

THE OFFICIAL  
**Uriah Heep**  
APPRECIATION SOCIETY

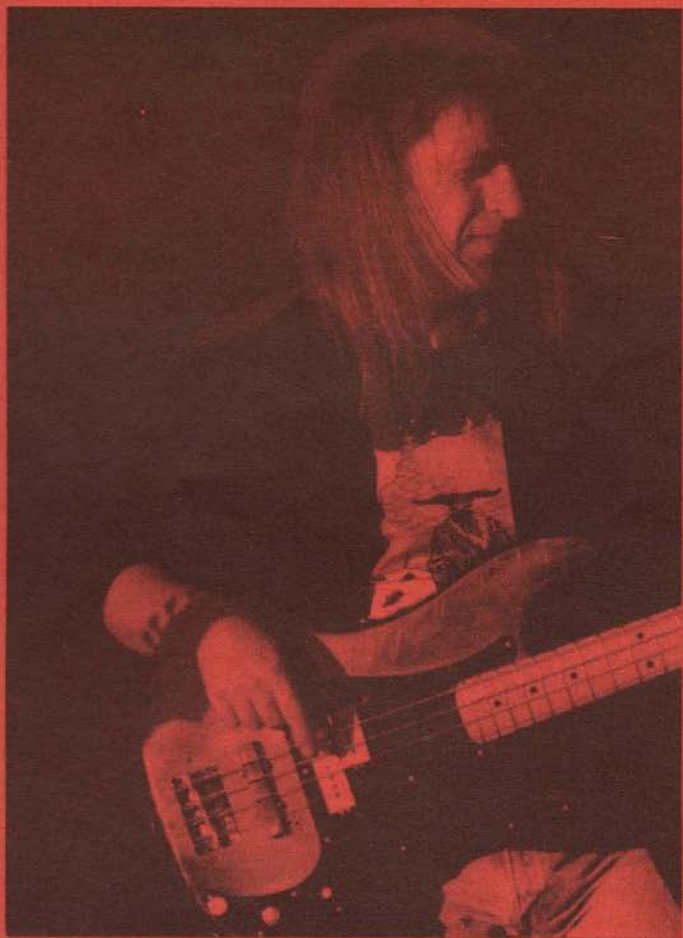


Photo by Isabella Seefriedt

**ISSUE 22**

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



Hi again and welcome to issue 22.

The year came to a terrific end for Heep with a very successful European tour, sadly the UK dates didn't come through but the band did take the step of introducing more "Sea Of Light" tracks into the set. These were rehearsed on the road and so some of the early dates didn't get to include them, but they started to become established in the set by the time the band hit Germany. The set newcomers were "Love in silence" and "Mistress of all time". One down side is that they were brought in at the expense of "Against the odds" but it keeps the tally of new material in the set looking healthy and provides some variation. The band are now taking a winter break and will hopefully return to the live scene with an extensive tour of Russia in Feb 1997. Mick tells us that he expects Heep to be back in the studio next summer to record the follow up to "Sea Of Light" for a September release.

Those UK members who have sent in SAE for concert dates should have received the John Wetton UK dates that were confirmed to us after the publication of the last issue, we hope some of you managed to get along and support John although we had hoped for a live report or two. We've also been disappointed with the lack of response to our request for help with material for the mag from you, the members. Although a few have contributed some excellent stuff which we are very thankful for, we've had very few "Classic Concert" and "First Touch" articles, come on, give us a hand out there!

We're still waiting for delivery of some of the latest re master CD's to complete our order for mailing out, they will be sent as soon as we get them from the record company so please be patient, you'll have them as soon as we do. Like wise with the master disk CD orders. Gunhill still haven't made a start on the recording of their new CD and we've still no news from Ken Hensley about his CD and video.

Our Canadian correspondent, Kevin Julie, informs us that Greg Detchert has joined up with a band called "Featherwheel". Greg plays on 5 or 6 tracks of the bands latest demo and once a record deal is secured Greg will be involved on the whole album. The band make their debut on new years eve at The Dalby House in Elora, Ontario, Canada.

Our thanks once again go out to the following people for their help and support, Mick, Lee, Bernie, Trev and Phil, John Lawton, John Rabbit Bundrick, Tina Hartley, Kevin Julie, Isabella Seefriedt, Eduardo Capurro, Tapio Minkinen, Andreas Schulz and Antonio Ruiz Gosalvez. The band and the society also want to thank you for you support over the last 12 months and we collectively wish you a MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HEEPY NEW YEAR.

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

*Alan & David*

Dec 1996.

## LIVE REPORTS

### **GUNHILL - LIVE IN NIEDERKASSEL-RHEIDT AND BAD KREUZANACH. 8&9/9/96.**

I knew that Peter Bethge had organised 2 shows for Gunhill in Braunschweig and Magdeburg, and that the band wanted to add some more gigs around these. I wasn't too optimistic because I'd just come back from holiday, and the gigs were in 5 weeks. I went to the local pub in our village and was lucky enough to convince the pub owner to book Gunhill. Then I went to Bad Kreuznach, which is a little town 100 miles away from my home, to visit a few friends. I knew there was an Irish pub there so I contacted the owner and managed to book another show. Peter Bethge made the posters for the shows he'd organised with his computer, scanning the recent band photo, and was kind enough to do the same for the shows I had booked. The gig in Niederkassel started with some problems. Their van broke down on the way because of a faulty fan belt. We arrived at the gig for the start time but were told that about 25 people had already left because of the delay. Anyway, there was still about 100 people there, which isn't bad taking into consideration that a big and famous fair was taking place in Bonn which is about 10 miles away. Because of the delay the band started without any soundcheck, everything went perfect and it took only two songs to an audience who had been playing a waiting game to become a noisy crowd. John Lawton took the opportunity to give the audience lots of chances to sing along with him and it really became a party. It was interesting that the whole audience, who had complained about the delay because the following day was Monday, back to work, now didn't want Gunhill to leave the stage. But after about two and a half hours the show was finished and John promised to come back next year, to great applause. After the show we went to my home, together with Heinz Biennek and Alexander Kolesnikov's sister and brother in law, to eat some food that had been prepared for tea time.

The next day we went to Bad Kreuznach. The pub is a really nice venue. The audience was a little laid back, although looking at their age compared to the audience in Niederkassel, I would have thought the opposite. Anyway, the show was very successful and during the break the pub owner came to me to book Gunhill again for next year saying they were the best band he'd ever had! Nice to hear because it put's me in to negotiate that the owner was in this year. To be continued??

Eduardo Capurro.

### **HEEP IN MADRID**

This was going to be my first Heep gig after 4 years of support, yes, (I'm a new fan) and honestly, I wasn't disappointed at all. I could finally check out in person just how much charisma Mick has on stage. He's a little magician of rock but also a very down to earth person. "Universal wheels" was the first song but the mixing sounded bad and this lingered on for a while, however, Mick's guitar overcame all the other instruments and I really loved hearing "Rainbow demon" which reminded me of a classic doom riff that could have been written by Tony Iommi. As for the rest of the set, they played 4 songs from "Sea of light", "Dream on", "Against the odds", "Universal wheels" and "Words in the distance". I was pleased that they didn't play any other tracks from the Bernie Shaw era as I'm not very keen on them except for the magnificent "Sea of light" material. Two encores were demanded from the crowd and the first one was the highlight of the evening for me as they played "Bird of prey", the evening was finished with much singing and clapping to "Lady in black". It was then time for autographs backstage, signatures on lots of old records,

photos, a few beers, we spent more than three quarters of an hour chatting and having fun with them. Chatting to Lee I learned that he is no longer busy with his studio in Lanzarote, I also enquired if Trev had a spare copy of the "Rono" single, to which he obviously said no, but I had to try. As a final note before I close the review, Heep didn't bring their Hammond organ which I really missed, at least Jon Lord used a Hammond in Madrid earlier this year. This was my first Heep concert, my first chance to meet the band and they are all nice fellows to chat with, cheers guys, you're the best indie (sorry, crap term) band in the world and you really deserve to make it in Europe again.

Antonio Ruiz Gosalvez

## **SPELLBINDER - VIENNA ROCKHAUS 15/10/96**

When I arrived at the Rockhaus Heep had just finished their soundcheck. One year has passed by since I last met the band and during dinner I heard some stories about the start of the Heep tour in Spain. I didn't ask for the set list so when the concert finally started it was a nice surprise to hear some more songs off "Sea of light", I did miss "Against the odds" which was dropped to make way for the new tracks but you can't please everybody. I was in the first row celebrating the return of my favourite band together with about 500 fans. The sound and lights were good and the set list was Universal wheels, Time of revelation, Stealin, Rainbow demon, Words in the distance, Wizard, Dream on, Love in silence, July morning, The way that it is, Gypsy, Look at yourself, and as encores, Bird of prey, Lady in black and Easy livin'. The guitar solo at the beginning of "The wizard" and "Gypsy" seemed longer than usual and Phil's keyboard solo in "Gypsy" was a bit too synthetic in my opinion. The fans liked it and the new songs were known by the audience almost as well as the classic stuff. After the show many fans were waiting for autographs and so finally it was about 2 in the morning before we left for the hotel.

## **MUNICH INCOGNITO, 16/10/96**

AS I drove to the hotel I didn't have the chance to see the venue in daylight. The Incognito is situated in a factory area and if you don't know the place it could be hard to find. It's a new place for concerts, there's no number in the phone book and taxi drivers don't know it well. This may explain why only 200 people found their way to the show. That really was a shame because Uriah Heep were in a very good mood and were joking on stage most of the time. The crowd was singing along with them for the classics and some even for the "Sea of light" stuff. It could have been great with more people there but as it was it seemed more like a private party. The backstage area was upstairs and was big, so many fans made their way to the band about 45 mins after the show. It was great for me to meet some old friends and talk about the differences between the shows as we see it. At 2 some guy from the venue threw everybody out because he wanted to close up and go home. I went straight to Nurnberg the next day while Heep had to go to Stuttgart first for a live radio interview. That was their first day off since the start of the tour and when they finally got to Nurnberg, after being stuck in traffic for hours - and all this for 10 mins on the air - they were still laughing and joking but were also a little tired. We all went out for dinner at a place called Hirsih where they played the next day.

## **Nurnberg Hirsch, 18/10/96.**

Another big factory hall but very different from Munich. One third of it was a long bar with wooden tables and garden chairs where you could sit and eat, and the other two thirds was the concert hall. This venue hosts around 25 concerts each month and obviously has a large crowd of regulars. I went to the soundcheck and Heep finally had time to rehearse



"Mistress of all time". It was very interesting to see how they worked it all out and this evening would be the first with "Mistress" in the set. I stayed at the Hirsch for some T shirt shopping and to meet some old friends again while the band left after the soundcheck. It was my last night with Heep and it made me a bit sad. Time was running so fast again and this year I've only been able to see them 3 times, but I know that's a lot more than other people. Uriah Heep have always given 100% in their shows and it was great to see a concert with a crowd of 700 fans or more. "Mistress of all time" followed "Rainbow demon" in the set, they played it very well, not perfect, but that's live music and it will get better for future shows. The audience seemed to have waited for that song because some people were singing the first lines with the band. It was a brilliant concert and it made it even harder for me to leave the next day. If you ask me which of the 3 shows were best, I really couldn't say as each gig has it's special moments and even if the set list is the same, it's always different. I forgot to mention the German support band "Avalon", well, if you didn't see them you didn't really miss anything although they are nice people. In the end all I can say is thanks to Heep and their crew for still touring and their kindness to me.

Report and photos by Isabella Seefriedt.

## STUTTGART AND GUMUNDEN. 20 & 26/10/96.

I've been a member of UHAS for almost 2 years but a fan of the band for over 20. My wife and I live in Stuttgart and we saw some concerts last year but this time we hoped to meet the musicians. We arrived three and a half hours before the gig started at the Stuttgart Longhorn but we weren't able to get backstage passes. We were among the first people to get into the hall and managed to stand in the first row. The show began and the sound was terrible, we had trouble hearing the next day but the band played with heart and had fun. That can't be all we thought so the next weekend we travelled to Gumunden on the 6.20 train arriving at 10.15. Where is the Schereberghalle? Where is a hotel? We found both and were surprised that the hotel was part of the hall. We checked in and then went to the hall, with my laminated society card we had no trouble getting in. There was no soundcheck because Heep hadn't arrived, they told us later they had some problems on the highway. We went back later and watched Mick testing his guitars, Mick Bernie and Lee recognised our button badges and said hello to us. We talked to some Heep fans from Holland and met Many, the front man from "Avalon", the support band. He told us it was not normally a problem to meet the band after the show (Thanks Many). The hall filled up



and the show started. "Universal wheels" to "Lady in black" (my favourite song for over 20 years) and "Easy livin", we were back in the front row and it sounded very well, we really enjoyed the show. Afterwards we waited a few minutes then Many said, "come and meet the band". We were welcomed just like friends and my wife got autographs on her jeans, "on your legs?" Trevor asked! We talked to Bernie, Phil and Trevor, we asked Bernie where he was staying and he showed us his key, number 86, we

showed him ours, number 82, same hotel same floor! It was a great weekend, thank you and of course we'll see you again next year.

Report and photo by Andreas Schulz.

## KOLN. 27/10/96.

The venue is called "Alter Wartesaal" because it's the old waiting room at the railway station. It's a nice venue although not very big and it only has a small stage. The set was: Universal wheels, Time of revelation, Stealin, Rainbow demon, Mistress of all time, Words in the distance, The wizard, Love in silence, That's the way that it is, July morning, Gypsy, Look at yourself, and as encores, Dream on, Bird of prey, Lady in black and Easy livin. You may wonder why "Dream on" was an encore and not in the main set. Heep tried to play it after "The wizard" but Trevor's acoustic guitar didn't work. After a few minutes the band decided to go on to "Love in silence". Even as an encore, "Dream on" wasn't to be played without problems. In the mid section of the song all the lights went out until the end of the song. Everybody was asking for the lights and after about a minute they came back on. The sound at the venue, which was packed with about 800 people, was great. The new songs, "Mistress of all time" and "Love in silence" were very well received. I believe that most people didn't know these songs because they were very quiet whilst Heep played them. But after the songs the audience gave frenetic applause they did for the old classics. I must admit that I didn't expect such a brilliant performance of these two songs, I've been waiting to hear them played live for 18 months as they are my favourite of the album and it was a real thrill. The only thing that gets boring is Mick's guitar solo and Phil's keyboard solo on "Gypsy". I know that both can do better, Mick, why don't you play the kind of solo you played on "Salisbury" of the live version of "Sweet Lorraine" from 79? Phil's solo from "Live in Moscow" was far better than the one he's doing nowadays. I also would really love to hear a drum and bass solo but it seems to me that it's hopeless. I do not want to offend, but Heep seem to have an attitude like a civil servant, go to work, finish it as soon as possible and then go home again. I'm lucky enough to see more than one show each time they tour, but after one show I know what will happen at the next. There's nothing unexpected happening -except sometimes an acoustic breakdown or a power failure. Last but not least I must complain about Heep's press work. Everyday I read the biggest paper in Koln but I didn't manage to find anything about the Heep show at all. It makes me wonder why because I managed to get a big advert and review for the Gunhill show at Niederkassel recently - free of charge!

Eduardo Capurro.

## HELSINKI TAVASTIA CLUB. 8/11/96.

Last Friday was the day I've waited for ever since I bought "Sea of light". Uriah Heep played the Tavastia club. The last time I saw Heep play live was in 1990, so it had been a while. I took the day off work and before the show I went to the hotel where the band was staying with Jari-Pekka Martikainen and Jari-Pekka Laitio, two fellow Heep fans. Martikainen had made arrangements for us to take part in the press conference, since Laitio, who has his own Uriah Heep home page on the internet, was going to do an interview. He had already been in touch with Mick Box and got his permission. I, on the other hand, had compiled some lists about the band's history, their discography, different lineups etc and put them all together in to a small booklet, which I was determined to give to Mick and have him sign a copy of it for myself.

At the hotel there was some bad news. The promoter told us there was something wrong with Bernie's throat and he had been taken to see the Doctor as soon as they arrived. He

wasn't sure whether he would be able to sing properly tonight. Mick was the only one who came to talk to the press. He looked very surprised when he was given the booklet and saw "all his lifes work" there. He signed my copy: "Thanks for the great work. Keep on rockin'". I had a good time following the rest of the conference. Mick talked about the past, the present and the future and he said that Heep would be playing 6 songs from "Sea of light". He also said that when the tour was over (the gig at Rauma the following day would be the last of the tour) they would take a break for a while and start work on the next album in June. It should be out next September so we have a long wait until we hear some new material. Afterwards we saw Bernie in the lobby, he said that both he and Trevor had a touch of bronchitis, but he would try his best to give a good performance tonight. The venue was fully packed, and the crowd was eagerly waiting to see the band take the stage. The set opened with two songs from "Sea of light", "Universal wheels" and "Time of revelation". From the start we heard that we had no reason to worry. There was nothing wrong with Bernie's voice. The rest of the band was also in top form showing that Uriah Heep today are a band of the 90's and not the kind of dinosaur from the 70's that the press constantly, at least here in Finland, are claiming. The first old classic was "Stealin". It was followed by a song I've never heard in concert before, "Rainbow demon". "Mistress of all time" and "Words in the distance", one of my personal favourites (well, actually there are 12 of them on the album) followed. The first highlight of the show came when Mick walked onto the stage with an acoustic guitar and started the intro to "The wizard". He had promised us 6 new songs and so came the last 2 of them: "Dream on" and "Love in silence". Until then the set had consisted entirely either of songs from "Sea of light" or songs from 1973 and before, and during the night we had only one exception to this rule. "That's the way that it is" from 1982's "Abominog" was the next tune. "July morning" had the audience going wild, and the next song, "Gypsy", where both Phil and Mick performed their solos, raised the feelings even higher. "Easy livin" closed the set as usual. The band left the stage and the lights went out, but we didn't have to wait long, they returned with "Bird of prey", a version that rocked like it never had done on stage before. The second encore was "Lady in black" and to show that the concert was over they played "Easy livin for a second time". All in all it was by far the best Heep concert I've ever been to, the band played better than ever, they seemed to enjoy the show as much as the crowd, and the set list was as I had hoped it to be, newest material and old classics. There was one minor disappointment though, they didn't play "Circle of hands", my favourite track from both "Live 73" and "Spellbinder". I would have loved them to play it in place of "That's the way that it is" or "Rainbow demon". But maybe they'll play it next time around. After the show I got my booklet signed by the rest of the band, and now it's a great memory of a great concert.

Tapio Minkinen.

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## QUIZ TIME

Congratulations to Paul Johnson of England who won Phil's wrist band in the quiz from issue 21, the three bands Phil has played in other than Heep could have included Parris, Grand Prix, Sweet, Sad Cafe, Aphiliated plus a few others. The prize in this issue is one of Bernie's stage shirts. To win it all you have to do is answer this question:

### What part of Canada is Bernie from?

Each entry must include a first class stamp (UK members) or an IRC (overseas members). Good luck!



## EASY LIVIN'

### THE COVER OF URIAH HEEP

"EASY LIVIN'" are a Heep covers band from Hamburg, Germany, they formed in the late summer of 1993 around guitarist Thommy Eyck, keyboard player Henjo Richter and singer Michael Keuter. As the concept of a Heep covers band grew they were joined by Markus Grosskopf on bass and Markus Corby on drums. They agreed to concentrate on the Byron era of the Heep and have built up a repertoire of more than 20 songs for their live set. In 1994 they recorded a 9 track demo tape, which is the subject of this review, and in autumn 1995 Ingo Kahland took over the drumming duties. My thanks go to Kevin Julie and Christopher Hoeglmueeller for bringing the band to my attention.



Easy Livin' live on stage, from left to right, Thommy, Markus and Michael.

**Track listing:** Easy livin', Sweet Lorraine, Stealin', Look at yourself, Bird of prey, So tired, Return to fantasy, Love machine, Sunrise. Well, what can I say? This really is a first class tape, these guys have set their sights on recreating the classic Heep sound and I feel they've done a brilliant job. All the Heep trademarks are there, the high vocals, the multi part harmonies, the Hammond, the crunching, snarling guitar, the solid rhythm section of bass and drums and a very powerful lead vocal performance, I was very pleasantly surprised with what I heard. The band have stamped their own personality on the recordings with some nice arrangements, it's not note for note copies of the Heep originals but it is very true to the style with some nice interpretations in both musical and vocal presentation and all the tracks sound crisp, bright and very much alive. I'm very impressed with the guitar work of Thommy Eyck, his solid performance is further highlighted with additional licks here and there that add to the interest. Ken Hensley's keyboard style is very well reproduced by Henjo Richter and the fact that Michael Keuter's vocal performance is closer in sound to the likes of Kai Hannsen than it is to Byron just gives the tracks an extra dimension, his power and wide range come across superbly, and the vocal contribution from these three on the multi part harmonies is very effective. Listen out also for the wandering, melodic bass lines and the power house drumming. I'll look forward to hearing "Easy Livin'" perform some of the Heep ballads from the Byron era and, of course, more of the heavier stuff. If you would like a copy of the tape, the cost is DM15 or £7 in Europe or \$12 (USA) for the rest of the world. Please send your order and money by registered post to: Michael Keuter, Seeschwalbentwiete 19, 22119 Hamburg, Germany.

Review by Alan Hartley, photo courtesy of "Easy Livin'".

## DISCOGRAPHY NO 16, HEAD FIRST

Hot on the heels of "Abominog" came an album that marked the end of an era for Heep. "Head First" (1983) continued in the same vein as its predecessor, hard and heavy with some pop overtones, but it was to be the band's last album for Bronze Records, the company was to fold soon after the album's release. The release also saw the departure of Bob Daisley from the band, tempted away to once again work with Ozzy. He left the way clear for the return of Trevor Bolder. Although not actually playing on the album, Trevor played bass on the "Head First" tours and is even seen on the video for the single release "Stay on top". This was the second single from the album, it followed "Lonely nights", Heep's cover of the Brian Adams song, that seemingly unknown to Bronze, Adams had recently had a hit with himself. The aforementioned "Stay on top" was released as a limited edition in a 7" gatefold sleeve with a free 4 track 7" containing Gypsy, Easy livin', Sweet Lorraine and Stealin. This limited edition release is much easier to find than the "Stay on top" standard release without the free 7". Bronze also intended to release a 12" version of the 4 classic tracks but the idea was shelved.

### **Side 1.**

The other side of midnight

Stay on top

Lonely nights

Sweet talk

Love is blind

### **Side 2**

Roll-overture

Red lights

Rollin the rock

Straight through the heart

Weekend warriors



### **LP Releases**

Bronze BRON 545

### **CD Releases**

Castle CLACD 150

### **7" Single releases**

Lonely nights/Weekend warriors Bronze BRO 166

Lonely nights/Weekend warriors (pic disc) Bronze BROP 166

Stay on top/Playing for time Bronze BRO 168

Stay on top/Playing for time/Gypsy/Easy livin'/Sweet Lorraine/Stealin Bronze BROG 168

### **12" releases**

Stay on top/Love is blind/Rollin the rock - promo LP sampler UK/USA

Stay on top/Straight through the heart Mercury MK 241 USA promo

### **PETER GOALBY'S MEMORIES.**

When we went through the initial songs for Head First with Ashley Howe, he said, "there isn't a real rocker there, you'll have to write one". We locked ourselves in a room for a couple of hours and the result was "Weekend warriors".

David Owen



The "Head First" touring line up, from left to right: John Sinclair, Trevor Bolder, Lee Kerslake, Mick Box and Peter Goalby.

# JOHN "RABBIT" BUNDRICK

## An interview by Kevin Julie

Anyone who is a lover of classic rock music will know the name, John "Rabbit" Bundrick from his work with "Free" and "Back Street Crawler" but what many of you may not know is how he is associated with Heep. Well, Rabbit actually worked on some little known David Byron solo material recorded in 1984, long after "The Byron Band" album "On The Rocks", this material consisted of 3 tracks and has never been released. Kevin, with the help of Dave Clayton and "The Free Appreciation Society" sent Rabbit a list of questions about his work with David Byron, the last recorded work before Byron's death.

**Kevin:** Paul Kossoff and Simon Kirk played on many sessions with Ken Hensley in the early 70's, did you ever work on any recordings with Ken?

**Rabbit:** No, I didn't work on any of these recordings.

**Kevin:** Did you know David Byron or any of the guys in Heep during the early years.

**Rabbit:** Not really well but I knew Ken Hensley a bit because when I was in Free and I used to go and visit Paul Kossoff, most of the times I went to his place Ken Hensley was hanging around with him, I gathered they were pretty good friends but I only knew Ken by meeting him at Paul's place.

**Kevin:** How did you come to be working with David Byron?

**Rabbit:** I have a very good friend who I've known since 1971 called Richard Digby Smith, he's the engineer who did all the early "Free" things and many and various bands and albums at "Island Records" in those days. Digby was approached by Richard Banner from "Blue Mountain Music" in Feb 1984 and asked if he would help David Byron out in the studio as he was trying to re launch his career. So Richard Banner got Digby to organise everything, ie. sort the musicians out and everything, and so Digby gave me a call and asked me to come and do the keyboards as we were really good friends and still are. That's how I came to work on these sessions, in fact Digby was the producer, he did everything for the work, he hired everybody, produced it, engineered it, mixed it, everything.

**Kevin:** Who wrote the material you recorded with David?

**Rabbit:** The first track - "That was only yesterday" was an old "Spooky Tooth" song, the second song - "Waiting for the sun" is an old Jim Morrison/Doors song and the third song - "Pride and joy" is an old soul song from maybe the 50's or 60's, an American black band did it originally so they were all written by other people and we only did the three songs.

**Kevin:** Over what period of time and where was the material recorded?

**Rabbit:** It took us about a week to do everything, two or three days to record the music and a couple of days to mix and things like that, we did it in a studio in Willesden, London, it used to be called "Morgan Studios" but it's had several names since so I don't know what it was called when we did the tracks.

**Kevin:** Who else played on these sessions?

**Rabbit:** I did the keyboards - piano, Hammond and synthesiser, Richard Digby Smith engineered and produced it, Tim Renwick played guitar, he was in a band called "The Sutherland Brothers" and he's in "Pink Floyd" now as back up guitarist to Dave Gilmour

but he's done many other things as well. The bass player was the sadly missed Alan Spinner from "The Grease Band", Joe Cocker's old band, the drummer was a guy named Neil Conte, he's the guy who was playing on the David Bowie/Mick Jagger version of "Dancing in the street". The background singers were a group of sisters called "The Chandler Sisters". We did three tracks in Feb 1984, "That was only yesterday" is 5.11 mins, "Waiting for the sun" is 3.41 mins and "Pride and joy" is 3.55 mins.

**Kevin:** Was there ever any intention to release the material? If so when and what label? Was album artwork or any other aspects discussed at the time?

**Rabbit:** Yes, it was intended to release the stuff but these sessions were intended to try and help David get back into his career so there was no record deal before we recorded them. We did the recordings to try to get him a record deal from who ever he could shop it around to but sadly he died before he had a chance to do anything. So there was an intent to release them but there wasn't a record company at that moment who was prepared to take it on and because of that there was no artwork or any other aspects such as touring or a band. They were just 3 songs to try to get him on his feet again.

**Kevin:** Were the tracks fully finished and mixed?

**Rabbit:** Yes.

**Kevin:** Can you describe the tracks?

**Rabbit:** Let's see, "That was only yesterday" has sort of like a pop/rock feel, an early to mid 70's up tempo, chunky come heavy song. "Waiting for the sun" had a sort of a little hypnotic groove going through it, it was a sort of light funky groove, we had crickets in the back ground and it sort of moved along at a steady keel and I really liked that one actually. "Pride and joy" was pretty much based on the original black soul group that I mentioned, I did a lot of boogie woogie piano - Jerry Lee Lewis things, a really nice rock and roll piano on it.

**Kevin:** Were you and David happy with the recordings?

**Rabbit:** Absolutely!

**Kevin:** Would you still like to see them released?

**Rabbit:** Definitely!

**Kevin:** Who's name would they be released under?

**Rabbit:** David Byron I would imagine.

**Kevin:** How was David's health during the sessions both physically and mentally?

**Rabbit:** He was in fine shape, I didn't notice any thing at all about any problems with his health because I didn't know him until I met him at the sessions, I wasn't aware of any problems at all, he seemed fine and quite happy. I understand that his health went rapidly down hill after "The Byron Band" in 1980 and he put on a good deal of weight but he looked thin when I saw him, he looked fine.

**Kevin:** Did he seem like a happy man?

**Rabbit:** Yes!

**Kevin:** Was he bitter about his fate in the music business without Uriah Heep?

**Rabbit:** That's a question that only he could answer, it's a bit like saying was Kossoff

happy when "Free" split up, he was absolutely miserable but I have no idea how it effected David Byron, I didn't know him well enough to know, but I knew Kossoff very well and I knew that the break up of "Free" was his downfall basically.

**Kevin:** Did you see him or keep in contact with him after the sessions prior to his death?

**Rabbit:** No, after the sessions I didn't see him or hear from him again.

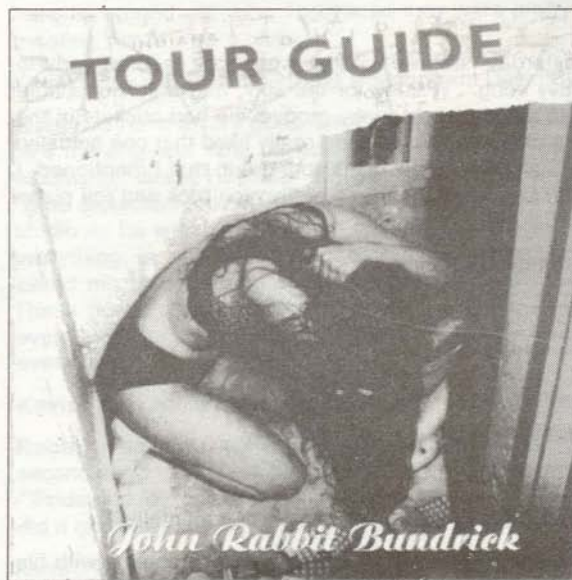
**Kevin:** Were you friends?

**Rabbit:** Musicians are always friendly with each other but as I said I didn't see him again after that, but when we were working we were very friendly, no problems, we would have been friends I'm sure.

**Kevin:** Do you know if David did any other recording prior to his death.

**Rabbit:** I do know that he didn't do anything, these 3 tracks are the last thing he did before he died, so basically I'm playing on David Byron's last recordings.

Interview by Kevin Julie.



Many thanks to Kevin for doing all the hard work and Rabbit for taking the time to share with us his memories of David Byron's last sessions. Rabbit has a new album out at the moment on Red Steel (RMC CD 0204) called "Tour Guide" which is well worth checking out, it features original "Back Street Crawler" members Geoff Whitehorn on guitar and Terry Wilson Slesser on vocals. For anybody interested in "Free" the address of "The Free Appreciation Society" is printed on the back page.

## CLASSIC CONCERT

### **CAM B MOCKBE - LIVE IN MOSCOW 1987**

Nine years have now passed since Uriah Heep became the first western band ever to perform in Moscow opening a new era in the history of rock. Why was it so important for them to play and make their comeback live album there?

Since the early 70's Uriah Heep were among the most prominent Western bands in Russia. To conquer this immense country without a single live show, or official album release, there was something very significant about such a success. If you find your name on the Billboard charts you know you've done it, but to make it beyond the Iron Curtain was something else, rock music was silenced here, if not slandered by the media and ignored by the state owned international concert organisation and record company. Original records demanded extortionate black market prices and the Iron Curtain proved to be strong enough even for some quite famous bands. The only way to win the Russian hearts was to simply make great music, all the rest - image, promotion - couldn't help. The first sign of Heep's official recognition dates back to 1976 when a short article and a photo of the Wetton line up appeared in the youth magazine "Rovesnik", then one of the few periodicals to deliver some positive information on Western rock. However the slander continued, many Moscow fans will remember a pasquinade entitled "Portrait in Cobwebs" in 1979 containing out worn accusations of plagiarism, eclectism, satanism etc borrowed from various "Rolling Stone" pieces. It's still in my collection today as a monument of the past anti rock campaigns, but nobody could keep a good band down. At almost the same time "Innocent Victim" became the first Heep release on the official Russian/Soviet label, "Melodiya". The album was untitled and had a sleeve containing a photo of the band with the Golden Lion award. It was sold out immediately and re-issued with a dull sleeve with no photo. Such sleeves were not unusual but it was rumoured that the record company had been forced to drop the photo by the Ministry of Culture because of the bands long hair.

We had to wait until 1987 for the first live performance, if wait is the right word, it all seemed to be castles in the air. Then, one November evening, looking through a newspaper, I came across the head line: "A famous British band comes to Moscow in December". There was a small photo with the logo "UH" in it's corner. I thought UH? it could be! no, impossible! but I soon recognised Mick, Lee and Trevor. The article was presenting the new line up and giving details of the forth coming event. The first epoch-making gig was to take place on 7th December. I was so excited that I didn't even worry too much about the tickets, I knew I would get them by all means.

At last the long awaited evening came and I took my seat at the Olimpijskij Stadium. It was in one of the central sectors, so my position was not bad, besides I was equipped with strong binoculars. Looking at the empty stage I still couldn't believe it was all real! There was nearly half an hour delay because of some technical problems but after all those years we had waited for Heep it was a mere nothing. A Leningrad band, "Zemlyane", opened the gig, but the audience wasn't very enthusiastic, everybody was too impatient. Heep caused a storm! The crowd was terrific, from the first note and throughout the whole set the band received fantastic support. They didn't have to be asked to join in, many fans knew by heart all the classic tracks (do you know that a lot of young people in Russia study English specially to be able to understand rock lyrics!). For the first time the Moscow public could see true superstars in action, there was perfect harmony within the band and each one of them was a personality with his own stage character. Mick was putting tremendous energy into his solos but his manner of playing was free and easy, like his famous smile! Trevor,

on the contrary was very serious, even playing with his eyes closed. He seemed to be all concentration of power. Lee, the bear, was feeling quite at home in Russia (naturally), delivering thunderous and at the same time perfect drumming. Is that Ken on the keyboards?, my neighbour asked me at the beginning of the set. I'm sure Phil didn't disappoint him, proving to be a great performer - the best evidence being his solo on "Mr Majestic" a new classic. But I think it was Bernie who had to stand the most severe test that evening. David Byron was still great in Russia, and many people had prejudices against the latest Heep singers. But it soon became clear that Bernie was the right guy for the band - apart from his brilliant voice he had the charisma of a true Heep front man.

A few words must be said about some unpleasant things, like a nearly 50 metre wide security zone with massive metal barriers between the stage and the front rows, hundreds of policemen hunting for everybody who just couldn't sit quiet, not to mention all those candles or lighters in their hands. I later found a newspaper article entitled "A concert at attention". Of course it was the first experience of such concerts in the Soviet Union and a good lesson for the future tour organizers.

The next evening I went to see the second show. It was my birthday and I had a great party with Heep. Unfortunately time flew by too fast, and what a pity that I didn't know where to go to meet the band after the show. I'm immensely proud that Uriah Heep were the first to come to Russia, that fans world wide now link my city with their discography and I would like to thank both present and past Heep members for the music which inspired me and helped me when in trouble.

Alexander Bukharin.

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## **FIRST TOUCH - HOW I BECAME A HEEP FAN**

I'd only heard of Heep via an interview in the late 70's on Picadilly radio's rock show and my old geology teacher Dave Mack - I wonder if he's a member? (Ed. yes he is). The "Abominog" LP cover had caught my eye and I'd heard "On the rebound". That year I got my ticket for "Status Quo" at Donnington and Heep were on the bill. As I remember it Bob Daisley was in the line up, I looked forward to their set and I enjoyed it, I didn't know anything they played but it was good. Soon after an ad appeared in "Sounds" with a dial a preview number, I did and I heard "The other side of midnight". Now I know many people loath this number but I love it. I bought the album and the "Stay on top" single but at the time I didn't like the four Heep classics that came bundled with it. Byron's voice did not set me alight and so I stuck with Heep until Goalby left. This year however, stuck for something to buy, I saw the 20 years three CD box set and couldn't believe what I had missed with the quality of Byron's delivery. Great stuff. Since then caught up and do favour the Byron era, however, the initial period that I was involved with - Pete Goalby- does stand up well.

David Corbett.



## MEMBERS' LETTERS

If you have any questions you need answers to, any comments or opinions about the band, the magazine or the service of the UHAS, we want to hear them. If you want a personal reply please include a SAE (UK members) or an International Reply Coupon available from any post office (overseas Members). Hope we hear from you soon.

**Dear UHAS.** Thanks for issue 21 of my favourite mag. I'd like to express some of my feelings about it. It's always very interesting to read the different letters and reviews and it's funny how much our opinions differ even though we're all Uriah Heep fans. For example that someone finds "Live in '79" better than anything by the current line up (which I find excellent), whilst that is the only Heep album I never listen to; and that they miss the second guitar as played by Ken, whereas I didn't like the sound of it at all and preferred for him to stick to the organ or the piano and leave the guitar to Mick. That just goes to show there are different aspects of Heep to be appreciated and different ways of listening to it. About the new album releases, I haven't got much to add to the positive reviews of "Spellbinder", except that it's really just an average concert from two years ago. If you're like many of us, including me who think it's terrific, that's simply because that's the way Uriah Heep are. If you don't happen to be one of us fortunate ones who have had the chance to see the band during the past few years, "Spellbinder" is a good reminder of how Uriah Heep sound on stage. And for all of us it's a good way to fill in the gap until you hear them live again. The Box Set is a real gem to have. All these years I've been hoping to get the chance to hear things like the Spice single and any unreleased material of Heep, and here we have quite a lot of it. Like Kevin Julie I also wonder if this is really the kind of album new fans would buy as an introduction to Uriah Heep and if it's really been meant to be such, if it's only a limited edition and not so easily available everywhere. If, on the other hand, it's more of a collector's item for existing fans, it could have included even more unreleased material. However, it does work as an introduction to Heep. I've lent it to a few friends who don't know anything about Heep and it seems to arouse a lot of interest and appreciation. Only, I'm not so sure those people would actually buy it. The cover is very nice and informative indeed, but maybe it's not quite necessary to have the track listing in three different places. The middle page, for example, could have included something else, since the track listing can already be found on the back cover in brief plus on the blue pages in detail. Also, if you do make such a great package for an important album cover, why not take a little more trouble and have it proofread before the publication? Honestly, I've never seen so many mistakes on any other album cover. About the unreleased material, here too it's funny to see how much opinions of fans differ from each other. To me the best numbers are all the old ones (Spice and the Byron era) plus "Valley of Kings" and "She Still Calls His Name". The Lawton era I've always found quite controversial but here too we have some great and heavy sounds and riffs and then suddenly a silly bubble gum chorus of "Let it Ride" which would better suit a band like "Mud" or "Smokie". My favourite previously unreleased number "Valley of Kings", I must say, is actually a disappointment to me. I was fortunate enough to hear it at the pre "Abominog" rehearsals, where it was the absolute topper, a very dynamic song with a lot of variation in volume starting softly and mysteriously with the bass drum only and exploding in wonderfully superfluous guitar solos between the short vocal bits and then changing over again to a different, softer intermediate section (which here ends the piece) before going back to the original couplet & guitar solos. It's obvious that what we hear on the CD is not a finished product, but unfortunately what the band had done to it at the recording studios was to overproduce it in the 80's fashion and ruin the original Heep sound plus to mix the vocals to the front and leave out the guitar. Maybe Mac Steagall was right in writing in issue 21 that Heep should write new lyrics to it and include it on their next album. I agree with Kevin

Julie that there must be lots of other great unreleased material which could have been included in the box set as well, such as some pieces from the Greg Dechert album. I've heard four songs of that line up, including the single version of "Think it Over", which I prefer to the "Abominog" one, and another superb song called "Don't Wait Forever", which are well worth publishing. Talking of Greg Dechert, it was extremely interesting to read about a member of Heep we know so little about and his views of the period of Heep that we also know so little about. I was very surprised to hear about Heep having gone through some musical changes that Mick disapproved of. Perhaps we can get some more information of it, e.g. from Mick's point of view? The material I've heard of the Greg Dechert line-up is really very strong and Heepy, and I cannot imagine anyone in the band or outside it not wanting it to be released. Reading William Kreisler's letter I feel sorry for him that you answered his question about the death of David Byron so briefly. I can imagine it's been bugging him if he doesn't know anything about the circumstances at all. You could have clarified the matter a little by telling him for example that David was asked to rejoin Uriah Heep in 1981, but he had his own band called "The Byron Band" at the time, of which he had lots of great expectations, so he refused. Apart from a few small gigs in the UK, one album and two single releases (correct me if I'm wrong) "The Byron Band" didn't really get anywhere. Of course I don't know the exact circumstances or his personal problems either, but I can imagine that he must have been very unhappy and disappointed and sought the answer to his problems in the bottle, which, as we know, didn't help him at all. Thanks for the interesting "classic concert", Alan. Maybe I'll send in mine later, or my "first touch". **Elina Aaltonen, Holland.**

*UHAS reply:- It is strange how opinions differ, although I also like the single release of "Think it over" recorded by the Sloman/Dechert line up, I do find it hard to get excited about the rest of the material recorded but never released, with a couple of exceptions. David Byron's death is a delicate subject to deal with and I would prefer to dwell on his life and the great musical legacy he left behind than go in to the ins and outs of his demise, however, I do recognise that you, and William may have been disappointed with my answer in the last issue. David suffered from epilepsy, many of you will have read in the music press at the time how he passed out on stage at the Marquee during a Byron Band gig, some made out that it was due to the effects of drink but the truth is that it was his epilepsy, of course it's widely believed that the epilepsy was a result of the life style David lead but to the best of my knowledge David met his death during the convulsions of an epileptic fit whilst he was alone at home. This is at least my understanding of it in general terms.*

**Dear UHAS.** In issue 21 you ran an article on a bootleg CD of Heep. I know you don't like promoting bootlegs but I wondered if you could tell me of any vinyl bootlegs that have ever come out. I'm also still having problems finding a few Hensley and Byron Band singles, can you help? **Paul Darlington, England.**

*UHAS reply:- We've been asked the vinyl bootleg question before and we still know of no Heep vinyl bootlegs, although I'm sure there must be some. If you know different please send us details. If you're looking for singles etc you could do a lot worse than placing an ad on our back page, it's free of charge to any member who's interested.*

**Dear UHAS.** I feel that Heep are coming under a lot of criticism from some members. The band have to progress, it's the 90's after all and Bernie Shaw is not David Byron, and Phil Lanzon is not Ken Hensley, so why criticise them? They are great musicians in their own identity. **Ian MacLaren, England.**

*UHAS reply:- Well said, Uriah Heep is the 5 individuals who make up the band today and although I was originally a fan of the classic Heep, just like many of you were, I am 100%*

*satisfied with the Heep of the 90's. We can't go back in time, the only way is forward and I feel that this line up are moving forward in a style that they can rightly be proud of and we can thoroughly enjoy and relate to.*

**Dear UHAS.** If, in a quiet moment, you've ever asked yourself just what it is that attracted you to Heep's music in the first place, then just stick on "Spellbinder" and all your questions will be answered. If you haven't brought this album yet on a matter of principal, believe me, the only person missing out is you. It's simply magnificent, without a doubt Heep's best live recording to date. The standard of musicianship is awesome and for the first time, ever in my opinion, the quality of the recording actually matches the playing. It sounds so dynamic and so full of life it eclipses all that has gone before it. Okay, so I may be biased, but hells bells, on this sort of form there aren't many bands on the planet who can even match Uriah Heep let alone better them. As you said in issue 20, it would have been a crime not to have released such a quality product as this. If I had to pick some highlights I would probably go for "Devil's daughter", "Rainbow demon" and "Circle of hands" as this is the first time I've heard these tracks played by this line up. Great stuff. I would also like to mention the final sequence of "Gypsy" - the way the keyboards seem to hang in the air while Mick's guitar snaps and snarls is very atmospheric and it still makes the hair on the back of my neck stand up every time I hear it. Although it's not often I disagree with Alan's comments - on the question of "Sail the river" I feel I must. In my opinion this track should have been included on the "Sea Of Light" album. It's a superb piece of music and I would have chosen it way ahead of "Fear of falling" without any hesitation. I have written in the past about Heep producing tracks of greater length so that the music can evolve and I think this proves my point. This was a bonus track in more ways than one and just goes to show the sort of quality that Uriah Heep are producing at the moment if this is considered not good enough to put on an album. And finally, I see that "Pilgrim" made it's obligatory appearance in another best/favourite survey and as it's obviously so well regarded by many Heep fans, would the band consider including it in any future live set? **Barry MacDonald, England.**

**UHAS reply:-** *I think there is a very valuable point to come out of this letter, it's one that I've missed out on and that is that the UK Heep fans (apart from those who have been lucky enough to travel aboard to gigs) have never before heard this line up playing such tracks as "Rainbow demon", "Circle of hands" and "Devil's daughter". Sure they get talked about all the time in the live reports but they've only been in the set since the band last played the UK. I really hope that the band will take this point into consideration when they do next play the UK and include these tracks in the set at the expense of some of the other old numbers that we've all heard on many a tour. Do the rest of the UK fans agree? "Pilgrim"? That would be something but to my memory it wasn't even in the "Sweet Freedom" live set. You'll read in this issue how the band have introduced more "Sea Of Light" tracks into their set for the European tour, to me this must take priority and the material of this line up should make up more than half the set, I would still love to see "Cry freedom" and "More fool you" return to the set and the inclusion of "Spirit of freedom".*

**Dear UHAS.** During the Lawton era the name "Williams" appears in some writing credits on "Firefly" and "Innocent Victim" and resurfaces again on Ken's "Free Spirit" LP. Could you shed some light on who this is? **Joe Kelly. USA.**

**UHAS reply:-** *Jack Williams was a friend of Ken Hensley's and who wrote and co wrote with Ken. This relationship continued into the 80's as you'll read in Kevin Julie's review of the "Blackfoot" bootleg in this issue. What he's doing today, we're not sure but we'll try to remember to ask Ken next time we talk to him.*

**Dear UHAS.** It's ok to have new articles in the magazine like "First Touch" and "Classic

Concert", but why stop writing the regular features like "Your Turn To Remember" and "Discography"? The last "discography" feature was "Abominog". I think we should carry through these articles before starting new ones. **Terje Larsen, Norway.**

***UHAS reply:-** You'll be glad to notice that both features you mention are included in this issue together with the two new ones. They were never dropped permanently as we said at the time, it was just that other, more important things were included. Please keep the letters coming in.*

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## CD REVIEW

### **BLACKFOOT - GIMME, GIMME, GIMME. (4CD SET - JAPAN)**

This 4 CD bootleg package from Japan will interest Heep fans as it includes a few rare recordings featuring Ken Hensley. As you may know Ken was in "Blackfoot" from 1983 to early 85 quitting after he learned of David Byron's death. Among the Hensley era Blackfoot recordings in this set are the "King Biscuit Flower Hour" show from Los Angeles in 1983. Of the 5 tracks featured here are the "Free" classic "Wishing well" (which Blackfoot recorded on their 1979 album "Strikes"), the Blackfoot signature tune "Highway song" and a rockin' version os "Easy Livin". Next up is a 1984 "Westwood One" radio recording from "Harpo's Bar" in Detroit, Michigan, in December of that year, (not too long before Ken left the band. Sadly, only half of the "Harpo's" set is included here, (I have a tape of the show which features an excellent version of "Easy livin", better than the LA 1983 version, and with a nice intro for Ken from singer Richey Medlocke) Among the 6 tracks here though are Ken's "Send me an angel" (written with Jack Williams from the "Sidgo" LP) plus 3 tracks from the "Vertical Smiles" LP from 1984 which Ken also played on. The last track that is of significance to Heep/Hensley fans is "Living in the city", it was a none LP B side from the "Vertical Smiles" sessions and is perhaps heavier and better than anything included on the album. Ken even sings a few lines too!



The recordings are taken from high quality tapes and in some cases good vinyl. If you're a Blackfoot fan looking for more, or a Hensley fan who must have everything, you may want to look for this. For a bootleg the sound quality is excellent, and you may have a hard time tracking all these recordings down through tape trading with in such good shape. It could however be a pricy investment selling for about 6500 Japanese Yen plus postage.

Kevin Julie.

## THE LATE 70'S PROMOTIONAL INTERVIEWS

### **INNOCENT VICTIM - MICK BOX AND KEN HENSLEY INTERVIEWED BY BOB KILBY, BBC RADIO 1, 26/11/77.**

**Bob:** Let's talk about the new album first gentlemen because it really sounds like a different band from the Uriah Heep that we've been used to, it's still humble but a lot less heavy.

**Ken:** Yes, well, for a long time we've tried to sound like a different band because for too long we went round in circles and the time was definitely right for us to make some changes in our approach to our music. Although I should stress that that's not deliberate, we didn't sit down and say - "right, now we're going to be really different" - this is just the culmination of the changes in personnel and the desire in the band to really make some progress instead of standing still.

**Bob:** John Lawton and Trevor Bolder are the new members of the band and obviously they'll have given the band a new musical direction, but you could have almost given the band a new name couldn't you?

**Ken:** Well a lot of people have said that and perhaps the most significant reaction to the new album and single has been that a lot of people haven't really believed it was Uriah Heep at all which says something in it's self. Yeah, I suppose at the point when we made the changes it was such a change that we could really have started again. We treated it as a new beginning so we could have given it a new name. None of us particularly wanted to let Uriah Heep go the way it was going.

**Bob:** You wrote "Free me", the new single Ken and it's blaring out of most people's radios at the moment. Did you write that song with an eye on the top 30 because it's very commercial?

**Ken:** Funny enough I didn't, I wrote it quite a while ago and it was one of those songs that was just left in the book. Two years ago it was one of those songs that I could never have suggested to the band because we had the kind of attitude within the band that would never have even entertained a song like that, it was so uncharacteristic. But now the atmosphere in the band is so completely different that I can take virtually anything to them.

**Mick:** It's a question of attitude, the band's a lot more open to anything, we played a lot on safe ground for a few years and now we're not prepared to do that. Anything we play is Uriah Heep regardless.

**Ken:** There was definitely a need for our approach to be more commercial, especially with what's happening in the music business, our kind of rock and roll was leading the field for such a long time that it's easy to fall into the trap and think that it would go on like that. But there's so many other things, we've got to be competitive and we've got to be contemporary so I think it's a good thing although it wasn't deliberate.

**Bob:** What you're saying really is that heavy metal music seems to be dying a bit of a death, why do you think that is?

**Mick:** I wouldn't say it's dying a death at all.

**Bob:** It's not reflected very strongly in the charts.

**Mick:** Well it's how you define heavy metal music, something like "Status Quo" still heavy

metal boogie type stuff.

**Bob:** Even their music is a bit more mellow than it was.

**Ken:** I think that probably the word is maturity, we're still a rock and roll band and we always will be for as long as we carry on. What we're doing is we're adopting a more mature approach to it, we're not just crash, band wallop for the sake of it. I think the reason that heavy has taken a back seat of late is because everybody had stopped thinking about what they were doing. I know we did it for two years, we went on thinking that everything we were doing was right, and it wasn't, while we were doing that there were all these other developments taking place and we suddenly found ourselves a bit old fashioned, I think that's really what the key to the whole thing was, a change in attitude rather than style, our style is still basically the same, it's just our attitude has changed.

**Bob:** There have been some upheavals in the years you've been together and probably the most notable of those was the loss of your lead singer David Byron, was there much bitterness about that?

**Mick:** Not really, no. I mean there was and there wasn't, he wasn't right for the band.

**Ken:** It was a difficult decision to make because it's hard to change anybody in a band but if you change the lead singer it's the toughest change to make, of course at the same time John Wetton decided to go on to something else. It was a calculated change, we knew it was a risk but none of us who decided it was the right thing to do were prepared to watch Uriah Heep die from internal apathy, it's one thing if a band dies because the audience doesn't like them any more but it's a tragedy if a band falls apart because of internal problems, that's really stupid. Alright, we may have lost a lot of ground up until the time we changed David but we still had a lot of fans everywhere who wanted to see us so it was important for us to do the right thing for the band.

**Mick:** It was really difficult because we couldn't find out how much effect losing David would have on the band because he's the front man. You don't know how much emphasis the audience put on David because he was the front man. By making that change it was a very big step but we just weren't prepared to let Uriah Heep die for the lack of taking the step.

**Ken:** We'd all put a lot of time and energy into it and it would have been a tragedy to let it go, but we haven't looked back since, everything we did was right.

**Bob:** I think that Heep made their name with heavy riffs though, particularly on the continent, do you still find that that's the sort of stuff that goes down well there, in Germany for instance?

**Mick:** It's changing slightly because we're changing too, all our old heavy riff numbers like "Gypsy" are still very big everywhere and are still a part of us, a part of Uriah Heep, they are like anthems, but things like "Free me" our latest single is very much part of Uriah Heep too and we're going to place as much emphasis on that as we do the old stuff, if not more.

**Bob:** Despite all the ups and downs over the years you still maintain a very loyal following, why do you think that is?

**Ken:** I think it's because our live shows have always been very different from our albums, there's always the contrast between the studio and stage. One that has all the atmosphere and the other that only has the atmosphere that you can create. Even in England where we've never really enjoyed the sort of record success that we'd like, we've always had a

large number of fans and a great following at our concerts simply because we put everything into our live shows. Weather people like our records or not, they can always treat our live shows as something completely different. I can only say that it must be because of the amount of energy and enthusiasm that goes into our show.

**Mick:** There's such a degree of honesty there that you can't ignore it, we go out and we really work. We don't just stand there looking at our boots and expect it all to be carried by 34 flashes and bangs going off behind you. We go out there and we put our heart and soul into what we're doing and I'm sure the audience these days see us enjoying ourselves and pick up on that.

**Bob:** The old fans are still with you but you could well find yourself with a new following with the new direction your taking..

**Ken:** I hope so.

**Bob:** Yes, I hope so too because the songs on the new album are more subtle, and a bit more structured, "The dance" for instance was one that caught my ear.

**Ken:** I think that's an important point because from where we stand we can see the change in audiences, we can see the generation change and one of the most important things for us to do now is make sure that our music stays contemporary and up to date simply because there's so much competition about, we've got to make sure our music fits in with the general atmosphere of the business at the moment. A it was, there was no chance, if we'd have kept going the way we were going we would have died a relatively dishonourable death. What we've done now is adjusted, and listened, and looked at what's going on, and thought about what we are doing, that's really all that we've done.

**Mick:** We are very confident with what we're doing now, we're very happy with the way we're going, the direction we're going, and when your projecting that sort of feeling it has to get across to everybody else. I feel sure that once we've done an American tour the record company and everybody else will fall in line, they'll see how serious we are and how much we've improved from where we had our lull.

**Ken:** I think the most important point about that is really that we are confident in what we're doing now where as not so very long ago we were doubtful, we weren't too sure about what we were doing, we have this kind of self confidence now which is helped a lot by the confidence amongst the record company and the people in the business, the fact that the single's being played, for the first time we've managed to get some degree of confidence being expressed by DJ's. This does a lot for our moral and this must come across in our overall performance. In America it's a completely different thing, we've got a lot of ground to catch up there, we lost a lot of ground in the States after being immensley popular there and it's more or less like starting from the beginning but I think we're all pretty confident that we can get it together over there.

**Mick:** Yeah, we've got sufficient confidence to overcome anything that comes along because the attitude within the band is one of sheer hard work and we're going to put in everything we can give.

**Bob:** You certainly sound very happy and confident, let's hope it all goes very well for you, thank you very much for talking to us gentlemen.

Next issue it's the "Fallen Angel" promotional interview from Piccadilly Radio. If you have any recordings of complete promotional interviews from any ear of the band, please send us a copy for inclusion in future issues. Thanks in advance.

YOUR TURN TO REMEMBER.  
THE MAGICIAN'S BIRTHDAY

44 SILHOUETTES MANE November 11, 1974

# URBIAK L'VEYEP



THE MAGICIAN'S  
BIRTHDAY

ILPS 9213

Produced by Gerry Bron



Manufactured and distributed by Island Records



Crew March '73

### Uriah Heep—The Magician's Birthday (Mercury)

(Rating: one ear)

Spooky Uriah Heep

has landed on Earth again, and this time they've turned from demons and wizards to magic. With hard-rocking songs about spiderwomen, blind eyes, weird echoes and magicians, Heep conjures up a wall of sound which boasts wild guitar, fractured moog and smashing drum work. As usual, the group's longer pieces are the most interesting, and the extraterrestrial story lines keep things floating well above the leaden atmosphere of mediocrity.

**URIAH HEEP:** "The Magician's Birthday" (Bronze). If Uriah Heep were ever to describe in traditional fashion the music they play, the instructions above each line of the score would be all fortes, crescendos, sforzandos, and fortissimos with hardly a piano or even mezzopiano in sight.

The libretto would abound with spider' women, visions, echoes in the dark, voices of the past, magic potions, trips to a cosmic playground, evil, nightmares, swords of fate, and magicians. Get the idea? A heavy band. . .

The Heep have evidently been working hard to shed

some weight, but nevertheless melody continues to take a back seat while front and center sit atop frogging the road. . .

The title track which occupies most of the second side, illustrates the combination of pseudo-mystical attitudes and heavy riffing that drives the black Uriah. . .

The second cut on side one, "Spider Woman" also displays a variety of influences (and a riff not unfamiliar to recent memory). "Sunrise" contains some fine wails. . .

Writing is mainly by Ken Hensley. — John Pidgeon.

## URIAH HEEP

NO MATTER HOW anyone may say, Uriah Heep obviously are not prepared to budget. They want to play their music loud and, come hell or unemployment review, they're going to keep it loud.

They are unquestionably the loudest band I've heard in a long, long time (and that includes the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards who paraded in Princess Street last week). And the Caley, Edinburgh, wasn't exactly the place to be last Sunday night if one's eardrums were a wee bit sensitive.

Still, the 900 other customers didn't quibble. This was Uriah's long-awaited Edinburgh debut and the fans had kept a welcome in the highlands. Or lowlands. Suit yourselves.

Organist/guitarist and writer-in-chief of the band, Ken Hensley, was by no means apologetic: "We play as we feel. If we thought our music was inappropriately loud we'd have the sense to do something about it. The PA we carry is really geared to the big concert halls of Europe and the States — we go to America on June 21 for five weeks — and tonight the Caley is a big concert hall."

Nonetheless, David Byron's vocals suffered. The lyrics were largely unintelligible before and after "July Morning", in which one could pick them up word for word.

This was a pensive Hensley song, capped with a marathon riff and with a strong Gary Thain bass-line, bringing the crowd to their feet. The tempo "Easy Living" was the first of the lifts from the band's new album.

Hensley switched from organ to guitar for the rock 'n' roll insert "Tears In My Eyes". This too brought a powerful reaction from the audience, that seemed largely oblivious to the decibels. If Uriah Heep proved anything here it was that on a clear night they can blast forever. — ANDY ROSS.

Page 38—MELODY MAKER, November 18, 1972.



## Heep good

**URIAH HEEP:** "The Magician's Birthday" (Bronze). From prophets without honour in their own land to profits without limits in their own hands, Uriah's progress through a four album career (this is their fifth) has been relentlessly self-confident and critically confounding. They've always sought to extend the boundaries of their musical achievement occasionally over-reaching themselves ("Salisbury").

"The Magician's Birthday" sees several new colours added to the Heep's palette. Previously most of their songs were built on thick swathes of notes. Now there's a more consistent lighter touch with some of their best instrumental work and on one particular song there's a vocal from David Byron which has greater control and emotion than he's seemed capable of, mainly because the material for a sympathetic performance hasn't been there.

"Santitas" and "Spider Woman" open side one and serve as resumes of the Heep's so far — and former being mainly something like "July Morning" — and despite a fine Gary Thain bass line and some stinky slide guitar, "Spider Woman", co-written by all of the band except for Ken Hensley, is "Easy Living" reworked.

Then we come to the comparatively new side. The progress "Blind Eye" is based around some heavily

## Uriah Heep

THREE THOUSAND fans arrived at London's Rainbow Theatre on Sunday to see Uriah Heep, which was almost a shame for Silverhead, the opening support act. However, despite antagonising an already unsympathetic crowd by being late, they managed to slowly swing the atmosphere into their favour with their direct brand of soul-based rock and roll.

With the audience warm, Uriah had little to do but whip them to near hysteria by the end of the evening, which they did comfortably. Until then we had heard their play, not particularly spectacularly, tracks from three of their albums, the new "The Magician's Birthday", "Demons and Wizards", and "Look At Yourself".

They chose a heavy opening with a piece from "Magician's Birthday" and also included "July Morning", "Gypsy" and "Tears In My Eyes". At times the choice was too heavy and it was a relief to hear the uptempo "Sweet Lorraine", "Look At Yourself", and "Love Machine".

"Gypsy" in fact was leavened by a devious solo from Ken Hensley, incorporating a three-part organ and mini moog solo which began with a moog interval sounding at times like the scraping of steel on porcelain. He continued the solo with a Bach-type organ recital and ended it with a "Caravan" trip on the moog, along with Lee Kerlake's drums.

Ken also took lead guitar on "Tears In My Eyes", but after promising starts, it tailed off into a dismal undirected mass of sound, plodding along without mystery, interest or precision. Nevertheless, Heep freaks were jiving in the shadows like plants from another galaxy and were no doubt encouraged by seeing bassist Gary Thain riding on singer David Byron's back as he knelt on the floor.

Earlier, "July Morning" from "Look At Yourself" had trodden much the same path though David Byron's humorous inflections saved it from disaster.

Yet, for Heep, it was a spectacularly successful evening. Perhaps it was because they were on home territory for the first time for some while. But whatever it was, when Byron asked everyone to stand up and clap along to their closer, "Look At Yourself", they did — and they didn't sit down again.

Mick Box and Hensley it's the first track that indicates that this album is not just more of the same old Uriah but another step in an underrated group's development. "Echoes In The Dark" like the preceding song was written by Hensley and features no right, no simple Moog parts from the composer and a vocal from Byron, the strength of which prepares what's to come next.

And what is to come is, quite simply, the best song that this band has recorded. "Rain" opens with piano and voices chords before David Byron's moose vocal replaces the ribs for the first verse. Vision returns at the start of the second verse and Byron's reading of the lyrics is as expressive as anything he's ever done. There's but one cringe moment — Ken's thumping of "usual" and "usual", almost the still-

mate own up! "Sweet Lorraine" opens side two. The verses are fairly static in rock passages until the Hensley solo, which is a high, whistly passage, with some like the Kerlake later contributes some punchy fills and some of Gary Thain's stinky busy bass lines. "Tales" reaffirms the general impressions of the album thus far. The gradual importance to come in the band's work, and increase in melodic interest in the songs. They've always had a greater flair for melody than, say, Sabbath. The weight of Mick Box's guitar is still nevertheless, evades and the "Tales" solo is something that I'd like to see. Byron's vocal confidence is absolute. The "usual" and "usual" like the last word of the penultimate verse

is something he'd not have done, I think, twelve months ago. And as to the piece du resistance, the title track. This is something Ken has spoken to me about at length during his conception. Basically, it is to tell the story of a song in at least equal proportion between music and lyrics. In the end the title track still relies, on the lyrics to a greater extent than I'd expected. Byron's vocal sets a great Warlocks, wizards, etc. together with a certain magician's birthday, there's a "Gypsy" (the "usual" day to You" and then in the next whereas the "usual" does his tricks and Mick Box does his. The "usual" and best solo on this disc so far. Lee Kerlake's drums there-and-everywhere drums support him while Hensley produces some

erie effects with his Moog. Back to narrative and his magician challenges his guests to better his skills but, of course, he comes out on top and musingly dead and he lives happily ever after. I'm sure Uriah Heep will do the same — G.R.

ORIGINS UNKNOWN UNLESS STATED



# HEEP BIG APPRECIATION

**URIAH HEEP OPENED** their British tour at the Rainbow on Sunday to scenes of, would you believe, Heepmania.

But first Silverhead started the evening with a driving set of real rock n' roll. Irradiated by beams of coloured light, Michael Des Barres displayed all the attributes of a future rock star: namely, confidence, an ability to move and a seductive, evil leer.

"Sold Me Down The River" chugged along nicely and the guitar of Rod Rook-Davies was mixed effectively from one side of the stage to the other. During "Underneath The Light", Silverhead's other guitarist, Steve Forrest, fell off the stage.

Bloody good job they filled in the orchestra pit after Frank Zappa's mishap.

"Will You Finance My Rock an' Roll Band" is a plea Silverhead don't need to make these days but, working on a pretty cold audience, it was this number which finally had everybody getting it on.

Negotiations between Uriah's Mick Box and myself to curtail their set after one song (so that I could catch the last train home) never came to fruition — with three thousand Heep fans out there rooting for them the band had to give a good show. This was definitely a case of playing to the converted. At up to £1.50 a ticket it needed to be.

"Sunrise" was met with a wave of applause before the first note had been played

and, like the bulk of Heep's set, was very very 'eavy.

"Sweet Lorraine" featured some haunted-house-type synthesiser from Ken Hensley and plenty of tight choreography between Mick Box on lead, Gary Thain on bass and vocalist David Byron in his silversuit.

"July Morning" was a mixture of music and showmanship; Mick Box displayed a Townshendesque respect for his guitar and a nerve like a brain surgeon. (You've got to have nerve to throw a good guitar fifteen feet into the air.)

Whether it was Mick striding across the stage or David kneeling down and singing a la Jolson, it was all designed to get the energy going. And it did. Heep were getting standing ovations long before the end of the show.

Over to David: "All having a good time?"

"Yeah!" shouted the £1.50s.

"Are you all having a good time UPSTAIRS?"

"Yeah!" shouted the £1.25s, the £1s and the 75pS. "Gypsy" was overpoweringly heavy — apart from the break, in which the spot fell on Ken Hensley playing an evil organ and synthesiser solo, looking not unlike the mad organist who comes up through the floor in horror films. Mick Box continued to throw his guitar around and kicked a milkstand over now and again just to keep the aggro flowing.

The essential element of Heep's music remains unchanged — from the first album to the fifth, from Fax Club to the Rainbow, Heep are HEAVY. Man. "Circle of Hands" saw Gary Thain riding David like a horse, Mick worshipping the drum kit and another ovation. Everyone stood up at David Byron's command and clapped along with "Look At Yourself" as the spotlights swirled around the auditorium.

An encore of "Love Machine" brought the audience surging onto the stage and many valiant attempts were made to slip through the line of bouncers. One girl dodged through and the whole band before leaping off the stage in triumph. Two girls got to kiss David Byron (sneaky — they rushed him from the side) and he also had the pleasure of being dragged into the front row by a mass of grabbing hands.

Uriah Heep have returned to England, very 'eavy indeed, but not so 'umble anymore.

**PAUL WEIR**

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