

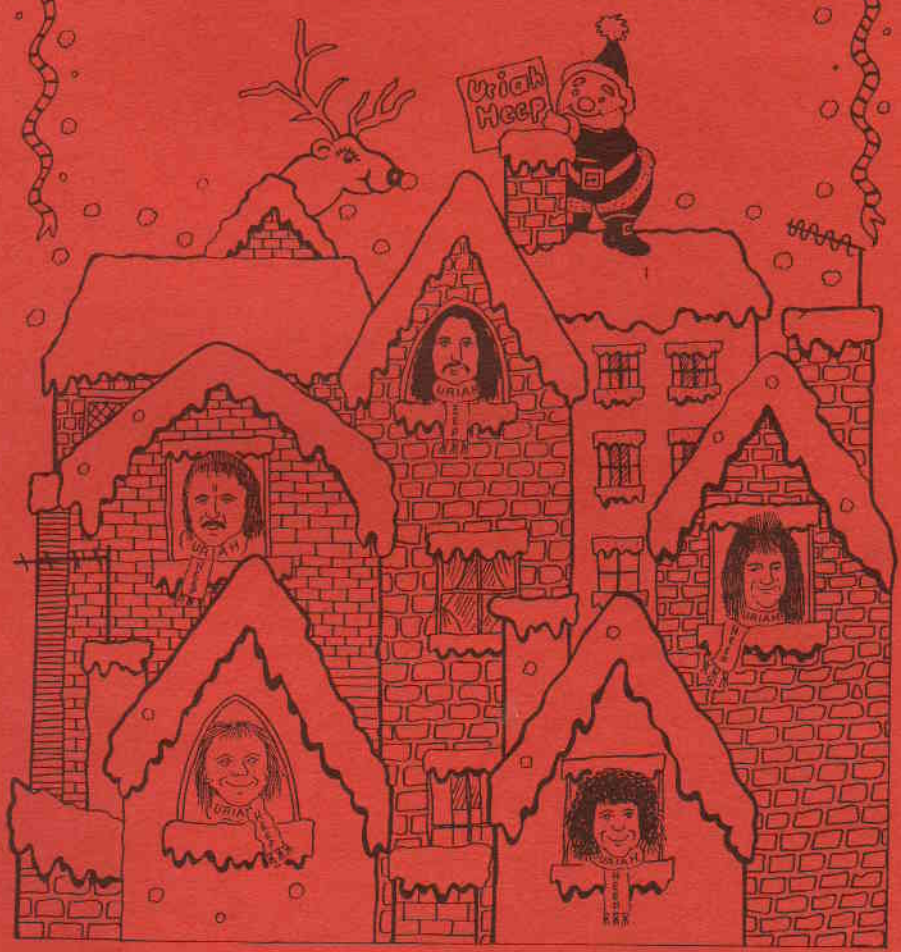
URIAH

THE OFFICIAL

HEEP

Uriah Heep

APPRECIATION SOCIETY



Drawing by Steve Whitworth

ISSUE 14

THE OFFICIAL

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URIAH HEEP'S OFFICIAL WORLD WIDE FAN CLUB — ADMINISTERED BY DAVID OWEN & ALAN HARTLEY

Hi again and welcome to issue 14,

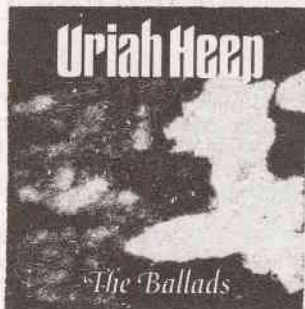
Here is the Christmas present you've all been waiting for and it's all been happening as we go to print. On November 25th Heep signed a recording deal with the German based company SVP/CBH. This deal covers most of Europe including the UK and Japan, the band will negotiate deals for other territories so watch this space for further news. Mick seems very happy with the deal and to quote him directly:- "things are looking up for 95". Heep have been in full rehearsals and are spending some time before Christmas in the recording studio. After a break for the festive season they'll be back in the studio to finish off the new album which they hope will be ready for release before next summer. Mick tells us that the material is a good mixture of all the styles the band are known for and he'll give you all the latest news in an exclusive interview in the next issue.

The North American tour reported in the last issue was quite eventful for many reasons, a mix up with visas before the band left meant Mick had to be at the American Embassy at the crack of dawn on the day they left to get everything sorted out. As all the dates were not fully confirmed there were some changes to the schedule listed in the last issue. This obviously meant that promotion for some of the gigs left a lot to be desired and consequently the crowds weren't as large as they could have been, to cap it all off they had thousands of US dollars stolen from one of the hotels. On the brighter side there were many great gigs and they still found time to record a radio session for "Bob Rivers" for his "Bob's Garage" radio spot on KISW in Seattle. The tracks laid down were "Easy Livin'", "Stealin'" and "Mr Majestic". Old Bob was amazed at how quick the band recorded the songs as many of his guests take an age to get it right!

On the live dates front, Heep hope to be in South Africa with "Deep Purple" from late March 1995, no dates are confirmed yet but we'll keep you posted. Unfortunately, the date in New Zealand for April 1995 never reached the contract signing stage and as far as Mick is concerned is now off, even though it was never really on as such. This is another case where local promoters have advertised a concert before it has been signed and sealed. If you want to keep in touch with any concert news as it is confirmed between issues of the magazine, use our concert dates service. Just send us a SAE if you are a UK member or a self addressed envelope and a international reply coupon available from any post office if you are an overseas member. Please write in the bottom left hand corner of your envelope the countries you require dates for.

There are a few new releases to look out for, the "Lucifer's Friend" CD "Sumo Grip", (Castle CSC 7148-2) is now out it is an excellent album featuring John Lawton on vocals and it includes a version of 'Free Me', it's well worth a listen and it is reviewed in this issue.

Castle Germany have released another compilation called "Uriah Heep - The Ballads", (Castle CSC 7153-2). It's a nice departure from the usual compilations and is good value with 13 Heep tracks and 4 Ken Hensley solo tracks as a bonus. Track listing:- Lady in black, Free me, What should be done, Come back to me, Why did you go, Come away Melinda, July morning, The wizard, Wonderworld, If I had the time, Circle of hands, The park, Wise man, From time to time, A king without a throne, Rain, The last time. Another German compilation, this time from "Spectrum Music" titled "Lady In Black", (Spectrum 5507302), has the following track listing:- Lady in black, Traveller in time, Easy livin, Shady lady, Gypsy, Lonely nights, Spider woman, Fallen angel, Sympathy, Come back to me, Carry on, Love stealer, Think it over, Stay on top. The 25th anniversary box set which was intended to be ready for release towards the end of 1994 isn't going to be ready until sometime during 1995. As soon as there is some definite news as to when it will be released and what it will include, we'll let you know.



One topic that has constantly come up in your letters to us is that of a society convention. We've thought about this a lot and with the 25th anniversary coming up next year the time now seems right. Mick wants us to do it later rather than earlier in the year to allow the band to see how their year will map out and hopefully enable at least some of them to attend, as Mick said, "I wouldn't want to be on the other side of the world when there's a party like that going on". That is the spirit of what the convention will be about, a chance for us all to get together, having said that, we will want to provide some entertainment and we've already had an agreement in principal from 2 ex Heep members to provide some live music, it's just a matter of trying to organise a date that will suit everybody. There will be a charge for tickets as there will be costs that need covering, we can't say at this point how much, or where the convention will take place as that will depend on several factors. With all this in mind, all we want at this stage is some idea of how many of you may be interested in attending so please write in and let us know. There will be more details in future issues.

Once again our thanks go out to the following people for their help and support, Bernie, Trev, Phil, Mick and Lee, John Lawton, John Wetton, Tina Hartley, Cathie Gutjahr, Barry Lombardo, Scott Cokeley, Dick Dunn, Steve Whitworth and Jurgen Scholz. The band and the Society want to thank you for all your support over the past 12 months and we collectively wish you all a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HEEPLY NEW YEAR.

Enjoy the mag,
Keep on rockin'
and we'll see you in about 3 months.

Alan & David

December 1994.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH JOHN LAWTON

With a new "Lucifer's Friend" album and "Gun Hill" fast emerging as a well respected act taking pubs and clubs by storm in the South of England, John gives us the very latest information on his current plans and his work over the last year or so.

UHAS: Can you tell us a bit about the new "Lucifer's Friend" album?

John: It's called "Sumo Grip", we prepared the tracks about two years ago, then all of a sudden a record company came along and liked what we played, and went for it.

UHAS: Who is the record company?

John: It's Castle, the company who have all Uriah Heep's back catalogue. It's alright, I'm happy to be with them and it's due out on the 31st October 1994.

UHAS: Is it just a German release?

John: No, it's coming out in the UK, Japan and hopefully in the States in about two or three months time.

UHAS: Will you be doing any promotion work on it?

John: Yeah, I'll be going over, they want to do a few live gigs round Europe which will be no problem.

UHAS: And...there's a version of "Free Me" on it, who's idea was that?

John: Yes, there is a version of "Free Me" on it, it was the record company's idea, I had nothing against that because it was a good song and if it's a good song, why not do it, I had no arguments about that at all. I wasn't going to turn round and say I'm not doing that because it's a Heep song, the company thought it was a good idea so we did it and it's worked out well.

UHAS: How did you get involved with "Gun Hill"?

John: Neil, our bass player has a studio and he had recorded two or three tracks with our drummer and guitarist under the name of "Knightfyre" and they were looking for a singer. I was in Neil's studio with Mike, our keyboard player, doing some radio commercials, Neil played me the Knightfyre tracks, I liked it, we put down some vocals and we decided that we would put a band together, Mike and I have known each other for a long time and it's good fun.

UHAS: Are you looking for a recording deal with "Gun Hill"?

John: We are trying to establish ourselves as a band that people like and consequently we are going to produce some live tapes in the near future with a couple of original songs and if people like what they hear and a record company is interested, then "Gun Hill" is interested in putting some stuff out.

UHAS: Is the main reason for doing the tapes to get record company interest?

John: No, principally we're doing the tapes because people say to us, "we like what you've played, it's a good set, can we buy it anywhere"? If people want to buy it after our gig's, then great.

UHAS: I believe you've been doing some work with "The Les Humphries Singers" over the past year or so?

John: Yeah, Les contacted me last year wanting to know if I would be interested in doing a tour, I said, if some of the original members are involved then I'll do it. He said some of the original members, who are well known faces in Germany, said they would do it if I would, so we did a couple of weeks on tour just for the sheer hell of it and it was good fun. It's going back to a part of my life before Heep, it's something which I enjoyed at the time, something that was part of my learning my trade because everybody has to do, at some stage, some learning. You can't just come along and say I'm going to be a singer and walk up to a mic and do it. If you have it, you have it, if you don't, you don't and at the time when I first started I thought I had it until I listened to other singers, I resolved my self to the fact that I didn't have it and I had to learn, that's why I went to Hamburg in the first place and learnt my trade there. "The Les Humphries Singers" were alright, it was a couple of weeks good fun, we enjoyed ourselves but that's enough of that chapter.

UHAS: You also did a track on the last "Zar" album.

John: Yes, the guitarist got in touch with me and said we've been asked if we could do another album. I said I'll produce it but I don't want to sing on it because you have a singer, let him do it, it didn't work out so I ended up singing it. Towards the end they found another singer which was fine by me because I didn't want to tie myself down, not because they weren't good, they were good but I felt they needed someone younger to fit to their image. I ended up singing on just one track which they put out as a single and we did a bit of TV work with it which was fun but I don't like to tie myself down too much to one thing, I like to move around a bit and do all sorts of things.

UHAS: You also sing with another band at the moment?

John: Yeah, it's called "D.C.LAW", we're based in Bournemouth and the band is good fun, it's not the same as I do with "Gun Hill", it's middle of the road material but I don't believe you should say that you'll never do this or that, we do some pop stuff and it's all part of singing, if you tie yourself down and say I'll never do this again or I'll never do that again, then you may as well close the door on everything that's going, I like to leave all the doors open, it's not rock, we cover a lot of pop stuff and we do no originals, it just purely for fun, I do most things today just for fun.

UHAS: Will "Gun Hill" be playing in Europe?

John: We hope to next year, we're trying to check out a few gigs that we can do as "Gun Hill", we won't be going with any reference to me being in Uriah Heep, we'll offer



ourselves as "Gun Hill" and if things happen, they happen but I don't want us to go under the guise of ex Uriah Heep, it's not my way and I'm not a big fan of that sort of thing. Uriah Heep was part of my life and I enjoyed every minute of it but I've moved on since then, if people say to me, "I remember this or that", then that's fine, it's part of their lives too, but I like to move on. Being ex Heep opens doors and it's all very nice but apart from that, the guys have gone their way and I'm really happy for them, but John Lawton's gone his way and it's not the same direction as Heep.

UHAS: So "Gun Hill" are basically a rock and roll band and you wouldn't describe them as a hard rock band?

John: No, I would describe us as a good time rock band because if you play the places that we play you want people to enjoy you and not just stand there and say, "he played that well", if people class us as a hard rock band, then that's down to them but it's not down to us. We go in to enjoy ourselves, if we make cock ups or blow a few bum notes here and there, it makes no difference, as long as people have a good time then we'll have a good time.

Interview by Alan Hartley and David Owen, photo by Alan Hartley.

ALBUM REVIEW

LUCIFER'S FRIEND - SUMO GRIP

CASTLE COMMUNICATIONS GERMANY, CSC 7148-2

Track listing:- Get in, Heartbreaker, One way ticket to hell, Don't look back, You touched me, Cadillac, Step by step, Rebound, Sumo grip, Sheree, Back in the track, Banzia, Any day now, Ride the sky, Free me, Get out, You touched me with your heart.

I've was never one of those Heep fans who rushed out to buy all the previous releases of each new member that joined the band, as a teenager in the 70's, a constant lack of money played it's part and it was hard enough keeping up with Heep and the Ken Hensley and David Byron solo stuff. I'm almost ashamed to admit that I have failed to follow John Lawton's career since his departure from Heep and when he sent me the new "Lucifer's Friend" CD I didn't quite know what to expect as I've never listened to any of their material before. I've heard their 70's releases described as 'weird' and 'difficult to get into' so I wasn't expecting to be blown away by "Sumo Grip" at all. Looking at the track listing, it seems incredible value for money, 17 tracks, however 3 of them are short instrumentals that only clock in at around 30 seconds but considering there is just over one hour of music, it's is good value in terms of quantity.

In terms of quality of music, it's value is even better, Lawton's voice is as phenomenal as ever for sheer power and expression. The songs are of a high standard and the presentation is in a commercial rock style, this surprised me, I don't have any previous Lucifer's albums to compare it to but I didn't expect a commercial feel, I was very pleasantly surprised.





"Heartbreaker" thunders from the speakers and dare I say it, oh go on then, I will, it reminds me of the best moments of the Lawton era Heep, especially on the verse. It's got real hit single potential and is possibly my favourite cut from the album. "Don't look back" embraces many of the qualities displayed by some of the best 'pomp rock' bands such as "Styx", while "Cadillac" has a very funky and danceable rhythm, this style isn't normally my cup of tea but I do like this one, it's a real highlight on the album and is equal to similar numbers in this mode from many of the newer rock bands of today. "Step by Step" isn't the song you've heard before on "Different World" but it is a rocker that starts with a nice riff and again reminds me of late 70's Heep in parts. That brings us nicely round to "Free Me", you all know it's not my all time favourite Heep track and whilst it's treatment here is similar to the original, it does sound a little more up to date and perhaps has a little more bite about it. The rest of the album is made up of ballads and mid tempo/rock songs and over all, it's a very good mix styles which is quite easy to listen to and enjoy. A quick check of the writing credits will reveal one John Cooper Lawton (you kept that one quite JC!) to be a very capable lyricist who maybe should have been given more of an opportunity to contribute during his time with Heep. If you are like me, you don't know the past "Lucifer's Friend" albums, then I can recommend this one as a starting point, as to whether we should expect something similar from their old stuff, please let me know!!

Alan Hartley.

QUIZ TIME

Congratulations to Roberto Martinez from Spain who won the copy of Phil's dance version of "Gypsy" in the quiz from the last issue, with the correct answer of 23rd March to the question, when is Phil's birthday.

As we mentioned last time, the prize in this issue is the banner that the band half inched after the gig in Mieste last July. It did stretch right across a road so we don't know where the winner will put it but all the band have signed it so it is quite a unique prize. In addition to this, we also have a copy of the new "Lucifer's Friend" CD, "Sumo Grip" which has been signed by John Lawton, and a "Gun Hill" T-shirt which has also been signed by John Lawton. The banner will go to the first correct answer out of the hat, the CD to the second and the T-shirt to the third. So to the question:-

Name three bands that John Lawton has recorded and released material with other than Uriah Heep.

Please include a first class stamp (UK members) or a international reply coupon (overseas members) with your entries, without these they will not be put into the prize draw. There was a very poor response to the last quiz so your chances of winning are far better than your chances of winning the lottery!! Good luck.

LIVE REPORTS

HEEP ROCKS PENNSYLVANIA AGAIN! 2/9/94

I opened my mailbox and found a letter from UHAS, my favourite mail along with all you penfriends out there. To my surprise, or shock I should say, I saw among the North American tour dates, Michealangelos, Corry, Pennsylvania on Sept 2nd. I've never even heard of Corry so I looked in my trusty atlas and found that it was about 300 miles away, near Lake Eric. I couldn't find anybody here who was crazy enough to ride 7 hours with me and to make matters worst, my telephone was out of order for the next 2 days but I did leave a few messages for some other North American UHASers who I knew were crazy enough to make the trip, sorry it was the last minute guys. Fortunately I managed to con my boss into a vacation day and I left around noon and headed some long miles through the Allegheny Forest, such beautiful country. By 7.30pm I was in Corry. I got out the car and there was Bernie walking across the parking lot, I yelled "Bernie"! he yelled back "hey", waved and walked in the main entrance. I grabbed my camera, my plastic UHAS card on a neck chain and some photos to be signed and headed on in. I ran straight in to Mick Box and asked him to autograph some stuff for me, I had some photos from Heep's show at Valley Forge last year, one was of me and Mick and I said, "I don't suppose you remember this" and he said, "of course I do", what a rush! After a brief chat he said I could come to the band's tour bus after the show to meet the rest of the band for autographs. The first band was called "Bad Attitude" and they ended their set with Ozzy's "Crazy Train", later on I was partying with these guys and none of them realised that the drummer from the track, Lee Kerlake, was in Heep. As I waited for Heep to come on I was right up against the 5 foot high stage, there had been a few technical difficulties but they hit the stage with a vengeance opening the set with "Devil's Daughter". Mick was smiling and winking at the fans as usual, probably only 4 feet away from me, what a headrush! As the set went on something very strange happened, the sound to the audience was great but the sound in the stage monitors must have been horrible, I've never seen Heep looked pissed off on stage before. But with the verocity of the music coming across and the guys expressions it became a very vicious package, it looked quite intense and I'll always remember this show a little differently than the others. I do like to see them smiling but it nevertheless was a fantastic show for the audience who were mainly in their early 20's. By the time the encores came along the young ones were bashing. They were very responsive to "Words In The Distance" and you could hear them singing along to "Stealin'", "Cricle Of Hands" and "The Wizard". It's amazing that people remember all these good songs from the past, they implant in your memory and yes, I must mention how great it was to hear "Rainbow Demon" in America. After the show I got talking to some other Heep fans and by the time I got to the tour bus it was time for them to leave. Thanks for the UHAS concert dates service, without this information in between issues of the magazine I would never have known they were here until it was too late.

Barry Lombardo.

UNDER THE RAIL, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA. 20/9/94.

In September Uriah Heep proved to me that, yes, dreams do come true. To my surprise they were to play at "Under the Rail" in Seattle with "Blue Oyster Cult" and "Stoney