

Punk in Reading: How did a global youth movement emerge in a town and what is its legacy?

A project by Woody Martin





Bones entrance, circa 1978

For once in my life I've got something to say
I want to say it now for now is today
A love has been given so why not enjoy
So let's all grab and let's all enjoy
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
Just take a look around you
What do you see
Kids with feelings like you and me
Understand him, he'll understand you
For you are him, and he is you
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
I don't want to be rejected
I don't want to be denied
Then its not my misfortune
That I've opened up your eyes
Freedom is given
Speak how you feel
I have no freedom
How do you feel
They can lie to my face
But not to my heart
If we all stand together
It will just be the start
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided
If the kids are united then we'll never be divided

Pink
City
or
Bowes
EST NAME



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I WAS BORN IN 1988

This project isn't about me, though it is entwined with my history.

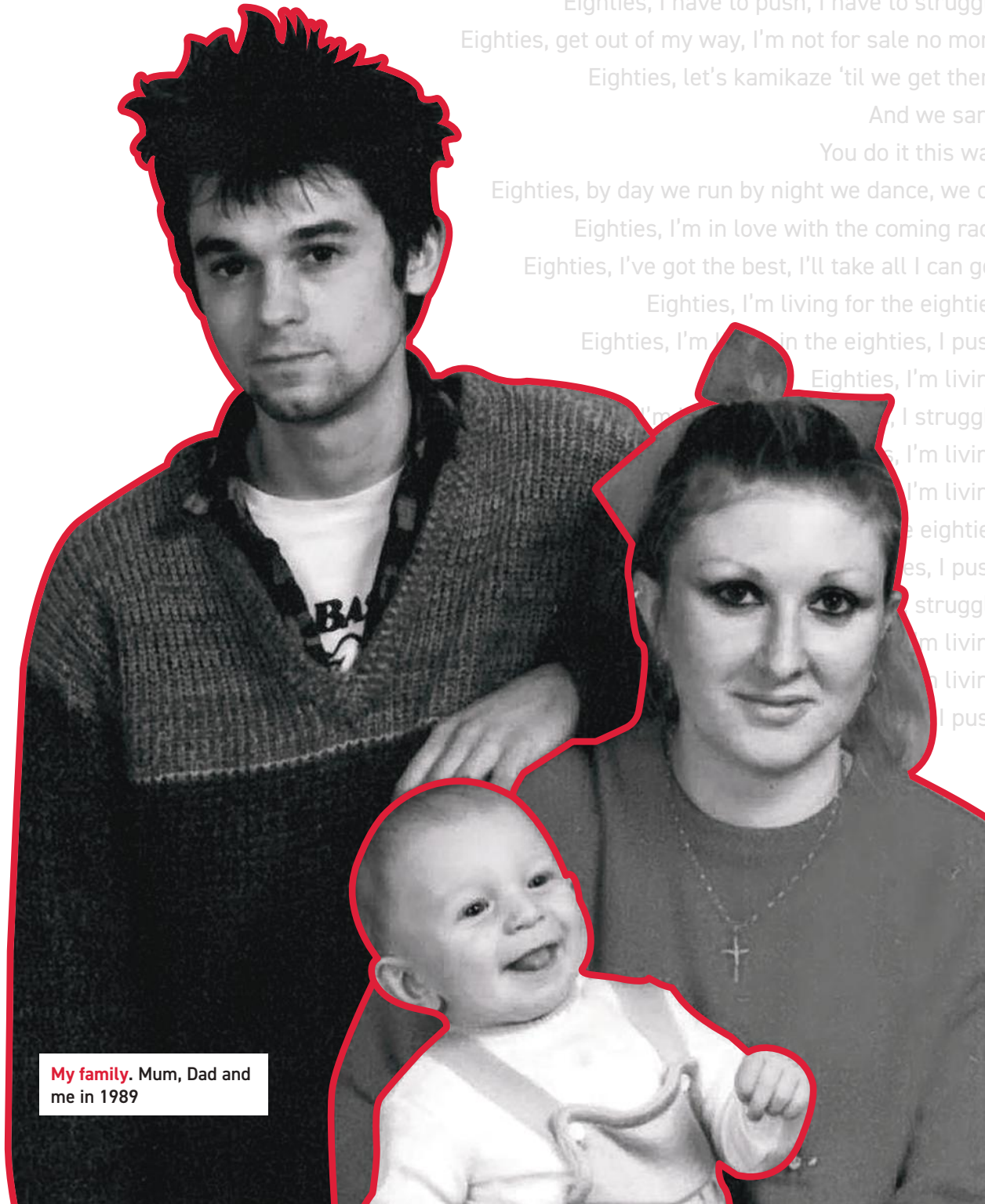
Reading is my home and has always had a presence in my life. It might not be the most glamorous or cosmopolitan town in the world but it does mean a lot to me. In fact, I managed to trace back my family tree to the 1700s and we were still residing in the area. I used to be scared of it: I used to take trips there on the bus with my friends and we usually ended up in some sort of sticky situation.

My mum worked in the town in the 80s and would drink with the Punks in **Cherries Wine Bar**, just down the steps from the **Top Rank** Suite, and used to be friends with the **Mitre** landlord's daughter, frequented by the National Front during those days. She used to (and still does) remind me that 'music was much better when she was younger' and that she used to play bands like The Specials and The Beat to me. She was friends with bouncers in the town and worked for a period at **P&M Music** in **"Smelly Alley"**, owned by the pop band Boney M.

From what I know of my dad's history, he was a young punk kid with a sister who was a new romantic, goth type - an interesting mix in the photos that I have seen. He used to play me **The Stranglers**, The Clash, **Sex Pistols**, X-Ray Spex and **Siouxsie and the Banshees**, among others, sparking my lifelong interest in these bands .

My in-laws met at the **Thing-A-Me-Jig** club down Minster Street in the 70s, where he spilled a drink over her and apparently never apologised, though they did end up getting married so I suppose it's all water under the bridge. They would see bands in and around the town: from The Merry Maidens to the Jekyll and Hyde, and they would go to dances and see bands in the vein of the Beatles.

With so much of my history, and my family's, ingrained in Reading's punk culture, I want to understand how the town and its people were effected by this movement and changed during its most prolific period (between 1976 and 1979), as well as how locals have perceived its disappearance from the town's history over time.



My family. Mum, Dad and me in 1989

PART ONE

WHAT'S T
STORY, R

THE
READING!

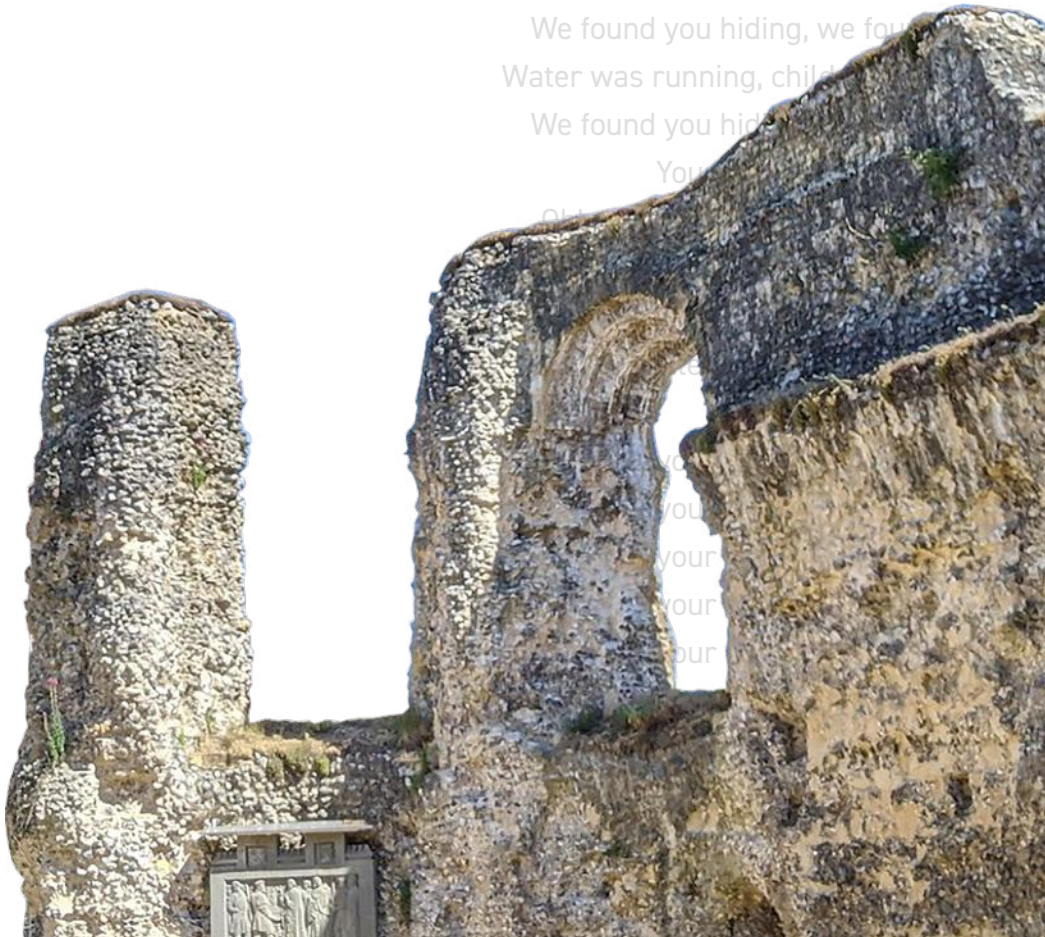
A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF READING

In order to get an idea of Reading, it is best to take a historic overview of the town's background and some of the interesting firsts and unusual events it can claim. This will help to paint a picture of the townspeople and how they would be affected by punk when it finds its way to leafy Berkshire.

Beginnings

Reading has been occupied since the **8th century** when it was named 'Readingum'. It was captured by the Vikings in 870 and a year later, the Vikings defended Reading during the **First Battle of Reading**. 135 years later, they burned Reading to the ground.

In 1121, King Henry I founded the **Abbey** which stands in ruins today thanks in part to Henry VIII's closure and absorption of the monasteries (and their wealth) in England in 1539. **Parliament** was held in Reading by King John in 1213, Henry III in 1241, Richard II in 1384 & 1389, Henry VI in 1440, 1451 & 1453 and finally by Edward IV in 1466 indicating that Reading has actually held a signifcant position in England for a long time.



1600s

London was hit by the **Great Plague** in the 1600s which led the Law courts to be relocated to Reading in 1625. In 1628 the **Oracle workhouse** opened in Reading. I find it particularly interesting that the place where society shut the poor and downtrodden would later give its name to the Oracle shopping centre where people flock to spend their hard earned cash on fashion and knick-knacks. Reading was a **Royalist stronghold** during the Civil War with a Royalist garrison arriving in 1642, a year later, the Parliamentarian forces, led by Robert Devereux 3rd Earl of Essex (right), laid siege and forced the Royalists to surrender. The 1600s also brought the first fire engine to the town in 1664, so it wasn't all bad news. To end the century, in 1688 the **Second Battle of Reading** occurred in which William of Orange's forces along with Reading townsfolk defeated the Irish forces of James II.



1700s

The 1700s would bring the first published newspaper in Reading, the **Reading Mercury**, in 1723. The town earned its US namesake in 1748 with Reading, Pennsylvania being established. In 1785, **Jane Austen** (below) attended the Reading Ladies' Boarding School at the Abbey gateway along with her sister Cassandra. William Blackall Simonds opened **Simonds Brewery** in Broad Street in 1785, which was the beginning of one of the biggest industries in the town's history.



1800s

Arguably, the 1800s and especially the Victorian era (1837-1901) was Reading's heyday. Firstly, in 1806 **Suttons Seeds** were established as 'The House of Sutton', later to become another of Reading's leading industries. The first steamboat trip embarked on the Thames at Reading in 1813. Joseph Huntley began making biscuits in London Street in 1822, and later in 1841 this would become **Huntley & Palmers** - the most famous biscuit company in Britain.

At the dawn of the Victorian era, 1836, **Reading Borough Police** were formed with 30 constables, two sergeants and two inspectors. As well as police, there were also advancements in healthcare with **Royal Berkshire Hospital** opening in 1839. Famous engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel made a mark on the town in 1840 with the opening of the **Great Western Railway** at Reading Station and a rail route from Twyford to London Paddington. Tragically, Henry West died in 1840 while he was working on the roof lantern of the new railway station. He was blown off by a break wind that was described as a 'whirlwind' on his monument in St Laurence's Church. The huge **HM Prison Reading** was built as the County Gaol in 1844 next to Forbury Gardens and the Abbey Ruins which seemed to be a bit of a callous move but I suppose that was the way things were. It became home to its most famous resident, **Oscar Wilde**, in 1895 who penned 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol' after witnessing the hanging of fellow inmate Charles Thomas Wooldridge. 1850 bought the groundworks for a water supply system for the town thanks to the Reading Union Water Company, finally, running water instead of the use of public water pumps such as the Whitley Pump. Reading opened it's Art School in 1860 which was followed closely by the first Police station and Assize Courts - 24 years after the borough police were founded.

The most iconic sight in Reading, the **Maiwand Lion** in Forbury Gardens, was unveiled in 1884 as a memorial to the troops lost at the Battle of Maiwand in the Second Anglo-Afghan War. It was designed by George Blackall Simonds, of **Simonds Brewery** fame, and sparked an urban legend of him committing suicide after realising his monument was out of proportion due to the Lion being modelled on a house cat. Speaking of animals, in 1886 **Hugh Lofting**, the author of children's classic Doctor Doolittle, was born in Reading.

The other rumour swelling statue was built in the town 2 years later as part of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee, the statue of Queen Victoria was placed outside of the town hall. The legend goes that she disliked Reading so much that she had the statue facing away from the town so she would always have her back to it. The Reading University Extension College was founded in 1887, later to become the University of Reading and finally, to close out the 1800s, **Amelia Dyer** was convicted in 1896 for killing between 7 and 20 babies and child farming in Reading.



1900s

The turn of the century brought the coronation of **King Edward II** in 1902 which led the Sutton family to erect a statue of the king in the town, currently of a roundabout outside of the station. The first cinema opened in 1909 as '**West's Picture Palace**' on West Street. This year also saw the University of Reading granted full university status. In 1936 trolleybuses began to operate in the town which led to the trams being closed down in 1939; the station would later become a part of the Oracle. On 10th February, 1943, four **bombs** totalling 500kgs were dropped on Reading, killing up to 45 and injuring 150. The bombs followed a line down the north bank of the Thames, the first leaving a 25ft crater in **Simonds Brewery**. Other buildings affected were the offices of the Reading Labour Party in Minster Street, the Welsteeds Department store, a Victorian arcade linking Broad Street and Friar Street, the People's Pantry, the facade of Blandy and Blandy Solicitors and St Laurence's Church. The **Town Hall** which served as the civil defence HQ was also severely damaged. Witnesses reported that following the bombing, the Luftwaffe opened fire on the crowds as they tried to flee the bombing, injuring a woman in Hemdean Road and damaging a school.

On a happier note, in 1947, **Huntley & Palmers** produced the wedding cake for **Princess Elizabeth** and Philip Mountbatten, Duke of Edinburgh. 1955 saw the beginnings of immigration from the **Caribbean** to Reading, leading to the multicultural Reading you see today. These were not easy times for the migrant families, moving with the view to obtain a better life but in many cases just finding hardship and rejection.

Right - The bombing near the Town Hall

Below - A ticket from the first cinema in Reading




WEST'S PICTURES PALACE,
New Foresters Hall, Reading.

GRAND OPENING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4th.

WEST'S PICTURES.

TRAVEL, SPORT, DRAMA, COMEDY, TRAGEDY, AND FARCE.

Illustrated by the very best and latest Films produced in all parts of the Globe.

7 TWICE NIGHTLY. 9

Matinee every Wednesday and Saturday at 2.30
FIRST CLASS ORCHESTRA.
POPULAR PRICES 3d., 6d., & 1/-

(4220)

From here, we approach the time period that this book focuses on, firstly in 1958 the first **Little Chef** opened in the UK on Oxford Road. I can't say that this is a huge achievement but the adoption of fast food definitely shows a shift in the attitudes of the townspeople. The first **high-rise council flats** were built in Coley Park in 1960, and continue to look imposing over the floodplains just outside of the town. **Ricky Gervais** was born in 1961 and grew up around Whitley: he wrote Cemetery Junction in 2010, a comedy-drama based upon the place in Reading.



In terms of industry and jobs in the town, this is the point at which they start to disappear. The last of the Tilehurst brickworks, **S. & E. Collier**, closed in 1966, the trolleybuses that only began operating 32 years earlier, ceased in 1968 and were replaced by the infamous and constantly jammed Inner Distribution Road (which wasn't actually finished until 1989). The following year, the Reading Borough Police were merged into the Thames Valley Police on April 1st, an odd choice of date for this but I'm sure it was just coincidence. In 1971 the first officially titled '**Reading Rock**' Festival took place, beginning to shed it's jazz roots. **Kate Winslet** was born in Reading in 1975, 22 years later she would survive the Titanic. The local radio station **210** began broadcasting in 1976 with their very specific views on punk which will be discussed later. And finally, to bring this history right up to the time in question, industry continued to leave Reading with **Huntley & Palmers** and **Suttons Seeds** leaving in 1976.



Pre 1600s

871
The First Battle of Reading
Vikings defending Reading from the Saxons

1006
Danes burn Reading
Vikings, who used Reading as a winter camp, burn Reading to the ground

1121
Reading Abbey Founded
King Henry I founded Reading Abbey

1125
Reading School Founded
Charter granted to Reading Abbey

1233
Franciscan monks arrive
Given a site near Caversham Bridge

1539
Reading Abbey Destroyed
Thanks to Henry VIII

1566
Civic coat of arms granted
Still in use today with slight variations

1600s

1619
Wiremaking starts in Reading

1625
Parliament moved to Reading
Due to the plague being rampant in London

1628
The Oracle opened
The workhouse, not shopping centre

1640
Silk manufacturing begins

1642
English Civil War
The town sided with the Royalists

1643
Siege of Reading
Parliamentarian forces overrun the Royalists

1664
First Fire Engine in Reading

1688
The Second Battle of Reading
Dutch soldiers defeat Irish forces on Broad Street leading to William of Orange taking the throne following James I fleeing

1700s

1723
First Reading newspaper
The Reading Mercury on 8 July

1724
Freemasons arrive
The first (known) meeting at the Mitre Inn

1748
US namesake established
Reading PA named after Reading, Berkshire

1785
Jane Austen attends school
18 month's attendance at Reading Ladies' Boarding School at the Abbey gateway

1785
Simonds Brewery opens
Opened by William Blackall Simonds in Broad Street

1786
Town Hall Rebuilt

1800s

1800
Streets lit and running water

Oil lamps and privately owned water

1810
Kennet & Avon Canal

Construction completed

1822
Huntley bakery opens

Joseph Huntley opens his shop on London Street

1841
Huntley & Palmers formed

Cousins Thomas Huntley and George Palmer create the new biscuit making partnership

1843
Reading Gaol opens

Designed by George Gilbert Scott with William Bonython Moffatt

1806
Suttons Seeds established

Initially as corn merchants

1815
Gasworks opened

The first opened in Reading on Bridge Street

1840
Great Western Railway

Opens running a line between London and Twyford

1844
Commercial Photography

Henry Fox Talbot establishes a photographic establishment in Reading

1900s

1903
Tramways open

Electric tramways through Reading

1919
Buses start running

Motor buses run to Tilehurst

1936
Trolleybuses start running

A mix of trams and motor buses

1955
Caribbean immigration

Migrants arrive in Reading

1969-1989
The IDR arrives

The Inner Distribution Road hails the beginning of the end for rail based industry

1976
First Reading radio station

210 begins broadcasting

1977
The Hexagon opens

The newest Reading performance space is completed

1909
First cinema opens

West's Picture Palace on West Street

1920
First council houses built

1947
Wedding cake

Huntley & Palmers create the Queen's wedding cake

1966
S & E Collier closes

The last of the Reading brickworks

1971
Reading Festival

The first **Reading Festival** of jazz and progressive music takes place

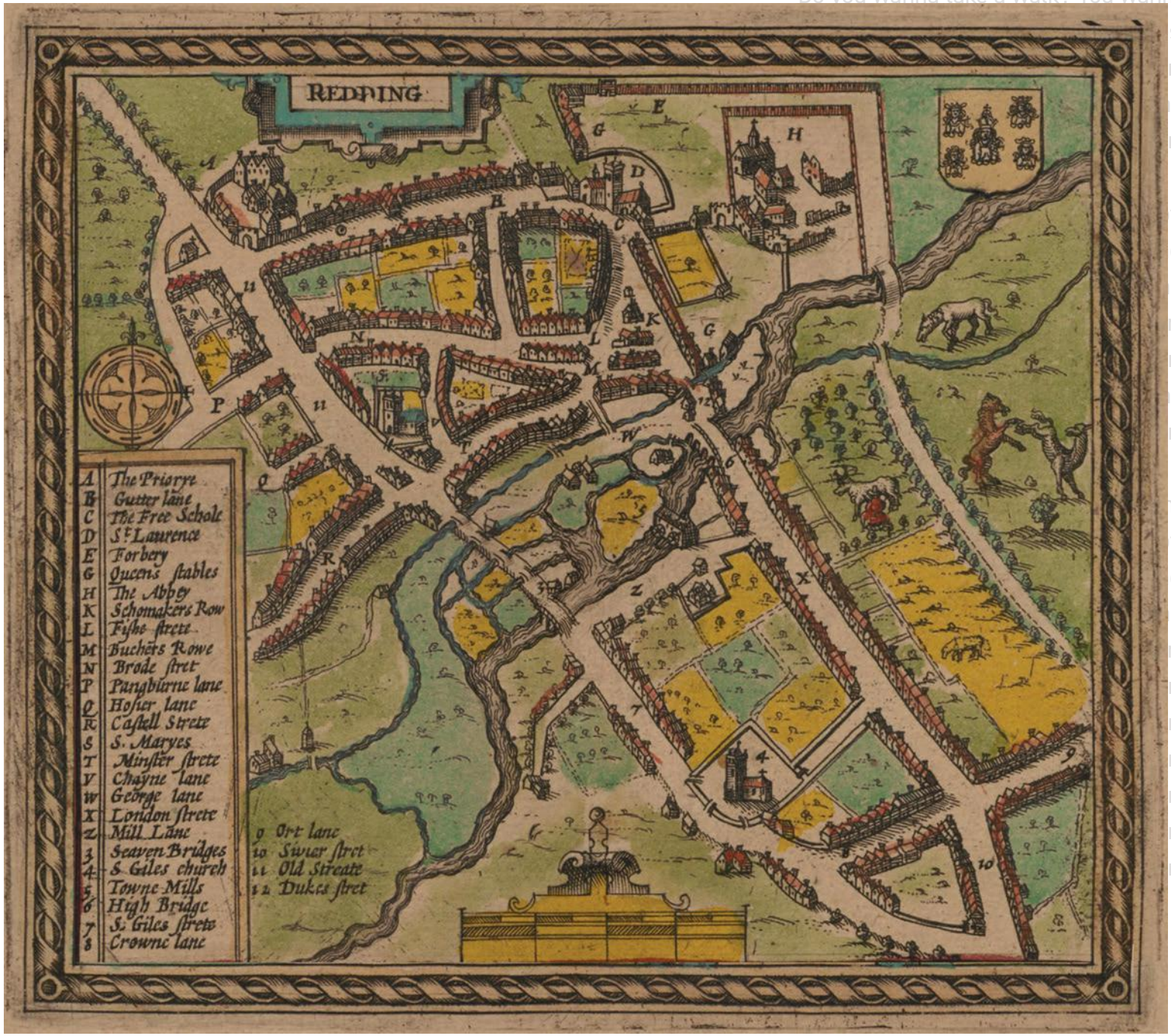
1976
More industry closes

Huntley & Palmers and **Suttons Seeds** close down and leave Reading

THE TOWN, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT

Geography can reveal a lot about a town and Reading's geography has changed quite a bit in the last few decades. Mostly, the pubs have all closed down but if you look further, you can see how the bare bones are still there.

The earliest map of Reading is **John Speeds 1611 map**, recognisable as Reading today by the road layout.





229 years later, the **1840 John Snare map** shows how much growth had happened in the town centre although the town was still fairly compact.



It wasn't until the **1950s OS map** that we can see the rapid expansion taking place, though you can still see the same basic outlines of the streets like Silver Street and London Road.



When you look at the **Google Map** of the present day, the complex spider web of roads that Reading has become really comes into focus.

Here is the 1840 map in blue, the 1950 map in pink and the 2022 map in black highlighting the similarities and differences in the town.



PART TWO

THE SWI
60S

NGING

I know you're antisept
Your deodorant smells nic
I'd like to get to know yo
You're deep frozen like the ic
He's a germ free adolescer
Cleanliness is her obsessio
Cleans her teeth ten times a da
Scrub away, scrub away, scrub awa
The S.R. wa
You may get to touch he
If your gloves are sterilize
Rinse your mouth with Listerin
Blow disinfectant in her eye
He's a germ free adolescer
Cleanliness is her obsessio
Cleans her teeth ten times a da
Scrub away, scrub away, scrub awa
The S.R. wa

WHAT WAS LIFE IN READING LIKE?

The 1960s in Britain were a period of economic upswing. There was a freedom that wasn't available for past generations and the 1960s were a decade that hosted the first teenage generation free of conscription. The horrors of World War 2 were beginning to be forgotten.

The Coley high-rise flats being built



Culturally, the teens of the time were free. They could go and socialise freely in the bars and **ballrooms** of the time and, with jobs available in the town they could go and see shows or go on dates to the local ballroom. The '**British Invasion**' was going on and bands were feeling the pull of the venues, they were being hired for dances and quite possibly becoming house bands for the bigger venues. In Reading, a new mall opened in Prospect Park, the replacement of the older buildings in the town centre had begun including the new BHS building in 1967 on Broad Street and the White Hart hotel still existed where later the Butts Centre would place its foundations. Trolleybuses were moving people around the town and if you travelled just outside of the main town to Whitley, you'd see vast green fields with the new **M4** motorway being constructed through them and new high-rise council flats leaving their mark on the skyline..

There were jobs available and the town was geared towards being firmly **blue collar** with manufacturing being king. There was even a purpose built railway line, the Coley Branch line, that was specifically made to move goods from the main train line through to the factories on the canal side for transporting hops, timber and other manufacturing materials.

You could frequent many of the local pubs and go see folk, reggae, R&B, jazz or skiffle acts among many others. The new influx of West Indian and Asian families in 1968 brought an even more culturally diverse feel to the town leading to a wider variation in local music.



Great Western Tower, opposite the Station



Bus Station opposite the Railway Station



Caversham. Not much has changed



Construction of the **IDR**



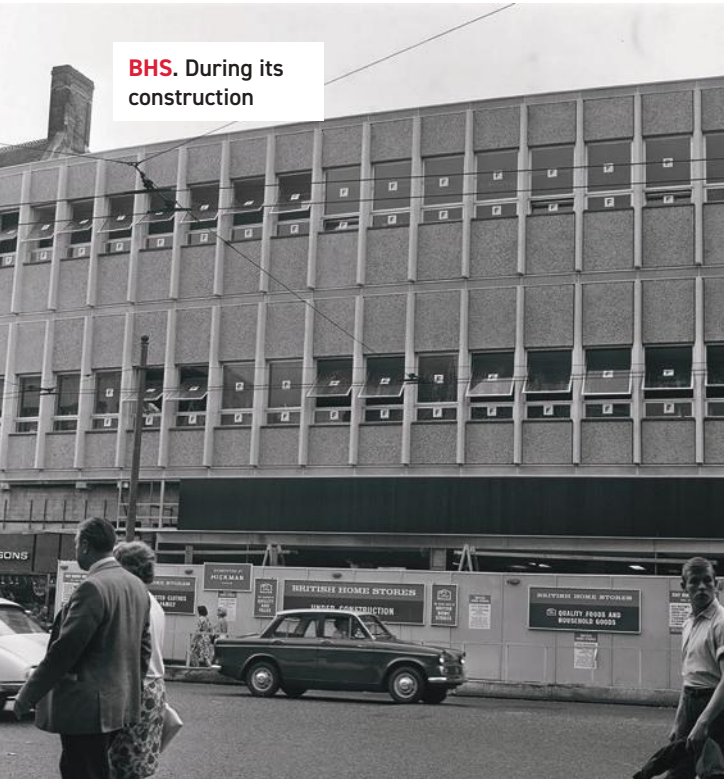
The White Hart Hotel and Broad Street as it was, complete with Trolleybuses



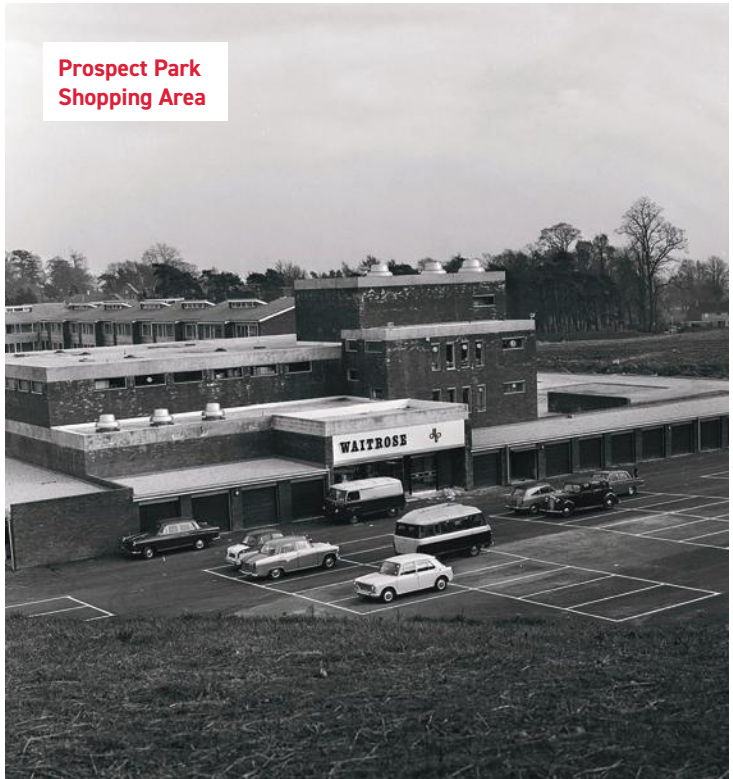
Broad Street. Before it was pedestrianised



Greyfriars Road



BHS. During its construction



Prospect Park Shopping Area



Prospect Park Shopping Area



Greyfriars Road



The Civic Centre



The Civic Centre

MUSICALLY SPEAKING, WHAT WAS THERE?

The music scene in Reading in the 1960s was based largely on the older, more established branches of music that were popular at the time, such as jazz, soul, and house bands.

There was an abundance of live music venues, and it was a livelier town than it currently is in terms of music with bands playing at the **Olympia**, The **Majestic**, the **Student Union**, **Town Hall**, **Top Rank** as well as pubs and clubs.

The **Olympia** on London Road was considered the spiritual home of the mods in Reading which shows that there was already a tendency for local youth cultures to gravitate towards singular bars and venues. In 1964, The **Majestic** played host to bands such as Cream, The Who and The Kinks; these big acts put Reading on the map for larger acts and ensured venues could guarantee a return on their investment when hiring such acts.

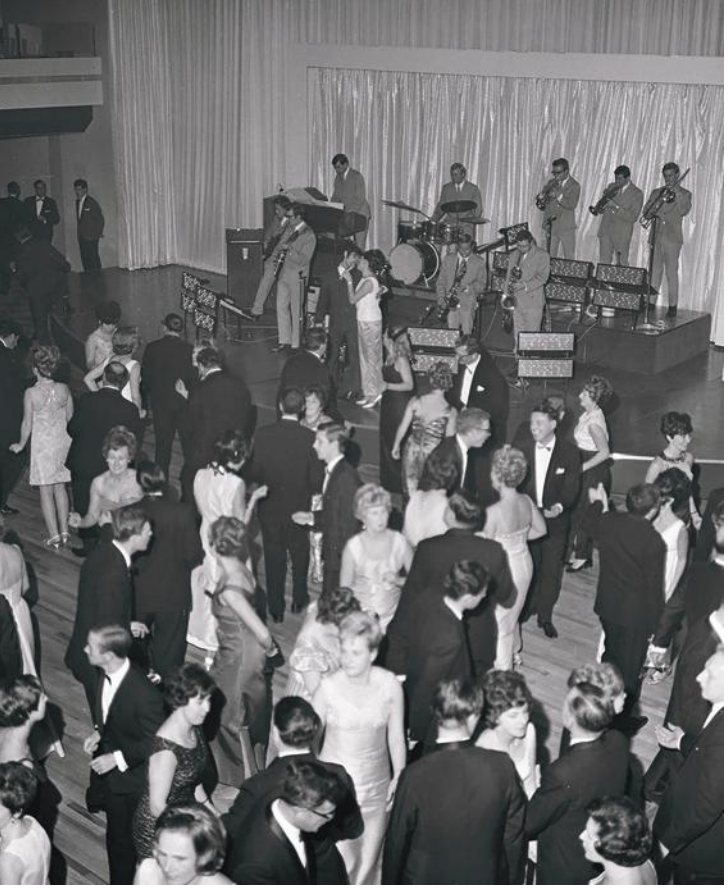


The **Majestic** (left) & **Olympia** Ballroom (below)



There seems to have always been an underlying tension within the town. From what I have read this was particularly relevant in the sixties: the student population of Reading from the University of Reading and Reading College espoused their own views on culture and middle-class social status which were at odds with the town's working class population. In 1966 the **Student Union** held a debate as to whether or not non-students should be admitted into shows and gigs in the **SU** or whether you should be required to hold a valid NUS card. The issue for the students wishing for a more exclusive **Student Union** was that students weren't buying enough tickets to maintain hiring desirable acts so they were essentially forced to promote shows in the national press. The following year, Pink Floyd performed at the **SU** and surprisingly, the psychedelic prog rock band were not a hit despite their popularity in trendy 60s London. The students were used to their soul, jazz, blues and dances, not the alien soundscapes of prog. The former firmly represented the old, safe and established way of life for the upper classes in the **SU**.









Top Rank as it was in the 1960s

The town followed suit with the **Top Rank** Suite opening the same year for soul, rock, disco and house bands, demonstrating that the general population was also interested in similar entertainment, leading to the question, why there was a division between the two camps? There had been other attempts to introduce acts that were a little more abstract in the town with Lee Dorsey, a soul artist, being supported in the town by David Bowie and his band at the time 'The Buzz'. Finally, this same year featured the opening of the **Thing-A-Me-Jig** club which became incredibly important in the Reading punk scene. Originally it was opened by two former students, it had a strict no t-shirts and no jeans dress code, zero-tolerance to drugs (this was at a time where amphetamines were rife in the mod culture, The Who's 'My Generation' was actually sung with a forced stutter to mimic the speech of kids taking the drugs) and was primarily targeted towards courting couples, all with the aim of improving relations between the local community and the University.

1968 was the beginning of the shift from the older established genres in the town though jazz was still very much there to stay for now. The Students at the Union were still hiring jazz and rock acts but the **Cosmo Club** branched out to Bluebeat and Ska, enticing the now homeless mods as their **Olympia** venue closed in 1965 to become a bingo hall, as did the **Majestic** in 1967.

CULTURAL TIMELINE OF THE 1960s IN READING

1960

23rd April 1960

Paul McCartney and John Lennon played their only gig as the Nerk Twins at the **Fox & Hounds** pub in Caversham, some sources say to as many as 3 people



1963

R&B started influencing the local bands such as **The Cyril Davies All Stars**

The Rolling Stones played the **Town Hall**

64
65
66

1960-1966

Ballroom Dancing was a staple for the town's night-life

1964

The Who play the **Olympia** and The Kinks play the **Majestic**

Reading born **Mike Oldfield** & **Marianne Faithfull** make their debut

The **Olympia** became the spiritual home of the Mods





1966

SU opens for non-students, a big debate occurs pertaining to whether you should need an NUS card

Students weren't buying enough gig tickets so gigs were advertised in the national press

67
68
69

1967

Pink Floyd performed at the **SU**, to the dismay of the student body who disliked the music which was popularised in London. The students of the time were used to soul, blues and dances - not psychedelic rock

Top Rank opened for soul, rock, disco and house bands

Lee Dorsey played soul, he was supported by **David Bowie** and his band 'The Buzz' (below)

The **Thing-A-Me-Jig** opened for pop music by two former students - it had a strict no t-shirts and jeans dress code, was a place primarily targeted at courting couples that also had a zero-tolerance to drugs - all aimed at improving relations between the local community and the University

1968

SU was mainly focussed on Rock and Jazz

Bluebeat and Ska in the **Cosmo Club**



PART THREE

THE NOT SWINGIN

SO
IG 70S

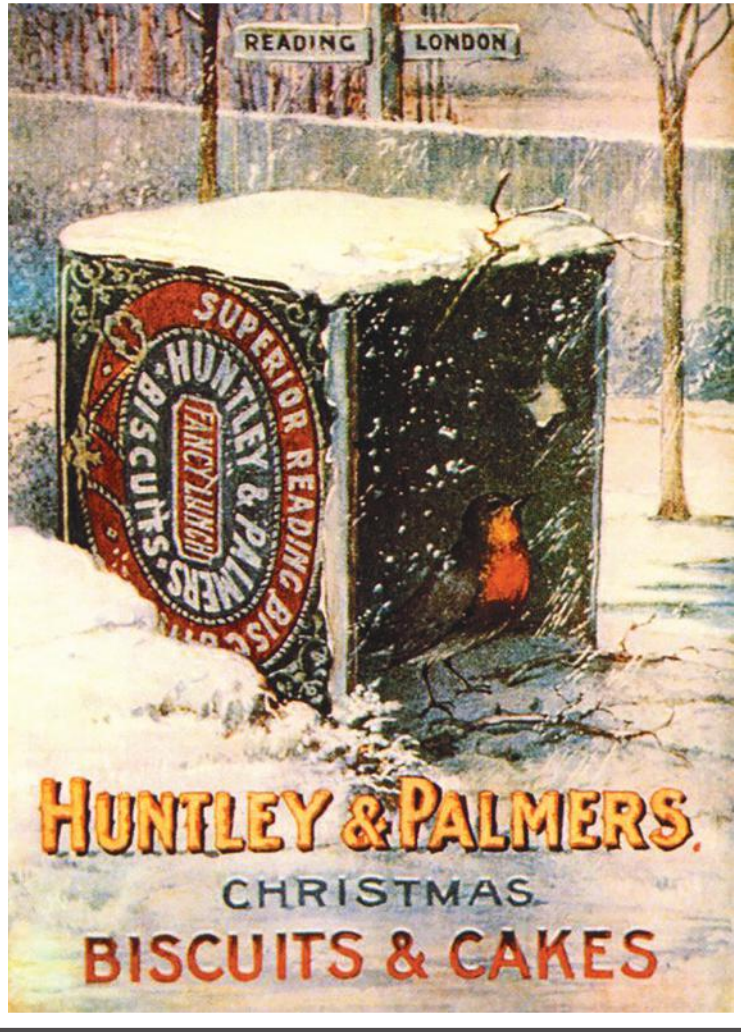
God save the Quee
A fascist regim
They made you a morc
Potential H-bom
God save the Quee
She ain't no human bein
There is no futur
In England's dreamin
Don't be told about what you wa
Don't be told about what you nee
No future, no future, no future for yo
God save the Quee
We mean it, ma
We love our Quee
God save
God save the Quee
Tourists are mone
But our figurehea
Is not what she seem
God save histor
God save your mad parac
Oh Lord, have merc
All crimes are pa
When there's no future, how can there be sin
We're the flowers in the dustb
We're the poison in the human machin
We're the future, we're the futur
God save the Quee
We mean it, ma
We love our Quee
God save
God save the Quee
We mean it, ma

WHAT WAS LIFE IN READING LIKE?

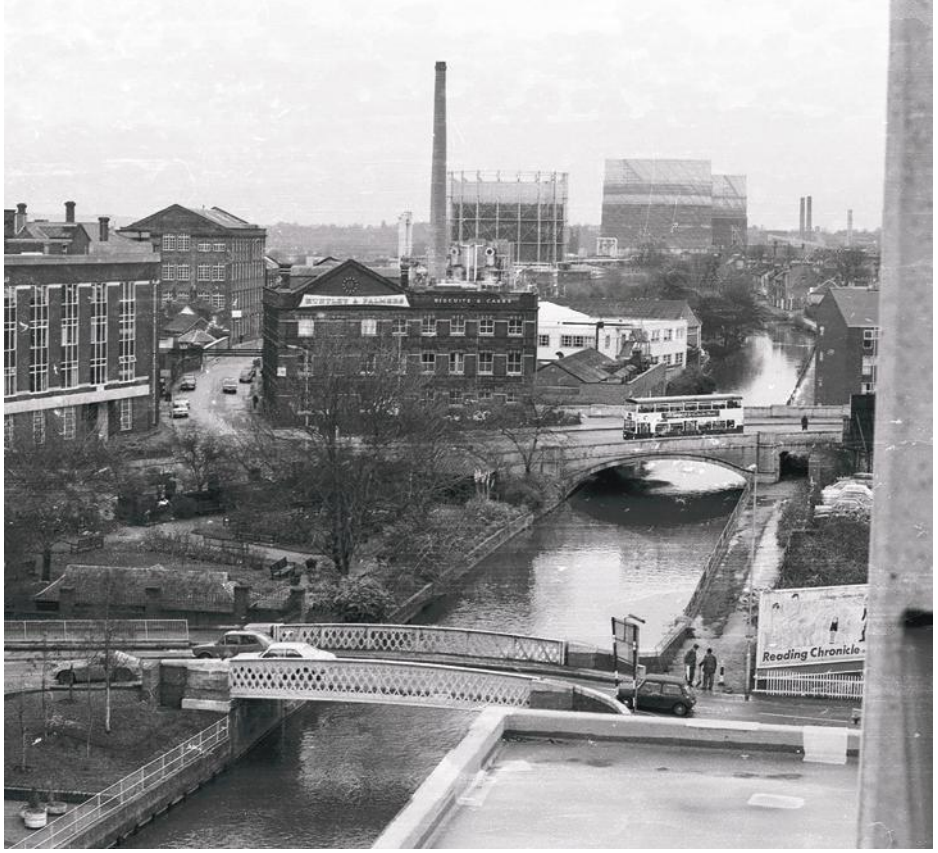
If you ask anyone from Reading, “what is Reading famous for?”, invariably you will hear the term the 4 Bs - Biscuits, Beer, Bulbs and Bricks.
This era was coming to a close though...

The 1970's were awful - bleak, depressing, pointless.

J. Haste - Reading Punk


READING
LONDON
SUPERIOR READING BISCUITS
HUNTLEY & PALMERS
FANCY LINED
HUNTLEY & PALMERS
CHRISTMAS
BISCUITS & CAKES

The **Huntley & Palmers** biscuit company employed a huge number of employees in the area and every family seemed to have an association with the business, with the factory employing up to 25% of the population. To this day, the buildings are still standing as well as new apartments being built using the name 'Huntley Wharf'. It was closed in Reading in 1972 after becoming part of Associated Biscuits Ltd along with Jacob's biscuits. This closure was felt by the working classes of Reading, leading to a rise in unemployment in the area.









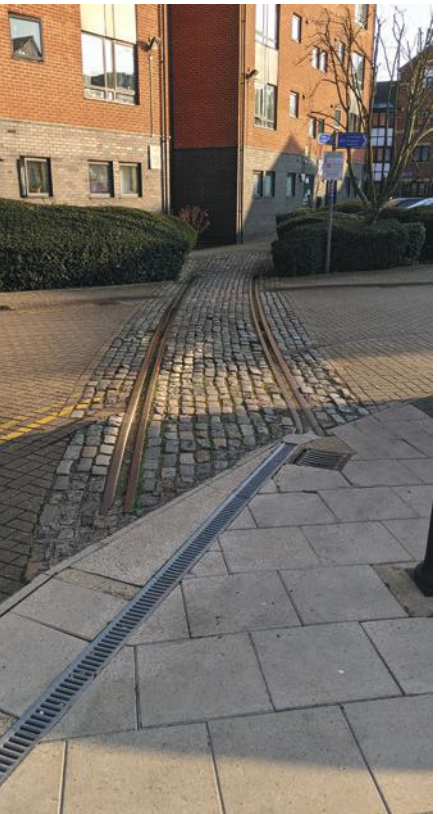


Clockwise from top left: view of Huntley & Palmers courtesy of Gordon Brake, factory workers, main building external view, present day remains of the social club, entrance still from the shooting of 'Bugsy Malone', drawing of the original shop on London Street and a classic advert showing the famous branding



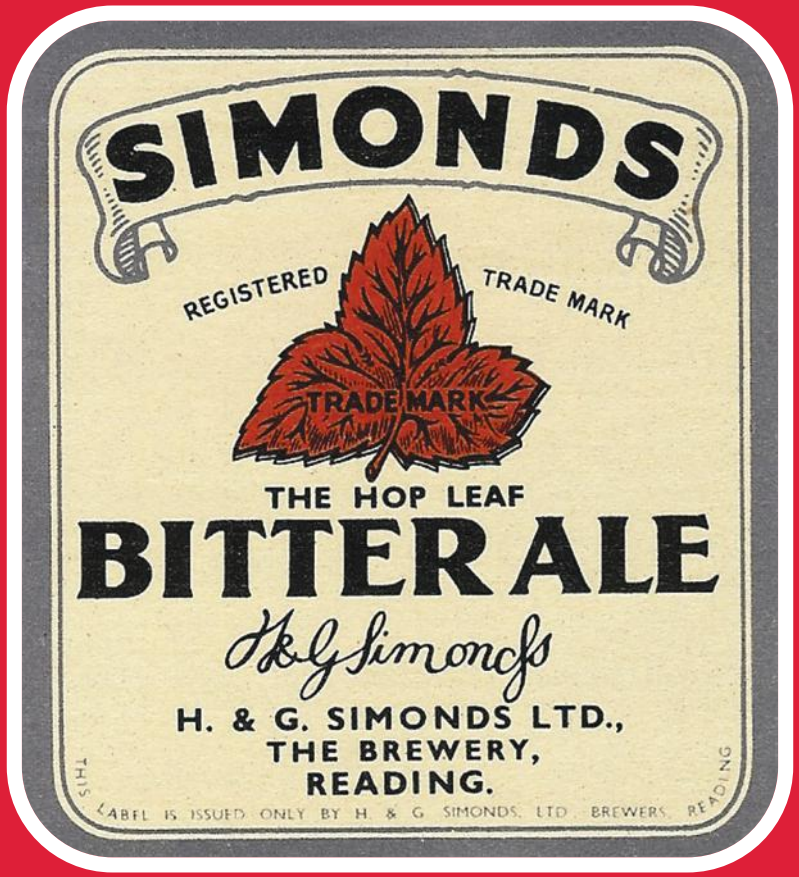


Above, Simonds brewery label, top left, the malt house today, right top and bottom, views of the old Courage brewery and bottom left, the remains of the Coley Branch Line





Simonds Brewery found its home in Reading in 1785 and used the waterways extensively: the malt houses are still used although now, as apartments, and the remains of the Coley Branch Line which served the brewery to ship raw materials to the brewery, are still visible if you know where to look. The brewery, as with **Huntley & Palmers**, hired huge amounts of people from the area and was bought in 1960 to become Courage, Barclay, Simonds & Co Ltd later being simplified to just Courage. It moved away from the town centre in 1978 to Shinfield and the old brewery site in the town centre later became the Oracle Shopping Centre.


SIMONDS
REGISTERED
TRADE MARK
TRADE MARK
THE HOP LEAF
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H. & G. Simonds
H. & G. SIMONDS LTD.,
THE BREWERY,
READING.
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BY APPOINTMENT

SUTTON'S SEEDS



For Profitable Market Gardening

SUTTON & SONS, READING

Seedsmen By Appointment to His Majesty the King



Above: Secretaries and green keepers at Suttons Seeds Trial Grounds in Earley, right, Suttons Seeds advert, bottom left, the old Sutton & Sons building in the Abbey Square (demolished in 1963 after relocating to Earley) bottom right, packaging seeds and bulbs.

Suttons Seeds were another huge employer in the area; they were established in Reading in 1806 and moved to the town's central marketplace in 1832. In 1840 they set up their own laboratory to ensure the purity of the seeds and bulbs. Later that year, they started to offer a mail order seed service delivering seeds worldwide due to the opening of the Great Western Railway. The central location was initially ideal as it enabled the company to sell vegetables at the weekly markets, but after a few years and substantial growth these became inadequate due to the addition of offices, seed storage houses, exhibition department, stables, and fire station. Suttons moved to a much larger space in 1962 along the A4 just to the east of Reading before their eventual relocation to Torquay in 1976.



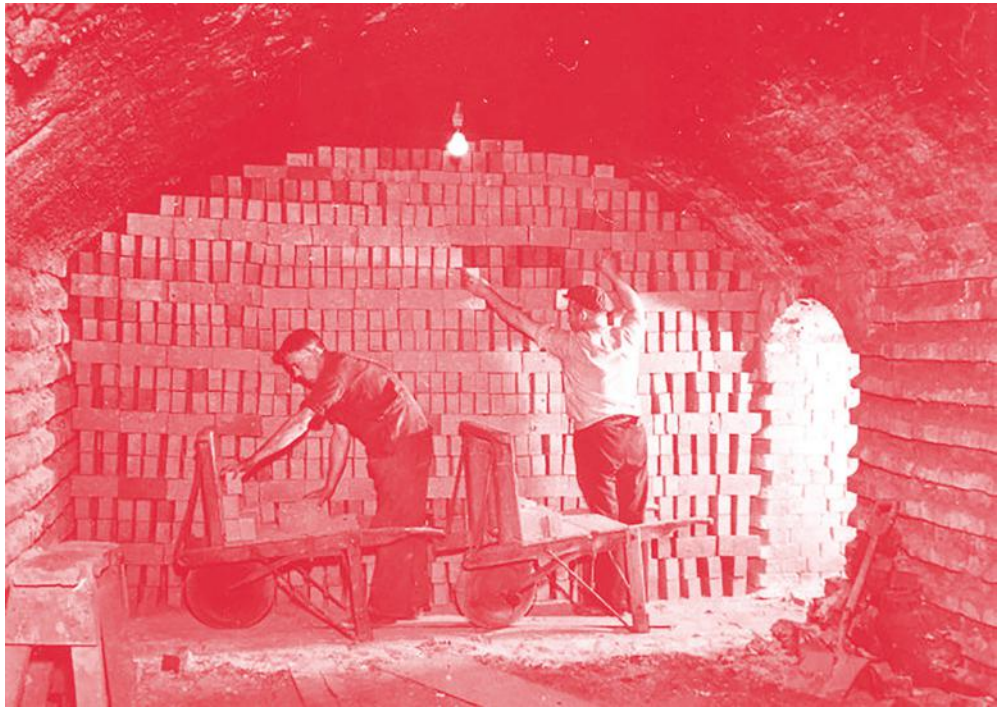


Below left, Grovelands Brick & Tile works, middle, workers packing a kiln and right, an advert for the famous Reading red bricks.

Finally, there were bricks. These have been produced in the area since the Medieval period. The area is famous for its 'Reading Red' bricks, and you can find links to this past all over Reading, from the grand red bricked architecture of the town hall and Queen Victoria Street to 'Rose Kiln Lane' and 'Waterloo Kiln'. Tilehurst, a suburb of Reading, means 'a wooded hill where tiles were made' illustrating how far back in time the industry goes. One of the larger firms to manufacture in the area was **S & E Collier** which operated from 1870 to 1966.

With all of this in mind, it is quite evident that there was a downturn in 1976 in the employment of the locals in Reading. The brewery maintained a fair number of jobs: I have been informed by my father-in-law that you could go to the brewery and pick up shifts driving easily but this was not secure work. The town itself was undergoing a facelift of sorts, with the demolition of The White Hart Hotel as well as much of Broad Street to make way for the Butts Shopping Centre in 1971 and the Hexagon Theatre in 1977. The town was looking prosperous and if nothing else, due to the brewery being so close, there were hundreds of places to go for a drink.



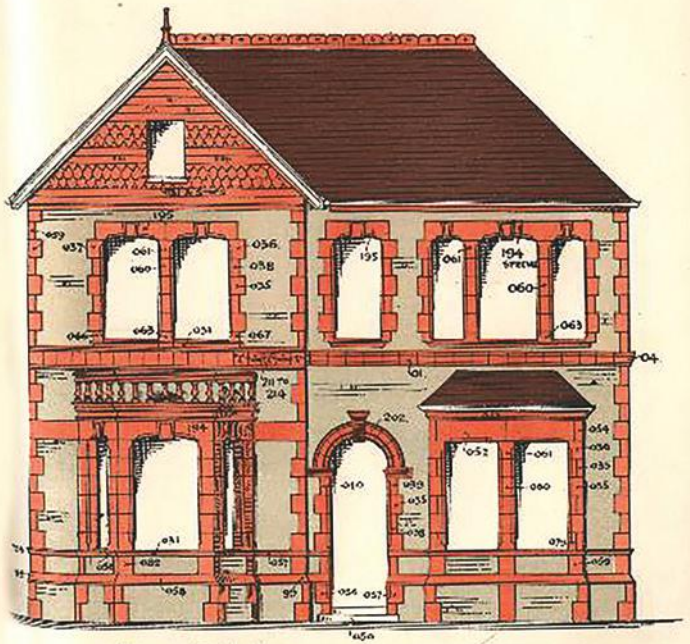


SHEET No. 18E.
SECTION No. 5A.

S. & E. COLLIER, LTD.,

MANUFACTURERS OF ALL KINDS OF BUILDING MATERIALS IN CLAY, LIME, AND CEMENT, AND OF PLAIN AND ORNAMENTAL POTTERY,

GROVELANDS, READING.



Terra Cotta Facings, &c for a Villa Residence.

THE BLOCKS SHEWN ARE OF STANDARD DIMENSIONS
BUT THEY CAN BE MADE TO SUIT ANY BRICK GAUGE.
KEPT IN STOCK IN STANDARD DIMENSIONS.

SCALE OF FEET.

MUSICALLY SPEAKING, WHAT WAS THERE?

By the close of the 1960s, Reading was beginning to make a turn in terms of music.

Pink Floyd made a return to the **Student Union** demonstrating how quickly musical taste can change considering the student paper described their original performance as "rather like having one's ears glued to a pair of maracas and then being put into one of those centrifuge machines they train astronauts in". With the tides turning towards psychedelia, it seems only fitting that the hippies began to take a stance in the town, bringing their own shows to the Abbey Ruins in 1970 by borrowing a generator from local music shop 'Hickies'. These shows were very popular with the students and really began to introduce the DIY ethos that will become a central pillar in the punk movement to come.





Left: opening of Tesco with The Target shown in the background. Below, Rikki and the Last Days of Earth 28 July 1977 & Sarah Farm subsequently Robert & The Remoulds 5 Apr 1977 courtesy of Gordon Brake



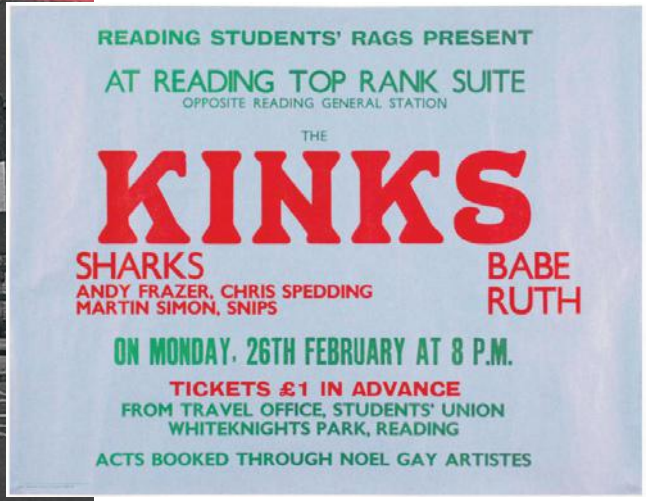


Sadly, by 1971, the local pubs and smaller venues were closing their doors to bands due to budgetary constraints introduced by the bands asking for payment. This led to the inevitable rise of the mobile disco; a fraction of the price and everyone could get what they wanted.

The music scene in Reading wasn't dead though. **The Target** was a big underground club situated underneath the Butts Shopping Centre - they hosted gigs 5 nights a week and became a place for bands to do practice runs before continuing to play in London. This became a mainstay of local bands on their circuits of the town too, with many bands playing repeatedly at the venue. The type of music being played locally by larger acts was becoming heavier with heavy metal gigs at the **Town Hall** by King Crimson and Uriah Heep – a complete departure from the soul and R&B that usually graced its halls, as well as Thin Lizzy playing at the **Thing-A-Me-Jig** club which, at complete odds with their previous strict 'no T-shirts and no jeans' policy.



1971 was the first year of the **Reading Festival**, known at the time as The Reading Pop Festival which seems quite alien now when you look at the kind of acts that have graced its stages. The festival was part of the **Reading Festival** of Arts which began on 12th June 1971 - 850 years since the foundation of Reading Abbey and 1100 years since the Viking raids documented in the 'Life of King Alfred'. The locals didn't take kindly to the music festival and drew comparisons to the Vikings quite regularly, with local politicians and angry residents writing into the local press to air their prejudiced views, one reported who had attended the festival was shocked to discover this and said 'it wasn't until I bought a newspaper on the way home that I realised I had been participating in a mad orgy of sex, naked ladies and drugs', which really shows how knee-jerk reactions can create something out of a relatively pedestrian event. The actual music festival was attended by around 20,000 people over the 3 days but now entices 110,000 music lovers each year.



The years immediately preceding my chosen period of investigation, 1976-1979, were relatively quiet in terms of major events before punk.

In 1972 the **Top Rank** Suite hosted The Pioneers who performed reggae for the local skinhead crowd, most of which were formerly mods. They were followed the same year by Lindisfarne, which was a break from the usual soul which attracted the working-class crowds. The prog rock band was booked by the **SU** and goes to show that there was still some way to go to bridge the gap between the students and the community.

In 1973 Folk clubs began popping up in pubs, drawing small but loyal crowds for short periods of time. These were briefly advertised in the local press but soon petered out and were often frequented by the burgeoning student beatnik crowd. Finally, in 1973 glam rock arrived in Reading - **Roxy Music** played at the **Town Hall** and had ties to the town with Andy MacKay having attended the University. This is important as **Roxy Music** would have a strong influence on the punk bands to come.

CULTURAL TIMELINE OF THE 1970s IN READING

The BBC show '**Something Else**' featuring interviews from the people of Reading and a performance by the Reading band **General Accident**, scan the QR code to watch



70
71
72

1970

Hippies started to host gigs in the Abbey Ruins by borrowing a generator from local music shop 'Hickies' - these were very popular with the students

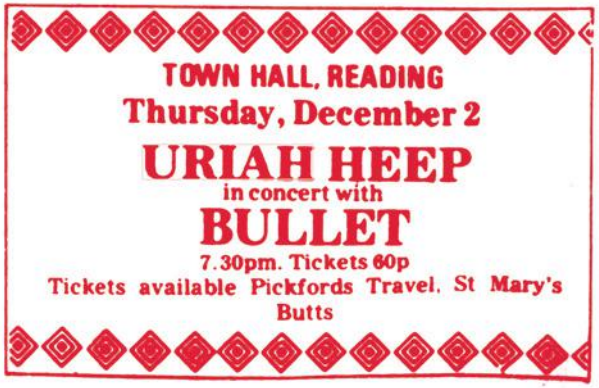
1971

Mobile discos started to take the place of live music in venues as they were cheaper than established bands

The **Target** opened beneath the Butts Centre, they hosted gigs 5 nights a week and became a place for bands to do practice runs before continuing on to play in London

The Town Hall started to branch away from pop and into heavy metal with gigs from King Crimson and Uriah Heep

Thin Lizzy played a set at the **Thing-A-Me-Jig**



1972

The Pioneers performed reggae at the **Top Rank** for the local skinhead crowd

The **Top Rank** was hired out for Lindisfarne, which was a break from the usual soul which attracted the working class crowds, the meandering prog rock which was booked by the **SU** shows that there was still some way to go to bridge the gap between the students and the community

73
74
75

1973

Folk clubs began popping up in pubs, they drew small but loyal crowds and often didn't last for many dates. These began to briefly be backed up with ads in the local press but soon petered out

Glam rock had come to Reading, **Roxy Music** played at the Town Hall and had ties to the town with Andy MacKay having attended the University

1974

The **Caribbean Club** opens where Reggae was the main staple

The Millers Arms in Caversham still offered Jazz though it was losing favour in the town

Top Rank was changing format more towards Glam, Soul and Country

1975

The Stranglers play the **Top Rank** - one of the first of the emerging Punk bands in the town

Pink Floyd, **Led Zeppelin**, **Queen**, **Elton John**, **Wings** and **Bowie** all top the charts. **The Sex Pistols** play their first gig at St Martins College, London.

Prog rock was still going strong in the town, due to the Windsor Free Festival being cancelled, the attendees made their way to **Reading Festival** without tickets increasing attendance by 20,000

1976
1977
1978
1979

1976

The Sex Pistols play the fine arts department at **Reading University** in May

Blondie and the **Ramones** released their debut albums, disco was making waves with Abba in the top 10 three times.

Local musician Gerald T Moore bought the Reggae music favoured by skinheads, mods and the working class kids to the middle class white rock fans in Reading.

Reading Festival is officially called “Reading Rock”

1978

The first year of Punk at the Festival with **Sham 69**, **The Jam**, **Penetration** among others



VIEWS OF THE TOWN IN THE 1970s

If you were unceremoniously dropped off in 1970s Reading, aside from being confused, what exactly would it be like? What was there?





ABC Cinema on Friar Street in 1976, courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: Reading, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Duke Street, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: Broad Street, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Reading Prison, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: St Mary's Butts, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: Station Approach, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Church Street, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Market Place, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: Reading Market, 1977



Below: River Kennet, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: 'Metal Box', 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee 1977



Above: The Gas Works, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Above: Reading Station, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Jacksons Corner, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Below: Friar Street, 1976
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**

PART FOUR

THE KIDS ALRIGHT

S ARE

Whatever happened to Léon Trotsky
He got an ice pic
That made his ears bur
Whatever happened to dear old Lenny
The great Elmyra, and Sancho Panza
Whatever happened to the heroes
Whatever happened to the heroes
Whatever happened to all the heroes
All the Shakespearoes
They watched their Rome bur
Whatever happened to the heroes
Whatever happened to the heroes
No more heroes any mor
No more heroes any mor
Whatever happened to all the heroes
All the Shakespearoes
They watched their Rome bur
Whatever happened to the heroes
Whatever happened to the heroes
No more heroes any mor
No more heroes any mor

YOUTH CULTURE IN READING

Reading had many different youth cultures during the 1960s and 1970s.

There was a huge music scene with bars and clubs hosting more music events than they do today.

Reading was a hive of youth culture in the 70s and 80s. Teddy boys, Rockabillys, Punk Rockers, Skinheads, Mods... yes there was the occasional clash and fights between us all but the biggest issue and problem was with what we all called the Smoothies

M. Greenaway

MODS

Mods have their roots in 1950s London, called modernists due to their love of modern jazz.

Moving into the 60s, the Mods would ride on Lambrettas or Vespas, wear tailored Italian suits and listen to rock bands such as **The Small Faces** and **The Who**.

The infamous clashes between Mods and Rockers would surface due in part to the Rockers. With their leather jackets and motorcycles they found the Mods to be effeminate due to their interest in fashion and appearance.

The middle-class art school and coffee bar roots of the Mods actually drew them quite close to the Beatnik subculture.

Within Reading, the mods held the **Olympia** as their spiritual home.

I don't mind other guys dancing with my girl
That's fine, I know them all pretty well
But I know sometimes I must get out in the light
Better leave her behind with the kids, they're alright
The kids are alright
Sometimes, I feel I gotta get away
Bells chime, I know I gotta get away
And I know if I don't, I'll go out of my mind
Better leave her behind with the kids, they're alright
The kids are alright
I know if I go things would be a lot better for her
I had things planned, but her folks wouldn't let her
I don't mind other guys dancing with my girl
That's fine, I know them all pretty well
But I know sometimes I must get out in the light
Better leave her behind with the kids, they're alright
The kids are alright
Sometimes, I feel I gotta get away
Bells chime, I know I gotta get away
And I know if I don't, I'll go out of my mind
ve her behind with the kids, they're alright
the kids are alright, the kids are alrigh



SKINHEADS

Some of the working class Mods became the Skinheads, they had removed themselves from the Hippies or the 'longhairs' by shaving their heads, wore Ben Sherman, Dr Martens, Levis and braces.

There was a real 'working-class hero' pride in the skinhead movement since its inception in the 1960s.

Skinheads came in waves. Originally, they were heavily influenced by Jamaican rude boys and alternative lifestyles to conservatism and the hippy subculture. From here they moved into ska, rock-steady and reggae all of which are very integrated with black culture, showing they mixed well with different groups at least for a period.

Unfortunately, by the late 1970s moving into the 1980s, they had become more radicalised with their affiliation with the National Front and became a more extreme group with violence and destruction seeming to follow them wherever they went.

They frequented the **Britannia Tap** pub and later, the **Jolly Porter**.



HIPPIES

Generally speaking, hippies tended to be white, middle-class teens and twenty-somethings. With their rejection of materialism and the oppressed outlooks of their parents, they were more 'left' oriented with their famous 'make love, not war' outlook, preferring rock and psychedelia.

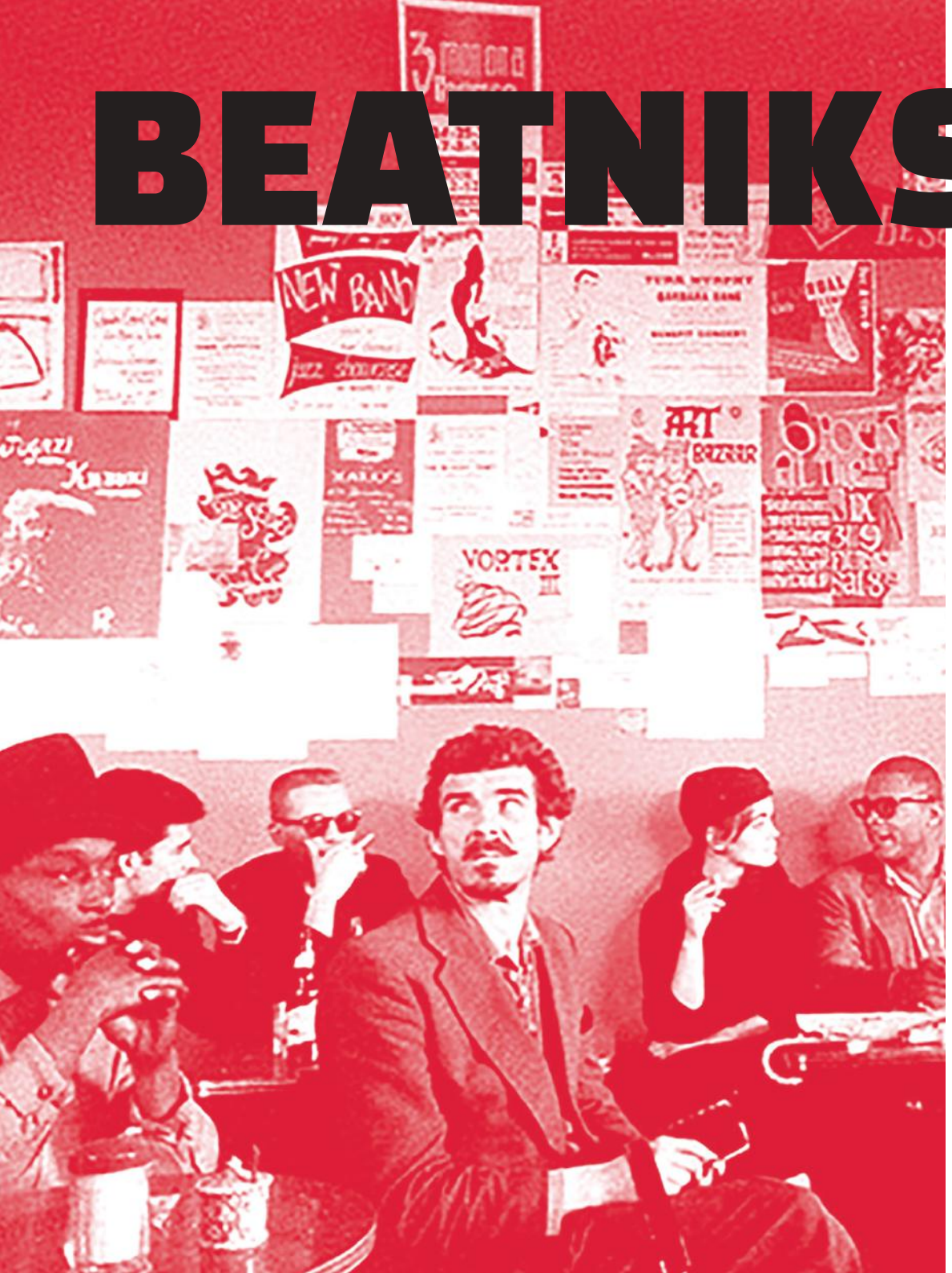
Arthur Brown went to University in the town and would be a standard bearer for the Reading Hippie scene. The scene has been in Reading for many years, along with the Beatniks.

The generator shows and various gigs around the town made hippies quite a fluid group in Reading though a fair amount of bands favoured by hippies did play the **Target** and the **Town Hall**. I suppose this also leaned into the idea that hippies were very inclusive and would try to get along anywhere.



I am the god of hellfire and I bring you
Fire, I'll take you to burn
Fire, I'll take you to learn
I'll see you burn
You fought hard and you saved and earned
But all of it's going to burn
And your mind, your tiny mind
You know you've really been so blind
Now's your time, burn your mind
You're falling far, too far behind
Oh no, oh no, oh no!
You're gonna burn
Fire, to destroy all you've done
Fire, to end all you've become
I'll feel you burn
u've been living like a little girl
n the middle of your little world
And your mind, your tiny mind
now you've really been so blind
ow's your time, burn your mind
You're falling far, too far behind
Oooh
Fire, I'll take you to burn
Fire, I'll take you to learn
You're gonna burn
You're gonna burn
e gonna burn, burn, burn, burn,
rn, burn, burn, burn, burn, burn
Fire, I'll take you to burn
Fire, I'll take you to learn
Fire, I'll take you to bed
Fire, I'll take you, fire

BEATNIKS



Folk, jazz, the arts and intellect would be a good way to sum up the beatnik crowd; they would frequent pubs in the town that promoted the folk clubs such as the **Red Cow**, the **White Horse** and **the Crown**. They also played the town's coffee shops in the 60s such as **Shades**.

Reading does have quite a long history with the culture - most pubs did hold folk nights and the town was home to local folk stars such as **Mike Cooper** and **Marianne Faithfull**.

The University was so entrenched in jazz and folk that when **Pink Floyd** played in 1967, one student paper actually wrote that the gig was "rather like having one's ears glued to a pair of maracas and then being put into one of those centrifuge machines they train astronauts in".

SMOOTHIES



Nowadays, everything is very distilled into obvious themes and tropes. When we look at the 60s and 70s, you think of mods, rockers, hippies, skinheads and punks. Unfortunately, it's just not that simple.

Smoothies were a group that mould so easily into the other groups that unless you were there, you would just lump them with skinheads. They were known as bovver boys, hard mods and bootboys and they were quite violent.

These guys were, like the punk movement, fighting against the idea that they had no future, no prospects, bad grades and dead end jobs. Instead of trying to build something and create an escape, smoothies fought the world around them. Essentially they were the steel-toecapped, braces and Levis wearing thugs of the 1970s.

Football violence at **Elm Park**, getting smashed at the weekend and having a punch up with anyone that gave you a sideways look was par for the course. Though, if your only options are a poorly paid job in a factory or spending time in a Borstal, I suppose you would feel quite downtrodden and want to fight.

Do It Again, Do It (Do It)
Let's Do It Again (Do It)
Mmm (Do It Again, Do It Again)
Gonna Do It Again (Do It)
Do It, Do It
Let's Do It Again (Do It)
Do It Again
Sometimes The Rain
Groovin' When I Hear The Sound
Like You And Me, Baby
Gettin' Down With The Sounds Around
Oh, The Smell Of The Mornin' Flower
As We Pass Away The Hour
I Wanna Do It Again, Do It Again
Do It (Do It)
Let's Do It In The Mornin'
Sweet Breeze In The Summer Time
Feeling Your Sweet Face
All Laid Up Next To Mine
Sweet Love In The Midnight
Good Sleep, Come Mornin' Light
No Worries 'Bout Nothin'
Just Gettin' Good, Just Gettin' Good
Just Gettin' Good Love
Do It, Do It Again
Do It Again (Do It)
Do It
Now I Like You, Lady
So Fine With Your Pretty Hair
If You Don't Mind My Compliments
Just Diggin' On The Clothes You Wear
I'm Just A Man Now Don't You Fear
I Can Love You Now I Brought You Here

TEDDY BOYS & ROCKABILLYS

This culture is where things get slightly confusing, when rockabilly first came to the UK from the US in the 1950s, it was taken up by the Teddy Boys.

Teds used to dress in zoot suits and clothing reminiscent of 1940s America. Velvet jackets, high-waist drainpipe trousers, slim ties and creepers or chunky brogues. They also sported greased long hair with quiffs - seemingly the archetypal 'rock and roll' look.

Favouring **Elvis**, **Bill Haley** and **Eddie Cochran**, the English iteration would also listen to UK rockabilly such as **Tommy Steele**, **Marty Wilde**, **Cliff Richard**, **Dickie Pride**, and **Joe Brown**.

So, along with the Teddy Boys, the rockers (of mods and rockers fame) also took on rockabilly though they were to take on the 'greaser' look of leather jackets and jeans.

In the 1970s, rockabilly bands like **Stray Cats** were favoured which was also listened to by the punk scene. In the US, the CBGB's punk scene spawned **The Cramps** which took rockabilly and combined lyrics inspired by drive-in B-movies to create psychobilly which was much closer to punk.



PART FIVE

WHAT AB
PUNKS?


BOUT THE
Well the kids are all hopped up and ready to g
They're ready to go no
They got their surfboard
And they're going to the Discotheque Au Go G
But she just couldn't sta
She had to break awa
Well New York City really has it a
Oh yeah, oh yea
Sheena is a punk rocke
Sheena is a punk rocke
Sheena is a punk rocker nov
Sheena is a punk rocke
Sheena is a punk rocke
Sheena is a punk rocker nov
She's a punk punk, a punk rocke
Punk punk, a punk rocke

THE RISE OF PUNK IN THE UK

I remember when my dad worked for EMI they turned down some punk bands because of their dislike of the monarchy and political parties at the time

P. McMichael - Reading Resident



This and that, they must be the sam
What is legal is just what's re
What I'm given to understar
Is exactly what I ste
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I was shocked to find what was allowe
I didn't lose myself in the crow
Shot by both side
On the run to the outside of everythin
Shot by both side
They must have come to a secret understandin
New offenses always in my nerve
They're taking my time by forc
They all sound the same when they screa
As a matter of cours
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I was shocked to find what was allowe
I didn't lose myself in the crow
Shot by both side
On the run to the outside of everythin
Shot by both side
They must have come to a secret understandin
"Why are you so edgy, kid"
Asks the man with the voic
One thing follows anothe
You live and learn, you have no choic
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I wormed my way into the heart of the crow
I was shocked to find what was allowe
I didn't lose myself in the crow
Didn't lose myself in the crow

Punk had its roots in the garage rock of the US with bands like **MC5** and **the Stooges** - they were the early punks, but they weren't like British punk. The downtrodden left-leaning political ideologies, style of torn clothes and safety pins and anger at their perceived injustices were a British influence on the DIY punk movement. Within the UK, the punk movement, in its purest sense, began and ended with bands like the **Sex Pistols**, **The Damned** and **The Clash**. They represented different tangents of the movement with the Clash having very political leanings and a melodic take on music, the **Sex Pistols** who, for all intents and purposes were all about shock value and **The Damned**, who again had a certain amount of shock value but were a harder sound. These bands were iconic in the way they developed the blueprint for songs that meant something to youth at the time. For example, '**Guns of Brixton**' referred to police brutality and '**Pretty Vacant**' portrayed a numb sense of ennui possessed by kids of the 1970s. By singing about relatable subjects, they showed that no matter who you were or where you were from, you had a voice and you didn't have to accept things as they were.

The other youth movements at the time had protested before, they had stood up for what they wanted and believed was right but it wasn't until punk that the fight was more confrontational. The established order of things saw this group of sloppily dressed, angry and possibly destructive bands and teenagers and they didn't see a way to control it. They didn't rely on the press to spread the word, they made their own press with handmade and copied 'zines. There was a sense that they were making their own world, they had their own groups and their own rules. They didn't want the music of the time, they didn't want to be told what to think or what to listen to, they made their own.



New York Dolls



The Stooges



MC5

When Ziggy fell from favour and lost all his memory, he had a son before he died...Johnny Rotten.

David Bowie

Early Seventies Britain was a very depressing place. It was completely run-down, there was trash on the streets, total unemployment—just about everybody was on strike. Everybody was brought up with an education system that told you point blank that if you came from the wrong side of the tracks...then you had no hope in hell and no career prospects at all. Out of that came pretentious moi and the Sex Pistols and then a whole bunch of copycat wankers after us.

John Lydon/Johnny Rotten





The public reaction was confusion and fear, this is probably in part due to the shock-value nature of the scene. The use of swastikas and bare breasts on t-shirts raised eyebrows, this is thanks largely to **Malcolm McLaren** and **Vivienne Westwood**'s SEX shop in Chelsea. The aesthetic was largely due to their shop and the model/ shop assistant they had during the 1970s, **Pamela Rooke**. In 1975, after his jaunt in the US managing the **New York Dolls**, McLaren returned with an interest in managing a punk band like those he had seen in Manhattan, particularly **The Ramones**.

The members of the **Sex Pistols** frequented the shop in 1974 and McLaren had started managing them as **The Strand**. After his trip to the US they eventually became The **Sex Pistols** and, after unsuccessfully trying to hire **Sylvain Sylvain** from **New York Dolls**, **John Lydon** was hired for vocals based on his look and attitude.

Left: Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood
Right: Pamela Rooke and Johnny Rotten

So there I was, all quiet and well behaved, nursing my drink and minding my own business, when someone put a record on the jukebox that turned my head right round and changed everything. The track started very loud and I looked at the jukebox, unable to believe what I was hearing. It was as if the place had been hit by mortar fire. Just under three minutes later I walked out of the pub and onto the street, my body literally shaking with excitement and anxiety, my mind blown. That was the effect this incredible cut had on me. The lyrics mocking and scathing, had been spat out with undisguised hatred; the incendiary guitars, like detonating bombs at the chorus, seemed to sum up exactly how I felt. I went back in and looked at the credits. The track was called 'Anarchy In The UK.' The band was The Sex Pistols.

Jimmy Nail

From here, with McLaren's guidance, they went on to cause more outrage leading to the infamous **Grundy interview** where they were coaxed into swearing on television - nothing by today's standards but compared to the conservative standards of the 1970s BBC, this was unacceptable. Shortly after, they were dropped from **EMI** after being signed for 90 days. They were uncontrollable and unpredictable, they had released Anarchy In The UK and it had sparked something that would go on to inspire countless other bands. The more bad publicity they got, the more people wanted to read about them, they had started a flood of punk bands, soon punk was all over the charts and record labels would be fighting to pick them up.



The Sex Pistols at the time, Johnny Rotten, Paul Cook, Steve Jones and Glen Matlock along with Siouxsie Sioux her drummer Steve Severin, Simon Barker and 'Simone' being interviewed by Bill Grundy.

The Anarchy In The UK tour they undertook, supported by **The Clash**, **Johnny Thunder and The Heartbreakers** and **The Damned**, would inspire more bands to form. In 1976 they played a gig in London which drew the attention of 2 music fans from Manchester to attend, Howard DeVoto and Pete Shelley who, inspired, went home and formed **The Buzzcocks**. The pair then arranged a gig at the Lesser Free Trade Hall in Manchester which in turn was frequented by Ian Curtis, Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook who went on to form **Joy Division**, Mark E. Smith who went on to form **The Fall**, Stephen Patrick Morrissey who, obviously, is **Morrissey** and Brian Wilson who went on to form **Factory Records** and propelled bands such as **Joy Division**, **New Order**, **Happy Mondays** and **A Certain Ratio** and from there pretty much created Madchester with the club **The Hacienda**.

Interestingly, the main band that I have found mentioned in Reading seems to have been **The Damned** rather than the **Sex Pistols**. This is probably due to the fact that **The Damned** actually released the first punk single in the UK, 'New Rose' in 1976 and it seemed to get a fair amount of airplay before the media had its knee jerk reaction to the culture that would follow.

Everyone had an opinion about punk and it was usually negative. The Pistols' Anarchy In The UK tour was decimated as 'outraged' councils up and down the country banned the group from playing. Only a few gigs remained. I managed to get to the Manchester show at the Electric Circus and they were still awe inspiring. Rotten was electrifying. In a way all the adverse publicity had a galvanising effect on the punk scene. It was us and them.

Mark P - Sniffin' Glue zine



WHEN PUNK HIT READING

It was tribal, we were school kids, they were old bastards, it was time for a change and we did it in style

S. Owen - Reading Punk


Is she really going out with him
I got a feeling inside of m
It's kind of strange like a stormy se
I don't know why I don't know wh
I guess these things have got to b
I gotta new rose I got it goo
Guess I knew that I always woul
I can't stop to mess aroun
I got a brand new rose in tow
See the sun see the sun it shine
Don't get too close or it'll burn your eye
Don't you run away that wa
You can come back and then da
I got a new rose I got it goo
Guess I knew that I always woul
I can't stop to mess aroun
I got a brand new rose in tow
I never thought this could happen to m
This is strange why should it b
I don't deserve somebody this grea
I'd better go or it'll be too lat
I got a feeling inside of m
It's kind of strange like a stormy se
I don't know why I don't know wh
I guess these things have got to b
I got a new rose I got her goo
Guess I knew that I always woul
I can't stop to mess aroun
I got a brand new rose in tow



Outside looking in-
a punk's eye viev

By JANE DAUNCEY

EVERYBODY knows about race prejudice — but how about punk prejudice.

Lou Clark and Dillan are firmly convinced that the way you look can cause people to keep you out of pubs, clubs and jobs.

And they probably know, because they've both been punks for years. Lou and Dillan are now the national experts for a punks-eye view of Reading. They were chosen from lots of other young people by a BBC-2 team to make a programme about the town.

It's not surprising that prejudice against appearance was the subject Lou picked for her part of the programme, "Something Else," shown last month. And it was only because of her punk outfit that the BBC researchers ever found her.

Lou, 17, explained how she'd seen a notice outside a post office advertising vacancies. She had no work, and decided to try. "But his man stopped me in the doorway," she said. "I asked: 'Why, have all the jobs gone?' and he said they hadn't but I couldn't go in because I was a punk."

This incident annoyed her so much, she went to the Number 5 youth counselling service to protest. And they introduced her to the BBC team who had been round asking for young people with strong ideas.

But even while doing the research for the BBC-2 programme, screened in November, Lou found that people wouldn't talk to her.

"Lots of business places just didn't want to know," she said.

And her fiance, 21-year-old

'BARRED' COUPLE RAP SOCIETY

a lot of them would mind. They've probably got sons and daughters like us!"

Both Dillan and Lou strongly deny that punks are violent or cause more trouble than anyone else, "specially in Reading, because it's a small town, the punks and mods and rockers know each other. So there's no big fights," said Dillan.

"The press give us a bad reputation. Like picking the most mean and savage looking guy with safety pins through his nose to photograph. The only ones who deserve their reputation are the skinheads. Violence is part of their thing."

Asked to define punks, and their thing, Lou and Dillan looked at each other and struggled for words. "There's so many different kinds now

— splin
things," sa
Lou added
want as lon
harm anyone
think anyway
Doing wha
dressing
brought eith
luck with job
few temp job
to Rosehill
Green, from
her family.

Mar
Dillan is st
out for work
given up as
getting marr
and having
They both en
putting toge
gramme, and
hoping he ca
his graphics.
"It was tiri
esting thing
"They shoul
grammes li
"I think
back to R
another f
only thin
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should ma
people wa
"Our ag
agrees wi
the manag
who own t
want to w
like ours."

The idea that if you wanted change, you could make it happen yourself was prevalent amongst the population at large, especially in Reading. There was a feeling that they were being told untruths somewhere along the line and there must be something they could do about it. This kind of thinking was evident in the BBC show 'Something Else', which interviewed Reading residents and asked them what they thought of the mainstream news. The show was a local BBC production, visiting a different town each week and choosing a few of the local kids to pick a local band and a bigger, national band to play on the show; for Reading it was the band **General Accident** and **The Specials**. It was essentially written by the local kids too which has led me to surmise from their music choices that Reading was a very punk town.

In 1974, The **Caribbean Club** opened its doors to the newly arriving West Indian community. This venue was geared towards playing reggae music, and became important to the Reading punk movement as punk and reggae had a very intrinsic link in the town. The same year, the Millers Arms in Caversham was one of the last in the town to still offer jazz to patrons. The **Top Rank** had changed its offering to glam, soul and country. This doesn't seem relevant until you consider that glam evolved into punk, and marked another step in the path to punk being adopted by the town. This actually led to **The Stranglers** making their debut in the club in 1975.

In 1975 the charts were full of rock and glam with Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Queen, Elton John, Wings and Bowie all occupying the top of the charts. However, while this was going on, the **Sex Pistols** played their first gig at St Martins College, London, making their first tentative steps from obscurity to the media circus which would ensue. In May the following year, they would play the fine arts department at Reading University although this gig went under the radar, with the wider town not actually being told where the gig was being held.

By 1976, internationally, **Blondie** and **The Ramones** released their debut albums and disco was making waves with Abba in the top 10 three times. However locally, musician Gerald T Moore bought the Reggae music favoured by skinheads, mods and the working class to the middle-class white rock fans in Reading. This was also the year that the **Sex Pistols** played Reading University's Art Department to a small crowd who had found their way there.

The music scene was absolute shit at the time, aimless pop songs and old hippies still trying to hang in there, we kicked them into touch overnight.

S. Owen - Reading Punk

When punk actually reached Reading, it seems that there were a number of ways that people picked up on it. The main thing to take into account is that when you mention punk there is a clear definition between the early punks in their charity shop clothes and shock value choices in badges and personalisation and the punks that appear as the stereotype with pins, mohawks and dyed hair - Reading punks certainly at the beginning at least, were definitely the former.

They were grassroots in the way that a lot of the crowd were drawn to the movement not only through the radio plays of 'New Rose' and other punk fayre (at least before **210** put a stop to it) or gaining access to vinyl from independent shops such as Quicksilver Records which would actually start signing punk bands, but through the way that punk allowed them freedom from the mundane days of the 1970s with no jobs and no prospects. Punk was what you made it, if you had no money then grab something second hand and make it yours. If you couldn't afford gig tickets to one of the big national or international bands then start your own band and have your friends come and see you play. In Reading, there were venues upon venues and places like **The Target** would allow anyone to play. There was a scene that was starting to take hold and it was spreading.

Punk was certainly a big deal in the town in the fact that **Bones** was the only club outside of London that catered purely for punks, it would attract bands that would hit the big-time later on, purely for the fact that there was literally nowhere else to play.

It's quite interesting that punk was self perpetuating too: the sight of other punks spurred people to get involved and become punks and therefore kept the movement going and developing. As quickly as it caught on though, it seemed to burn out. The **Sex Pistols** in their infamy had with one hand started the fire but with the other hand ensured that it could not spread too far. Their 'Anarchy in the UK' tour became so infamous that they actually got banned from playing pretty much anywhere in the UK which led to venues stopping punk gigs from occurring. This in turn led the general population to believe that punks were inherently bad and even not allowing them to be hired for work (see news article) or actively avoiding punks in the workplace.

I think that this aversion is what caused local band **General Accident** who, in everything I have seen, actively call themselves punks and played at punk venues to their punk fans, denied being a punk band on radio **210** and compared themselves more to a reggae band and said they 'never were a punk band'. This shunning of punk in a commercial setting is quite

I did put green dye in my hair once and one guy at work never spoke to me again...

P. Smith - Reading Punk



The Sex Pistols at Caversham before their gig at Reading University

interesting as it would have gotten them at least some airplay on a radio station that had banned punk. Showing that punk was, at least in the late 70s, very difficult to actually pin down for people that weren't actually involved.

It seemed to be universal opinion that the music was aimed at the middle class, the jobs just weren't there and the prospects were dire. As true as this was for the whole country, in this town, it united the kids into different tribes and these tribes are still meeting up. They still reminisce about **The Star** pub and gigs and they put on and attended and they still have a very punk aura about them.



Punk rock group General Accident outside the insurance company's offices in Reading. Left to right: Jon, Ned D. Rummer, Chris and Tramp.
PICTURE: MARTIN HAYHOW

By VICKI ELCOATE

THE giant insurance company General Accident puts its name at a different — and it wants to ensure that Reading punk group called General Accident follows that policy.

But General Accident, the insurance company, does not approve of its musical namesake and is considering suing if the group keeps using their trade name.

And the insurance company are also annoyed about the disappearance of one of their sign boards.

The group came to the notice of the insurance company when they played their first date at Newbury last month. And there was a sign on the stage.

"Somebody took down the office name board at Newbury," said Mr A. H. Bosworth, the general manager of the office at London Road, Reading.

Title

Mr Bosworth said that if the name was not changed the company would take the matter further. "I should think we could sue them" he said.

But General Accident, the group, say the insurance company has no claims on the name General Accident because its full title is General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation Ltd — a bit of a mouthful for a punk band.

The band say they have been in touch with the Musicians' Union, of which they are members, and they agreed that the company only had claims on the full title.

"They told we could use it," said lead singer, Tramp, from Purley. "But we might shorten it to GA."

Mystery

The group, whose other members are Chris Normal, on bass, "Jon" on guitar and Ned D. Rummer, on drums, insist they have not got the sign board.

"At our first gig at Newbury college this sign was just there," said Tramp. We haven't got it. Then it happened again at Bones Club in Reading — It just keeps turning up. We call it the mystery sign.

"They can't sue us because we haven't got 'insurance company' on the end. It's just that they've had the name so long they don't want to give it up."

He said the group decided on the name because they met by accident. "We thought we would create a family. We all know each other socially as well as on a musical basis."

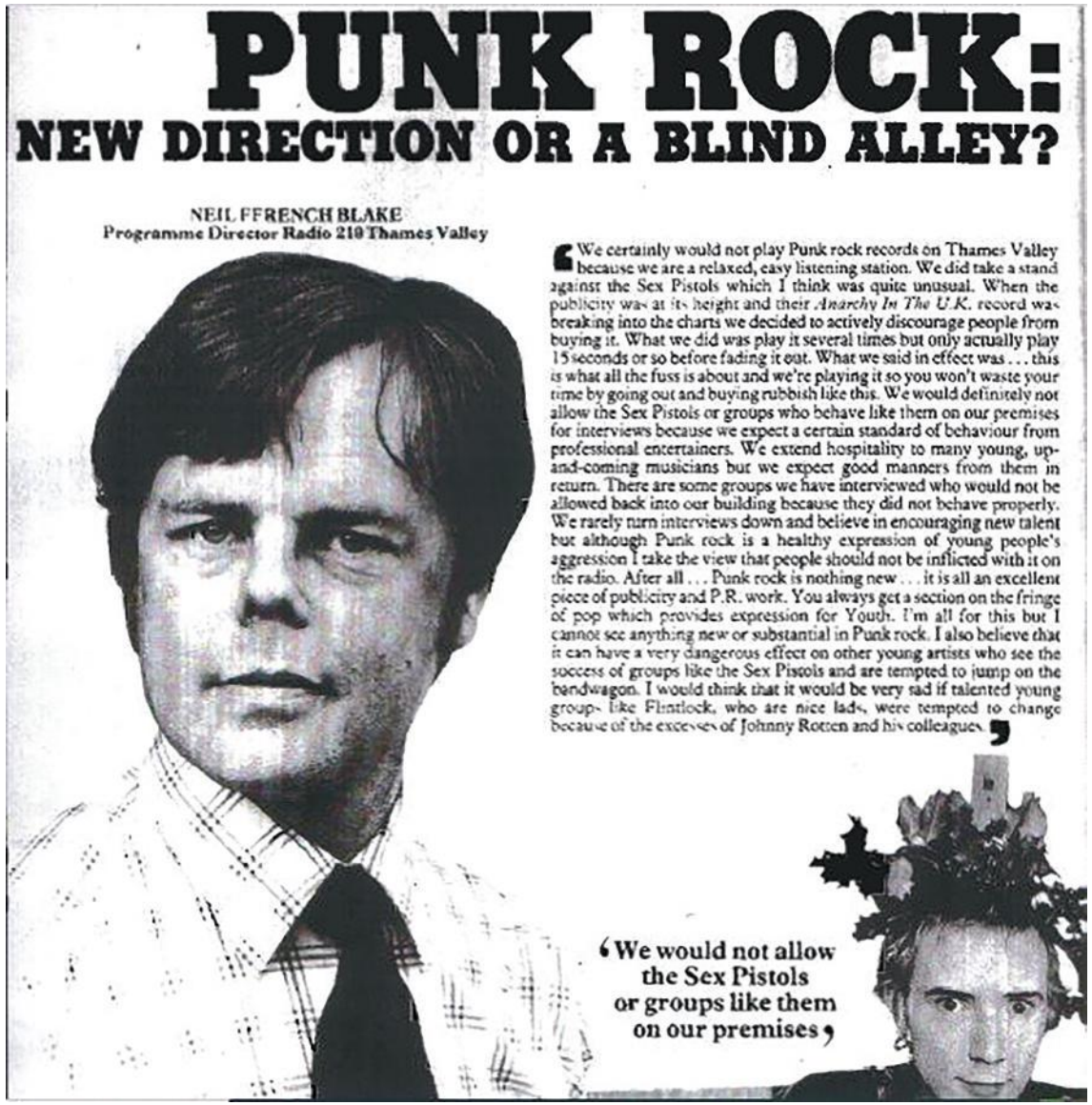
■ Extra police were called in to Reading town centre on Saturday afternoon after complaints about unruly punk rockers outside an entertainment arcade. A police spokesman said today that there had been no arrests during the disturbance.



Punk rocker saves baby from blaze

By PETER MURRIS

A YOUNG punk rocker



PUNK ROCK:
NEW DIRECTION OR A BLIND ALLEY?

NEIL FFRENCH BLAKE
Programme Director Radio 210 Thames Valley

"We certainly would not play Punk rock records on Thames Valley because we are a relaxed, easy listening station. We did take a stand against the Sex Pistols which I think was quite unusual. When the publicity was at its height and their *Anarchy In The U.K.* record was breaking into the charts we decided to actively discourage people from buying it. What we did was play it several times but only actually play 15 seconds or so before fading it out. What we said in effect was . . . this is what all the fuss is about and we're playing it so you won't waste your time by going out and buying rubbish like this. We would definitely not allow the Sex Pistols or groups who behave like them on our premises for interviews because we expect a certain standard of behaviour from professional entertainers. We extend hospitality to many young, up-and-coming musicians but we expect good manners from them in return. There are some groups we have interviewed who would not be allowed back into our building because they did not behave properly. We rarely turn interviews down and believe in encouraging new talent but although Punk rock is a healthy expression of young people's aggression I take the view that people should not be inflicted with it on the radio. After all . . . Punk rock is nothing new . . . it is all an excellent piece of publicity and P.R. work. You always get a section on the fringe of pop which provides expression for Youth. I'm all for this but I cannot see anything new or substantial in Punk rock. I also believe that it can have a very dangerous effect on other young artists who see the success of groups like the Sex Pistols and are tempted to jump on the bandwagon. I would think that it would be very sad if talented young groups like Flintlock, who are nice lads, were tempted to change because of the excesses of Johnny Rotten and his colleagues."

"We would not allow the Sex Pistols or groups like them on our premises"

The only story I can offer is that, at the time, punk music was largely unheard of on radio, and Reading's local radio station, Radio 210, was more known for playing pop or "Middle of the Road" music. Two of their young, new presenters were Mike Read and Steve Wright (yes, both went on to Radio 1 later, and Steve is on Radio 2 today!). For a few weeks, "Read & Wright" as they were known, played a Punk top 20 chart on 210 on a Saturday - one day the boss of 210, Neil ffrench-Blake heard this, and rushed to the studio at Calcot to tell them off - the conversation was something like this:- Neil - "What do you boys call this" Read & Wright - "It's the punk top 20" Neil - "It's the LAST punk top 20"!!

In fact, the rebellion of Read & Wright playing a Punk top 20 on 210 was even funnier, when you consider this article from the time, with Neil Ffrench-Blake (left) making his views on punk music very clear!

B Denton








M Greenaway - Punk

Punks in Reading were around as early as 1975 . Reading was a hive of youth culture in the 70s and 80s . Teddy boys, Rockabillys, Punk Rockers, Skinheads, Mods. All had their own favourite pubs to go to and various clubs to frequent that played the music each culture loved , yes there was the occasional clash and fights between us all but the biggest issue and problem was with what we all called the Smoothies, folks that had no concept of youth culture, just enjoyed beating people up that were different. Reading Uni and the old **Caribbean Club** would have bands on to suit the styles of music at the time. Reading was a great place to be in the 70s early 80s for that very reason.

J Dewhirst - Reading Youth

As an onlooker at the time, as I was a tiny bit too young for the punk scene, I remember seeing a group of punks in Broad Street frequently on Saturdays. People used to sidestep them, be quite wary. The older generation certainly didn't seem impressed, especially after the infamous interview on teatime TV with the **Sex Pistols**. Someone told me subsequently that Liz Hurley was one of the 'Reading Punks' but I've no idea if this is accurate. I have more general memories of the town in the 70s.

M Gill - Reading Youth

I think Reading hosted the first punk wedding too and it was in the paper...

R Howard - Punk

I was fascinated by the punks in town and always looked forward to driving past **The Star** on Sunday night taking my granny home to Shinfield so I could see who was hanging around outside. A couple of years later I was old enough and brave enough to actually go inside.

S Day - Punk

As a 15 year old this seemed something new and exciting, a little bit of rebellion against parents, the government and all they stood for and every old bigoted fogey who gave us a hard time. The music made you feel alive!

L Williams - Punk

It was Hong Kong garden for me. I took the record round to a friend's to play to the girls and they hated it as they were all into disco but my friend's dad said to me follow my own choices and not the crowd, so I did.













S Owen - Punk

It was an explosion. It all happened so fast, nobody could do anything to stop it and for a short while the music industry was out of control. The authorities were suddenly powerless with all the independent labels springing up all over the place. It was an amazing time.

J Haste - Punk

The 1970's were awful- bleak, depressing, pointless. I was 14, in 1976, listening to John Peel on my little transistor radio and I heard New Rose by **The Damned**. That was it for me. I had a difficult home life, hated school and I felt like nobody could see or hear me. Now I had a way of making people see me, whether they wanted to or not! I loved the music and I had finally found a tribe where I belonged.

D Holder - Punk

It was in 1976 after seeing ideas in the style magazines and press.

P Smith - Punk

I used to go to **Bones** pretty regularly, I still have my membership card somewhere, Kevin Sheeran is spot on with the bands that we both saw around town at that time, The Doomed (Damned) played **Bones**, as well as Adam and the Ants, **999** The Lurkers, Penetration, there was also later on Reading bands like **General Accident**, The Geisha Girls, early Punk days were in my mind a change of attitude towards music, I wasn't into all the bondage stuff and looking like Sid, I did put green dye in my hair once and one guy at work never spoke to me again, there was also a pub on the canal **The Star** I think, big late 70's punk hangout, Reading had a great music scene at **The Target** early 70's but it really wasn't a punk hang out, I had very long hair and flares when I used to go there, I turned up for the XTC gig and couldn't get in, Reading Uni used to put on bands, but I think after trouble at some shows non students were banned, I did see The Smiths there but that would have been in the 80's.








PLAY WELL WITH OTHERS?

Was it all love and harmony between different groups?
Did the public live and let live? It doesn't seem so


Big girl in the red dres
She's just trying to impress u
And she's got the barley feve
But she doesn't make a sour
She's just hanging aroun
She's just hanging aroun
Down the court road ear
With the Hustlers big and bur
There's a million of 'em sellin
And the buyers can be four
They're just hanging aroun
They're just hanging aroun
Christ he told his moth
Christ he told her not to bothe
Cos he's alright in the ci
Cos he's high above the groun
He's just hanging around (hanging around
He's just hanging around (hanging around
He's just hanging around (hanging around
He's just hanging around (hanging around
One of 'em comes ove
Got a monkey on his shoulde
And the monkey's getting grinne
But his eyes are on the groun
He's just hanging aroun
He's just hanging aroun
I'm moving to a colehem
With the leather all around m
And the sweat is getting steam
But their eyes are on the groun
They're just hanging arou
They're just hanging aroun
Christ he told his mothe

The most famous violent occurrence in Reading between punks and the other cultures of the time was at **Reading Festival** in 1978. The festival was in its 17th year as **Reading Festival** and the line up had finally begun to have punk bands appearing with **Sham 69**, **Penetration** and **The Jam** performing on the Friday.

Sham 69 were wrapping up their set with a rendition of 'If the Kids are United' when there was a loss of control and fights began to break out in the crowd. In footage of the festival, you can see the crowd dancing and more and more people getting on the stage. Mark Hibberd, who I have interviewed later in this book, was actually on the stage just as the gig wound up and described his view of what happened. It seems to have been skinheads starting on the hippies with punks and onlookers getting dragged into the fray. The thing that I find most strange about this isn't that there was a riot or disturbance at **Reading Festival**, or even a stage invasion or a fight but, Jimmy Pursey asking the audience to '**show Reading punk isn't dead**'. It was 1978, punk was in its infancy still, it was the first time punk was at the festival, was this a well known trope already?

This was the line that allegedly started the fighting which led to around 20 hospitalisations with one stabbing.

Peter at myvintagerock.com

The main event was **Sham 69**, who were excellent with Jimmy Pursey his usual cockney 'boy on the streets' self, and those anthems 'What have we got?', 'Borstal Breakout' and 'If the Kids are United'. The Sham Army had come across to Reading in force, all braces, No 2 cuts, and Doc Martins, and ready to take on those hippies. We were right at the front, although we soon moved to the side of the crowd when the fights started. A bunch of skins climbed on to the stage, and Pursey tried to call order, pleading with the crowd to stop fighting to no avail. He was in tears, watching bedlam and violence all around him, and not being able to do anything to stop it. But that was the nature of a Sham gig at the time. Jimmy even brought Steve Hillage on stage to show that it was ok to mix with hippies, but that just annoyed the skins more. A nasty, frightening experience, which marred an excellent performance by Sham.





Sham 69 performing at Reading Festival (far right) skinheads on the stage during the Sham gig



I'm sitting in this cell for something I didn't d
And all I can think of is baby I think of yo
Don't worry baby coming back for yo
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
Well now I've got the chance I don't care about what I d
When I done them things I done them just for yo
And now I'm getting out coming back for yo
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
Well now I'm over the wall I'm nearly hom
I'm coming through that door coming back for yo
Now I'm nearly home nearly back for yo
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako
There's gonna be a borstal breako

Reading Festival wasn't just a one off, there are plenty of other accounts...

P McMichael - Reading Youth

I remember once when I was in broad Street mall, aka the butt's a lone punk walking through minding his own business, suddenly got chased by about ten skinheads, think he managed to get away, they did have quite a rivalry back then

M Quilty - Skinhead

Reading was great in 70s 80s. At the time we was skinheads loved fighting the mods and punks. **The Star** was the punks pub, we drank in the Britannia, Mostly we would have trouble around the central club, good old days

S Day - Punk

Punks didn't have it easy, it was a regular occurrence to be abused verbally in the streets or physically attacked!

M Hibberd - Punk

Well we got down to the station to catch the train back to Reading and the Bracknell lot are waiting for us to go down and they got all bottles and bricks and they proceeded to rain bottles and bricks down on us

R Schnell - Skinhead

I remember that at **Top Rank** - and after the gig a huge pair of knackered DM's outside - One of my mates got ONE of his brand new 14 hole DM's nicked after the ANWL gig there - it didn't stop the skinheads beating people up in the gig though

M Greenaway - Punk

Punks in Reading were around as early as 1975 . Reading was a hive of youth culture in the 70s and 80s. Teddy boys, Rockabillys, Punk Rockers, Skin Heads, Mods. All had there own favourite pubs to go to and various clubs to frequent that played the music each culture loved, yes there was the occasional clash and fights between us all but the biggest issue and problem was with what we all called the Smoothies, folks that had no concept of youth culture, just enjoyed beating people up that were different.

R Schnell - Skinhead

The punk scene and society in general back then was pretty violent and things were really tribalistic - the skinheads were the most visible problem but there was a lot of inter town rivalry between different punks or punks linked with football crew and we used to get a lot of shit from the Mod revival twats too. Unfortunately some of the Reading punks had a bit of a bad rep for fighting in the 80's - I hung out in Bracknell too and that was a violent shit hole - if you were a punk back then you may as well have written 'punch me' on your forehead. It was only when I got a bit older and scarier looking and started fighting back that things got better in that respect A lot of the idiots in the punk scene lost interest by mid 80's anyway leaving those of us left to get on with it



Punk rockers storm stage

A TEENAGER was seriously hurt when scuffles broke out among punk rockers, at a pop concert at Reading's prestige entertainments centre, the Hexagon, on Saturday night.

Graham Pond, 19, of Wokingham Road, Reading, was kicked in the throat, eye and mouth after trouble flared at the Hexagon's first-ever punk event.

Officials on the stage were showered with spit and punk rockers who jumped onto the stage had to be pushed back by security staff.

But today Hexagon publicity officer Ed Pollard said there was no question of Hexagon staff being involved in the attack on Mr Pond.

Heckling

The trouble began when fans of a Reading punk band, called General Accident, became angry that their band only came third in the evening's Radio 210 rock contest.

Punk rockers jumped on stage, spat at disc-jockeys, Bob Harris, Steve Wright and Gavin McCoy, who were compering the event, and tried to stop the winning band, Hazzard, from appearing for an encore.

Radio 210 was broadcasting the event live, but the programme was suddenly halted when microphone wires were damaged in the trouble.

Security staff also had to prevent the youths pulling down amplification wires and lighting cable on the stage. The fans of General Accident wanted their band to play, but were calmed down by the group's lead singer, and the stage was cleared for the winning band, Hazzard.

Hazzard played their encore under a torrent of spit from the punk supporters, but managed to complete their set.

Trouble

The Saturday night show was the grand final of a contest by Thames Valley Broadcasting to find the area's top new rock talent.

The injured youth's sister, 18-year-old Jane, said today Graham, who was standing near the front, was attacked by a man wearing a yellow T-shirt with the word Hexagon on it.

Today the Hexagon's publicity officer, Mr Pollard, said there was unlikely to be a blanket ban on punk rock groups because of the event.

Today, Radio 210's programme controller, Mr Neil ffrench Blake, said: "It was the minority of troublemakers that you get at football matches and punk concerts who do their best to ruin it for everyone else."

Police said today that one teenager would be appearing in court charged with causing criminal damage at the Hexagon.

■ Graham Pond — beaten up

■ Jane Pond — her ear rings torn out.

FAN STILL IN HOSPITAL

Violence flares at Hexagon

A 19-YEAR-OLD Reading man was seriously hurt after being attacked during a Punk Rock concert at the Hexagon on Saturday night.

Graham Pond, of Wokingham Road, was kicked in the face and narrowly escaped losing the sight of his right eye.

The fight happened towards the end of the concert at about 10.30.

Ten local groups had been competing for first prize in a Radio 210 talent competition.

Fighting broke out after Hazzard were announced as the winners. Fans of a rival group jumped on the stage and turned violent.

Speaking from his hospital bed, Graham said: "We were standing near the stage while Hazzard were doing an encore after winning the contest. All I can remember is seeing a guy running up to me.

"I never felt a punch even. I must have been knocked unconscious straight away because I just cannot remember anything until I woke up outside The Hexagon as we waited for the ambulance.

"One of my mates said he saw one of the people who attacked me, jumping up and down on my head. I must have been kicked quite a few times in the face and throat. The doctors say one of the kicks damaged the pupil of my right eye."

Witnesses told police that a man wearing a Hexagon T-shirt and blue jeans attacked Graham knocking him over and kicking him in the eyes, throat and mouth.

His younger sister, Jane, who also attended the concert, and some friends, managed to pull him away from the stage and the police received a call soon after.

Publicity officer for The Hexagon, Mr. Edwin Pollard, denied that a member of The Hexagon staff made the attack.

He said: "Our staff were instructed not to get into any bother and, besides, none of them were wearing Hexagon T-shirts on Saturday night."

He likened the situation to that of a football match — "Only instead of two rival teams there were 10," he said.

Apparently, when the winners were announced, the trouble flared. "Security staff did step in to clear the stage because you can't have six or seven hundred kids running riot," Mr. Pollard said.

Fans go wild as concert is stopped

VIOLENCE FLARES IN PUNK RAMPAGE

A 50-STRONG gang of punk rockers rampaged through the streets of Wokingham last Friday throwing stones and damaging cars when a concert at the town's rock club was cancelled.

And a man was dragged to the floor in a Denmark Street cafe and beaten-up as the punks searched for youths who had attacked members of their group.

Police from Wokingham and Woodley were called in and the rockers left the town, still seeking the youths.

The trouble flared after a "new wave" group called Tarot dropped out of a concert at Wokingham rock club leaving local support band the K9's with no amplification for their music.

About 70 rockers had been allowed into the club, at the Wokingham Youth and Community Centre, when they were told the concert was off — their money was refunded but the disatisfied fans spilled on to the streets of Wokingham.

Some went home but a gang stayed in the town, some went to the pubs, others walked the streets.

It is believed that the trouble started when a punk rocker was hit and his friends looked for revenge.

Some went to the Coffee Bar n Denmark Street and ttacked one of the customers. hey also issued a challenge to

By David Williams

anyone who wished to "take them on" to meet them the following evening.

Owner of the shop, Mr Alan Edwards, said a gang of about 50 punks went into the cafe looking for someone — they picked on one of the customers and kicked and punched him.

He added that he had close the cafe the following evening to prevent any further trouble.

When the gang left the cafe they ran down Peach Street towards the new St. Crispins centre where a disco was being held.

The centre's assistant manager, Mr Ray Kelly said: "There was trouble in the town centre and they chased a lad down to St. Crispins.

"They confronted me at the door and asked if the lad had come in. They went away and came back again and said they wanted to come in to get him. I told them they couldn't."

"They started throwing rocks and several cars were dam-

FANZINES

Zines were a big part of punk, the homemade magazines were by the punks, for the punks, about the punks



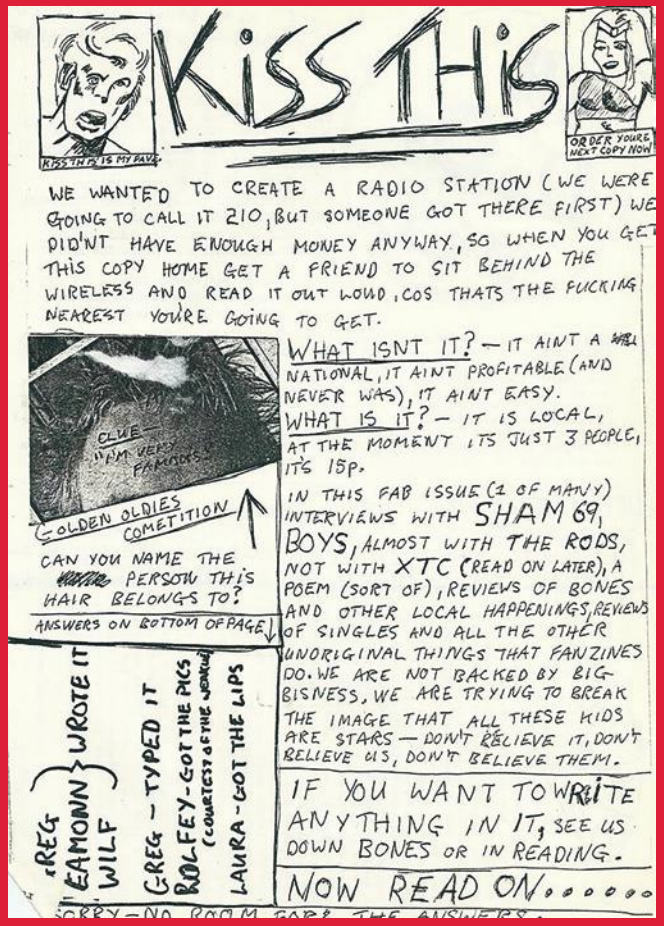
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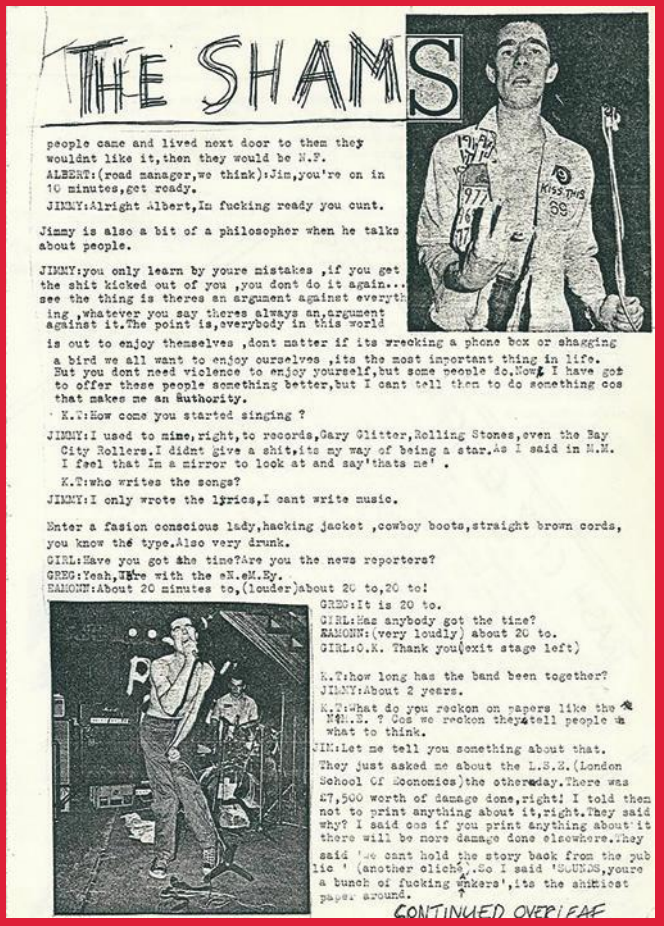
KISS THIS

There were a couple available in Reading, this one is '**Kiss This**'. It mentions the relationship between the Reading punks and reggae and talks about the legendary Bones club as well as featuring the K9s.

I have also found another that has been recommended which is '**Grinding Halt**'. The issue I have found mentions General Accident as well as K9s which goes to show how prevalent the two bands were through the late 70s into the 80s.

Finally, there is '**Stick the Smoke**' fanzine which I have only managed to find a few pages of, one of which has a review of local band 'The Pierres'.





SHAM CONT.

PHILOSOPHY CORNER
"SUPPORT DEMOCRACY – VOTE TWICE"
R. SLICKER

K.T: What about the Vortex incident?
JIMMY: Well we went down that day and were supposed to play down stairs, we had a look and the room was about as big as that toilet. So I said 'come on, for a laugh well [redacted] play on the fucking roof'. So anyway we went on the wrong fucking roof, So they called the law, they pulled the plugs out and I stuck them back in again, and he said 'sonny you do that again and youre nicked'. I turned round and said 'it was O.K. when the fucking Beatles dunnit'. He said 'right sonny, youre nicked'.
GREG: How much did you get [redacted] done for?
JIMMY: £150 – £200.
EAMONN: O.K. cheers (aint we well mannered
GREG: Good luck.

AND SO SHAM HIT THE STAGE.....

WE WON'T REVIEW THIS CONCERT BECAUSE MOST OF YOU WERE PROBABLY THERE – IF YOU WEREN'T YOU FUCKING SHOULD HAVE BEEN – THEY WERE FUCKING SMART.



BY APPOINTMENT TO HER MAJESTY THE SHIT – KISS THIS AND SONS BULLSHIT MANUFACTURERS
UNFEMININE HAIR REMOVED – BY APPOINTMENT

TRASH CITY ~~COCKERS~~ ROCKERS



I DONT KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I THINK TONITES SINGLE ... DRUMMER ...

I LIKE KISS THIS BECAUSE ....
NOT MORE THAN 10 WORDS

KICK OUT

BULMERSHE COLLEGE OF HIGHER AND FURTHER (AND PROLONGED) EDUCATION, FEB. 4 1978
8 O'CLOCK — WHAT A WANK !!!

SHOCK 1....no entry to bar unless youve got a [redacted] union card. SHOCK 2....the disco has no punk .(D.J: if anyone wants to go home and get their punk records, we'll play 'em — nice boy). SHOCK 3.....no support band and Sham arnt on til eleven. RESULT.... lots of kids with nothing to do for three hours. Lets hear it for Bulmershe college; abortion of the year award ..with merits.

10.30...into the changing rooms, Jimmys in the corner with mates — backed by assotd liggers and band playing hockey with tins.
GREG: I pressed the button and the fucker worked!
ANOTHER FIRST FOR KISS THIS.



KISS THIS: why are you called SHAM 69?
JIMMY: well, were I live there is a football team called Walton Hershan, someone had wrote Walton Hersham 69 and the Walton Her had been rubbed out leaving Sham 69.
K.T: what do you reckon on the first single (I Dont Wanna), we reckon it was pretty watered down.
JIMMY: of course it was, its like that because John Cale produced us, he did Velvet Underground, which is very laid back and he tried to do the same with us. He only ever saw us once and tried to produce us. Iknow what we want so I did it myself. (Jimmy produced Borstal Breakout).
K.T: what do you think of John Cale?
JIMMY: JohnCale as a person's great, but he is better off doing bands that are into the type of thing he's into. If you are doing 'ilove you' type music you know you have got to get 'I love you ' type feeling across. If you're doing a live band you've got to get that live feeling across.
K.T: why do you put that smashing glass sound at the end of Borstal Breakout?
JIMMY: fuck me, thats humour. Breakout is just about this bloke getting out of borstal (a friend: it's a Lizzy rip off (laughter)).
K.T: in an N.M.E. interveiw you went on about how the N.F. hate you, and the commies hate you, whats all that about?
JIMMY: what I probably said was the commies dont know what to make of me and neither do the N.F., cos I'm against all types of politics. I just wanna have a laugh. Its alright for the people in St. Georges Hill (posh place in London), don't get me wrong I'm not N.F. or anything, but its alright for them in St. Georges Wood to say 'we're not N.F. ,we dont mind black people living in London; but if those black

CARNIVAL
CARNIVAL – 30th April starts Trafalgar Square with CLASH, TOM ROB. BAND, X-RAY SPECS

REGGAE MUSIC BY CARLOS HOLDER

XTC X-CAPE KISS THIS

DOWN BONES – CAPASITY, THE PLACE IS FULL OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE APPEARED ON THE NIGHT, LOTS OF NEW FACES. WE ASKED XTC FOR AN INTERVIEW BEFORE THEY WENT ON – "COME BACK 10 MINUTES AFTER THE GIG", SO FAR SO GOOD.



LOOKING FOR QUICK EXIT

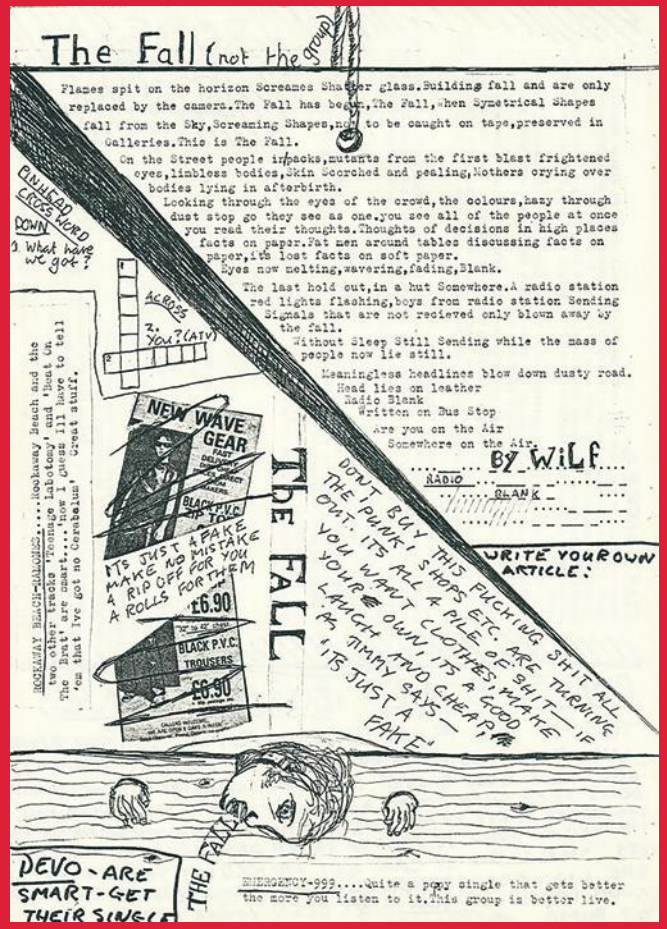
XTC PLAYED A REALLY TIGHT SET, THEY PLAY REALLY GOOD TUNES, BUT THIS FACT WAS LOST SOMEWHAT DUE TO THEIR LACK OF CONTACT WITH THE AUDIENCE.

AMONG THIER NUMBERS THEY INCLUDED SUCH WONDEROUS HITS AS 'STATUE OF LIBERTY', 'ALL ALONG THE WATCH TOWER' (THIS WAS A REALLY GOOD VERSION), HOLD ON TO THE NIGHT AND OF COURSE SCIENCE FRICTION (WHICH THEY PLAYED AS AN ENCORE (CHEEKY BASTARDS)).

WE WENT FOR AN INTERVIEW AFTERWARDS – AFTER 45 MINUTES WAITING WE SAW THEM ESCAPING FROM US IN A LAUNDRY BASKET. ANYONE SEEING A STRAY LAUNDRY BASKET – KICK IT.



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK XTC FOR GIVING UP THEIR VALUBLE TIME



The Fall (not the group)

Flames spit on the horizon Screames Shatter glass.Building fall and are only replaced by the camera.The Fall has begun,The Fall,when Symetrical Shapes fall from the Sky,Screaming Shapes,not to be caught on tape,preserved in Galleries.This is The Fall.

On the Street people in packs,mutants from the first blast frightened eyes,limbless bodies,Skin Scorched and pealing,Mothers crying over bodies lying in afterbirth.

Looking through the eyes of the crowd,the colours,hazy through dust stop go they see as one.you see all of the people at once you read their thoughts.Thoughts of decisions in high places facts on paper.Pat men around tables discussing facts on paper,with lost facts on soft paper.

Eyes now melting,wavering,fading,Blank.

The last hold out,in a hut Somewhere.A radio station red lights flashing,boys from radio station Sending Signals that are not recieved only blown away by the fall.

Without Sleep Still Sending while the mass of people now lie still.

Meaningless headlines blow down dusty road.

Head lies on leather

Radio Blank

Written on Bus Stop

Are you on the Air

Somewhere on the Air.

BY WILF

RADIO ..... BLANK

WRITE YOUR OWN ARTICLE!

BANHEAD CROSS WORD

What have we got?

AC BOYS

2. YOU? (ATV)

NEW WAVE GEAR

BLACK P.V.C. TROUSERS £6.90

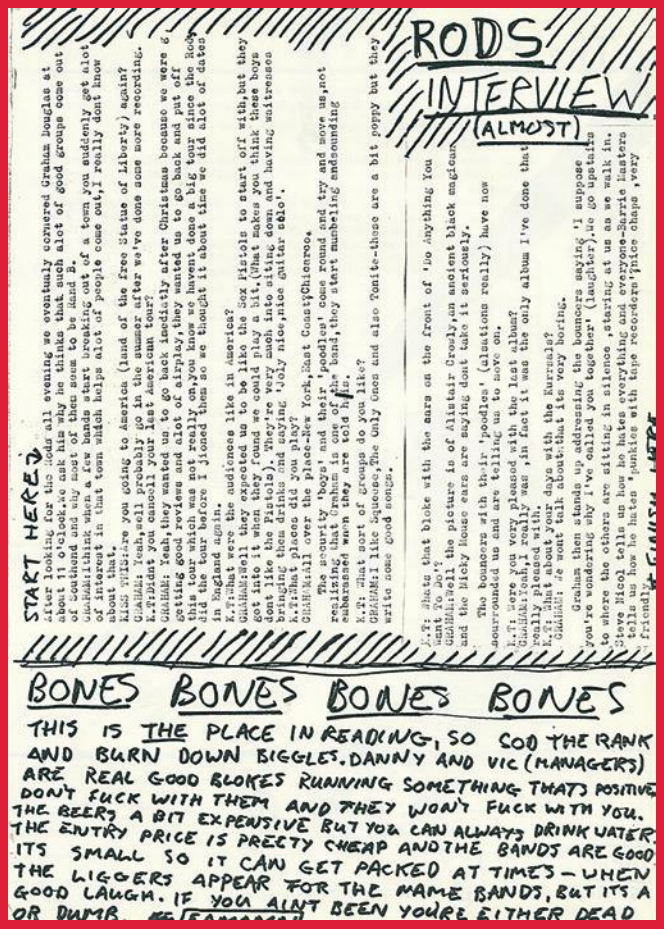
ITS JUST A FAKE MAKE NO MISTAKE A RIP OFF FOR YOU A ROLLS FOR THEM

DON'T BUY THIS FUCKING SHIT ALL THE PUNK SHOPS ETC. ARE TURNING OUT. ITS ALL A PILE OF SHIT— IF YOU WANT CLOTHES, MAKE YOUR OWN, ITS A GOOD LAUGH AND CHEAP, AS TIMMY SAYS— 'ITS JUST A FAKE'

THE FALL

DEVO - ARE SMART - GET THEIR SINGLE

EMERGENCY-999....Quite a poppy single that gets better the more you listen to it.This group is better live.



RODS INTERVIEW (ALMOST)

START HERE.

after looking for the rods all evening we eventualy cornered Graham Douglas at about 11 o'clock.We ask him why he thinks that such a lot of good groups come out of Southend and why most of them seem to be Hard 8.

GRAHAM:I think when a few bands start breaking out of a town you suddenly get a lot of interest in that town which helps a lot of people come out,I really dont know about that.

KISS THIS:Are you going to America (land of the free Statue of Liberty) again?

GRAHAM: Yeah,well probably go in the summer after we've done some more recording.

K.T:Didnt you cancell your last American tour?

GRAHAM: Yeah,they wanted us to go back immediatly after Christmas because we were getting good reviews and alot of airplay,they wanted us to go back and put off this tour which was not really on,you know we havent done a big tour since the Roxy in England and the audience like in America?

GRAHAM:Well they expected us to be like the Sex Pistols to start off with,but they got into it when they found we could play a bit.(What makes you think these boys dont like the Pistols). They're very much into sitting down and having waitresses bringing them drinks and saying 'Joly nice,nice guitar solo'.

K.T:What places did you play?

GRAHAM:All over the place-New York,Chat County Chicaroo.

The security 'boys' and their 'poodles' come round and try and move us,not realizing that Graham is one of the band,they start mumbeling embarassed warn they are told he is.

K.T: What sort of groups do you like?

GRAHAM:I like Squeeze,The Only Ones and also Tonite-those are a bit poppy but they write some good songs.

K.T: Whats that bloke with the ears on the front of 'Do Anything You Want To Do'?

GRAHAM:Well the picture is of Alistair Crowly,an ancient black magician and the Micky Mouse ears are saying dont take it seriously.

The bouncers with their 'poodles' (alsations really) have now surrounded us and are telling us to move on.

K.T: Were you very pleased with the last album?

GRAHAM:Yeah,really pleased with it,in fact it was the only album I've done that I'm really pleased with.

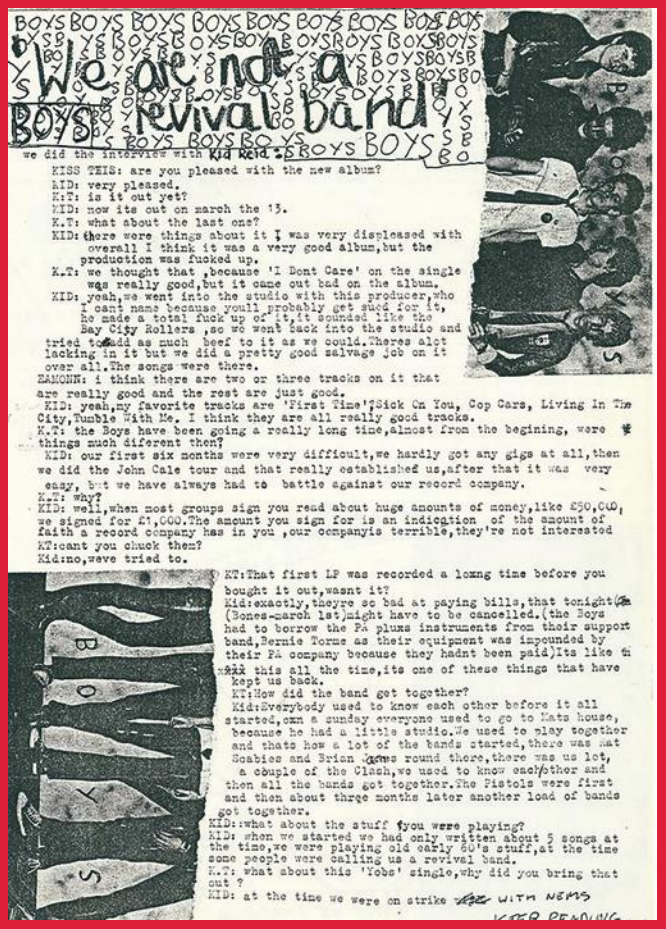
K.T: What about your days with the Kurrels?

GRAHAM: We wont talk about that its very boring.

Graham then stands up addressing the bouncers saying 'I suppose you're wondering why I've called you together' (laughter).We go upstairs to where the others are sitting in silence ,staring at us as we walk in. Steve Nicol tells us how he hates everything and everyone-Barrie Masters tells us how he hates 'punkies' with tape recorders'Price chaps ,very friendly

BONES BONES BONES BONES

THIS IS THE PLACE IN READING, SO COD THE RANK AND BURN DOWN BIGGLES. DANNY AND VIC (MANAGERS) ARE REAL GOOD BLOKES RUNNING SOMETHING THAT'S POSITIVE DON'T FUCK WITH THEM AND THEY WON'T FUCK WITH YOU. THE BEER'S A BIT EXPENSIVE BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS DRINK WATER. THE ENTRY PRICE IS PRETTY CHEAP AND THE BANDS ARE GOOD ITS SMALL SO IT CAN GET PACKED AT TIMES — WHEN THE LIGGERS APPEAR FOR THE NAME BANDS, BUT ITS A GOOD LAUGH. IF YOU AIN'T BEEN YOU'RE EITHER DEAD OR DUMB.



BOYS BOYS BOYS BOYS BOYS BOYS BOYS BOYS

We are not a revival band

we did the interview with Kid Reid.

KISS THIS: are you pleased with the new album?

KID: very pleased.

K.T: is it out yet?

KID: now its out on march the 13.

K.T: what about the last one?

KID: there were things about it I was very displeased with overall I think it was a very good album,but the production was fucked up.

K.T: we thought that ,because 'I Dont Care' on the single was really good,but it came out bad on the album.

KID: yeah,we went into the studio with this producer,who I cant name because youll probably get sued for it, he made a total fuck up of it,it sounded like the Bay City Rollers ,so we went back into the studio and tried to add as much beef to it as we could.Theres alot lacking in it but we did a pretty good salvage job on it over all.The songs were there.

EAMONN: i think there are two or three tracks on it that are really good and the rest are just good.

KID: yeah,my favorite tracks are 'First Time'?Sick On You, Cop Cars, Living In The City,Tumble With Me. I think they are all really good tracks.

K.T: the Boys have been going a really long time,almost from the begining, were things much diferent then?

KID: our first six months were very difficult,we hardly got any gigs at all,then we did the John Cale tour and that really established us,after that it was very easy, but we have always had to battle against our record company.

K.T: way?

KID: well,when most groups sign you read about huge amounts of money,like £50,000, we signed for £1,000.The amount you sign for is an indiegtion of the amount of faith a record company has in you ,our companyis terrible,they're not interested

KT:cant you chuck them?

Kid:no,weve tried to.

KT:That first LP was recorded a looong time before you bought it out,wasnt it?

Kid:exactly,theyre so bad at paying bills,that tonight (Bones-march 1st)might have to be cancelled.(the Boys had to borrow the PA plums instruments from their support band,Bernie Torme as their equipment was impounded by their PA company because they hadnt been paid)Its like this all the time,its one of these things that have kept us back.

KT:How did the band get together?

Kid:Everybody used to know each other before it all started,oxm a sunday everyone used to go to Mats house, because he had a little studio.We used to play together and thats how a lot of the bands started,there was Mat Goabies and Brian Jones round there,there was us lot, a couple of the Clash,we used to know each other and then all the bands got together.The Pistols were first and then about three months later another load of bands got together.

KID:what about the stuff you were playing?

KID: when we started we had only written about 5 songs at the time,we were playing old early 60's stuff,at the time some people were calling us a revival band.

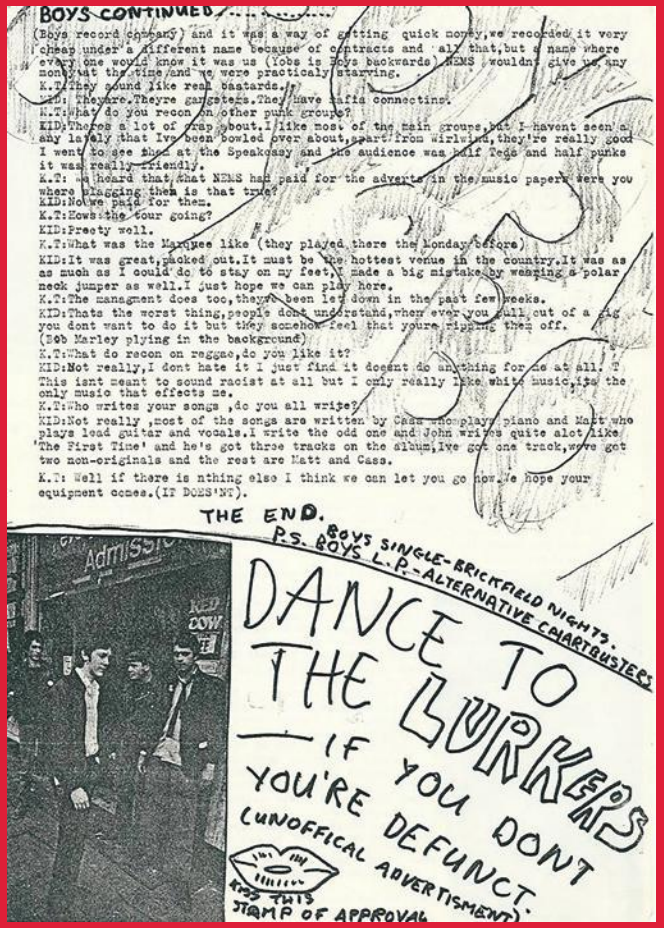
K.T: What about this 'Jobs' single,why did you bring that out ?

KID: at the time we were on strike with NEMS

KEEP READING

BONES

K9s


BOYS CONTINUED.....

(Boys record company) and it was a way of getting quick money,we recorded it very cheap under a different name because of contracts and all that,but a name where every one would know it was us (Sobs is Boys backwards) NEMS wouldnt give us any money,at the time,and we were practically starving.

K.T:They sound like real bastards.)

KID: theyare.Theyre gangsters.They have mafia connections.

K.T:What do you recon on other punk groups?

KID:Theres a lot of crap about.I like most of the main groups,but I havent seen a any lately that Ive been bowled over about,apart from wirlwind,they're really good I went to see them at the Speakeasy and the audience was half Teds and half punks it was really friendly.

K.T: I heard that that NEMS had paid for the adverts in the music papers were you where blagging them is that true?

KID:No!we paid for them.

K.T:How's the tour going?

KID:Preety well.

K.T:What was the Marquee like (they played there the Monday before)

KID:It was great,packed out.It must be the hottest venue in the country.It was as as much as I could do to stay on my feet,I made a big mistake by wearing a polar neck jumper as well.I just hope we can play here.

K.T:The managment does too,they've been let down in the past few weeks.

KID:Thats the worst thing,people dont understand,when ever you pull out of a gig you dont want to do it but they somehow feel that youre ripping them off.

(Bob Marley plying in the background)

K.T:What do recon on reggae,do you like it?

KID:Not really,I dont hate it I just find it doesnt do anything for me at all. T This isnt meant to sound racist at all but I only really like white music,its the only music that effects me.

K.T:Who writes your songs ,do you all write?

KID:Not really ,most of the songs are written by Cass who plays piano and Matt who plays lead guitar and vocals.I write the odd one and John writes quite alot like 'The First Time' and he's got three tracks on the album,Ive got one track,we've got two non-originals and the rest are Matt and Cass.

K.T: Well if there is nthing else I think we can let you go now.We hope your equipment comes.(IT DOESN'T).

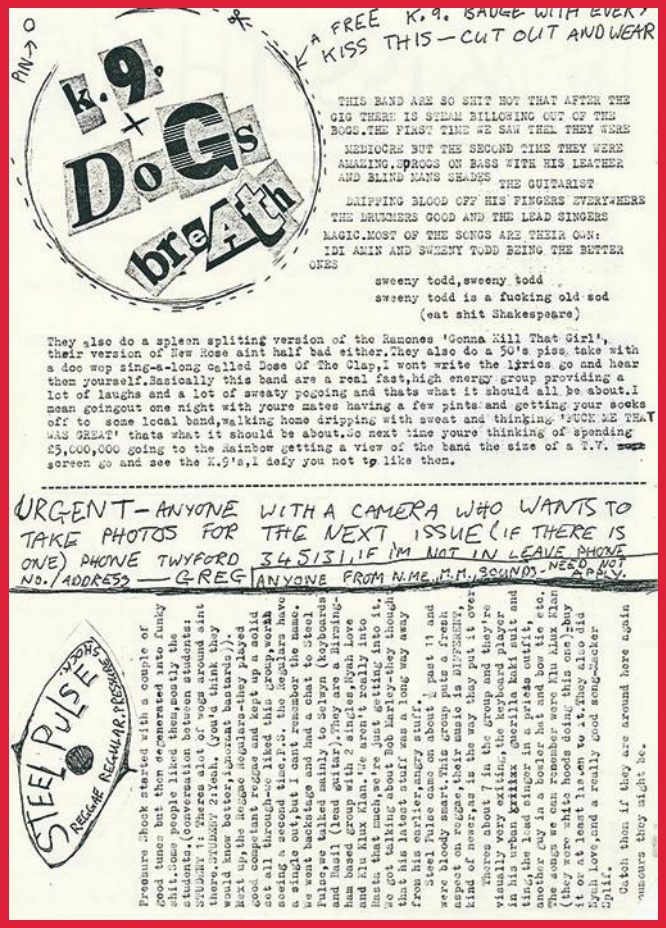
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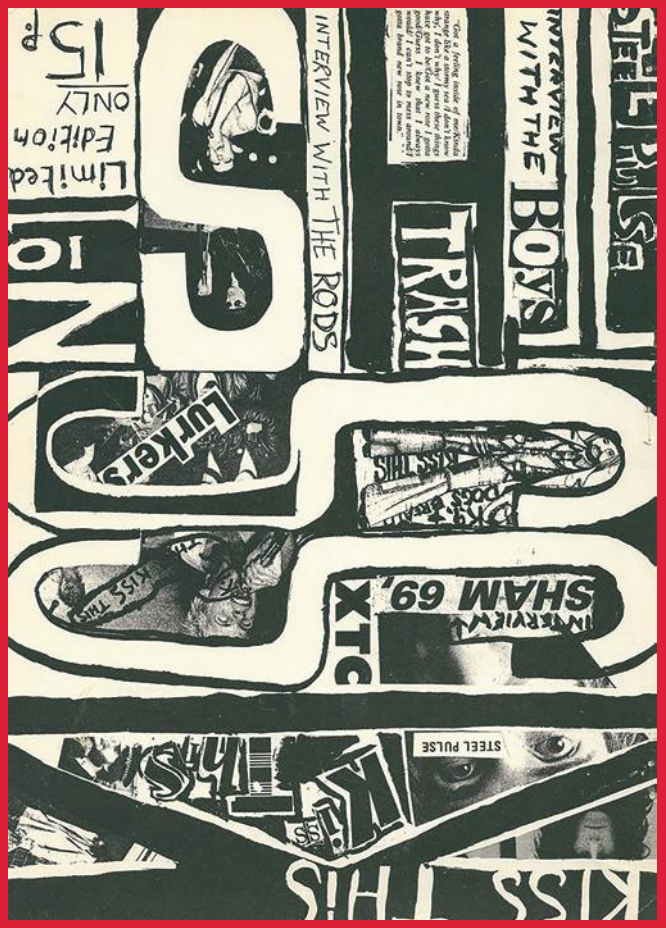
P.S. BOYS SINGLE-BRICKFIELD NIGHTS.
BOYS L.P.-ALTERNATIVE CHARTBUSTERS.

DANCE TO THE LURKERS — IF YOU DONT YOU'RE DEFUNCT.

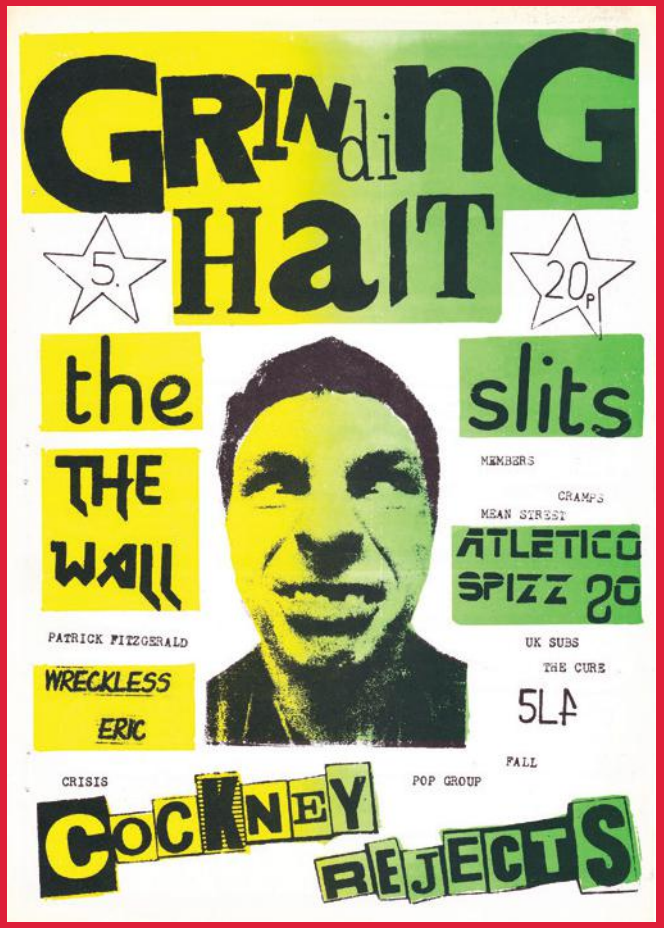
(UNOFFICAL ADVERTISMENT)

KISS THIS STAMP OF APPROVAL





GRINDING HALT



GRINDING HALT - THE KIND OF CRAP THAT TALKS BACK.

Ladies & Gentlemen, How do?
My turn to write the editorial . And God knows what I'm supposed to say? Why the hell have you paid 20p. for this? Short of bog papert This isn't anything to do with your life, and it's only a dilution of mine! Be yourself! Think for yourself! Live for yourself, don't just follow another trend around like sheep! Why should I hurt my brain thinking up all this meaningful (?) crap for you? For christs sake get in touch and prove you can think and formulate your own opinions. You want to know what's inside? Find out for yoself ya lazy git!

STAY FREE,

E.S.

P.S. The Indos are coming (?)
P.P.S. Mark & Dan are innocent!

SINGLES

THOSE NAUGHTY LUMPS - DOWN AT THE ZOO EP (Open Eye Records). Four, new catchy, humourous tunes from the Naughty Lumps. 'Ice Cream' is first, followed by 'Down At The Zoo' and both are built around a strong, effective chorus. Side two contains 'I'm Gonna Die, which takes a light-hearted view of death and is probably my favourite. 'Love Is A Reflex' ends the EP wich, although not as good as their debut, 'Iggy Pop's Jacket', is still worth getting. <.<.

CULT FIGURES - IN LOVE (Rather). Three tracks that justify the Figure's growing popularity - an interesting, light fun sound, undemanding without being unnoticeable. E.S.

APARTMENT - THE CAR (Heartbeat). Stop/no chorus that doesn't quite come off as well as it might, but this is a promising single and the overall effect is of a competent, catchy tune. B-side is fairly average. <.<.

DONKEYS - NO WAY (Back Door). Although not quite as good as 'What I Want' which was one of the best singles of last year, this is still great, smooth rocking number. Watch these pages for more on the Donkeys - interview next issue (we hope). E.S.

VIPs - CAUSING COMPLICATIONS (Gem). Some people might call this modern pop - I call it plain wet - totally lacking in power or aggresion. Tries desperately to be cathey, but instead is just irritating. <.<.

YACHTS - THERE'S A GHOST IN MY HOUSE (Radar). This time they have resurrected an oldie, and the Yachts again prove themselves to be purveyors of the most light and pure pretension-free pop available. E.S.

ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN - RESCUE (Korova). This is the second single from the Bunnymen, and although neither have really been stunning I feel that they could well have something up their sleeves that could be really great. This is better than its predecessor, but still lacking in something - life - they sound thoroughly bored with the whole thing. Other than that I don't think of anything else to say. <.<.

THE SCARS - THEY CAME AND TOOK HER (Pre) After a very promising debut single, this is a massive let down - thick, unappealing, slow, boring. it drags its feet like Joy Division with a headache! E.S.

STIFFS - INSIDE OUT (EMI). Explosive begining, drums and then it's into a whirling verse and an effective, but not over-powering chorus. Probably one of the best singles I've reviewed this issue - poppy but still aggressive and well worth looking out. <.<.

ATHLETICO SPIZZ '80

SPIZZ, The final frontier, to boldly go where no man has gone before.....

The support group where absolutely laughable, their particular lack of originality or character particularly shown up in comparison with Athletico Spizz 80. The band (I don't know their name, and don't care) were headed by a female lead singer, and featured a sax. player who apparently added absolutely nothing to the sound at all. The latter left after the first number, and I wished he had taken the rest of the group with him, but he soon returned for the rest of a long and boring set. I don't think I need to comment on the fact that they didn't get an encore!!

However, no-one was really worried about the support band, 'cos we'd all come for one thing - Athletico Spizz 80, and after a long wait, and an intro tape (the theme tune from Star wars), the group charged in a alne, Spizz himself coming on last to much applause. Touched and Rythm started the set off, but it was not until the third number, Amnesia, that the crowd really got going. Central Park and No Room were followed by a version of Cold City, which, although not as sophistica- ted as on the E.P. was spirited enough to get the crowd going again. The rest of the set was new numbers, which, presumably will become more familiar with the release of their first album. If so, I can see nothing but praise coming for that L.P. on the evidence of the songs they played tonight.- Intimate, New Species, Effortless, Mot Deserts, with Red and Black and Where's Spock leading up to a magnificent end. As it was clearly the more famil- -iar songs that were most popular throughout the evening, it was obvious that a final volley of Soldier Soldier and Where's Captain Kirk? would send us all crazy, although these two classic numbers were separated by an impromptu rendition of their live fave and singalong number Clocks Are Big, Machines Are Heavy. Of course, this finale achieved what it was clearly designed to do, and Athletico Spizz 80 got two encores, including Virginia Plain, and, if my memory serves me correctly, where's Captain Kirk? again.



No-one could have been disappointed with tonights' performance. The group proved how much more reliable and secure this line up is than its predecessors, and they also proved themselves to be great entertainers, particularly Spizz himself, who pranced up and down the stage like a demented ballerina, as well as playing guitar, tom tom, and forcibly taking over the drum kit at various times during the evening. Really, his instrument was the audience, and he played it with skill, building up a great rapport without any appearance of condecension. Anyway, a great evening, and a great bunch of guys who really deserve all the success that's coming their way.

E.S.

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COCKNEY REJECTS

The Cockney Rejects must be one of the most earthly, solid punk bands to have arisen in the last couple of years, and one of few to present punk in the way it should be heard. Nowadays bands use all sorts of gadgets which detract from the spontaneity and simplicity of the music. The Rejects, however resist this and are writing and playing songs in the way groups did some three years ago. This is what they had to say after their set supporting Slaughter:

GH: Is the new single ('Greatest Cockney Rip Off') a reference to Jimmy Pursey?
Micky Geggus: No, well it's a bit of a piss take really, like he goes round calling himself the great cockney cowboy and all that but he never goes near the place, y'know what I mean?
GH: Did you have an argument with him?
MG: Yeah, a bit - let's drop it though 'cos he isn't really worth it. I've had enough of him.
GH: How did you feel about the press the album got?
MG: Well, I was happy with the album and that's all that really matters to me. I reckon it's a good album, and that's good enough for me, the press ain't all that important - Gary Bushell gave it a good write up though.
GH: How did the Gary Bushell 'come about?
MG: Well, basically I sent him a tape and he liked it and it all went from there. But he had to choose between writing and managing and he chose writing 'cos you can't do both properly at the same time.
GH: Why is no-one credited on the album?
Nigel Woolfe: The guy who played on the album was bought out and so they didn't have to credit him. £200 was all it cost to buy him out, I arrived to late to have anything on the album. It was too late to do it all again so no-one was credited.
GH: Why did you choose EMI?
NW: They choose us. Someone came to one of our gigs and liked us and it all went from there.
GH: How do you get on with them?
NW: Well, they're really great to work with, they give us everything we want and they're really generous and helpful.
GH: Why did you leave Small Wonder?
Vince Riordon: Well, they're a bunch of wankers, always trying to rip bands off, all this talk about them being good 'cos they're a small company is crap. Small Wonder are only interested in Crass who are a bunch of bloody hippies - crap. We've no regrets about choosing EMI. A lot of bands go around saying its best to be on a small label and all that, but that's a load of bollocks really. You hear about how EMI treated the Sex Pistols and all that, but they're great really. Other groups only say small companies are best 'cos the big ones aren't interested in them and won't give them amajor recording contract.
GH: Do you have any particular musical influences?
NW: Well, Micky and Stinky are influenced by God Save the Queen and all that stuff.
GH: How did the Rejects get started?
NW: Well, Micky and Stinky used to be in a band called the Shitters then Vince came in from the Deadflowers and then me from Back To Zero.
GH: Are you pleased with the way the album's been selling?
NW: Yeah, very pleased. It's outsold Sham's first two albums already, and I think that's really great.
GH: What exactly happened about Jimmy Pursey?
NW: Well, he'd come in and start telling everyone what to do and he'd try to change things, to how he wanted them, and not how the band wanted them to be and they just told him to fuck off.
GH: Have you been asked to do TOTP?
NW: Well, do it when we get asked. And Tiswas - I'd love to go on Tiswas.

REJECTS



COCKNEY REJECTS

GH: Why were so many dates cancelled on your recent tour?
VR: Simply because they thought there was always trouble at our gigs.
GH: Is there?
VR: No, not really...well, you saw tonight - when have you seen so many punks and skinheads in one hall, and there was only one fight, which we sorted out ourselves. But there isn't much violence at our gigs at all. A lot of people say skins are violent, but the ones who follow us around are quite peaceful really.
GH: A lot of bands that started off in the early days of punk have changed musical direction, like the Clash, and many have become more commercial. Can you see this happening to the Rejects?
MG: No, I hope not. I can't see any reason why we should. We'll just keep on going as we are.

And on that optimistic note we left it - lets hope they keep to their work, for I would hate to see the Rejects energy supressed, and for them to follow the same course as many other Punk bands, that arose before them.

PATRIK FITZGERALD

PULSEBEAT

Local group, Bullseye, were supporting. At first everyone stayed in the bar, but they soon began to drift into the hall. They went down well, and they certainly provide good fun, and both they, and their audience seemed to enjoy themselves, which is what matters most really. However I found their music to be uninspired and dull. There's room for improvement, but they do have potential.

Patrik Fitzgerald was, to put it bluntly, BORING. Most of his songs showed little variation, and he was dull to watch. One man playing a guitar, standing almost motionless doesn't exactly provide a good spectacle. I do like some of his songs, especially 'Trendy' (although he didn't even play that), many of which tell the stories of harsh reality. His lyrics are certainly very good, but his music is often boring, and unimaginative, with just the odd tune standing out as being anywhere near exciting. I can listen to his records alright, but only in small doses, and when you get some three quaters of an hour of it like this it really turns me off. Buy his records by all means (He needs the money - he couldn't even afford a copy of GH!), but I think it best to stay clear of his live shows, although, on the other hand I seemed to be one a the few that thought this way, as he was given an encore. Make your own minds up. C.C.

'WRECKLESS ERIC'

YMCA, Tottenham Court Road.

Eric bounded on the stage to an audience which had been expecting him for some time, and proceeded to give them a memorable evening. The songs came thick and fast, linked together by drummer Dave Otway's frantic beat. Old and new were all there. Songs from the new album were strong - the new single 'Broken Doll' was delivered with great vigour, while 'A Pop Song' had a strong bassy feel. The balls of R 'N' B are very much in evidence. This band is amazingly together, strongly supporting Eric who frantically drove the band to the limit. 'Semaphore Signals' came nearer to its original atmospheric feel as Eric played his guitar better than ever before live, while 'Reconnez Cherie' still sounds good. 'Tonight Is My Night', 'It'll Soon Be The Weekend' stood out from the new album, almost equalling the intensity of his old classics. A new song, apparently called 'Just A Little Bit More', was the encore - we were slightly disappointed that there was no second encore, but it was a night to remember.

Living is a cliche, it's all been done before, 'Lost' Johnny Speed.
Death is the only thing we've got left to live for.

U.K. SUBS

****

BRAND NEW AGE

In recent months I have felt helpless, as I saw the 'Subs slipping into the abyss of H.M. which has sucked up so many hard-core punk groups in recent months. Earnest saw them holding onto the drunk by their fingernails, but just when all appeared to be lost, the 'Subs again discard guitar solos for a blistering 40 - minute burst of white - hot anger and frustation.

No-one, I hope, would claim that the 'Subs are a particularly inspired group, just reliable / predictable. In fact, here lies a dilemma- do I praise them for their ability to turn out reliable punk thrashes seemingly by the yard, or do I criticise the predictability of it all?

My first reactions to this album were disgust at the artwork, and noticing that, as only 2 tracks here are previously available, it is far better value than the last 'Subs l.p. You Can't Take it Anymore is an effective opener as it slowly builds up, with one component of the sound being added one after another, until finally Charlie Harpers distinctive tone takes up the droning repetitive title line, which is the complete lyric of the song. The title track comes next, and like many of the songs here concerns suspicion with technical advancement, and suspicion of the coming decades' innovations. Public Servant, Warhead and Barbie's Dead have little of note about them, Pat Lace sees the pace starting to pick up a bit, and side one ends in a blaze of power with 'Organised Crime'. From this we get the instant quote - 'There's a man who sucks your cigarette, there's a man who sucks your cock - he's a government official...' Vicious Stuff Eh?

Still I get this little nagging voice in the back of my head saying it's all predictable and meaningless. All the anger has been sucked out to make it safe for big business to capitalise on. There are, after all, so many groups yelling equally frustrated and impotent themes, but the 'Subs have a sheer forcefulness and conviction about them which elevates even the most uninspired and unoriginal tune. As I plough on into side 2 with ~~Emotional Blackmail~~, the excellent Kicks, Teenage, Dirty Girls, 900 C.C., Bomb Factory, I suddenly realise what it is that the 'Subs have that is lacking from a lot of stuff today, energy - all the 'Subs need to do is channel this blind energy into a useful path and we should see them resolve all their problems and go rocketing to the top. E.S.

The Slits

RETROSPECTIVE BOOTLEG LP ****

This could be the first real punk album of all time, on the other hand it could be a complete waste of time and vinyl - the sound quality is terrible so half the songs are unidentifiable, and some of the songs cannot only be described as plain lousy. The whole thing is presented in as uncaring and unprofessional a way as possible.

And yet through the roughness and crudeness of the whole thing, some aspects shine with power and beauty, as if the album was an uncut diamond - and that is probably the best way of viewing it - terrible quality, certainly not the clean, healthy reggae sound of 'Cut' and yet the sheer magic and power of these girls cannot help but shine through.

This is, as I said, real, hard, crude Punk - not the controlled bottled agression of the Subs or the thoughtful and calculated viciousness of the Pop Group, but unconcerned and ignorant bravado, totally devoid of sophistication or anything to comfort you. FOR HOW MUCH LONGER DO WE HAVE TO TOLERATE MASS MURDER? E.S.

THE POP GROUP

Before I start this review I must make it clear that I am not by any means a Pop Group fan, and I was expecting the whole of the record to be as impotent and hysterical as its title would suggest, but I have found the Pop Group's music much more effective in the context of an album than on a single.

The opening track, 'Forces Of Oppression' is, as I said, more powerful than I expected - fairly enjoyable in fact with tribal drumming and hoarse, strained, almost hysterical vocals. 'Feed The Hungary' is recommended only for its heavy rhythmic drumming, the guitar being erratic and uncontrolled and the vocals no more than a monotonous chanting. 'Out of Many' features wild keyboards and rather funky singing and thankfully gives way to 'Blind Faith' which is smoother and more controlled, falls into chaos, but all falls back into place and is redeemed in the end. 'How Much Longer' follows to end side one. Side two is very much the same - 'Justice is spontaneous and unreliable, 'There Are No Spectators is slow and quiet. Then follows 'Communicate' and 'Rope Bank' E.S.

There were few mourners as this album was laid to rest; recommended for PIL fans and other junkies.

THE MEMBERS

1980 - The Choice Is Yours

* * * *

Yes, the Members still do exist! During the past year or so they seemed to have virtually disappeared off the face of the earth, with only one single being released. 'Sound of the Suburbs' was a Top 20 smash; it's follow up, 'Offshore Banking Business' was relatively unsuccessful, and then it was all over - the Members' 15 minutes was virtually only that. But in a spurt of activity the Members are back - a new single, a new LP and an extensive tour. This is therfore a crucial period for the Members, whose infectious reggae influenced punk I find irresistible. Anyway enough of this drivel...

Like the first album this starts off with an instrumental - The Ayatollah Harmony', which is typical of the Members' catchy rhythms. 'Goodbye To The Job' follows, which is built around a solid chorus, and although not quite as good as most of the material on the first album, is still very good. In fact that seems to be the case throughout - all the songs are great, but they could be better, and as good as it is, I can only feel disappointment with this album. 'Physical Love' is followed by the single, 'Romance' - a song that deserved to do a lot better than it did. On 'Brian Was' Nicky Tesco's vocals are really soft for the most part, climaxing in an uproar, and this song has really got me hooked. It's a delicate song, but that doesn't mean it's lacking in power. 'Flying Again' is again brilliant and very reminisent of the excellent debut album.

If we flip over we find 'Normal People' to open side 2. Again a great song, but not quite realising its full potential. However from this point things really start to move - Larry Wallis' 'Police Car' - everybit as good as the original, if not better, followed by 'Clean Men', which sounds a bit like the Members' attempt to cash in on the current ska revival, with a heavy brass section, but it's still branded with that typical Member' sound, although it's undoubtedly the worst track on the album. This is followed by two Members' classics - 'Muzak Machine' and 'Gang War', the former a heavy rocker, the latter a slower, more melodic song, which tells freightenly realistic tales of violence.

So, although not up to expectations, this is still a bloody good album, which gets better and better towards the end, so that you're really disappointed the album has actually come to an end. It isn't likely to set the world alight, but is should be enough to maintain interest and make sure the Members don't disappear completely - and that would be a tragedy. <.<.

*****

UNDERTONES HYPNOTISED

So, the one Uncle John's been waiting for. After a few listens my impressions were that this was generally a weaker album than their debut, but I now have no doubts about this album whatsoever. The opener is 'More Songs About Chocolate And Girls', which has a catchy riff that plays throughout and eats its way into your mind until it finally takes you over. 'There Goes Norman' is faster, and probably the nearest thing to the first LP on this album. The title track 'Hypnotised', follows. This is one of the least immediately appealing of the tracks, but after a few more listens I can't get it out of my system, as hard as I try. Things slow down again for 'See That Girl', which has a punchy rhythm that knocks you to the floor in one blow. 'Whizz Kids' is followed by 'Under the Boardwalk' - one of the Undetones' 'romantic' numbers, with a slow verse, and faster chorus, with Feargal Sharkey's voice much softer than usual for the most part. 'The Way Girsl Talk' is similar in style, but by no means the same, and still very effective. 'Hard Luck' closes side one; drums start to roll and then the guitar joins in, but the drums remain prominant throughout and are used to good effect to form what is another great number.

Side two: 'My Perfect Cousin' you all surely know - that forceful chorus and the lyrics that are impossible to resist. 'Boys Will Be Boys' is next - the rest of the group echo their voices around Feargal Sharkey's as he brings the message home loud and clear. 'Wednesday Week' follows 'Tearproof' and is undoubtedly the most untypical Undetones song yet to emerge - tender vocals backed by gentle guitar playing which at first sounds really wet, until you realise just how effective this song is. 'Nine Times Out of Ten' again slightly untypical of the Undetones, but as catchy as ever with whirling guitar to finish. 'Girls That Don't Talk' is the penultimate number and the album ends with 'Whats With Terry' - light guitar playing provides the intro with sporadic hard drumming and then the Undertones break into yet another great number.

The Undertones are the ultimate in modern pop and by the way things are going at the moment they look like being a major force in the '80s and deservedly so - miss them at your own peril. <.<.

I'M just a vision on your TV screen,
Just something conjured from a dream.

the slits



It would have been easy to do a straightforward interview with the three girls, but we wanted to look at things from a different angle so we spoke to drummer, Bruce, but so as not to leave the girls out, we also had Tessa in on the interview. The fact that she said relatively little would seem to indicate that the opinions of Bruce were those of the whole band.

GH: Would you say that the Slits are moving towards a heavier reggae sound?
B: Not consciously. We're not moving towards any sound, not consciously. We're not thinking, right, this is what we're going to sound like. No, I wouldn't say we are. It's not the way to play music - not in terms of what you think it should sound like - you just play it, and that's influenced by a lot of things - things you read, things that happen to you, all kinds of stuff. Alright, we listen to a lot of reggae. We've listened to reggae for a long time, and we still do, though I don't as much as I used to. I wouldn't really have thought that the new single was a heavier reggae sound. I don't know.

GH: When will the next official studio album be out?
B: I don't know. We're taking our time. Instead of recording an album all at once, I think we'll be recording tracks at a time, in kind of bursts, rather than doing it all at one moment. Instead of spending about five weeks in the studio, which is fucking boring really, I'd rather do it in bits and then piece it together. I think you get bogged down when you're in the studio for weeks on end.
GH: Why did you decide to release the official bootleg?
T: Because there's some good stuff on it. And it's not a bootleg - it's called a retrospective album, but it's not a serious album at all.
B: A lot of people have been going on about the quality, but people don't have to buy it, for Christ's sake. They go on about it, they say how terrible it is and it's a waste of time, but they don't have to buy it - they're not obliged to at all. If they want to buy it they can, if they want to break it up afterwards they can. It doesn't matter. It's just there. It's there to be heard.

GH: Do you think it's at all relevant to what the Slits are doing today?
B: No, but that doesn't matter. The Pop Group one will be the same. Well, that in a way may be more relevant to what they're doing, but no, no, it doesn't make any difference wheter it's relevant or not. I mean, what you did yesterday isn't relevant to what you're going to do tomorrow, 'cos you don't know what's going to happen anyway. You can't decide what's going to happen anyway, 'cos someone else is doing it for you.

T: It's just a really casually put out album.
GH: Why did youleave Island?
T: Oh God! We've been asked that so many times!
B: They're fools.
T: It's unimportant why.
GH: For ages you were going on about how great they were and that they were just what you wanted....
T: Yeah, they were, but some things just don't last, and they don't go right, then you move on to something else.

GH: Why did you decide to form Y Records?
T: So that we can deal with who we want. So that we can say we're in charge.
B: So that we have a seat, y'know, so that we can make the decision on what's being put out.

the slits

GH: How did the connections with Rough Trade come about?
B: They're nice people, and we get on with them. They do things the way we like it. They're not to worried about profit margins.

GH: Why were there two different groups on the last single,- why didn't you release two seperate singles instead?
B: Well it's two different bands, and two A sides. We wanted to do it as some kind of gesture, to show that there was an affinity between the two bands, and that was the way of demonstrating that. Also it will introduce Slits fans to the Pop Group and vice versa. We don't want to keep people in their mingy little holes.

GH: How has it sold compared to 'Typical Girls'?
T: It's Number One in the alternative chart. It doesn't matter if you sell more if your on an independant label, 'cos it still won't get in the charts.
GH: So although Typical Girls appeared to sell better, it didn't...
B: You could sell 400,000 records, but will it be in the BBC charts? Not a chance. It wouldn't even appear, 'cos they're not sold inchart return shops. I'd really like to do that - to sell 400,000 records and still not be in the BBC charts, because all those charts are there for is so that people can compete against each other, so they can say "Oh, I'm higher in the charts than you"
GH: How satisfied were you with the single?
B: It's alright. As soon as yo 've done something it's alright - you can do something better all the time. You never say "Yeah, this is really brilliant, we've achieved what we wanted to do".

GH: Would you say it was better than anything on 'Cut'?
T: Let's just say it's different.
B: I don't know. Obviously its worth being very critical of yo rself, but it's not worth saying "Well, we've done something that's better than that", because at the time you did it, it was the best you could do. But there's nothing wrong in playing something a bit different, and running from one side to the other, like playing Heavy Metal, then playing Funk.
GH: Whose singing 'No More Rock And Roll ~~Blues~~' on the new album?
T: That's Subway Sect.
GH: From moving from a big company to an independant aren't you regressing rather than progressing - most groups do it the other way round.
B: Most groups get a big record label and they figure on sing the record company. You see, by doing it this way, when people buy the record, it's as we want it to be. Whereas however much yo can say you might be manipulating a label, what they're doing is making fucking money out of you and that's all they're interested in. They might pamper you and they might say how great they think you are and give you everyhting you want, but they're only doing it 'cos they're gonna make lots of money out of you. They don't care otherwise. Now, that doesn't bother me. We could handle being on a big record label, I'm sure we could. It's also easier in the sense that you don't have to argue with these fat arseholes who sit in their offices all day, 'cos we decide what to do.

GH: What's happening about the Slits's drummer?
B: I play drums for both bands, at the moment.
GH: Are the Slits looking for another drummer?
T: No, we've given up.
B: It's alright 'cos I'm getting bionic parts fitted next week.



Bruce picks up on the subject of Y Records again....

B: It's not really a desire to be independant though, it's because this way we can get it out and we'll know that it's getting to people as we want it to be. And we can license it out, 'cos Rough Trade haven't got the distribution of other companies in places like Japan and China - and all the company will do it press it and put it out and they don't do anyhing else.
GH: Why did Budgie leave?
T: I can't really remember, he just seemed to drift away.

And from that point the interview started to drift away into a series of irrelevant uncoordinated statements, so I won't bore you with the details, And anyway, I'm running out of space. <.<.

THE CURE

SEVENTEEN SECONDS

The album starts with a very weak and very insignificant piece of keyboard playing, called 'A Reflection' - a very inauspicious start for what I find a very inauspicious album. As they break into 'Play For Today' it is obvious that the album is going to be in the slow, weak, mysterious style of 'A Forest', rather than the instant pop-appeal of 'Boys Don't Cry', 'Jumping Someone Else's Train' and the first album, 'Three Imaginary Boys'. 'Play For Today' is, actually one of the better tracks on the album, but all sound very much the same - slow, heavy and monotonous, leaden drum beat, throbbing bass, twinkling guitar and mysterious/silly fiddley bits on the keyboards and those wining vocals. 'Secrets' and 'In You House' are both fairly undistinguished tracks. 'Three' is a fairly good point to end side one on - the same sort of stuff as the others, still too slow, and I can't hear any vocals except a ghostly whisper in the background, but it's a lot heavier than the others.

Horrible, pathetic, ghost noises like you'd expect on a low-budget horror movie, and entitled 'The Final Sound' give way to the not classic, but distinctive, opening line of 'A Forest', instruments joining in one after another - this sounds a lot more like what the other tracks should have sounded like - the ironies of having this in the chart, when stuff like 'Boys Don't Cry' got no where is best left well alone, by me at least.

Things definitely start to look up here - 'M' is a more instant style, 'It Might' is slow again, but more bearable than 'A Reflection', 'Secrets', or 'The Final Sound', and the title track 'Seventeen Seconds', rounds off the album fairly reasonably.

It is difficult to be fair about this album, as I find myself distracted from its good points through sheer disappointment at its failure to live up to the Cure's great potential. Anyway, I won't give it stars, but I'll just say, if you like 'A Forest', then you'll probably like this (I can't say fairer than that can I?) and from the number of people who apparently do, I can only deduce that I just don't appreciate it, 'cos it hasn't even grown on me!

E.S. THIS ALBUM IS THE BEST THIS DECADE... SO THERE ?

MAGAZINE

THE CORRECT USE OF SOAP

****½/*****

Call them pretensious if you must (Oh, alright then - C.C.), but Magazine are still a fascinating group, and this is a fascinating album - it is everything that 'Secondhand Daylight' should have been, and not as threateningly pretensious as 'Real Life', it sees Magazine as real people, with Howard Devoto not only singing, but singing singing almost well! All the songs are very good - all similar enough to fit well in together, but different enough to each have its own, distinctive character. I would like to go in depth into each song, but I shall refrain, (You're just a lazy sod - C.C.) saying only that as every song comes on, you think "this is the best" - in retrospect the opening volley of 'Because You're Frightened' and 'Model Worker' is formidable, and 'Sweetheart Contract' is the only real weak spot. All in all an impressive and formidable album.

E.S.

The Fall

TOTALE'S TURNS ****

As most of these tracks have already been released before there's not much point in going into great detail 'cos if you're a Fall fan then you'll know them already, and if you're not you're probably not interested anyway - the Fall are a band you either love or hate.

There are no new tracks on Side One, which includes 'Fiery Jack', 'Roche Rumble', 'Musorewi's Daughter', 'In My Area' and 'Chock Stock.

Side two opens with 'Spectre Vs Rector' and then there are three new tracks, none of which are up to the Fall's usually high standards. The first is 'Gary Grant's Wedding' and is one of those slow/fast sort of songs, but the change in tempo is a bit to frequent for me, and I don't know whether I'm coming or coming. 'That Man' sounds like a rip off of the theme from 'Happy Days' - yes I did say Happy Days - but the Fall have stamped it with their own distinctive style and it turns out to be a great piss-take. 'New Puritan' is probably the worst Fall track ever - like Alternative TV on a bad day. The final track is the classic 'No Xmas for J. Quay'.

So 10 tracks, 7 previously released, but the presentation of the songs is different enough to make this a worthwhile buy for a Fall fan as it presents the Fall as they should be heard - spontaneous, rough and LIVE. It would be easy to criticise the fact that so many songs are already available, but that's the case with most live LPs - in fact most live LPs contain nothing but material that is already available.

C.C.

THE WALL

Why is it that we nearly always seem to introduce our interviews with apologies? I ain't going to apologise for this! The Wall were in Reading and they're a good group so we decided to do an interview with them. Any other questions? The Wall are Kelly (vocals); Nick (Guitar); Andy (Bass); and Rab (drums). Now let's get on with it -

GH: How, why and when did you start?
Rab: Andy's the only original member left so he had better answer that...
Andy: We started the October before last. We were all in seperate bands, then they all split up and so we formed the Wall, and we cut the first record six weeks later.
Rab: The band started off with the EP - they made that at the Wallsend studio - that's were the name comes from as well. But then they decided to move to London, and the guitarist and drummer didn't want to so it was only and the vocalist. Then I joined - I met them on the Patrik Fitzgerald tour, 'cos I was Patrik Fitzgerald's drummer and they were the support - I was hired out, and the contract was only for seventeen dates, so when the tour finished, I joined them.
Andy: Rab was one of the original members of the Pack, and I think he was in PIL for about a week.
GH: How did you manage to get the first record out so quickly?
Andy: We'll there was this bloke who really liked us, and he got run over in a road accident. Anyway he got £5000 compensation and he gave us £200 to make a demo, we made the demo and took it around everywhere. We went to Rough Trade and they said they'd like to release a single, but they didn't have enough money, so we went to Small Wonder and they said they'd do it. We then practised for 6 weeks solid so we were tight, and then recorded it.
GH: Why did you sign to an independant label?
Andy: Well, if anyone had come up and offered us a deal then we'd have just signed it - we weren't really bothered, we just wanted to get records out and go on tour, and that's all we want to do.
GH: How did you feel when you heard Small Wonder were going to fold up?
Rab: A bit shocked, but I don't think they'd have done naything else with us anyway. But they're a good label, they've helped a lot of groups.
GH: What's happening about recording now?
Rab: We've just got a deal with Fresh records in London, and we'll be making an album and single real soon.
Kelly: We don't know what we'll call the album, but the single's going to be called 'Gateway', that's definite.
Rab: What we've always wanted to do is put an album out, 'cos then you can get more gigs.
Kelly: We might even make a bit of money as well, 'cos out of Exchange we got about 25 quid each, and from the EP about 15 'cos it didn't get reviewed at all, it just sold by word of mouth.
Nick: But it's all so much up to the music papers, especially in London, 'cos if they say you're good then you're the people to go and see, and if the papers say you're crap then no-one comes. Like, we had a two page write up in Sounds some time back, and all these kids started to come and see us - we were really trendy for about two weeks, then it all faded away. We went on the Upstarts tour and when we got back no-one wanted to know anymore. It's all so manipulated, who goes to see who.
GH: How did you feel when they all stopped coming?
Andy: Sick. We got gigs really easily then, and we sold out at the Hope and Anchor, but a week later we couldn't get any gigs, and that still goes now - we can't get gigs in London. If they'd have kept coming we'd have probably got signed up about six months ago and we could have had an album out now.
GH: What do you write your songs about?
Nick: Anything that's in our heads at the time.
Kelly: the music's changing now 'cos we all write songs now so the songs are all different.
GH: Has John Peel been of much help to you?

THE WALL

Rab: Not session wise, but he's plugged the single a bit - in fact I think We're the only Small Wonder band who haven't had a session!
Andy: We sent him a tape with about five songs on it and we asked him what he thought, and he sent his secretary down and she said we were good, but hard luck y'know, you can't have it, which is funny 'cos all the other Small Wonder bands have had one as Rab said.
GH: How did the connection with Steve Jones come about?
Nick: He came to see us at a gig, then he offered to produce us after he'd seen us, which was before the 'Exchange' single. He still keeps saying he's going to produce us again in the future, but that's a load of bollocks - we haven't done anything with him since and we haven't seen him since.
GH: When we talked to the Cockney Rejects a couple of weeks ago they dais Small Wonder ripped bands off and they were a bunch of wankers....
Kelly: Where would they Cockney Rejects be without Small Wonder? They were the label that launched them.
Andy: The guy that runs the label has helped a lot of bands and he's a good guy. I think he's thinking if doing a comilation album with his favourite Small Wonder tracks on it. I think he'll have a track on it - the first single - he didn't like the second so much. I thought the second was weaker as well. It's much more powerful live. He's just about the only straight bloke we've met. I don't know what the Rejects were talking about.
GH: How big a following do you have now?
Andy: We've a bigger following up north. The further north you go the bigger following we've got. In London it's all the electronic stuff innit?
GH: What are your plans as far as gigs go at the moment?
Andy: Well, we've got no manager now, 'cos our last one, he was promising us the world y'know. He said he'd put us on the Slaughter and the Dogs tour, the one that's just past. We thought great, y'know, sure. Then he said "I'll tell you what lads it would be better if you did the Subs' tour instead, 'cos there are more dates" Great, we thought. But nothing came out of that, so we asked him if he had got us any other gigs. "Oh, we've got a gig in Reading - maybe, but it isn't definite", so the day before he rings me up and goes "Uh, have you got the PA yet?". And I hadn't 'cos he hadn't confirmed it, all he said said was that we might be playing, so we couldn't get one in time. He kept making all these promises, like the Subs' tour, and nothing ever happened. We really thought we'd be on that tour. So we do it ourselves now, and we're organising small dates, like this, for say £100 a night, which'll just be enough to get us to the next gig, and we'll live like that. When we did the Upstarts' tour that was for £25 a night and we had a quid a day to spend and we just lived in the van for two weeks, just driving about. And we're quite happy living like that.
GH: Would you describe yourselves as a punk band?
Rab: No - we're just a new wave band.

I suppose that's as good a point as any to end an interview. Anyway watch out for the Wall's new single and see 'em live if you can - see C.C.'s gig write up elsewhere for a rave review of their live performance!

E.S.

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STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

THE STRAPS | HAMMERSMITH ODEON | ANOTHER PRETTY FACE

The Straps kicked the evening off and they were a good taster of what was to come. The lead singer sported a Captain Sensible jumper and a kilt, and looked, to say the least, ridiculous. Their songs showed a fair degree of originality and they were fairly interesting to watch, although they did seem a bit out of place in such a big venue - they'd make a very good garage band. I got the chance to see them at a smaller venue, only a couple of weeks later at the Monday Club - you can read about that later. For now, I'll tell you a few titles - 'Trixton', 'What's On The Box', 'News of the Day' and 'Violence Sex Disaster'.

Another Pretty Face were next on and best forgotten. The least said about them the better, although I must say they were treated very badly by Virgin, who dropped them so suddenly. But if they want to attract further record company interest they'll have to do better than this.

After a relatively short break Stiff Little Fingers took the stage. They opened with 'Gotta Getaway' and 'Straw Dogs' and then ploughed through the majority of the songs on the new album - 'Wait and See', 'Nobody's Hero', 'Bloody Day', 'Doesn't Make It Alright', 'No Change' and the classical 'Tin Soldiers'. All the singles were included plus a few off the excellent debut album - 'Barbed Wire Love', 'Johnny Was', 'Breakout' and 'Wasted Life'. I would have liked to have seen them play more from 'Inflammable Material' but I won't grumble about it too much. Each number was delivered with the energy and forcefulness that has made SLF one of the premier punk groups around today. Henry Cluney showed great enthusiasm, rushing about the ample stage with determined resolution. Jake Burns was also lively as was Ali McMordie. Jim Reilly did little to add to the visual effect, though his drumming cannot be faulted. For their silly encore they played 'Riders In The Sky' which was, as you might expect, silly. There was really only one thing missing that would have made this gig outstanding. It was nothing to do with the band for they were exemplary. It was in fact the audience (Notable absence of punks by the way) - they were boring. They was no pogoing mass of bodies at the front as you might expect. It wasn't that the bouncers were so efficient - the audience were so lackadaisical. Still, full credit to Stiff Little Fingers for turning in a great performance.

C.C.

MO-DETTES & SPIZZ & TENPOLE TUDOR

Tenpole Tudor are a peculiar group to say the least. The music was solid and quick. Tenpole kept mentioning singles in between his songs but none of what he said really made much sense. They were trying to recapture the image of the Pistols in music and dress, but somehow they didn't seem to fit in with the precise quality of Spizz and the Modettes. Whatsmore no one seemed to know who they were, but eventually all was revealed when someone yelled "Who the hell are you?". "We Are Tenpole Tudor" came the proud reply. The most amusing song had to be 'Who Killed Bambi' when Tenpole tried desperatly to do the job of all the orchestra alone - he failed.

Athletico Spizz 80 followed soon after and din't put everything into their set, although it was still very enjoyable. They went through most of their favourites, but their set was very disjointed. They had no song list and conferred at the end of each song to decide on another. They managed to squeeze in a version of 'In The Navy', and the encore was a song about the Mo-dettes with such sophisticated and profound lyrics as "There's Kate...sitting on a gate" and "Jane...you make me swoon" - hot stuff eh? Overall Spizz were a little disappointing but still as 'special secret guests' they were good to watch and played with their own original style.

The Mo-dettes on their special first birthday party started off rather badly. They lacked the energy and confidence shown at the Moonlight Club a few weeks earlier, but they soon settled into the swing of things.

A good set that naturally included their brilliant debut single and its b side, and they promised us another in the near future. In the meantime I can satisfy myself with the free flexi disc given away at the gig of their very popular live number 'Twist and Shout'. Unfortunetly this lacks the energy and enthusiasm it gets live, but who's complaining?.

The first birthday party went off well, and the audience seemed happy. I'm sure all of us here at the CH factories look forward to hearing more from the excellent Mo-dettes in their next year.

PP

WRECKLESS ERIC

You may remember a big review in here by great writer Derm the Sperm. Well, he didn't like that name, so he will now be known as 'Lost' Johnny Speed (??? - C.C.), although it says this article is by 'Lost' Johnny Speed, it's really Derm the Sperm. Do now you know. (Sorry Derm!) (Just get on with it - J.S.).

Anyway, Derm the Sperm, sorry, I mean 'Lost' Johnny Speed didn't write an introduction so it's straight into the interview....

GH: How do you rate the response to your 'Big Smash' album? First critically and then in salesterms?

WE: I don't know what you probably think of as criticism....I don't take some sort of petty, personal attack as a half-baked sort of excuse for a journalist as criticism. As far as other reviews go, I just don't read 'em, y'know. There was one that I did read, and that's one way that's getting seen to in no uncertain terms. People slag us off, and we just send 'em honorary membership of the fan club. As far as sales go its been great.

GH: Has the album been issued in America yet?

WE: No, it hasn't, but it will be soon. It'll be on Stiff/Epic. We formed Stiff records in America to put my last album out there.

GH: You weren't too happy with the last album were you?

WE: No, not the last finish album - 'The Wonderful World'. That was the 'Wonderful World of Pete Solley'.

GH: How much control do you have over records issued by Stiff?

WE: If I've got the make an album, we decide on the producer, and then we have to go and record it, and unless its a complete out and out disaster, which they didn't really take the 'Wonderful World' to be, it gets released.

GH: So you decided on Pete Solley to produce the last album?

WE: No, I didn't no. I think they probably realised they had made something of a mistake afterwards, but it was alright, y'know. It just didn't have any balls in it. Nazza was a great choice for the new album. They chose him while I was away, knowing he was a friend of mine, and he was into doing the thing right. I don't think they actually thought he would listen to what I said, but he did. So the songs came out just as I intended, and not like some sort of producer's dream.

GH: Why did you go to Stiff?

WE: Stiff Records were a new company, they had a lot more of a human side, which they've still got actually, than the other record companies which would mould the product. There's a lot more heart in it y'know.

GH: Is it more of a family atmosphere then at Stiff?

WE: The people that I know there, the people that work in the office, that is a sort of family, although I don't think a lot of people have got much time for Rachel Sweet. I see Lew Lewis and bits of his band occassionally. They're great chaps y'know. I don't fraternise with Dury or anybody. He's always away some here having a trauma as far as I can tell.

GH: What were you doing before you went to Stiff?

WE: I'd been at art school for about 4 years, and after that I had, between becoming a professional musician and leaving art scholl, something like 90 sort of menial jobs - warehouse work, just moving boxes about, unloading trucks, stuff like that..washing up in a restaurant. My last job was toilet cleaning for Tarmac Roadstone in Greenwich. I lasted two days. I remember in the winter of '77, that was after I'd been to Stiff, being on the roof of the National Theatre, which they were putting plays on in while they were still building the thing. I was working on the roof, painting steel girders inside a cooling tower. it was fucking freezing - in November. Stiff never gave me any advances, so I had loads of stupid jobs. I was working in the basement at St. Thomas' Hospital covering the pipes with some stuff. That was quite well paid, and one day the Queen came to visit the place and we had to stay down there until she'd gone. They wouldn't let us come up because it was really filthy down there. I always said after that that I'd had the pleasure of working under the Queen.

GH: So you weren't doing anything musically?

WE: Yeah. I was writing songs at the time. I ended up as a free lance gardener - I used to garden for old ladies.

GH: How did you get the name 'Wreckless'?

WE: It was just a question of everybody was being hoisted with names, like I wasn't all that keen onit. But everyone was being given these names - Elvis Costello, Rat Scabies, Captain Sensible, Laurie Driver, Howard Pickup, Gaye Advert. Everyone was being given stupid names. They did it to me as well y'know.

WRECKLESS ERIC

GH: You don't play much from your debut album any more. Do you then not feel too happy about songs like 'Personal Hygiene'?

WE: I'd probably do them again, but the thing is we've been restricted to going at the most an hour, and we need a lot longer to get all the songs in. So, I have to play a lot of the new stuff because you don't make money out of going on the road. Going on the road is like an advert for your album. We've just lost £6,000 on the Squeeze tour. On one tour we played 10 gigs, sold out at every one, and lost £5,000

GH: Who decide to remix 'Whole Wide World' and 'Reconnez Cherie' on the PS comsilation album?

WE: The original mix of 'Whole Wide World' was very good, but slightly fuzzy round the edges. Nazza did that. We were in the studios late one night, some band hadn't turned up, and he'd always wanted to go at remixing it, so we spent to evening remixing it.

GH: Why does the personel of the band change so fast?

WE: I sacked the entire first band. After the 'Out From Under the Wife's Feet Tour'. I got Walter Hacon in on rhythm guitar, and in the meantime Brady left because we weren't working, and he's very much a live player. He got offered something else so he left, and rejoined, and left, and rejoined, and left and rejoined....we got Pete Gooling in. Pete left at Chrostmas to go and live in Switzerland, to teach guitar, because he's not really in to going on the road. So we've got Colin Fletcher now - he used to be in the Troggs. Geir Wade, who was on the 'Wonderful World' just wasn't good enough to be our drummer, so we sacked him.

GH: Do you see your present band as stable?

WE: I think so, yeah. We're thinking of getting a keyboard player as well. Malcolm Morley played keyboards on the album, but he's got a lot of other stuff going for him.

GH: Why did you do a cover of 'Crying, Waiting Hoping'?

WE: It was actually Pete Solley's only good idea. Me and Malcolm arrived at the studio a bit early and we were sitting in the corner playing all these old songs. He walked in and we were playing 'Crying Waiting Hoping' and he said it was great and that we should record it. I didn't mind them putting it out as a single. On the b side they credited the production to Malcolm Morley and I was so incensed because I'd stayed behind for an extra 10 min tes to mix it and get a demo out of it. They've never credited Malcolm's part of it ever again, they've always credited it to me every time it's come out anywhere.

GH: Why don't you tour more in England?

WE: We can't afford to. On the last tour we took out a huge PA which we couldn't afford. I never really thought about who was paying for it until about halfway through the tour. We lost so much money, and we'll obviously lose money again. We can easily get gigs, but we can't afford to play them - we'd look silly if we went out with a smaller rig, no lights.

GH: How much of your stuff is released in other countries?

WE: A lot. 'Hit And Miss Judy' was a number 1 in Belgium.

GH: What are your plans for the future?

WE: There is a lot I want to do. I want to do a rock 'n' roll album at some stage - none of my own songs, just covers. We'd put it out cheaply, and we'd probably change the name of the band - we'd all be on the cover with false moustaches and things like that.

GH: How do you rate the chances of your latest single, 'Broken Doll'?

WE: That's basically been put out to boost album sales. As long as you've got a single out the radio's got something they can put on their playlist. Obviously they can't put an album track on the playlist, so you don't get daytime airplay. I don't think it'll be ab hit, that would be naive.

GH: Are you happy with the album sales?

WE: It's done well, because we've been on tour. It's the rest of the world that matters. I don't think there's much room for us here, in England. I know there's more room for us in America and Europe, and the album's in the lower reaches of the top 30 in Australia, so we should be alright.

GH: Has Stiff been pressing you for a hit single?

WE: Not pressing me. We've all agreed that it would be efficacious.

So there you have it - Wreckless Eric. He is not afraid to stand part from the trends, which at different times could have made him a chart star. He presents himself as he is, unashamed, and honest about his career, background and music. One thing is certain - after three albums he is still getting better all the time.

'Lost' Johnny Speed.

SLAUGHTER & the DOGS

MANUFACTURED ROMANCE. CRISIS COCKNEY REJECTS

Manufactured Romance were first on, and appeared to be fairly talented but somewhat lacking in inspiration. Musically their punky / poppy numbers were good, but not really what was wanted by the audience of hard-core punks and skinheads, although they didn't go down badly. As support to two such powerful groups, Crisis fitted the bill excellently. Although the lyrics were to some extent political, the music was hard and fast and enjoyable, the better numbers were Holocaust (an Anti-Nazi anthem) and White Youth (an Anti-Racism number.)

eventually the 'Rejects took the stage, but from the start their set was bedevilled with faults. Lead singer Stinky Turner tried to keep the audience amused, but really lacked the presence to keep us amused, 'though he led the skins in the audience through such delightful numbers as "I'm For Ever Blowing Bubbles", "Knees Up Mother Brown", and of course the inevitable cries of "Skin'eeeeads",'though this little sing-song was interrupted a couple of times by the 'Rejects very selfishly (?) playing a real 'Rejects song. All the best ones were there - I'm Not A Fool, Police Car, Sad Man, Are You Ready to Ruck?, Join The Rejects, Where The Hell Is Babylon? and lots more all creaked out at a breakneck speed sending us wild, and leaving us yelling for more long after they had finished their encore.

Slaughter, by comparison, were a big disappointment. Although Slaughter were headlining, most people were there to see the 'Rejects, and Slaughter certainly didn't blow them off the stage, but they still weren't bad; not as lively as I had expected. They played many numbers which are apparently on their new L.P, and I can't say any of them inspired me with any desire to buy it, the highlights of the set still, predictably, being their two great classics - Cranked Up Really High and Where Have All The Bootboys Gone? which was part of their encore and saw them joined forcibly by a massive blonde figure, usually to be found singing with Zerox (Hi, Pete!) who was eventually chucked back into the audience. Anyway, not a very good gig, and with the Cockney Rejects, despite all manner of problems, being indubitably the stars of the evening. E.H.

MEAN STREET BETWEEN PICTURES LAST GANG SPITTING IMAGE. LIVE AT THE ROCK GARDEN.

The Last Gang are an unusual and heavy three-piece group from Birmingham, who sound more than a little like Joy Division. I was quite impressed by their performance, and a little bit of detective work revealed that The Last Gang are:- Mick (vocals), Rob (guitar), and John (drums). They have released one single on Graduate Records and titled Spirit of Youth / Waste It All which I can reccomend. All The Same, they couldn't match Between Pictures' performance. Although I have seen them give better performances than they did tonight, they were still brilliant. They rocketed through Jukebox Memory, Married, Virgin King and Sleepytime, their nervousness quickly fading as the audience proved to be lethargic but appreciative. Faces, Factory, Cut Me Out, Jersey and Life followed eachother in quick succession, and I remember remarking on how much more confident and vital their live sets have become since I first saw them. Practice and Treat Me rounded off their set, but they were soon back to appease our cries for more with an encore of Postcards.

I saw very little of Spitting Images' set, and it was not until afterwards that I even discovered their name, 'though it seemed to me that it was just for them to remain as anonymous as their music, for their are typical of countless bands doing the rounds of countless gigs.

Mean Street were headlining, 'though to my mind they didn't deserve to be. They played a fairly long set , and seemed un-necessarily cocky for five blokes who played such insipid rock-music. Nevertheless, the general lack of originality and colour was, to a certain extent, redeemed by a catchy encore, and the playing of what was clearly a fairly talented guitarist.

Anyway, all in all a varied and enjoyable night, and remarkable in that for almost the first time I have seen, a Reading group have done themselves justice away from home! E.H.

I'm gonna strike a defiant pose against the life you chose

There ain't 'alf been some clever bastards.

ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80

No room for intoductions, just to say that we spoke to Spizz, Jim Solar (bass), Dave Scott (Guitar), and C.P. Snare (drums), the missing member being Mark Coldfield (Keyboards). The obvious question first:

GH: Why do you keep changing your name?
Spizz: Spizz '77 started and then we had to change it in '78. We didn't like Spizz '78- preferred Oil - Oil was big in the media. Changed from Spizz Oil 'cos the band split up. Then we became Spizz Energi - new band, new people. Spizz Energi went through so many line up changes. New decade, new name - Athletico Spizz '80.
GH: Would you agree that Spizz Energi was better than Spizz Oil?
Spizz: It depends from which angle you look at it. Musically it was probably better, but Spizz Oil had more spontaneity...not to say that Spizz Energi had no spontaneity.
GH: When will you be doing an LP?
Spizz: We're hoping to record one within the next four weeks. We'll take four days over it, but in which week I'm not going to tell you.
GH: What's it going to be called?
Spizz: It might be called 'Housewives and Labourers'.
GH: What about tours - have you got any lined up?
Spizz: We're going to Italy in a couple of weeks time but between now and then we're recording the album and then anything we haven't done when we come back from Italy we'll polish off in the studio for the album, then we'll probably do Scotland, then come back and do England or something...and Wales.
GH: Are you quite happy with Rough Trade or do you want a major recording contract?
JS: Next week when we make our album we'll see then. We might do it next week and we'll decide then 'cos if we haven't got any money left then we're going to have to go to some other label, possibly to get some money to finish it off, 'cos we might have to finance it ourselves.
GH: Do you think you've got any chance of making the charts whilst you're with RT?
Spizz: Captain Kirk did come pretty close, but because the RPI don't receive any money on Rough Trade I reckon they actually physically stopped it from getting any higher. It could have gone higher - sales prove it could have. It's the best selling Rough Trade single so far - getting on for 45,000 copies - and it's still selling.
DS: But it was a sustained sell, since December - it's been selling for 4 months.
GH: What was the promotional deal you arranged with William Shatner and why did CBS stop it?
Spizz: 'Cos they didn't want a small time company and a small band making any money out of their big finance film.(Star Trek). He was just going to fly over for 10 days promotion. We were just gonna come into him, maybe take a few pictures for the Daily Mirror or something and that was that.
JS: It was basically CBS and Paramount that got together and said we don't want Spizz Energi or Rough Trade getting any capitol out of it. CBS marketed their own single of the Star Trek theme so they didn't want any contest.
GH: Why did you do a cover of 'Virginia Plain' for the b-side of 'Soldier Soldier'.
JS: It was the very first song we played together, at the beginning of '79. We said what do we all know and everyone knew Virginia Plain so we just did it straight away. We did it at gigs and it went down very well. We've always enjoyed playing it and it seemed an obvious choice. It's an easy song as well - there's only about four chords.
GH: Have you had any other offers from any other companies?
Spizz: They've rung us up saying um um we're interested in your band. How much? Then we've put the phone down.
GH: How did you get onto Rough Trade in the first place?
Spizz: Spizz Oil did a John Peel session and we took the tapes to Rough Trade of the session. They said um, record it and we went and recorded 6,000 Crazy'. That's how we got on Rough Trade. Then Spizz Oil split up and we didn't see Rough Trade for four months or so, whilst Spizz Energi came together and then we did another John Peel session and they said look do you wanna do another single and we said we liked 'Soldier Soldier'. They said OK, so we went and recorded that for Rough Trade.
GH: Does the sort of press you get bother you at all?
Spizz: No. We prefer fanzine write ups to media write ups, although media write ups do get to more people.

ATHLETICO SPIZZ 80

GH: Do you want to be big and famous?
Spizz: I just want to sell as many copies of our records as possible.
JS: We wouldn't mind getting in the charts or going on Top Of The Pops or Tiswas.
GH: How would you describe you music?
All: GREAT!
GH: Are you satisfied with the way things are going at the moment?
Spizz: No - never am. Pleased that it's better than yesterday, but otherwise....
JS: It's been quite a struggle and it still is and it gets more of a struggle as you go on 'cos when things escalate you have more to deal with.
Spizz: More's at stake so if you step out of line, the bigger clobbering you're going to get.
JS: We used to get very little national music paper coverage and we still haven't had a lot but the odd thing sneaks in and we're kinda glad something's happening at last, but You've got to think a lot more about about what you're going. Tonight a lot of people are being trruned away and a lot of under 16s can't get in and we feel to a point sad about that. A lot of our fans are quite young and they can't get in the Nashville, the Marquee or the Music Machine.
Spizz: We've talked about doing Matinees. We've done it in Liverpool, but sadly it was beaten into the ground.
GH: You've just been to Europe - how did that go?
Spizz: We all got the runs or constipation and that just overode everything, y'know.
JS: I didn't but I had a very bad cold instead.
GH: You went with the Modettes - who went down better?
Spizz: Well, some nights it would be a slightly more punky audience and where we would be more appeciated in a way and if we went on first in that situation the Modettes would get a good reception, but we didn't go out to beat the pants off each other. We had a party most nights.
JS: We took it in turns to headline.
GH: What are your parts in the film 'Breaking Glass'?
Spizz: About 3 minutes- if you blink you'll miss us. There's a backing band supporting Hazel O'Connor and Jim's on bass, Merks's on piano and someone spots Hazel O'Connor and says hey I could really do something with this band and takes her away and gets rid of us. I play drums.
GH: How did you get the parts?
Spizz: The director of the film was looking for small part actors and they just said come and look at some scripts, which we did, and we didn't like it. But then they changed it and we were cast as the backing band for Hazel O'Connor.
GH: (To C.P. Snare) You were once in the Members - what was that like?
CP: It was a different band really. The only person who was in it then whose still in it now is Nicky Tesco. The other three members left ie me and two others.
GH: Why did you leave?
CP: Well, I didn't really like them and there were problems within the group. I didn't like Nicky Tesco either.
GH: You once also played in a band in Reading, The Planets - what happened to them?
CP: Lack of gigs. Lack of money and that sort of thing. It was very hard to get gigs in Reading. We did a few gigs in London - the Moonlight and places like that. We supported the Vibrators at Bones once.
GH: Why do you think there have been so many line up changes?
Spizz: Well, often we've chosen someone to step in for a gig - 'cos we've never refused a gig and often we've chosen someone not suitable on a permanent basis so they left or we sacked them.



C.K.

left to right:
Spizz, Dave, Mark, Jim, C.P.

A FAST CROWD IDIOT DANCERS ..T THE MONDA. C.UB.

A Fast Crowd played a typical set - musically ranging from heavy forceful and alarming numbers to more standard, repetitious punk fare, but all are infused with energy and personality and delivered with agression and power. An interesting and lively bunch to watch, proficient without being professional, all they need is a little more confidence in theirown ability, but manage to project their songs very well. The songs themselves are very good too, I have seen them a few times now, and can pick out some of the better numbers - P.A.U.L., Last Kid in The World and when The Bombs Come being among the best.

Anyway, let's move on to the idiot Dancers. The name has got spread round quite a bit recently - thanks, to some extent, to their own efforts in putting ads in the classified columns of the weekly music rags. However, these adverts are lies - the Idiot Dancers do not dance; In fact they're not even idiots. What they are, in fact, is a cozy and fairly average little three - piece, musically somewhere imbetween mod and pop. They did a cover of the Rich Kids 'Burning Sounds', which was indistinguishable in style and tempo from their own compositions, so that'll give you some idea. Anyway, as I said, a fairly average group, but I was pleased to see the growing strength of A Fast Crowd. E.S.

JAZZ. THE MONDAY CLUB. PHOTOGRAPHS.

Two more fairly average groups on two separate occasions down at the Monday Club. Jazz, I think, are a local group and feature a sax. player who appeared to add nothing to the sound when he was on the stage, which was only about half the time. The Photographs are a Brummie group, not to be confused with Wendy Wus Photos, and not, despite what they maintained, as good.

It is possible that you have seen these groups, but you probably wouldn't remember them if you had - you know the type, the ones who stand ignored in a corner of a pub playing away, or playing a support spot while you're in the bar, not capable of evoking any sort of reaction, positive or negative. E.S.

GENERAL ACCIDENT AND JOHNNY AND THE MOONDOGS AT THE TARGET.

I've seen Johnny and the Moondogs so many times now, I suppose it was inevitable that I'd have to review them some time. The fact is, I can appreciate that they are a talented group, and the vocalist has the to sing classic vocals for this style of music (I think they call it Rock 'n' Roll) but, maybe I'm just biased, but personally I find this sort of music boring, vague and dodo-esque.

with Zerox banned in Reading and most of Berks, G.A. are the best group to be seen around here. I've reviewed them so many times that it seems to be pointless, but we'd better keep plugging 'em 'cos they're a hard-working bunch who deserve to get somewhere. G.A. have always been faithful to their fans, and the number of familiar faces swells with every appearance. Tonight, as on every other occasion, they gave us what we wanted, even if Tramp was a bit subdued.

Elephants in Stilettos, Look Alright, and of course the single Computer Dating (If you haven't got it yet, hang your head in shame!) were given an airing, and if you don't know them yet, go to a G.A. gig now, 'cos you're missing a great group. E.S.

THE WALL

THE MONDAY CLUB

Despite an unmoved audience (as usual) I thought the Wall were bloody good tonight. The Fox and Hounds might not be the best of venues, but the Wall coped admirably with the conditions and did the best you could expect of anyone in such a venue. When I bought their second single, 'New Way' I was a little disappointed with it, but tonight it really sounded great - far better than it does on vinyl, and they played both the b-sides as well - 'Uniforms' and 'Suckers'. They also played their first single, 'Exchange'. On several occassions, lead singer, Kelly, would plough his way through the audience to the back of the room and almost force people to dance, but his efforts were in vain. They certainly tried though, and they deserved a far better reaction than they got. In fact I don't think I've seen anyone put so much effort into a performance for a long time, and I can't wait to catch them again - hopefully they'll return to Reading soon in the future. The Wall were way above my expectations - if they can transform their live energy onto vinyl they 'll be well on their way, 'cos they've got a few good songs up their sleeves. Hopefully they can do it.

<.<.

The man who pulls the trigger's not to blame.
You know there ain't no street like home,
To make you feel so all alone,
Plenty of folk to tell you what to do
But they don't speak the same language as you.

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET.

THE CRAMPS The Fall FASHION

Fashion were first on, and were as pretensious and arty as their name suggests, but the three-piece of Mulligan, Luke and Dik played some quite danceable numbers, in particular Citinite, Do It In The Dark, Steady Eddie Steady and Product Perfect. The Fall were next on, and after a long introduction, they broke into Piery Jack. We went mad, but the group just stood there, in their ordinary clothes as if it was just a rehearsal. Their earlier numbers were, as on vinyl, the better ones, and a good balance was kept between old (Frightened, John Quays, Rowche Rumble) and new material (Flat of Angles, Heart Out, 2nd Dark Age), and some un-recorded ones were slipped in too (Scheme, Temperance, Plastic Man), as Mark E.Smith blurted out the lyrics with improvised spontaneity. Although not a powerful stage presence, Smith was clearly the driving force behind the Fall. The group were soon recalled to encore with ropstock, and, this task having been, very perfunctorarily, fuifilled, they strolled off again. What a contrast it was, therefore, between the unaffected and uncaptivating visuals of the Fall, and the elaborate theatricals we were to be treated to by The Cramps.

After a long wait, which was intended to be atmospheric, but was, in fact, just plain boring, The Cramps took the stage. Guitarist Brian Gregory was stood in front of us, and clearly deserved, as C.C. put it "10/10 for weirdness" - he wore womens high heels and tight black trousers with a glittering green spiral round one leg (C.C.?-P.I.). He rolled a fag menacingly round his mouth, and sneered at us through the white quiff which hung down from his greased-back black hair. WHAT A POSEUR!! we went crazy for the opening volley of Human Fly and Domino. Ivy Rorscach just stood there strumming her guitar and chewing gum with an expression of accustomed boredom; she looked like a whore in her tight gold trousers (what is this? a fashion parade?- P.I.). Nick Knox sat at the back, his drumming tireless and reliable, and as for lead singer Lux Interior, he was a madman, rolling about the stage, climbing up the speaker stacks and almost swallowing the mike as he belched out the lyrics. However, with the exception of Garbageman, I was A Teenage Werewolf and the encore of The Way I Walk, all the Cramps' Psycho-Rockabilly tunes sounded the same to me, and when Gregory had smashed his pink-and-black spotted Flying V into the drums, and the group had stalked off leaving candies guttering on the amps, I couldn't help but feel a little disappointed. E.S.

FLATBACKERS.



The Flatbackers were first on, and despite the loss of their keyboards player, they sounded a lot more substantial than before, but they had made the fateful error of refusing to let Zerox play, and they were to suffer for it - the set was disrupted by cries of "ZEROX" as goo rained on the stage, and someone even let off a couple of smoke bombs, but the Flatbackers kept trying and trying - God they were trying. They even granted us an encore (Ta?) "For being a great audience", and repeated cries for Zerox were countered with threats of another encore!

General Accident were next on, and although I have seen them play tighter and more powerful sets, and the bassist was hampered by a broken string, we all appreciated the chance to dance to our old faves Computer Dating, Julie etc.

As for the K9's, well, this was just a rehearsal for their real farewell gig, which promises to be a real event, and they weren't taking tonight too seriously, or putting too much into it. Nonetheless, we all went mad for all the old faves - Rose of The Clap, New Rose, Sweeney Todd, Idi Amin etc. etc. They had to stop at one stage, when the number of people jumping on the stage caused the amps to fall over, and we had to wait some time while they were repaired. Still, The K9's were as much fun as they always have been, and the spilt-up of such a great group is clearly a great loss for Reading. E.S.

CRISIS THE LAZERS THE STRAPS

THE MONDAY CLUB

This was the second time I'd seen both Crisis and the Straps within a couple of weeks. The Straps were first on. They delivered a half hour set that was good, but not amazing, and they failed to get the audience moving, which was much to their annoyance - "Is Reading really this boring?" They deserved far more than the rather apathetic reaction they received. 'Brixton' was dedicated to all those people in the audience from Brixton (cor! really? - Pi) "cos no one else seems to care". They ended cataclysmicly with 'Violence Sex Disaster'. In my previous review of this group I'd said they'd probably be better in a much smaller venue. Well, I'm not so sure now - at least at Hammersmith they had a large stage on which they were able to thrive. If they'd have done every song like the last then they would have been brilliant, but for the rest of the set they were less stunning. Still, they certainly never gave up their attempt to get some sort of reaction from the audience, who were indifferent towards them.

The Lazers were better received, though this was probably only because some members of the audience were familair with some of their numbers. They're probably best described as a pop/punk band, and they provide nothing but pure genuine fun, with numbers such as 'Try So Hard', 'Compromise' and 'Don't Understand', although unfortunetly they didn't play 'Coming Out'. A group worth catching if you get the chance.

After the Lazers' set had finished chaos developed. Zerox had been billed to play, had dropped out at the last minute, but had now turned up and wanted to play. They therefore took over the Lazers' equipment and played one song, with the pogoers at the front going wild. Despite cries of "Zerrrox" they were allowed no more.

Crisis were last on. Having seen them twice in such a short space of time I can tell you they are pretty average really. They're fairly good to watch and their songs are fairly good too ('PC 1984', 'White Youth', 'WhatsOn TV', and the brilliant 'Holocaust'). They managed to do what both the Straps and the Lazers had previously failed to do, and that was to get the audience moving. I'd certainly like to see them again, as they provide good entertainment, and it was a generally enjoyable evening.

<.<.

WASTED YOUTH

THE MONDAY CLUB

First of all let me introduce you to the band. They are: Ken Scott (guitar and vocals); Andy Scott (drums); Mick Atkins (guitar); Daren Murphy (bass); Mick Nicholas (keyboards). Their music is very much Velvet Underground influenced, and in what seems to be an attempt to imitate their heroes they put on pretentious American accents, although in a recent Sounds interview they claimed to have dropped this habit. Each song was preceeded by long, contrived introductions, which really irritated me, especially as they were trying so hard to sound American (god knows why) "Hey man, that's really cool, y'know" seemed to be their ultimate phrase, amongst others pulled straight from an American phrase book type mental dictionary.

As for the music, well some of it was good, some of it was awful. 'Do The Caveman Stomp' was one of their better numbers, but 'Wasted Youth' was terrible. They didn't play their single 'Jealousy', but most of their numbers seemed to be reasonably listenable, except for the one or two exceptions, which were quite diabolical. As for the visuals they were hampered by the small stage, but they coped adequately with this problem, although the otherall affect wasn't what you'd call stunning. They're supporting the Only Ones when they come to Reading (which will probably have happened by the time you read this), and I should imagine the extra space available to them will lead to a slight improvement. If it doesn't they've got problems, for this is something they could really improve on. If they did this, and dropped the American accents, and their few weak numbers they could be bloody good. We'll just have to wait and see, but for now they're not really up to much.

<.<.

GENERAL ACCIDENT AND K9s

STICK THE SMOKE



GRINDING HALT

FANX

Blits, Wreckless Eric, Crabsey Projects, The Wall, Athletico Spizz '80, 'Lost' Johnny Speed, Between Pictures, Quicksilver, Reading and Oxford, Music Market, Oxford, Earth Records, Aylesbury, V.I.P., Attrix Records, Mouth Trade, Revolution Records, Windsor, Davids Records, Wrecknell, Better Badges, anyone who bought this or previous issues or wrote to us and anyone else we've forgotten to mention. The rest of you can sod off.

BETTER BADGES PAWS

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ZINES

PANZINES, ARTZINES, COMICZINES, ZINE

50p 30p 25p 20p 15p

BLAM!

You think you're a nobody,
And I get all the fun,
But no one is nobody
Everyone is someone

BE WHAT YOU ARE

Next Issue

NOT TELLING - SO THERE!

(ie we don't know)

Write to Eddie at:
52, Rosehill Park,
Tamer Green,
Reading.

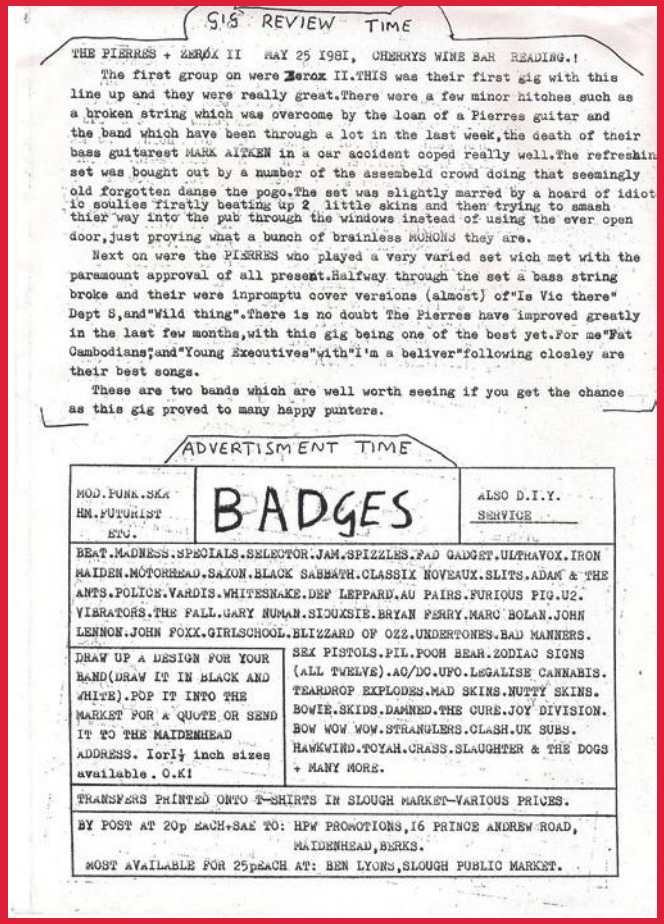
Or ring on Rdg 477981

Capt. Rdg 25308
Pig Nettlebed 641640

NEUTRON BOMB

I don't want to talk about it
I don't want to hear no lip,
Take your share don't shout about it,
That's your lot, remember you're a kid.

The persons that waste their time on this fanzine are: Captain Callous, Eddie Snide and (to a lesser extent) Pig Ignorant. Who wants to waste time on you scum? #



GIG REVIEW TIME

THE PIERRES + ZERÓX II MAY 25 1981, CHERRYS WINE BAR READING.!

The first group on were Zerox II.THIS was their first gig with this line up and they were really great.There were a few minor hitches such as a broken string which was overcome by the loan of a Pierres guitar and the band which have been through a lot in the last week,the death of their bass guitarest MARK AITKEN in a car accident coped really well.The refreshin set was bought out by a number of the assembeld crowd doing that seemingly old forgotten danse the pogo.The set was slightly marred by a hoard of idiot ic soulies firstly beating up 2 little skins and then trying to smash thier way into the pub through the windows instead of using the ever open door,just proving what a bunch of brainless MONONS they are.

Next on were the PIERRES who played a very varied set wich met with the paramount approval of all present.Halfway through the set a bass string broke and their were inpromptu cover versions (almost) of"Is Vic there" Dept S,and"Wild thing".There is no doubt The Pierres have improved greatly in the last few months,with this gig being one of the best yet.For me"Fat Cambodians"and"Young Executives"with"I'm a beliver"following closley are their best songs.

These are two bands which are well worth seeing if you get the chance as this gig proved to many happy punters.

ADVERTISMENT TIME

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BADGES

ALSO D.I.Y. SERVICE

BEAT.MADNESS.SPECIALS.SELECTOR.JAM.SPIZZLES.FAD GADGET.ULTRAVOX.IRON MAIDEN.MOTORHEAD.SAXON.BLACK SABBATH.CLASSIX NOVEAUX.SLITS.ADAM & THE ANTS.POLICE.VARDIS.WHITESNAKE.DEF LEPPARD.AU PAIRS.FURIOUS PIG.U2. VIBRATORS.THE FALL.GARY NUMAN.SIOUXSIE.BRYAN FERRY.MARC BOLAN.JOHN LENNON.JOHN FOXX.GIRLSCHOOL.BLIZZARD OF OZZ.UNDERTONES.BAD MANNERS.

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THE PIERRES

THE BANDS IN READING

Punk was taken up by lots of bands, it's DIY ethos was happily replicated and it spawned countless acts. Here are just a few of the bigger bands from Reading but in no way is this a comprehensive list.



Same old boring Sunday mornin
Old man's out washing the ca
Mum's in the kitchen cooking Sunday dinne
Her best meal, moaning while it last
Johnny's upstairs in his bedroom sitting in the dar
Annoying the neighbours with his punk rock electric guita
This is the soun
This is the sound of the suburb
This is the sound of the suburb
Every lousy Monday mornin
Heathrow jets go crashing over our hom
Ten o'clock Broadmoor sire
Driving me mad, won't leave me alon
The woman next door just sits and stares outsid
She hasn't come out once ever since her husband die
Youth Club group used to want to be fre
Now they want Anarch
They play too fast, they play out of tur
Practise in the singer's bedroo
Drum's quite good, the bass is too lou
And I can't hear the word
Saturday morning family shopper
Crowding out the centre of tow
Young blokes sitting on the benche
Shouting at the young girls walking aroun
Johnny stands there at his window looking at the nigh
I said, "Hey, what you listening to? There's nothing there
That's righ
This is the sound of the suburb
This is the sound of the suburb
This is the soun
This is the soun
This is the soun

GENERAL ACCIDENT



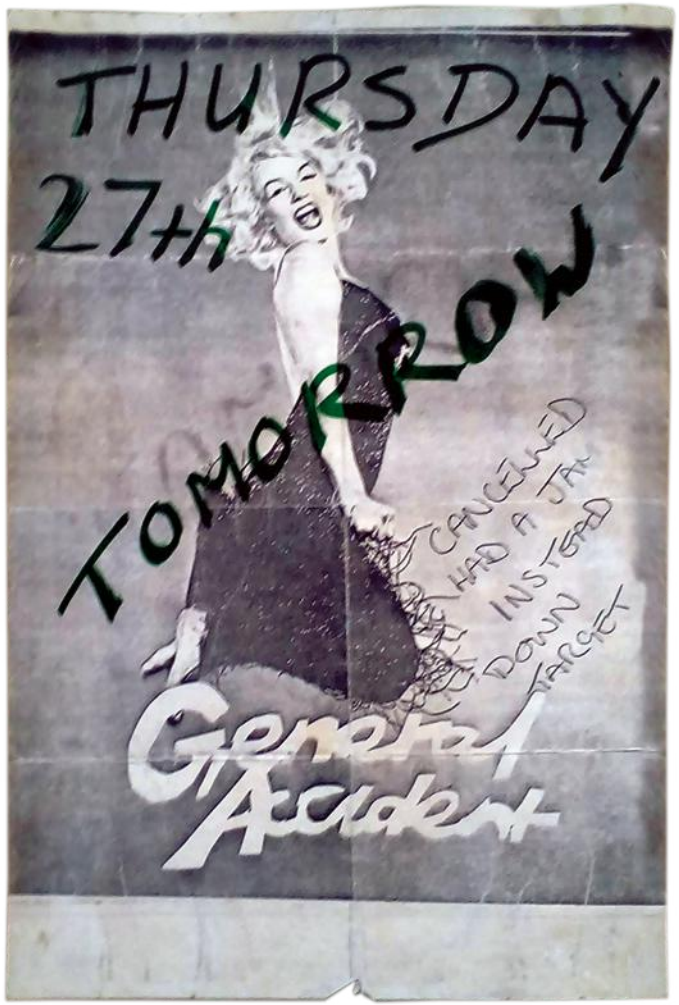
Formed in 1976, the band consisted of Tramp (vocals), John (guitar), Chris Broderick (bass) & Noddy (drums)

"We met in 1977 and started rehearsing in the bassist's garage, we were a garage band. We developed our own sound and started writing our songs. The guitarist John, is an incredible musician, his knowledge of musical structures allowed him to write punk with jazz chords, which gave another dimension. He would put together a song from a simple idea that one of us had expressed even a simple intro riff...We collectively wrote like that. Chris Broderick on bass, with a sound like a ball rolling on a parquet floor, deep and emphasising rhythm and melody. He too was an accomplished musician familiar with a variety of musical styles, Tramp had fronted a band, as lead singer of 'The Soldiers Are Coming' in West London, although as a young man he had experience managing an audience. We also had a strong backbone on the drums to lean on, we were going to be a good band. We had the right look, the right sound, the right songs, the right attitude, it was the right time, we were in the right place to make it happen... We started performing and very quickly we acquired an audience that grew from concert to concert. We were fast, furious and tight-knit. Soon we had bands following us, Whitley, Woodley, Reading, we were making sound and it was rumoured that we were the band to see..." **Noddy**

They were active between 1977 and 1980 and released 1 single - 'Computer Dating' in 1980. They were regulars at the **Target** and **Bones** and had gained a significant following in Reading, the fans would follow when the band gigged outside of Reading and this drew attention from the police due to the violence and destruction left in the bands wake. Unfortunately, due to already being on the police radar and following a drug bust, the singer, Tramp, was arrested and sentenced to 3 years for possession which led to the band breaking up shortly afterwards.

Sadly, Tramp passed away in 2021.

Left: homemade sticker for General Accident, below: homemade gig poster with handwritten relocation message. All really shows the DIY ethic behind punk





The Target Courtesy of **Noddy** from **General Accident**



The Greyhound Courtesy of **Noddy** from **General Accident**



General Accident impress

THE Reading group General Accident gave no sign that they had played on stage together only once before when they appeared at Bones Club this week.

They played a well-rehearsed set, reminiscent of the Stranglers in places, but most of the numbers had a quite distinct sound of their own.

Lead singer Tramp, bearing more than a passing resemblance to Ian Dury, is an ideal front man for Chris Normal on guitar, Johnny Featherlite on guitar and Nod D. Rummer on drums.

Outstanding numbers were You're the Lonely, a reggae tribute to the police drugs swoop, Operation Julie — which was well received — and an interesting number called New Music.

VICKI ELCOATE



Hazzard top local band

THE finals of the Thames Valley's rock band contest at Reading's Hexagon last weekend were marred by fighting.

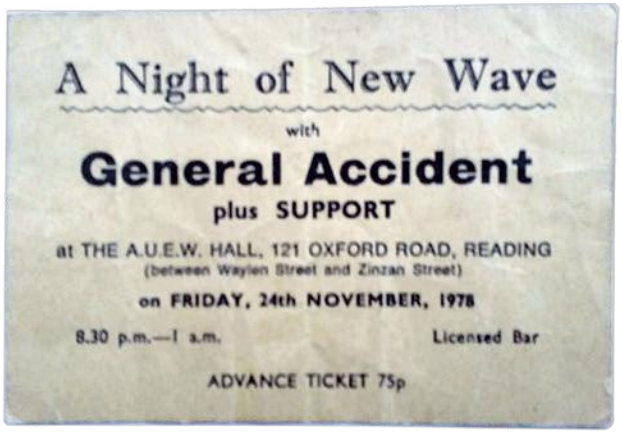
It was a shame because, for most of the evening, the audience at the Radio 210 event listened to the music, and behaved themselves.

Top band on the night were Hazzard, who have come a long way since I saw them about a year ago. Now their set is controlled and well-rehearsed and the songs are of a better quality.

Second were Lorelei, who I've never heard before, but who were excellent. The twin lead guitars were the stand-out point of the band, although the Dylanesque lead singer had real personality and looked a born rock star.

General Accident also have a lot of charisma and the band play neat, Boomtown Rats-style, sounds. They certainly deserved third place, and on a slightly weaker bill could have won outright.

Of the other groups, Killer were about 10 years out of date; Chris Gore was unoriginal; The Duncans were bouncy; Small Fry and Dealer both lacked star potential; Ocean were very ordinary; and Robert and the Remoulds had a good name but were outclassed on the night.



A Night of New Wave

with

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at THE A.U.E.W. HALL, 121 OXFORD ROAD, READING

(between Waylen Street and Zinzan Street)

on FRIDAY, 24th NOVEMBER, 1978

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ADVANCE TICKET 75p



Local rock group gets BBC break

READING rock band General Accident get a big break on Monday night — courtesy of the BBC.

The group are appearing on a BBC 2 show, Something Else, which will be devoted entirely to Reading and its youngsters.

General Accident — whose line-up now reads: Tramp, vocals, Nod, drums, Steve Willis, guitar, and Keith Steptoe, bass — were invited to the BBC studios to record two songs.

They will be seen performing Elephant In Stilettos, which is expected to be their new single on Quicksilver Records, and Walking On The White Side.

The band are featured alongside The Specials in the third of seven programmes called Something Else, which are made by young people for young people.

As Nod said: "It could be a good break for us. We are hoping to get some London gigs from this."

Fans of General Accident should tune in on Monday at 6.50pm.

Overkill here

Press clippings from General Accident's presence at the 210 Radio Stations Battle of the Bands, appearance on the BBC show 'Something Else' (video on page 52) and their first gig at Bones.





Mansfield Hall, Reading University Courtesy of **Noddy** from **General Accident**








K9s

The other big band on the circuit at the time was the K9s, they formed in 1977, they were Rick Dellar (vocals), Greg Muden (guitar and vocals), Iain 'Sprogg' Aird (bass and vocals) and Kev Drain (drums)

Originally called 'Rick Rodent And The Sewer Rats' in 1976, they became well known due to their cover of 'New Rose' by **The Damned** and their on stage costumes - policemen, nurses, ballerinas, holiday makers to name a few... they were **Bones** regulars until it closed down. They were around for a relatively short time as they first broke up in 1978.

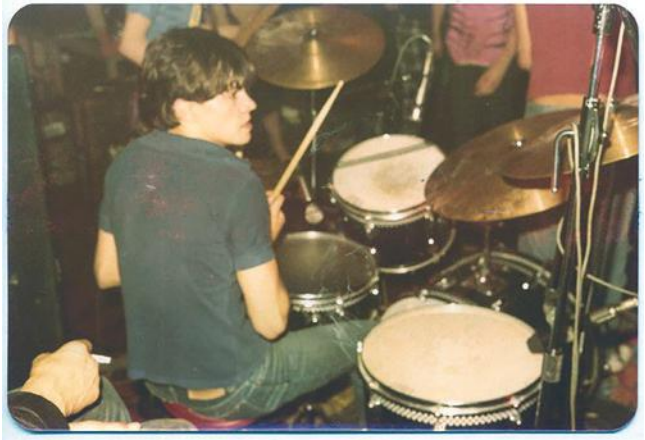
When 1979 rolled around, they reformed to put out a self-released single, 'K9 Hassle / Idi Amin / Sweeney Todd'. Shortly after, they were offered a touring spot with **The Damned** and needed funding so they signed a contract with the local record shop, Quicksilver, in order to secure their place. Unfortunately, no money was put forward so the band had to cancel the tour and they broke up.









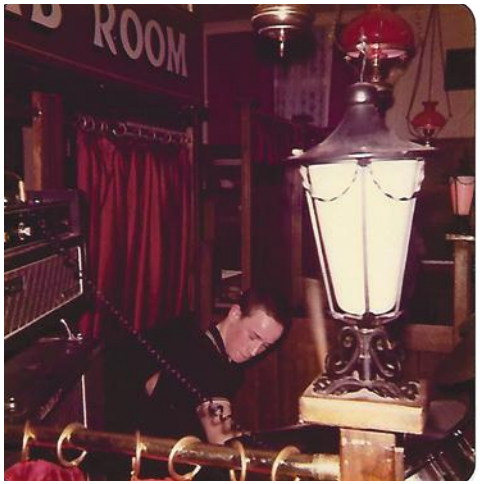

Earley Cricket Club Courtesy of **Steve Brockway**

THE PIERRES

Formed of Michael Grant (vocals), Sid Ritchie (bass), Trevor Childs (guitar) and Paul Basten (drums)

The George Hotel Courtesy of **Suzanne Day**









The Target Courtesy of **Suzanne Day**






Odd Fellows Hall Courtesy of **Suzanne Day**

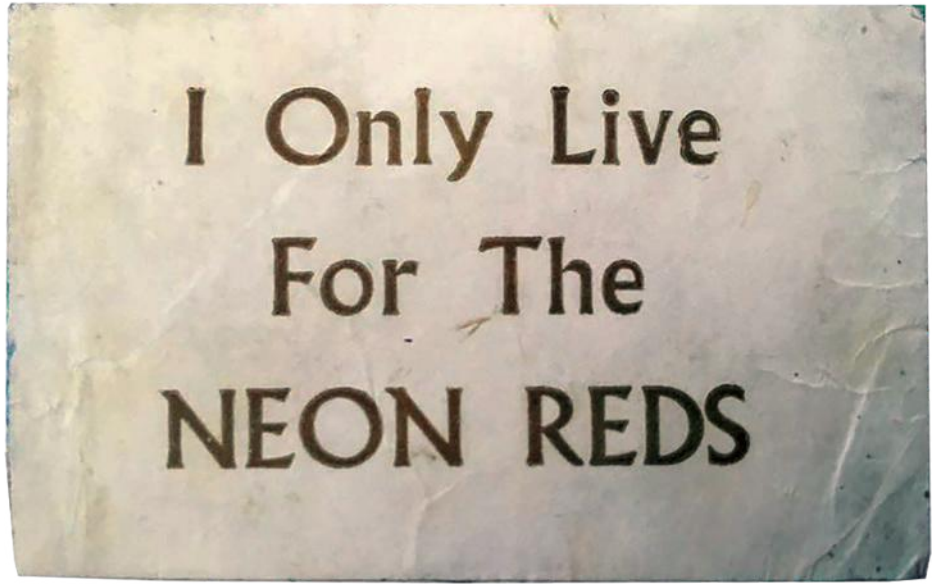





NEON REDS

Neon Reds were a Woodley band consisting of Graham Pond (vocals), Michel Simmons (guitar), Geoff Polley (bass) and Matthew Oliver (drums)

Homemade sticker showing the DIY ethic behind punk







Earley Cricket Club Courtesy of **Steve Brockway**





INTERVIEWS

Chatting to punks from Reading who were there when it all happened has been pretty eye opening and sometimes, stomach turning...


Turn the wrong way your socks don't chang
Your shirt could too but the shoes are strang
Eyes are facing the other wa
In backward talk you try to sa
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou
Living out instead of
Drinking tea and paraff
Thinks aloud but don't say a wor
It's just my visions blurre
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou
Holding head with foot in doo
Camouflage or something mor
Goes to sleep on waking u
Coffee without a cu
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou
You're so Inside Ou
Inside Out Inside Out Inside Ou

MARK HIBBERD

FORMER PUNK

[MH]: I got into punk in sixth form, one of my friends lived in London and he sent me a copy of **The Damned** New Rose which was one of the first punk records.

I used to go to **Bones**, this was right in the early days, it would have been '77, there weren't that many punks in Reading at that time, it was a small community.

[WM]: Was it?

[MH]: Yeah, in the early days it was yeah, it went to what I call plastic punk after that, the bondage stuff and that. I'll tell you my story, my dad was long term unemployed and he had emphysema, so we were quite a poor family so punk was ideal for me because you could be the height of fashion dressed up in charity shop clothes as I say this was pre-bondage trousers, this that and the other. We would wear ... tuxedo jackets you could buy one of those from a second hand shop and just decorate it with plastic watches and pins and badges.

[MH]: I saw the Jam at the **Top Rank** I think

[WM]: You saw The Jam at the **Top Rank**?

[MH]: Yeah! They were more New Wave but this was pre-Pistols...before the Bill Grundy thing...I saw **Sham 69** open up the festival in '78.

I became friends with the early punks but some of them went on to be skinheads but they went on to be a young part of the National Front which is something I don't agree with at all... I treat people how they treat me, they were my friends and it's sort of like it's a conflict of interest because people who I deemed as friends who I met as punks, they went on to be skinheads and they went on to be quite nasty, you know?

[WM]: I've heard that

[MH]: The pubs at the time we used to use, **The Target** used to put punk bands on occasionally but they put a lot of music on...**Bones** used to be called, it was originally the **Thing-A-Me-Jig** club, it was Bryans nightclub but on Wednesday night they used to have **Bones** or Punk City - I'm not sure what they called it but, it was out the back of Heelas, it did used to be a mortuary

[WM]: Oooooh

[MH]: They converted it into a nightclub. I've got an older brother, I'm 62 my older brother is 70 but he was around the town, he used to go to the **Thing-A-Me-Jig** club and I knew of it from there. The **Top Rank** also had **The Stranglers**? They were supported by the Beastie Boys I believe.

[WM]: I can't imagine that...

[MH]: There was a group of us from Reading, we saw **The Stranglers** at Bracknell Sports Centre

[WM]: Nice...

[MH]: It was the really early days, it might have been the first time they played 'No More Heroes', I believe that to be true but I can't verify it, but it's in my memory, 'we've got a new song, this is the first time we're playing it' but I was dressed up in all my punk gear and the Stranglers had an Angels following, the bikers? 'Coz again, **The Stranglers** weren't really a punk band, they just got swept up in it, you know?... as I was walking through the hall, these bikers were sort of whistling, and I was scared. I was 17 you know? I got all my gear on and all these big men, they were probably in their twenties, early twenties but man I was scared.

[WM]: So, the (Hells) Angels were followers of **The Stranglers**?

[MH]: Well, I don't know if they were Angels or they were bikers

[WM]: Yeah, but still...

[MH]: They were like the road crew to them? But they were there. They were definitely there... Do you know Bracknell at all?

[WM]: A little bit, not much

[MH]: Well you know the station, down below the road? Like a flyover? Well we got down to the station to catch the train back to Reading and the Bracknell lot are waiting for us to go down and they got all bottles and bricks and they proceeded to rain bottles and bricks down on us

[WM]: Jeeeeeez

[MH]: They ambushed us

[WM]: That doesn't sound real, that's mental...

[MH]: Yeah, um, the Adverts were supposed to play in Reading, they did Gary Gilmour's Eyes? I went with a great bandage over my eyes, I could see through it, but people used to go into **The Mitre**? I got barred from the **Mitre** and the **George Hotel**, same night...the guy wouldn't let me into the **Mitre** because of the way I was dressed. This was on a separate occasion, I don't know if they bought in a new landlord because it was like our local, we used to drink in the **Boars Head**, **The Peacock**, the **Mitre** but the **Mitre** became sort of a niche pub. You know the **Mitre**?

[WM]: Whereabouts is it?

[MH]: It's West Street, you know Raffina cafe? On the corner, it's a Thai place now, it's called corners or something like that... You know the **George Hotel** in Broad Street?

[WM]: Yeah

[MH]: They were the same brewery, or they were the same chain and I was in the... the guy wouldn't let me in the **Mitre** cause of the way I was dressed and I went around to the **George** and the landlord said 'I just seen you not get in the **Mitre**, I'm not gonna let you in here'

The Porter was one of the pubs as well, cause it all got muddled up with the football violence as well, if you imagine in the late 70s it was a very violent world. I mean, I used to have a season ticket to Reading at Madejski and it's completely different, I used to go to Elm Park, I actually got arrested on Boxing Day, disgrace, but again, that's another story... The punk movement almost split in two because some people were like Socialist workers and some people were National Front.

[WM]: So you had, like, basically fascists and sort of socialists, all mixed together under the same umbrella?

[MH]: You did but the fascists sort of moved on to become skinheads, they moved away from the punk movement and they became skinheads and that's why at so many concerts, you know like because punk pre-dates the Specials and that...

[WM]: Two-Tone?

[MH]: Yeah, two-tone by its very nature is black and white isn't it? I mean if you search further back into skinheads... the skinheads used to follow, they were into reggae, it wasn't so much trouble... skinheads have several iterations, starting with reggae, they were mixing with black people up in London. I was supposed to go on the Right to Work march with one of my friends that was a punk, but I didn't make it in the end because I had to go to work. I think what happened is, punk went on for quite a while but in the very early stages you had a break away, they weren't friends, the socialist punks and the errr, I think what happened with the right-wing punks is they went on to be skinheads. The guys who I met in Reading were part of Ealing National Front, they moved up that way.

[WM]: I was watching that interview with the **Sex Pistols**...some of them in the background have got Swastikas on, whats with that? Is that a normal thing?

[MH]: It was part of the dress code because it was all about shock. I don't think the ones with the Swastikas on... you know the manager of the Pistols?

[WM]: Yeah, Malcolm McLaren

[MH]: He had a shop in Chelsea called Boy?...There was a T-shirt of a cowboy with his dick out

[WM]: Oh yeah I've seen that

[MH]: So that was from Boy, I bought a t-shirt from there, but it had a, the logo was 'the strength of a country relies on its youth'... but I used to wear that with a suit jacket. Once I was working I had the money to buy decent clothes. I used to go up to Johnsons in Kensington High Street and buy the David Bowie suits...I got my dad, because we were, there's no other way to put it, we were abjectly poor, I had to take him to the social services where they gave away free clothes, cause I was looking for punk stuff and I got a fantastic pair of trousers from there, cause it's like the old gangster suits you know?

[WM]: Yeah?

[MH]: The suit I had was actually more like **David Bowie**, **Brian Ferry** kind of thing, what they called a zoot suit, I think that's what they called them.

The violence went into football because Reading, traditionally, a lot of people from Reading support London clubs like Chelsea and Tottenham and Arsenal

[WM]: Yeah, like Millwall?

[MH]: Not so much, there were a few Millwall supporters around but Millwall was more of a statement, 'I'm madder than you are' you know? I know a couple of those boys and umm, there was a guy who knocked around the town called F**** D**** and you wouldn't want to meet him on a dark night, he was huge. He's got a brother called E***** and E***** was a great... I didn't really know Frank, he wasn't, he didn't talk a lot. Tended to grope. But E***** was a smashing guy, we actually ended up in court on the same day, that did it for me.

Football in those days was horrible I mean, I do feel that Hillsborough was a direct result of that, you know? Football fans were treated like animals because some of them that went were animals.

[WM]: Just want to fight?

[MH]: Nasty people yeah. I think the people that were Socialist workers actually were, maybe had a genuine care for people.

[WM]: Do you think a lot of this is about politics then?

[MH]: I don't think on the right wing no. But from the right wing it was just about violence. It was so hypocritical because one of the guys, one of our good friends, was a mixed race guy. He actually had his um 18th or his 21st, must have been 21st at Elm Park when Elm Park was still going and there were guys from the National Front there. A mixed race guys birthday party. How does that work? I think it was just a badge to fight under.

[WM]: So they didn't believe in it, they just wanted a punch up?

[MH]: Yeah, it's an affiliation and I think in those days, it's what football was, an affiliation of like minded idiots. A lot of people that go to football, especially nowadays, they don't go there for violence, they go there you know, for bonding.

[MH]: In 1978 we were at the festival and **Sham 69** opened the festival. We were on the stage, when **Sham 69** finished we were on the stage and the hippies, cause **Sham 69** were more um, a skinhead band anyway

[WM]: You were on the stage?

[MH]: After they finished, yeah. You can see it on YouTube. The Hippies started throwing stuff at the skinheads and I'm just a kid running around clucking like a chicken with no head. But as we're running through the crowds and the hippies there was this big fat skinhead jumping on this hippie's head, so as I went past I pushed him off. I don't like to see people get hurt.

[WM]: So you've got the Hippies, the skinheads, the punks, National Front...

[MH]: Socialist workers party, right to work movement, it was all going on at that time.

[WM]: Did you hang out at **The Star**?

[MH]: Yeah, I've been there a few times. We used to get blues from there. That was the place to go to score blues, **The Star**. It wasn't a pub that I personally frequented a lot because they tell me that Liz Hurley from Basingstoke used to go there as well, have you heard that story? Yeah, it's a common story that Liz Hurley in her teenage years used to come in from, well she's a Basingstoke girl I believe.

We saw a band there (at **Bones**) called Cumberland Sausage, they were shit. They were proper shit. A lot of bands jumped on the bandwagon just for the money. And I was there in the crowd, there were guys there and they were peeing in pints and things and slinging them over the band because they were so crap...it wasn't me, it was guys I know that were doing it. And this Cumberland Sausage, it hit him straight in the face and he thought it was beer and started drinking it.

[WM]: UGH

[MH]: And he started having a go at me so I started having a go at him back and have a fight with him and um, there's a tap on my back and it was one of the bouncers, a guy called T** D***** was one of the bouncers around the town and he's massive and I looked around and I said, 'time for me to go T** isn't it?' and he said 'yes Mark', luckily I knew his brother. I used to carry around a cassette tape around with me in those days with all my punk stuff on, I'm a kid, I'm 17/18, I'm a kid so I said 'can I go and get my cassette?' and he said 'yeah', but he was a nice guy, some want to take advantage don't they. I've been naughty, he chucked me out.

We were kids, punk was great for the under 20s. If you look at the later stuff, you know when they started wearing, you know having fights at the Kings Road with the Teds and they've all got haircuts and the bondage stuff and that it went from being a youth movement to a fashion movement in my eyes. It almost became high fashion.

NODDY GENERAL ACCIDENT DRUMS

[ND]: I would say this but, we was the biggest and best band in Reading, y'know what I mean? We packed out all the clubs, down at the **Target** the landlord used to love having us because by 9 o'clock he'd have to shut the doors because the place was packed to capacity. He couldn't let anyone else in, none of the other bands were doing that down there.

[WM]: That's mental

[ND]: Yeah, it was good, we was a good band, a good tight band. We were, we did everything a local band could do you know what I mean? In that we got a following straight away

[WM]: Yeah?

[ND]: We used to have to hire coaches to get people to come and see us you know what I mean, to accommodate all the kids, 3 coaches at a time...we packed out all the pubs, sold out all the pubs and clubs...there was an old punk club down in Reading called **Bones** we used to play down there, we used to headline down there...we got on the radio, we got on telly

[WM]: You got on telly?

[ND]: Yeah we got on a programme called '**Something Else**'? Cause they did a programme about Reading

[WM]: Oh yeah?

[ND]: Something Else, it was a BBC programme, it was right during that youth TV thing, y'know?

[WM]: Cool, that's got to be on YouTube

[ND]: The programme used to go to each town and get in touch with the kids from that town, from the BBC y'know and see if there was enough interest in making that programme from and about that town, and it went all over the country

The Clash played on it, loads of bands played on it. Each town it would go to, kids would be asked, ok, you can choose all the subject matter for the programme and you make the whole programme with the assistance of the BBC and you can choose a local band and a national band so when it come down to Reading this programme, the kids chose us and **The Specials** so we supported **The Specials** on Something Else.

[WM]: Wow, how was that?

[ND]: Ah it was great, yeah, it was brilliant, great day out. We all went up to the BBC studios, ransacked the studios, wrecked the place a bit. Driving around on those electric carts and all that.

[WM]: You were well away

[ND]: Yeah, we were well there was us really at the time, there was us and the **K9s** that were, at the really early days of the punk stuff there was only really those 2 bands then later, there was a lot more to come but, really by 1979 punk was over really.

[WM]: Yeah I get the feeling that, after that it got a bit diluted down didn't it?

[ND]: Yeah and Ska was the new kid on the block with **The Specials**, **Madness**, **The Selektor** and **The Beat** and all that, that was the next thing that come along y'know? But really by about 1979, certainly by 1980, it was over really, we went from the ferocity and the raw pure energy of bands like **The Pistols** and **The Clash** to fucking **Depeche Mode** within about 4 weeks or the New Romantic shite.

[WM]: I find it interesting though, when you look at **Siouxsie and the Banshees**, hung about with The Pistols when they first started and now they are more of a New Romantic kind of band aren't they?

[ND]: Yeah, but at the time when we started and down **Bones**...**Bones** was the only punk club outside of London. That's why all the punk bands come down to Reading. Because there was nowhere else for them to play, especially after the Pistols got banned playing everywhere...bands like **Generation X**, **999**, **Siouxsie and the Banshees**, **The Lurkers**, **Penetration**, but none of them were signed then, so they were all like, like they were an unsigned band from Bromley and we were an unsigned band from Reading, y'know what I mean? We supported **The Lurkers** and **999** we supported loads of them but at the time, they were from Bromley, we were from Reading sort of thing.

Now, of course punks become this big thing and everyone writes about it and this that and the other, a lot of people have become household names but at the time, they weren't. Prior to them becoming household names they have become now.

The thing is, you've got to put it into context of what was about at the time, music had sort of... Prog Rock was the dominant, it was really at the birth of all those sort of stadium rock bands, you had bands like E**merson Lake and Palmer** and **Yes** and **Genesis**, all that sort of public schoolboy rock, y'know what I mean?

[WM]: Yeah!

[ND]: I went to see **Genesis** in 1975 I think it was, it might have be '76... they were brilliant musically, brilliant. They were great musicians, but it was self indulgent, the guitarist did this long wailing 20 minute guitar solo with his back to the audience it was all sort of 'oh ya ya ya'

[WM]: You just don't need it do you?

[ND]: No, it was all so self indulgent and all that, 17 timings and all that sort of stuff...suddenly punk come along and you had this 16 year old kid on stage he couldn't even sing, it didn't matter. Just belting out a load of tunes, it was crap but it was good!

[WM]: He was doing what he wanted to do?

[ND]: Yeah, exactly, raw, pure energy. Bought it all right back down to street level, music. Anyone could get into a band. In fact, the whole period was very, very much DIY. You made your own fashion, you didn't buy it, you made your own jacket. You went down the charity shop, bought a jacket, stencilled it up or whatever you wanted to do with it...I knew that E**** S**** guy, who made, he got his own fanzine going. So there was kids who like journalism and instead of going, trying to get a job on some newspaper they just made their own fanzines, there was loads of that going on.

[WM]: You could do whatever you wanted?

[ND]: Yeah and you did it, you created it, it was non-corporate and that was the thing, one of the big things about it, because it was all home-grown and homemade

[WM]: You're not being told what to like, you just like it and you do it

[ND]: Yeah and it blew all the big corporations out of the water because they had no control over it. It was totally...so kids that were into journalism, like I say, if you're into journalism and writing and all that then you just produced your own fanzine, you just went around and reviewed all the bands yourself

[WM]: It's funny that all these bands came from not wanting to be part of this corporate thing then the corporate side still managed to repackage it and sell it back to the kids again?

[ND]: It is weird, yeah. There was a small period of time probably only about a year or 2 where the big corporations and big business had no control over it. That's why they started to sign up anybody and everybody. You know, try and get some money out of this, this is what the people wanted and they weren't in on it.

[WM]: In 90 days at EMI, the owners didn't know how to control the **Sex Pistols**, it's interesting that the A&R guys wanted them but the guys in charge couldn't handle them

They had no control because these bands hadn't gone to them, cap in hand 'oh, can we have a record deal?' We don't want a record deal. Fuck you and your records. We will knock out our own singles 500 at a time. It wasn't meant to be, at the time, it wasn't meant to be a big thing. Nobody was really meant to last. Nobody wanted to make a living out of it.

[WM]: It was a way to kill time?

[ND]: Well, yeah, just way of doing it, it can be done sort of thing

[WM]: See if you can?

[ND]: Yeah, you're doing it because you can sort of thing and there was an insatiable desire from kids, y'know sort of young kids at the time, teenage kids, young teenage kids to see and hear new music and there was an insatiable desire from people to play it.

Well there was a fanzine back in the day, it might be Grinding Halt...well, S****** had one called Grinding Halt, he was a budding young journalist, um, nice fella, he knows a lot of music journalists now, his mate did the biography for **Radiohead**, there's a funny little story...

General Accident played at errr, I don't know how we managed it, there was always fights following us around, a lot of trouble really, the places we played got trashed and all that. It was a good laugh. But somehow we managed to get a gig at a public school in Abingdon. We went out there and played and about half an hour through the set a teacher come out, we had an argument with the teacher, I thumped the teacher right in the face, he went down and then that was it, a riot ensured...about 6 or 7 of these riot trucks pulled up with their cages down and they escorted us out of the country, the band, they escorted us out of the county, Well allegedly, the members of **Radiohead** were there, in the crowd. They went on to say that we were the reason they started the band.

[WM]: What about the **Caribbean Club**, that gets mentioned a lot?

[ND]: The punk movement in Reading was quite mixed up with the reggae movement in the town, the Caribbean used to do reggae punk night, you know the **Bob Marley** song 'Punky Reggae Party'? The two went together. There was a punk night there and we was one of the only, I think it was only us, well it was me and Tramp the singer who smoked and instead of playing for money the landlord paid us with a big load of weed. Upset the other guys because they didn't smoke but we was happy.



GENERAL ACCIDENT RADIO 210

[Interviewer]: My special guests in the studio are a local band, probably no strangers to you either as well, they are called **General Accident** and welcome to Nod, you can nod if you like and to Tramp, what do tramps do?

[Tramp]: Well, we hang around parks

[Interviewer]: Nice of you to come in out of the cold today. How are you, ok?

[ND & Tramp]: Yeah we're fine

[Interviewer]: Good, now look, before I joined Radio **210**, there was a band competition that was sponsored by radio **210** and you came third yeah?

[ND & Tramp]: Yeah

[Interviewer]: What happened on that night? Tell us all bout what happened on that night

[Tramp]: Well, nothing really, we just came in third. It went well, it went quite well. It went better than we expected, let's put it like that. There was a lot of trouble unfortunately.

[ND]: A bit of violence

[Tramp]: Yeah it was unfortunate, very unfortunate.

[Interviewer]: A bit of a riotous evening?

[ND & Tramp]: Yeah

[Interviewer]: Good fun. Were you very disappointed or was it very stiff competition?

[Tramp]: No not really, we weren't disappointed

[ND]: We thought it was a fix. Slightly.

Awkward murmuring

[Interviewer]: So anyway, how long have you been together?

[Tramp]: 18 months now, yeah about 18 months now

[Interviewer]: And this single that we are going to play shortly called 'Computer Dating' isn't your first is it?

[Tramp]: Yeah it is the first yeah

[Interviewer]: Very first one? Ok ok. You record it locally at a local studio?

[ND]: Yeah, sun(?) studios

[Interviewer]: Right, are there very many bands in the area working locally and producing records, locally?

[Tramp]: Errrr, yeah there's quite a few actually, the Reading band scene is looking pretty good actually at the moment. Not a lot that's doing much as far as single go, I think, but it's looking pretty good.

[Interviewer]: That really is the ultimate I guess, get a single together at a local studio

[Tramp]: Yeah, it gives you something to show for the band

[Interviewer]: Right what do you do, you get 1000 pressed and produced do you? Or what?

[Tramp]: Yeah, we got 1500 of these pressed and if they sell, we shall get us some more pressed.

[Interviewer]: Right

[Tramp]: But it all depends, y'know

[Interviewer]: Is there a very lively, local band scene around in the Reading and the surrounding areas?

[Tramp]: Yeah, it's quite good actually, quite a good scene.

[Interviewer]: You don't have any difficulty finding venues to play at?

[ND]: Well that's the main trouble, lots of bands rehearsing, the unfortunate thing is there's not a lot of places to play actually in Reading, you've got to rehearse up to a certain standard then crack on up to London. Which is the main, obviously, the main centre.

[Interviewer]: Are there any prospects of, as you say, cracking on up to London?

[ND]: Yeah, hopefully

[Tramp]: Yeah we've got several gigs lined up in the next month and we are hoping to do a sort of 3 over 3 a week stint in London

[ND]: A lot of Reading bands tend to stay in the Reading rut, they play the **Target** on a Saturday night and leave it as that. Which is what we tended to do in the past

[Interviewer]: But now you've started to break out?

[Tramp]: Yeah, we were sort of apathetic before in fact we almost called the band General Apathy but we couldn't be bothered

[Interviewer]: Yeah, how did you come by the name, the most unlikely name, although I guess, current names... **General Accident**, how did you come across that?

[ND]: Um, just basically had to choose for the competition didn't we? The Woodley one?

[Tramp]: Oh yeah, yeah. There was no, sort of, not with the insurance company in mind. I don't really know actually I can't really remember how we came up with that

[ND]: Kind of just an accident the way we met, and errr...

[Interviewer]: Ok well anyway, the new single we've got is called 'Computer Dating' and we will talk directly to Nod and Tramp directly after we've heard it.

['Computer Dating' plays]

[Interviewer]: The new single and the first by a band, a local band from the Reading area called **General Accident** and that's called 'Computer Dating', any particular reason for choosing 'Computer Dating'?

[Tramp]: Mainly because it was the most commercial thing we had at the time. It was the most acceptable thing that could be put on a single. The others were a bit too long...

[Interviewer]: Not as immediate in terms of reaction when listening to it for the first time?

[ND & Tramp]: Yeah

[Interviewer]: It is fairly immediate, it does get straight into you straight away

[Tramp]: We're writing what, well, what we think is better stuff now, more commercial stuff and that. I mean if we had the choice again to go in again, what we might do actually, the next one will definitely be better

[Interviewer]: It's actually one of the most popular songs out of the set is it?

[Tramp]: It was yeah

[ND]: That's the main reason we chose it

[Tramp]: Yeah, it is better live, I mean, the sound isn't too good on that, the production and it goes on a bit too long

[Interviewer]: Could have done with a bit more production I thought actually, a more solid sound to it

[Tramp]: Well, we produced it ourselves you see and none of us really have any studio experience

[Interviewer]: So if there's a producer listening... You never know, you never know, you never know, that's what it's all about. Something else I was going to say to you, about that, which has actually slipped my mind, oh yeah, I know what it was - there is actually, you have, your style of music is keeping with a style of music which is really making it, I do feel

[ND]: New Wave?

[Interviewer]: Yeah, well, not necessarily New Wave

[Tramp]: Joe Jackson, The Police?

[Interviewer]: Yeah, very much so, unfortunately it's so competitive and imagined

[Tramp]: A lot of people have said that errr, when we originally got going that you played the **Bones** club, which is like a punk club, most of the bands are playing very sort of raw record bash sort of punk and we came along with a sort of the upstroke reggae type fill-ins and errr, this was before Joe Jackson had even appeared.

[ND]: Well I don't know about that

[Tramp]: Well, a lot of people have said that

[Interviewer]: I went to see Joe Jackson 4 years ago in Gosport

[Tramp]: We've been labelled as a punk band but we've never really were, we never were a punk band, we never played punk music

[Interviewer]: Right well, ok, so when can we next see you in this area?

[Tramp]: 15th of February at the **Target**

[Interviewer]: Right. And those singles will no doubt be on sale at your gigs in the future yeah?

[Tramp]: And Quicksilver records

[Interviewer]: Right well, Nod and Tramp thank you very much for coming in nice talking to you, ok Bye bye

[ND & Tramp]: Bye bye



Above: The Queen tours the new 210 studio, 1976



PART SIX

DOWN TH

HE LOCAL

The distant ech
Of faraway voices boarding faraway trai
To take them home
The ones that they love and who love them forev
The glazed, dirty ste
Repeat my own and reflect my thoug
Cold and uninviting, partially nak
Except for toffee wrappers and this morning's pape
Mr. Jones got run do
Headlines of death and sorrow, they tell of tomorro
Madmen on the rampa
And I'm down in the tube station at midnight,
I fumble for change, and pull out the Que
Smiling, beguili
I put in the money and pull out a plu
Behind m
Whispers in the shadows, gruff blazing voic
Hating, waiti
"Hey boy" they shout, "Have you got any money
And I say, "I've a little money and a takeaway cur
I'm on my way home to my wi
She'll be lining up the cutlery, you know she's expecting m
Polishing the glasses and pulling out the cor
in the tu at midnight,
I first , and then a ki
I cou nell their brea
he of pub rmwood scru
too n t wing meetin
wam around m
yne xisten
Th leath
It blended in with the weath
Filled my eyes, ears, nose and mouth, it blocked all my sens

WHERE WERE ALL THE PUNKS?

There were plenty of drinking establishments and venues around in Reading during the 1970s, a lot more than today. So where were the hangouts?


Nothin' for us in Belfa
The Pound's so old it's a pi
OK, there's the trident in Bang
Then walk back to the ci
We ain't got nothin' but they don't really ca
They don't even know you kno
Just want our mone
And we can take it or leave
What we nee
An Alternative Ulst
Grab it and change it it's you
Get an Alternative Ulst
Ignore the bores and their law
Get an Alternative Ulst
Be an anti-security forc
Alter your native Ulst
Alter your native lan
Take a look where you're livi
You got the Army on your stre
And the RUC dog of repressio
Is barking at your fe
Is this the kind of place you wanna live
Is this where you wanna be
Is this the only life we're gonna have
What we need
An Alternative Ulst
Grab it and change it it's you
Get an Alternative Ulst
Ignore the bores and their law
Get an Alternative Ulst
Be an anti-security forc
Alter your native Ulst
Alter your native lan

The Star was punk HQ, certainly for us at least...

Noddy - General Accident

There were so many bars and clubs in Reading but where were the punk venues?

It wasn't until I started this research that I realised the majority of venues are actually lost now.

Here is a list of the most important venues and pubs to the punk scene in the late 1970s:

1. **The Star**
2. **Bones**
3. **Caribbean Club**
4. **The Target**
5. **Top Rank**
6. **Captains Cabin**
7. **Ye Boars Head**
8. **Britannia Tap**
9. **Coopers Arms**

There were more after the 1970s but these were the originals.



THE STAR
LONDON STREET

Closed down for redevelopment in the 1980s, currently, Grosvenor Casino occupies the land formerly belonging to the centre of the punk scene in Reading.

K Fletcher - Punk

I remember **The Star** Inn (long gone) at the end of Starlane, right between the Helping Hand Shop and Duke St Bridge. I was very little but I loved going past with my mum and looking in to see all the amazing clothes and hairstyles, with music to match blaring out!

A Wakefield - Reading Youth

Ah yes **The Star** – we played darts against them, and I popped in for a drink now and then with some of their darts teams as mates

It had 2 bars - the rear was 'normal' for the time but the front was full of pin-ball machines and a known hang out for punks – I knew a few of them

You could hardly see in other due to the cigarette and 'other' smoke'

Great place though back then

D Duffin - Mod

I used to hate catching the traffic lights on red, on Duke Street bridge especially at closing time, and me being a Mod on my Lambretta, it used to be a nightmare. Especially the night I was pulled over by the police right outside **The Star** as it kicked out, jeez a night I would like to forget, especially as I was made to push my scooter home as the exhaust was noisy. Plus they didn't have a plastic bag for me to blow into, so they erred on the side of caution. Glad they didn't have one, let's put it this way having the wee taken out of you by punks and skinheads, and pushing a Lambretta all modded up soon sobers you up

R Howard - Punk

I remember winning a few free pints getting the pinball high score in **The Star** which Clive grudgingly gave me

A Brown - Punk

all the pubs had a no boots , no leather jacket policy (apart from **The Star**)



1973

2021





The Star is dead, long live
The Star graffiti on the
upper front window

A R P Lazarus - Punk

The Star (opposite where the Oracle is now, on the other side of the bridge) was the Punk and Skinhead hangout of choice from the late 70s until it was demolished in the mid-80s. I always remember the alleyway stinking of old hops. It was featured in one episode of the fly-on-the-wall documentary 'Police', when it was raided after allegations of drug use/dealing. After **The Star**'s demise (popular graffiti at the time being '**The Star** is dead, long live **The Star**'), the punk and skinhead community (briefly without pub and bemoaning the fact in the local press, there must be a cutting somewhere) started hanging out in The Rising Sun before settling in The Coopers for the remainder of the 80s.

S Walker - Reading Youth

The Star in 1973/4 was the place to score all the drugs - acid Microdots I remember particularly and the Caribbean club a wonderful melting pot of music and cultures.

J Butterfield - Punk

I used to be a regular here on a Saturday night and a Sunday lunchtime in 1976/1977. It used to be a real bohemian crowd there: artists, small firm owners, homosexual, students, philosophers, drunks, lonely old and neglected ones, and lots of fun-loving people. It was also multi-cultural. That such a group of people could ever fit together, which it did. At the time, I like many, found it to be a very good place to be, be it that the outside and inside were not modern, pretty, or well looked after.

It was run by an elderly German woman, Paula, and her live-in barman/boyfriend. She had a strong German accent and a high-pitched skitter-scatter laugh, was quick witted, loved dirty jokes, was a mother hen, and always in for a laugh. This in contrast to her son Clive who would spend much of his time be-moaning the clientele.

By the doorway was a juke box and I can remember spending a lot of time playing Fleetwood Mac's: Go your Own Way, Thin Lizzy's: Don't Believe a Word, Peter Gabriel's Solsbury Hill and Ace's How Long there. At the time I lived in a small apartment on South Street, so it was convenient. I was also just starting up my first job after completing university.

I took my first and only LSD trip there. I can also remember Paula's boyfriend locking up many times after closing time on a Saturday night and groups of us staying on to party till the early morning. It was a place to get up and dance, boogie, and just do your thing. Everyone was welcomed and welcome there.

I'm totally wire
Can't you see
I'm totally wire
Can't you see
My butterfly stomac
Growls grow
I drank a jar of coffe
Then I took some of thes
And now I'm totally wire
Life leaves you surprise
Slaps you in the eye
And I was a communis
A rich man would bail m
The opposite applie
The morning ligh
Another fresh figh
Another ro
Right right right rig
And I'm totally wire
You don't have to be weird to be wire
You don't have to be an American to be strang
You don't have to be strange to be strang
You don't have to be weird to be weir
I'm totally wire
My heart and I agre
I'm always worrie

BONES
MINSTER STREET

Closed down and replaced by the Purple Turtle which is also on Minster Street, Bones was knocked down and replaced by The Oracle.

S Buller - Reading Youth

My sister was a punk in the 70's. She was also going out with Gary Newman. They used to hang out in The star pub which I believe was in Duke street, and a place called '**Bones**' which I believe was behind John Lewis, on the other side of the road. It was called **Bones** as it used to be a mortuary. I'll see if I can find a better picture but..... Reading **Town Hall** also had a whole exhibition around 10 years ago now, where I found the pic. My sister Tina and Gary Newman

P Smith - Punk

I used to go to **Bones** pretty regularly, I still have my membership card somewhere, Kevin Sheeran is spot on with the bands that we both saw around town at that time, The Doomed (Damned) played **Bones**, as well as Adam and the Ants, **999** The Lurkers, Penetration, there was also later on Reading bands like **General Accident**, The Geisha Girls, early Punk days were in my mind a change of attitude towards music, I wasn't into all the bondage stuff and looking like Sid, I did put green dye in my hair once and one guy at work never spoke to me again, there was also a pub on the canal **The Star** I think, big late 70's punk hangout

K Sheeran - Punk

I think Gary Numan (then a member of Tubeway Army) played at **Bones** but I missed that gig; I saw both the Jam and the Stranglers at Reading **Top Rank** in the autumn of '77, although the Adverts later cancelled a gig there.

G Cosslett - Punk

I remember **Bones** on a Sunday night, copious amounts of beer and brandy

R Cheeseman - Reading Youth

saw Brian Auger and Julie Driscoll play at the Thingamajig... I am not certain but I think possibly 1968/69/70.

P Judd - Punk

There was only 2 proper hangouts star and bones then as sue says plus Caribbean club

D Wheeler - Punk

There was club called **Bones** where I saw **Siouxsie and the Banshees**,**999** and others. There is a wealth of punk history tied to the town.

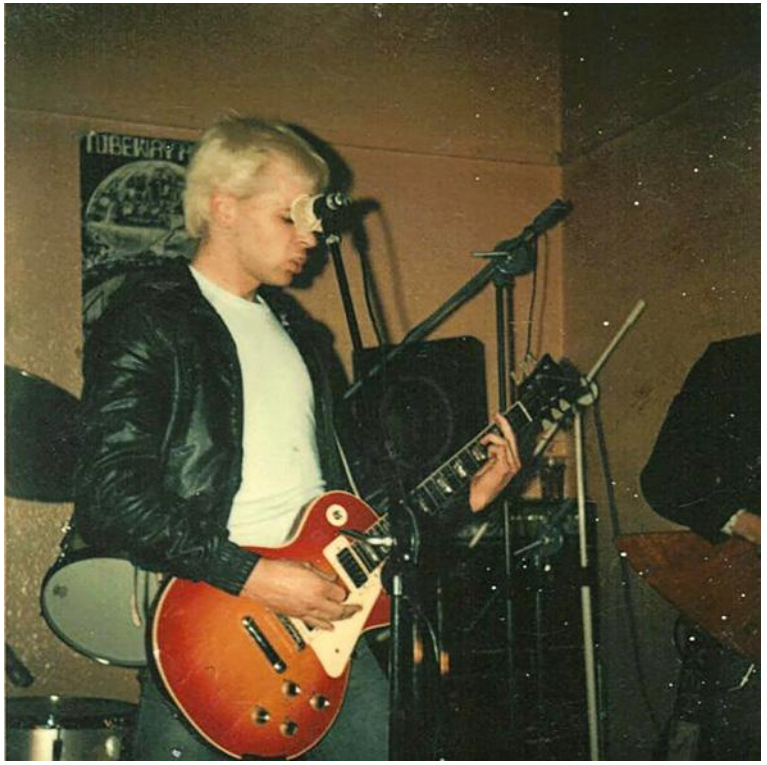


1976

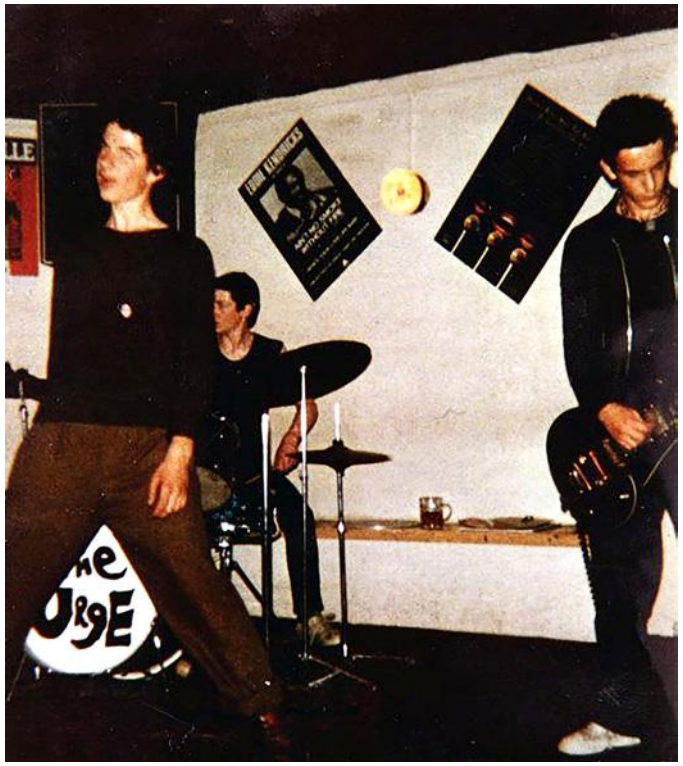
2021



Delinquents playing at Bones
Courtesy of **Soo Toombs**



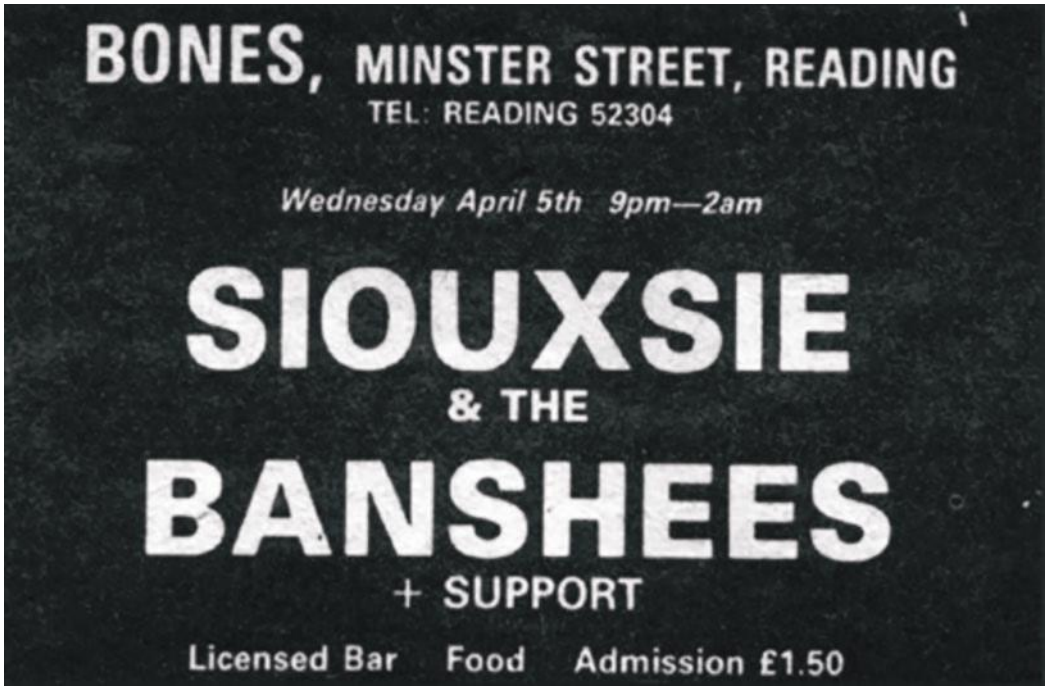
Tubeway Army in 1978, Gary Newman shown here 14th March 1978



The Urge in 1978



Bones gig, unknown act
Courtesy of **Soo Toombs**

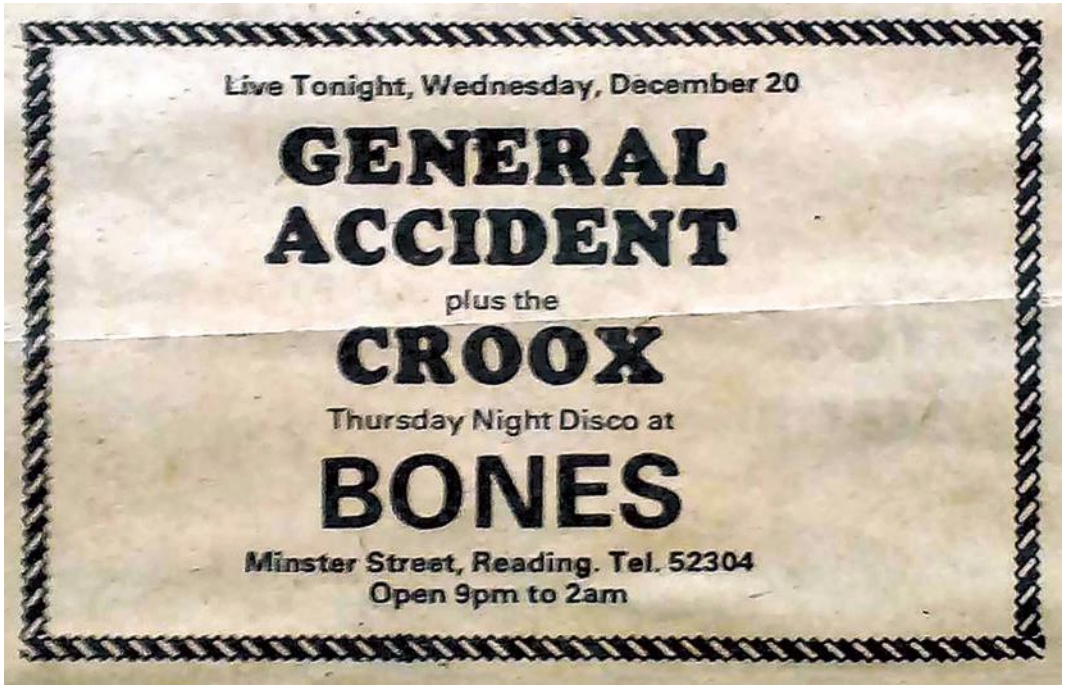


Siouxsie & the Banshees at Bones poster, 5th April 1978

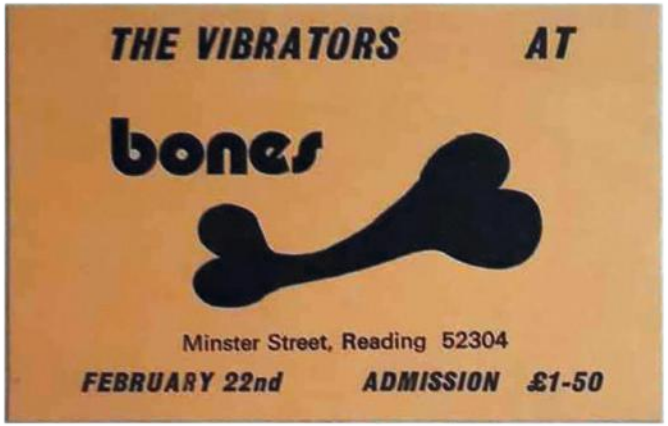




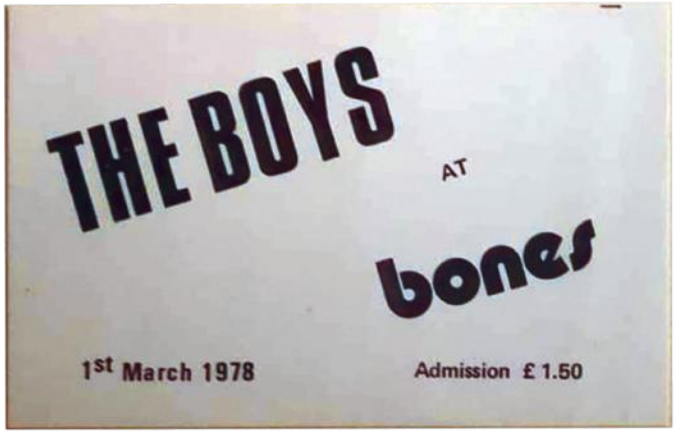
Bones posters, February & March 1978



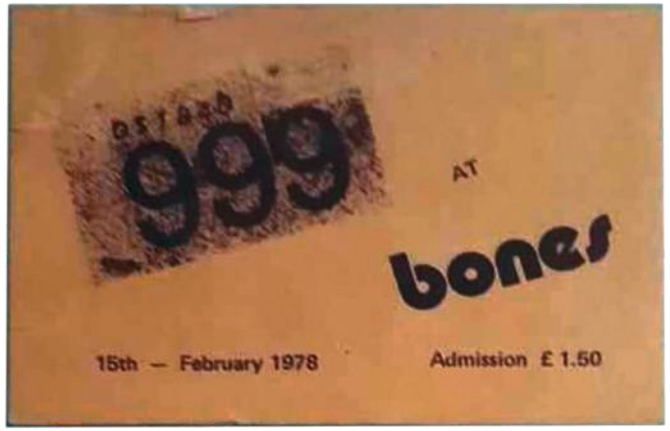
General Accident at Bones newspaper advert, December 1978



The Vibrators at Bones
22nd February 1978



The Boys at Bones
1st March 1978



999 at Bones
15th February 1978

CARIBBEAN CLUB
LONDON STREET

Initially opened by Huntley & Palmers as a social club, it became the Caribbean Club in 1971. It went on to become the Paradise Club and then the After Dark club but was eventually closed down when its licence was revoked for 'noise complaints' by the neighbours.

T Dyer - Punk

...is that the Upstarts gig from the **Caribbean Club**. It must have been in June, as I remember having a Maths O level exam the day after. Mr Pursey turned up, so I naturally got his autograph. No selfies in those days. I reckon '79.

D Wheeler - Punk

The **Caribbean Club** on London street and Reading uni student union were all places you could see bands. There was club called **Bones** where I saw **Siouxsie and the Banshees**, **999** and others. There is a wealth of punk history tied to the town.


2021
MAS INDUSTRIAL RECRUITMENT
FOR SALE/TO LET
1,340 sq ft
HASLAMS
0118 921 1515
FOR SALE / TO LET
Self-contained
office building
2263 sqft
PARKINSON
HOLT
0118 939 3333
I C E
L E T
0118 958 8383
110

THE TARGET
HOSIER STREET

Closed due to health and safety regulations for fire safety and now used for bin storage for Broad Street Mall. Opened in 1971 along with The Butts Centre, it used to host gigs up to 5 days a week for punks, hippies, skinheads, depending on the band playing.

G Dormer - Reading Youth

I think the target pub in the Butts was a fav for Punks? I went there one Saturday night to see a band gig and it was full of them with a punk band. We didn't stay longer than 5 minutes!

G Brake - Barman

I don't know if this helps, I used to work evenings at the **Target** pub in the 1970s. It was a cellar bar in the basement of The Butts Centre, now the Broad Street Mall. It had live music every night with folk, rock and punk bands. I served Ian Gillan one night who came down with reps from his record label. I posted an album 'Reading Recall down the **Target**' which has photos of Rikki and The Last Days of Earth... a popular and talented punk band.

K Sheeran - Reading Youth

Reading had a thriving gig scene back then in the mid to late 70s and catered for a lot of musical styles from punk to prog rock. I saw XTC play at the **Target** (a pub downstairs behind the Butts Centre) although they weren't strictly punk

P Smith - Reading Youth

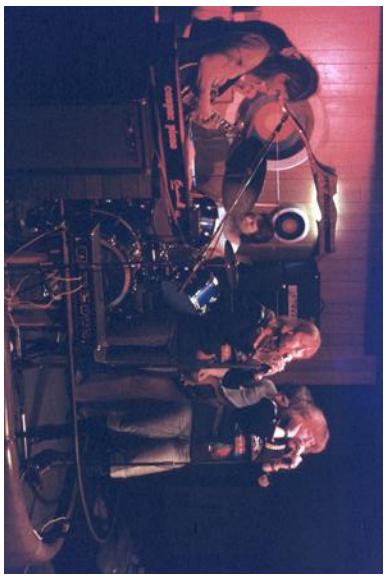
Reading had a great music scene at **The Target** early 70's but it really wasn't a punk hang out, I had very long hair and flares when I used to go there, I turned up for the XTC gig and couldn't get in, Reading Uni used to put on bands, but I think after trouble at some shows non students were banned, I did see the Smiths there but that would have been in the 80's


1971
TESCO
TARGET
utts Shopping Centre


2021
BROAD
ST.MALL

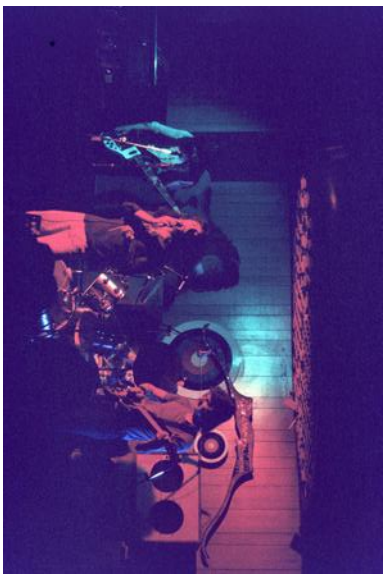







Tamiko Tami Teri & Co, 23rd January 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**







Scorpio, 9th Apr 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**







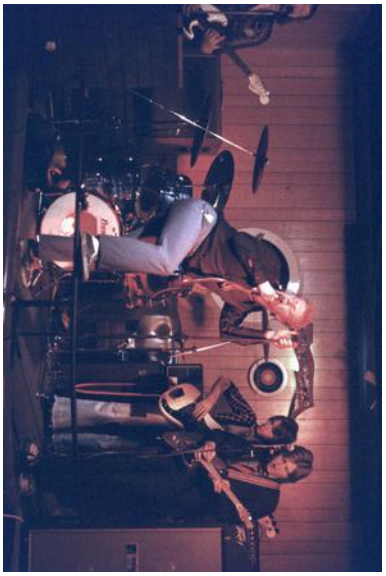
Rikki and the Last Days of Earth, 28th July 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**

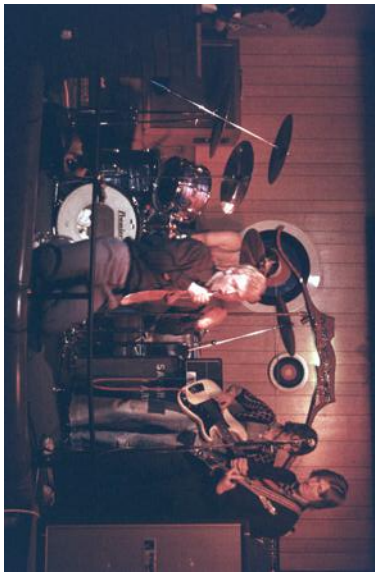






Babylon, 3rd Aug 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**



Sarah Farm, 5th Apr 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**







Grind, 21st April 1977
Courtesy of **Gordon Brake**

OTHER IMPORTANT PLACES FOR THE 1970s YOUTH SCENE

Skinheads, hippies, mods... with so many different types of youth cultures, there was always going to be some overlap in where they hung out. Here are a few places that were important to pretty much everyone at the time



Dirty rapped all night 'bout his suicid
How he'd kick it in the head when he was 2
Don't wanna stay alive when you're 2
Wendy's stealing clothes from unlocked ca
Freddy's got spots from ripping off stars from his fa
Funky little boat ra
The television man is cra
Saying we're juvenile delinquent wreck
Man I need a TV when I've got T. Re
Hey brother you guessed I'm a duc
All the young dude
Carry the new
Boogaloo dude
Carry the new
All the young dude
Carry the new
Boogaloo dude
Carry the new
Now Jimmy looking sweet though he dresses like a quee
He can kick like a mu
It's a real mean tea
We can lov
Oh we can lov
And my brother's back at hom
With his Beatles and his Stone
We never got if off on that revolution stu
What a dr
Too many snag
Well I drunk a lot of wi
And I'm feeling fi
Gonna race some cat to be
Is this concrete all arou
Or is it in my hea

TOP RANK
STATION HILL

Closed to become a Mecca bingo hall and subsequently knocked down for the redevelopment of Station Hill. The Top Rank Suite was opened on Station Hill in 1967, though it hosted gigs, it wasn't specifically for the punks or youth cultures.

D Wheeler - Punk

The **Top Rank** in station hill used to put on quite a few bands, I saw **The Damned** there a couple of times

J Saunders - Reading Youth

I saw Hazel O'Connor at **Top Rank**, 1978/1979 - a lot of the audience were spitting & gobbing, and one went in her mouth. She nearly threw up, then said that anymore spitting & she'd walk off! There wasn't and she didn't!

M Gill - Reading Youth

Paul Smith I remember **Bones** and I saw Hazel O'Connor at the top rank, though I do not remember the gobbing! I like Sue Owen was disco all the way.

K Sheeran - Punk

Also the **Top Rank** was a great venue for the post-punk scene that developed in late 70s'/early 80s. I saw **Killing Joke** (as dark and angry as any punk band), OMD, Squeeze, Teardrop Explodes, Undertones, Tenpole Tudor and loads of others there.

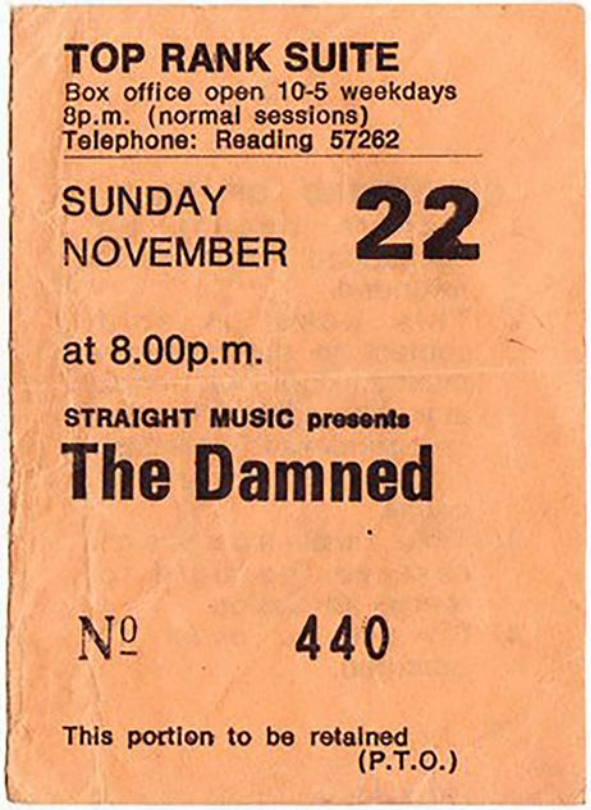

Top Rank READING SUITE
THAMES VALLEY BUS STATION
ROYAL BLUE

1970



1977

The Stranglers at the Top Rank



Ticket stub from the Damned playing in 1981



1990

Top Rank as the Mecca Bingo Hall



2021

The current redevelopment of Station Hill

CAPTAINS CABIN
WEST STREET

Today, the Captains Cabin is a Peri-Peri Chicken takeaway restaurant. It was formerly a watering hole for anyone from locals to punks to hippies.

P M S Pitt - Skinhead

When I was 16-17 ,1976, I used the **Captains Cabin**, as I was a young skinhead, that's gone as well, after Brit closed Osborn Arms and then Red lion and Red cow next to St Giles Church, and then wherever we could until kicked out again.

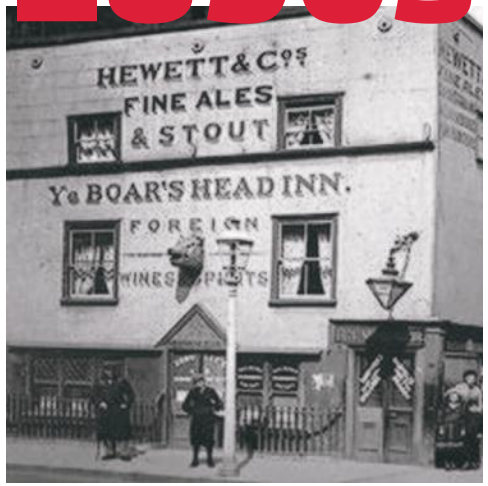

CAPTAINS CABIN
COURAGE
WOOLWORTH CAFE BAR
TOWING
16
WHITLEY WOOD
181
FRD 152
NRX 805
TBH

1968

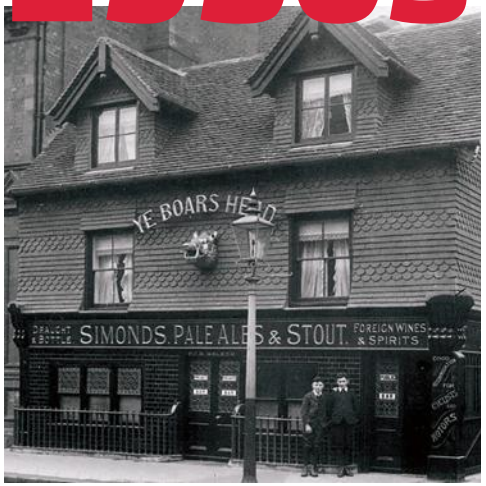
YE BOAR'S HEAD
FRIAR STREET

Ye Boar's Head Inn in Friar Street had been on that site since at least 1760 but was demolished in 2003 to make way for 2 hotels and flats. It was next to the ABC cinema which was also demolished. It served as a drinking place rather than a venue.

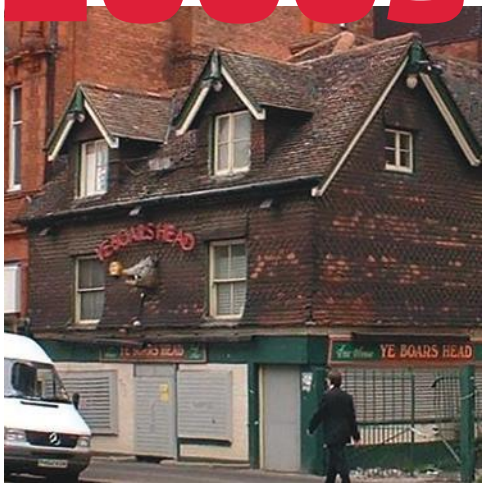
1890s



1950s



2000s



2021





1970

BRITANNIA TAP
CAVERSHAM ROAD

Situated at the crossroads on Caversham Road and Stanshaw Road, it was demolished in the 1980s (by my father-in-law actually) and subsequently became an office block. It hosted gigs and had more of a reputation as a skinhead hangout.

S Walker - Reading Youth

The **Britannia Tap** had a set of turntables where you could kind of establish a residency on different nights of the week . I helped a bit on Tuesdays when a mate played Zydeco, The Clash, Louisiana Swamp Pop, Early R&B Etc ...

S Osborne - Reading Youth

The **Britannia Tap** was one of a number of homes for the itinerant Monday Club which used to put on regular gigs.



1976


IND
COOPE
THE
BRITANNIA
TAP
THE
BRITANNIA TAP
SKOL
International

PART SEVEN

NO FUTU

RE?

Right no
I am an antichri
And I am an anarchi
Don't know what I wa
But I know how to get
I want to destroy passerb
'Cause I wanna be anarch
No dogsbod
Anarchy for the U.
It's coming sometime and mayb
I give a wrong time, stop a traffic lir
Your future dream is a shopping schem
'Cause I, I wanna be anarch
In the ci
How many ways to get what you wa
I use the best, I use the re
I use the NM
I use anarch
'Cause I wanna be anarch
It's the only way to b
Is this the MPLA
Or is this the UDA
Or is this the IRA
I thought it was the U
Or just another countr
Another council tenanc
I wanna be anarch
And I wanna be anarch
Know what I mean
And I want to be an anarchi
I get pissed, destro

THE LEGACY OF PUNK IN READING

What actually happened after 1979? And is anything left to see of punk? Did it carry on in Reading?


The PURPLE TURTLE
S1572

The era of punk was over after 1979 due to the over saturation and commercialisation of the genre thanks to the record industry becoming aware of the scene and finding bands that would emulate its sound under the control of the record industry. The **Sex Pistols** had created such a storm with their infamous 90 days at EMI and their uncontrollability, they had tapped into the attitude of the youth and the men in suits could see that there was money to be made. After the Pistols were sacked, they were picked up by Virgin who were keen to increase their popularity with the kids, many other bands were also picked up by rival companies to try to get their punk pounds by copying the **Sex Pistols** fame. Due to this, we entered into the era of post-punk and the massive schism and deluge of different styles and evolutions of punk.

To name a few there was;

New Wave
Blondie,
Martha and the Muffins,
The Psychedelic Furs

Goth
The Cure,
The Damned,
Killing Joke

Neo-psychedelia
Siouxsie and the Banshees,
Echo & the Bunnymen,
Soft Boys

Avant-funk
A Certain Ratio,
Talking Heads

New romantics
Adam & the Ants,
Spandau Ballet,
Ultravox

Synthpop
Kraftwerk,
New Order,
Depeche Mode

But all in all, punk ran deeper. For example, if **Ian Curtis** hadn't seen The **Sex Pistols** then arguably **Joy Division** wouldn't have happened. Without them, **Factory Records** wouldn't have happened. **Madchester** wouldn't have happened. **Primal Scream**, **New Order**, **Happy Mondays**, **Oasis**, **Pulp**, **Blur**, none of this would have happened if it wasn't for the small cunning Malcolm McLaren and co with their eyes on all that is disruptive to the mainstream.

In Reading, the punk scene had split too, **The Star** and **Bones** were on their way to being closed down and bulldozed and the punks needed somewhere to call their own.

They had moved onto the **Coopers Arms**, as did a lot of other cultures along with **Cherries Wine Bar** (where **General Accident**, **Geisha Girls** and others played), **Caribbean Club** (as the Paradise Club), **The Turks Head**, **Target**, **The Rising Sun** and **New Yorker**. All of which have now disappeared, leaving only **The Purple Turtle** left as a reminder that once upon a time, the youth actually went out and did something to change the world they lived in.

The Purple Turtle is the spiritual descendant of **Bones**, Greg of **K9**s was the manager of the bar along with Danny, who was Kev's replacement in The Geisha Girls which was the descendant of the K9s.

This was probably one of the most frequented of the new places that would take over from the predecessors, it seemed the more new people came into the scene, the more disparate the original punk of the 1970s became.

When it came to it, I have heard that punk just became a fashion statement that was built upon by the subsequent groups, the original punks as with the mods before them, evolved into more extreme politics such as the National Front or they moved away or just got on with their lives. The one thing that is very clear is that punk most definitely made a mark on the town, the riots at **Reading Festival** with **Sham 69**s appearance still gets discussed, the anecdotes about the Butts Centre having a bar underground and punks being chased by policemen through the centre, the architecture of the Grosvenor Casino is a reminder of **The Star**s entryway, Reading punk Johnny Deluxe (RIP) put on an exhibition at Reading Museum called 'Rip it up' about the punk scene in the 1970s in 2007, local bands are still cropping up with a punk sound - although a lot more polished - like The Amazons and Pete and the Pirates, and most importantly, the original punks still get together, they still talk about punk and they are still as loud as they ever were. They found their tribe and when you talk to them about it, you can see the impact those 3 years really made on them and those who knew them.

To the center of the city where all roads meet, waiting for yo
To the depths of the ocean where all hopes sank, searching for yo
I was moving through the silence without motion, waiting for yo
In a room with a window in the corner, I found trut
In the shadowplay, acting out your own death, knowing no mor
As the assassins all grouped in four lines, dancing on the floo
And with cold steel, odor on their bodies mad a move to conne
But I could only stare in disbelief as the crowds all le
I did everything, everything I wanted t
I let them use you for their own end
To the center of the city in the night, waiting for yo
To the center of the city in the night, waiting for yo

R Schnell - Punk

Saw a few punk bands at the **Caribbean Club** in the mid 80's - or was it called the Paradise club by then?? I knew about Cherry's and the 5 bar but I never went to either

P Underhill - Goth

The was the New Yorker, down Queens Walk (side of the Butts Centre) us Goths/acid punks were there in mid 80s

T Daisy - Punk

5s and treats and the Caribbean were my hang outs when I was 15ish in the early 80s the new Yorker was after 5s . Then went on to the rising sun with the back bar being the skins and the old punks and the front bar being mainly the younger crowd (me) and the Turks and the Butler then later the old turtle. I only went to the star and the target a few times as was very young then . Good memories . Also used to go to the dove but that was much later remember going there just before it closed and the manager used to just buy a few crates of beer from wherever then sell from behind the bar . Anyone remember the raves at the now Tesco's site and the old old aldervalley bus station in the 80s

K Sheeran - Punk

Also the **Top Rank** was a great venue for the post-punk scene that developed in late 70s'/early 80s. I saw **Killing Joke** (as dark and angry as any punk band), OMD, Squeeze, Teardrop Explodes, Undertones, Tenpole Tudor and loads of others there.

R Schnell - Punk

I first became aware of punk in 79 aged 13 but only really got into it in the early 80s - I grew up in a violent household so came to despise authority early on so punk fitted me like a glove.

R Schnell - Punk

the younger punks used to drink in the **Target** and Rising sun - also the Turks head in the late 80's [although I got refused service in there for allegedly 'being on the convoy' [which I wasn't! haha]

R Howard - Punk

The Granby was at the junction and quite alternative. There was also Treats in Kings Rd opposite where the central library is now and the New Yorker/5s bar that attracted the alternative crowd in the early 80s

COOPERS ARMS
BUTTER MARKET

The honorary new home of the punks after the closure of the Star

A R P Lazarus - Punk

Between 1986 and 1989, The Coopers was an extremely busy pub as subcultures (punk, goth, skinhead, psychobilly, crusty etc) flourished in Reading. However a change of management brought in a 'no torn trousers' dress code (in strict terms the dress code was actually worded 'no torn pants' as the new manager was an American with precious little understanding of British subcultures and their associated profitability) which abruptly terminated The Coopers' previously roaring trade. After that, the Reading 'alternative' scene shifted briefly back to **The Mitre**... before Danny and Greg opened **The Purple Turtle** on its original site pretty much opposite where **The Star** had once reigned supreme. Since then **The Purple Turtle** (in both incarnations) seems to have kept its crown as the 'edgy' hangout of choice.



1976

2021



APPENDIX

BIBLIOGR
ETC

RAPHY

SONGS IN THIS BOOK

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If the Kids are United / Sham 69
Dave Guy Parsons and Jimmy Pursey
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