to work like that.
AM: Word has it that EMI are going to release a new Barrett album of outtakes & alternate versions,what are your thoughts on that?
AK: Oh,I hope they do;I'm sure Syd needs the money.I hope it goes well.I don't know for sure but I imagine he has lot's of financial problems & I would be in favour of anything ....

Just then Andrew had to leave us,as he was leaving Peter Jenner arrived,you may recognise some of our questions but nevertheless here we go...

AM: Before the Floyd...
PJ: I was teaching at the LSE and I'd become involved with a thing called the London Free School which was one of the earliest manifestations of the sort of psychedelic movement,the underground with John Hopkins and various other luminaries like that.And from that involvement I became involved with AMM with two other people;Ron Atkins-whose still a jazz writer ,Hoppy & Alan Beckett.
IT: That was for DNA Productions.

PJ: Yeh,now that's an obscure album that AMM record,I bet you can't get that anymore,it was partly working with them which turned me on to some of the electronic music things & certainly I put Syd onto some of the stuff that they were doing,though I don't know how much it influenced him,I would have thought it did quite a bit.Sort of rolling things up guitar necks & things like that.Keith Rowe who was the guitarist in AMM,I got really interested in him.

IT: Their still going aren't they,Cornelius Cardew,

PJ: Well Cornelius Cardew's dead.

AM: There was an AMM gig advertised

PJ: AMM yeh,but that's Eddie Prevost who was always the drummer & a very good drummer & perhaps Keith Rowe & I don't know who else but Cornelius died several years ago.Cornelius left all that because he became involved with Socialist Worker or something or other extreme left wing organisation-all his stuff had to be become socially relevant & I think it all became a bit difficult so he drifted away from the avant garde in music whereas the others stayed there.

IT: It's amazing just who isn't around anymore

PJ: Extract from a continuous performance,yes,the theory being that if all noise is music,any noise noise can be music & therefore that all the noise that's going around all the time is music... and therefore all you do is pick up on a bit of it.I'll tell you whose very much like AMM & that's "This Heat",the nearest I've ever heard a band sound like AMM-subsequently.Very obscure band but very...you'll like em,if you'like early Floyd,their the only thing I've ever heard that reminds me of the early Floyd. Though they'd probably hate it if I said that,

IT: Is that like the middle of Interstellar Overdrive?

PJ: Yes complete weird stuff,all very very linear & no sort of y'know

IT: Were the early gigs that sort of sound?

PJ: Yeh

IT: Syd's guitar & echo

PJ: yeh,yeh,it was all sort of waffle,y'know they'd play the songs usually not very well I think & then there'd be a long instrumental section.It was also the era of the Blues things where instead of Blues breaks & wailing guitar solo's there would be all this weird echo & psychedelic bullshit.

IT: It's like in Candy & A Currant Bun,which is sort of an RnB song, & then it breaks off

PJ: ..& sort of goes wacky.Well when I first saw them a lot of their songs were still R n B songs & they only played a few of Syd's songs.And what really got me was,when I did see em I couldn't work out where the noise was coming from,whether it was coming from the keyboards or the guitar.

AM: If in '68 when Syd & the Floyd went their seperate ways,you'd followed the Floyd you'd probably made a lot more money through it & more "success".Do you wish you'd done that,do you regret going off with Syd?

PJ: emmmm.....No.Idon't.No.I think probably the Floyd wouldn't have made it if we'd gone on with them,because I don't think,the reason they left & we agreed to them leaving,as far as I understand it & remember it was because the Floyd said You don't think we can make it without Syd & we said Well you're right,not that they wouldn't make it,but that we didn't think that they would make it.And in a sense I don't think we would have got round the financial problems that were by then developing as well,there were a lot of financial problems as well-which were partly brought on by Bryan Morrison-a very villanous person who is still making a fortune out of things like Wham,he always...

IT: It is said that he's getting all the money from Syd's solo albums.

PJ: It is quite possible.

IT: After Syd went solo,you went into the studio with him in 1968 & 1974,do you remember anything about these sessions,or who were the musicians?

PJ: Well I did two lots of sessions with Syd.I did some of those very early ones which subsequently came out on the solo albums & I don't know whether they were the versions that I did with him or whether they re-did them.I did a few sessions with him & then various other people took over,Malcolm Jones & Dave Gilmour & I never got any credit;there you go C'est la vie. And then I did some sessions subsequently with him,& I've forgotten who we used on those sessions-I've forgotten who we used on both of those sessions-no idea.

The first lot of sessions,I only did a couple & it was really reasonably together in a fairly wacky way-at least there were songs & things.But the second lot was really hard work,it would just be complete...inarticulate ramblings & then suddenly something articulate would come together & then just disapear again And you'd think 'Oh hold that,can we make something out of that' y'know...& then it would just disapear again into chaos & confusion. ...The thing I most remember about that was the engineer pointing out that when Syd left the studio if he turned left he wouldn't be back & if he turned right he would be,& he pointed this out & I checked the next time & he was right.

IT: Do you remember the songs Birdy Hop or The Word Song?

PJ: Not particularly no.Again if someone played them to me they would probably come back because I've got quite a good recall but I'm very bad at titles.

PJ: That last lot of sessions,the titles were just very random-to try & mark things from time to time to try & keep some idea on things-it was really very very hard.There were very few glimpses in there,I'm a great believer in stuff coming out,but I think those probably really shouldn't.They're just really...good tapes for a psychotherapist to work with,y'know what I mean.It's not music,it's interesting as sort of listening to a man,clearly in considerable mental confusion & I don't think there's nearly enough music,there's no more than the odd 30 secs of articulate music.

AM: When we asked Andrew King what he thought about the Floyd these days he said that what he thought of as the Pink Floyd was the excitement caused by the tension between Syd's 'romantic anarchy' & Rogers more structured approach,how do you feel about what the Floyd do now?

PJ: Well from the word go they were four not terribly competant musicians who managed to create something between them that was extraordinary.

The other thing which is quite extraordinary is the main sort of creative drive behind the band was Syd,I mean,he wrote the songs-he was the lead singer,he was the lead guitarist. Roger couldn't tune his bass-he was tone deaf,he couldn't sing in tune & he couldn't pitch his bass,it had to be tuned by Rick. I say this as it were as a sign of respect for Roger though because he is a hard worker & a determined person & his determination & committment to getting that band together & building on what Syd had done I think was an extra-ordinary achievement which I would not have believed possible when they left.

If you'd told me that without Syd they were going to go to be the biggest working band in the world....with Syd I could've believed it,but without Syd where's it going to come from?Nobody else could write very well,Rick could do a bit of a tune & Roger could knock out a couple of words if neccessary under pressure;but I mean Set The Controls was the first song that Roger wrote,& he only wrote because Syd wrote & we encouraged

everybody to write, because Syd was very hessitant about his writing & because Syd suddenly wrote all these great songs everybody else thought 'Oh well it's easy to write songs', I think that was when Rick wrote, Rick wrote before Roger...

IT: What about Take Up Thy Stehyscope?

PJ: Set The Controls was the first song that Roger wrote which was part of their live repertoire, & it stood up against Syd's songs which was significant at the time, though I didn't allow for that I mean it did stand up.

IT: Is it true in '67 you stuffed the gig money from a Copenhagen show down a drain?

PJ: Ahhh. that's Andrew. No, he didn't stuff it down a drain-it was some sort of dreadful; I wasn't there, Andrew was with them & there was a scene where the money just fell out of his pocket & went down a drain or something...so there is an element of truth-you should ask Andrew about that.

IT: Have you got any tapes of the Floyd at all?

PJ: No, the only tapes I had got lost when Blackhill went down the tube & I don't know if I ever saw them again.

IT: Do you remember a 1966 interview for CBC radio?

PJ: What was that all about?

(Cue the point where we turn on a tape of the CBC interview, if you haven't got a copy we've transcribed it for you on pages) Peter made some general comments while the interview was being played, the following nO's correspond to the points in the interview where he made them-dig?

1-I would think that's the recording we did from some Demo's that we did in Hemel Hempstead

2-& that was the trick, they didn't know when it would stop until Syd told em when to stop.

3-Roger had to say that cos he wasn't.

4-I got that right

5-I got that right

Well there you have it.

After the tape ended came a recording of Top Of The Pops 6/7/67 & See Emily Play..the conversation resumed.

PJ: Where's that from?

IT: Top Of The Pops

PJ: Is it a different recording, I've forgotten, I think it is. I think they have to re-record the tracks,

AM: Whether the backing track is the same?

PJ: Yes, I've forgotten how we cheated, there's always been so much cheating with those rules, I don't know what happened back then, I I don't know where the cheating was.

And that just about wraps it up, if your interested in reading what Peter & Andrew had to say about Roy Harper, Dave Gilmour & The Floyd after Syd the it's all in The Amazing Pudding No 14.

Finally we've got to say thanks again to Peter & Andrew and especially Suni, Peter's Wife, for her hospitality, & for making the arrangements. It was a real pleasure to meet you & we look forward to another interview sometime..

Thankyou

Andy Mabbett & Ivor Trueman

The C.B.C Interview

The following is a transcription of the 1966 interview that was made for the Canadian Broadcasting Company....

Interviewer: In a frenetic haze of sound & sight a new concept of music has begun to penetrate the senses of Britain's already hopped up beat fans. Some call it free sound, others prefer to include it in the psychedelic wave of isims already circulating around the western hemisphere, but this music here and now is that of the Pink Floyd, a group of four young musicians, a light man & an array of equipment sadistically designed to shatter the strongest nerves. The Pink Floyd are new on the London scene they've stupified audiences at all night raves, in church halls, at the Albert Hall & on various tours in Britain -ain. They've yet to make their debut on records, but perhaps the Pink Floyd themselves are most qualified to tell you what it's all about..

Syd: We didn't start out trying to get anything new, y'know, we just (1)

Nick: It entirely happened, we originally started virtually as an R n B group

Syd: Sometimes we just, sort of, let loose a bit & start hitting the guitar a bit harder & not worrying quite so much about the chords

Roger: It's stopped being sort of 3rd rate academic rock, y'know, started being..sort of intuitive groove really.

N: It's freeform. I terms of construction it's almost like jazz where you start off on a riff & then..you improvise on this except; to some extent the improvisation...

R: Except it is, where it differs from jazz is that, when your, if you're improvising around a jazz number, if it's a 16 bar number you stick to 16 bar chorus's & you take 16 bar solo's; whereas with us it starts and we may play 3 chorus's of something that lasts for 17½ bars each chorus...& then...it'll start happening. And it'll stop happening when it stops happening & it may be 423 bars later or 4. (2)

S: And it's not like jazz music cos, em

N: We don't want to be Pop stars, we don't want to be jazz musicians

S: Yeh, yeh, exactly & I mean we play for people to dance to. They don't seem to dance much now...but that was the initial idea, so we play loudly and we're playing with electric guitars...so I mean we're utilising all the..volume & effects you can get.

N: But now in fact we're trying to develop this by using the light.

S: Yes of course

R: But the thing about the jazz thing is that we don't have this great musician thing, y'know. We don't..(arrogant sniff)..we don't really look upon ourselves as musicians 'as such', y'know, period. (3) Reading the dot's, all that stuff.

I: How important is the visual aspect of the production?

All: Very,..Very important

S: It's quite a revelation to have people operating something like lights while you're playing, as a direct stimulus to what you're playing, it's rather like audience reaction except it's, sort of, on a higher level. Y'know. You can respond to it & then the lights will respond back.

N: There are various sorts of lights...there's simply flashing spot-lights that are worked off a sort of control board, rather like a piano, so that can be used very rhythmically & then there are sort of effect lights that are usually coloured slides or wet slides, which are slides with some sort of liquids on them-so that you get some movement...or they might be actual movies as such, in which case, as they have their own set speed & sequence that can't be altered by the operators, this changes the formation to some extent because we tend immediately to play to that.

I: What happens at a performance, what happens with your audience, what's the feel you get?
R: Well if we get excited,& we get very excited when we're playing very well then the audience gets very excited as well..y'know
I: Do they dance?
N: They may dance, it depends upon the sort of number & whats happening
S: Yeh & anyway, you hardly ever get the sort of dancing right from the beginning that you get just as a response to the rhythm, usually people stand there & if they sort of work themselves into some sort of hysteria while they're there.
N: Yes, the dancing takes the form of a frenzy which is very good
R: They don't all stand in a line & do the matteson
R: The audience do tend to be standing there & just one or two people maybe will suddenly flip out & rush forward & start leaping up & down
S: (laughs) yeh
N: Freakout I think is probably the word you're searching for
S: Which I think ,y'know, is an excellent thing cos this is what dancing is
R: This is REALLY WHAT DANCING IS.

I: Is this then the music destined to replace the Beatles? Are the melodic harmonies poetic lyrics & soulful rhythms of today to be swept into the archives totally undermined by a psychotic sweep of sound & vision such as this displayed by the Pink Floyd. Large pockets of enthusiasts from all over the country are determined that it shall, despite the powerful opposition of the majority of leading disc jokeys. But the most enthusiastic fans of all quite fittingly, are the Pink Floyd's managers:

Peter Jenner: I heard them once, I was in a very bad mood, I was at a club & heard them..and the sort of sound they were making was a sound I hadn't heard before & I was just totally knocked out. I suppose I felt there was freshness about what they were doing, there was a sort of freedom about the way they were playing. They weren't just hacking through the old numbers playing all the old hits of yesterday and today and sort of you didn't feel that they were a regimented group just going through the motions, there was this fantastic liveness about it & huge sheets of sound were building up & this was a sound I hadn't heard before & I, immediately, was completely knocked out by it..and started getting interested in them. The whole light scene & things like this came out of, from I suppose, a different direction. I mean the way this did come from quotes 'the psychedelic movement' sort of thing, as far as I was concerned, it's always been a thing which I've dug. I've always thought that lights & music & things like that, and sounds & vision should all go together, and it seemed the right time for it to happen.
I think another thing which is very important is that one feels that the pop market, as it were, is now capable of taking something far more than it used to. Y'know, previously it was all sort of Jim Reeves n very simple things played over & over again. But increasingly I notice at clubs that the things which always seemed to get the really huge applause, always was the instrumentals the things when the musicians really gave themselves a chance to really do something new & different.
And out of this whole rock n roll movement you've got an instantly attractive beat, a very strong beat, a very powerful beat -which anyone can respond to. And then on top of this you've got the electronic thing which gives you this...fantastic dynamics & excitement & ability just to pierce through peoples sometimes deadness, y'know. One can penetrate right through into their minds, almost sheerly by volume & sound & noise & distortion; it gives a

PJ: tremendous increased awareness of what's going on. You hear things much more.
When you've finished listening to Pink Floyd you don't just clap & hum the thing-hum the tune they've just been playing, you just go wooaahh, y'know, it's an experience, You've been through a total sensory...sensory experience; both visual & audio. And I think this has an appeal not only to intellectuals, I mean there is a lot in common between the Pink Floyd & what people like Albert Ayler & Ornette Colman are doing but it's got also an immediecy of appeal to kids which I think is great & it's a common denominator which can go right across, anyone can dig the Pink Floyd I think.
I: Can you capture this strictly on sound? Let's say in terms of recording.
J: I think our records will be very different from our stage shows. I think our records, inevitably, firstly there's a 3 minute limitation, secondly you can't walk around the kitchen humming to the Pink Floyd. I mean if you had a Pink Floyd, sort of sound their making in the clubs coming over the radio, while you're doing the washing up, you'd probably scream. (4)
I suspect that our records are bound to have to be much more ..much more audio. (5) They're written for a different situation, listening to a gramaphone record in your own home or on the radio is very different from going into a club or into a theatre & watching the stage show.
They're two different things & requires a different approach we think we can do both.

Letter Contd

Michael West has sent a copy of a painting called Interstellar Overdrive by Paul Whitehead, It's on the cover of a particularly awful record of heavy metal crap by Chronicle titled Like A message From The Stars.

Reprint of The Making Of The Madcap Laughs booklet, written by Malcolm Jones he's allowed me to make a limited print of his 30 page booklet 'The Making Of The Madcap Laughs'. It costs £2.00 including postage, available from 1st October, order now to avoid dissapointment. (Write to Ivor at the usual address)

That's it for the other one...

Ivor Trueman

This is the genuine OPEL magazine, printed by the Orange Sunshine Pill Press, Beware of imitations. Collect the set, swap them with your friends.

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