

Issue #1 - May, 1983

flypaper



The Newsletter of the Richard Thompson Fan Club.

HELLO

Hello to all on behalf of myself, Edward Haber, and Ilana Pelzig, and welcome to the first issue of FLYPAPER. We thank all of those who have subscribed from the start and appreciate your patience while we got this first issue together. The first one's always the toughest, but we wanted to make it the best possible first shot!

Just a quick word about us and what we are trying to do. The three of us have been fans of Richard for years - like most of you, we used to think we were the only ones who were "obsessed" with the genre. I was hooked from the first note of WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAYS and sitting in the 2nd row at the Fillmore East in 1970 when Fairport opened for Traffic. Happily, my fandom turned to friendship when I first met Richard in 1971 when he was on tour with Ian Matthews. Edward Haber may be familiar to some of you as a radio producer at WBAI, Pacifica radio in New York as well as an engineer at WNYC, New York public radio. Ilana Pelzig is an audio technician (working at WNYC as well) and a devoted fan who we are proud to announce is also an assistant engineer on HAND OF KINDNESS.

We hope to offer you all the current and interesting information we can on the music and news in the lives of Richard and all of the offshoot and related performers of the Fairport tree and modern folk-rock. We don't want to limit ourselves.

We covered this briefly in our flyer, and we welcome any requests or suggestions. Plans for the future included a four hour interview I did with Richard late last year; official FLYPAPER/fan club t-shirts; and hopefully a special fan club only cassette which will feature previously unreleased and rare tracks from the vaults of Richard's live and studio performances.

We've gotten many requests for tapes and all those hard to get LP's. Look for info on the records further in this issue - as far as tapes go, it's touch and go, as we don't know about the legalities yet. We are also interested in tapes - we suggest you send us lists of have/wants and that you be patient with us to put you all in touch with each other. So, thanks again and good reading.

F.K.

RICHARD THOMPSON TOURS

Richard Thompson will appear solo at the Winnipeg Folk Festival (Canada), July 8 and 9, (204) 453-2985 and at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival (Canada), July 15 and 16, (604) 879-2931. Dave Swarbrick and Simon Nicol will be at the Vancouver Folk Music Festival as well. Richard is expected to tour with a band in the U.S. in the fall, with dates to be announced in these pages in time enough for you to make your plans.

MAIL-ORDER

If you have difficulty finding HAND OF KINDNESS or SHOOT OUT THE LIGHTS in the stores, you can purchase the records directly from FLYPAPER. The price per LP is \$7.50 plus \$1.00 postage, with the check/money order made out to Frank Kornelussen. In addition, Woodworm Records has just released THEY ARE NOT ALONE, a 90 minute Fairport Convention cassette taken from the 1982 reunion. The band is tight throughout, with the Fairport Nine lineup featured. You can purchase this cassette directly from FLYPAPER - the price per cassette is \$10.00

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in this newsletter. It is intended primarily for those interested in a particular branch of British popular music, which has been called Folk, and has been called Rock, and inevitably the dreaded Folk-Rock, but really isn't defined easily by any of the above. This branch of music, which never achieved any real commercial success in its country of origin, is perhaps best recognized and defined by the names of the people who play or played it - Steeleye Span, Fairport Convention, the Albion Band, Sandy Denny, Nick Drake, John Martyn, Fiddler's Dram, Five Hand Reel - and a large etcetera! That this music was never more popular may be partially due to a lack of real production know-how on the part of the artists involved (and a lack of desire to be rich and famous - if that's even conceivable!), and perhaps due to minimal interest from the British public in its own musical traditions.

I grew up thinking traditional music was dreadful, mostly because the stuff I heard at school was so bad. As part of "Music" we were taught terrible Victorian arrangements of lousy, corny songs, devoid of life, and certainly devoid of any relevance to 20th century existence. Far more exciting was the stuff on the jukebox at the cafe on the corner, or even the jazz in my dad's record collection. The sectarianism of the folk scene, the lack of media coverage, the perpetuation of the "folk" image, and the importation of a more "alive" popular music, all contributed to the great decline in interest in the native music. This is still the case today! It's hard to convince people that something British doesn't have to be corny. But hope is always at hand! Bands like XTC and Any Trouble have strong indigenous influences, and Malcolm McLaren, the man behind the Sex Pistols and Adam and the Ants, has just discovered Ethnic music, and is in the process of turning it into hits!

Oops! Frank asked me to keep this introduction on the light side, and here I am spouting like a Musicologist. Briefly, I hope you'll find matters of interest in here, and I know that Frank, Ed, and Ilana are well qualified and extremely keen to do a good job, and serve you with the best information. This is all experimental stuff, and run for you, and any feedback you may have would be greatly useful. Once again, I hope this is what you're looking for, and it's nice to know that there's someone out there as crazy as oneself!

Best wishes,

Richard Thompson

HAND OF KINDNESS

We're happy to begin our first issue with an exclusive preview review of the new Richard Thompson LP HAND OF KINDNESS, Hannibal Records, HNBL-1313. The record should be available shortly after you read this. After repeated listenings to the record I felt I had the slightly biased opinion of great, so I asked Richard's help to give you an idea of what the songs are. Richard prefers to leave interpretations of his music on an open level, but here are a few random comments!

Track one, side one is titled "Tear Stained Letter". Richard: This one's "Scottish music meets the Coasters...or Ernie K. Doe." About the lyrical content, "it's pure fantasy - a flight of fancy...everything is based on real life, but it is a fantasy." Track two is "How I Wanted To", a song which you may have seen Richard perform on his fall '82 solo tour. Richard: "Well this is just one of those kind of love songs, you know? Every album has to have one." I am reliably informed that the saxophone arrangement was inspired by Van Morrison's "Into the Mystic". Track three is "Both Ends Burning". Richard: "It's the name of a real horse. It tied in with something I was thinking about at the time." This is a mid-paced rocker with some great instrumental work, which tells the story of a lame horse who is nursed back to become a winner. Particularly telling are the buoyant sax lines that bring a joyful drive to the music.

Track four is "Poisoned Heart and Twisted Memory". Richard: "This is the token social outcry number. The song tries not to be overly specific about its subject matter - anti-filling forms in, anti-triplicate, anti-quadruplicate. You can take it in two ways - as a personal relationship song or as a kind of social picture. I don't think it's healthy to get more specific than that...Keep it loose." Musically, the song is a sort of warped blues.

Side two: "The Wrong Heartbeat". This one's an old song which goes back as far as the scuttled Gerry Rafferty produced LP, the pre-SHOOT OUT THE LIGHTS time period. Richard: "It's an old song, the third time it's been recorded. I'm pretty happy with this one. It's a cross between Irish reggae and Japanese bluebeat." Track two is the title track, "Hand of Kindness". It's our opinion that this is one of Richard's finest ever. It's a song about betrayal, survival, and compassion, and maybe a lot of things in between. Richard: "It's about burning your bridges at both ends - the ultimate mixed metaphor."

Track three is "Devonside". Richard: "This is a song in the ballad tradition, a real folk-rock number." It features a fiddle solo by Aly Bain of the Boys of the Lough. It's the same old story of devotion and obsession, done up in full traditional regalia, also featuring a fine guitar solo by Richard. Track four (and last) is "Two Left Feet", another uptempo rocker with all the band members rushing the soloists to the end. It's basically a fun song with some mangled traditional style instrumental breaks as well as some great r&b sax solos. HAND OF KINDNESS was produced by Joe Boyd, and was recorded early in 1983 in London and Los Angeles, and mixed in New York. The album features Richard on guitar and vocals; Simon Nicol on guitar; Dave Pegg on bass; Dave Mattacks on drums; John Kirkpatrick on accordion and concertina; and Pete Zorn and Pete Thomas on saxophones. This will basically be the band which will tour.

F.K.

FAIRPORT UPDATES

Outside of the reunion this summer, the various ex-members of Fairport are actively involved in their own pursuits. Dave Pegg continues to run his Woodworm recording studio, as well as Woodworm Records (see elsewhere this issue for details). He has also recorded a solo album, tentatively titled ALL ME 'OME WERK, due to be released on Woodworm in July. He remains, of course, a member of Jethro Tull.

Dave Mattacks is now a permanent member of the Albion Band once again, along with Simon Nicol and Ashley Hutchings. The band is rounded out by lead singer Cathy Lesurf, Dave Whetstone on melodeon and concertina, and Jean-Pierre Rasse on bagpipes, crumhorn, and recorder. Their latest album is LIGHT SHINING, released on their own Albino Records. It features songs written by Ashley Hutchings and Dave Whetstone, with one song by Cathy Lesurf. The vision of Ashley Hutchings, songwriter, may come as somewhat of a surprise - Hutchings has written an occasional song for Fairport Convention, Mr. Fox, and Steeleye Span, but all were recorded 12 years ago or more. Still, the new songs are all good, combining a contemporary pop sensibility with Hutchings' deep empathy for traditional English music. And the best songs are quite superb - "Wolfe", about General James Wolfe who died capturing Canada for the British in 1759 (sung from the point of view of his girlfriend left behind), and two contemporary songs that evoke a futile search for love - "Always Chasing Rainbows" and "Beware of Blue". The band itself is excellent, with Mattacks' personality dominating. LIGHT SHINING is available in North America from Alcazar Records (Box 429, Waterbury, Vermont 05676, U.S.A.), Rounder Records (One Camp Street, Cambridge, Mass. 02140, U.S.A.), and Down Home Music (10341 San Pablo Avenue, El Cerrito, California 94530, U.S.A.).

The Albion Dance Band (without Cathy Lesurf) has recorded an album due to be released in July. Tentatively titled SHUFFLE OFF, it is (according to Dave Mattacks) similar to MORRIS ON or THE COMPLETE DANCING MASTER, but contains mostly contemporary tunes written by Dave Whetstone, with one by Dave Mattacks. The Albion Band are looking to set up a small scale East Coast tour of the U.S. sometime in 1984. John Tams, a former member of the Albion Band and now with Home Service, did the incidental music for an adaptation of D.H. Lawrence's SONS AND LOVERS, currently being shown in the U.S. on P.B.S. TV stations as part of public television's "Masterpiece Theater" series.

Simon Nicol and Dave Swarbrick are also hoping to come to the U.S. in spring of 1984. This past fall they did a successful tour of the U.S. - their first time in the United States in many years. The tour included two nights at the Lone Star Cafe in New York city, with Dave Pegg (on tour with Jethro Tull) sitting in both nights. The first night also saw Richard Thompson sitting in for an hour electric set. Current New York City resident Willie Murray, who had played with Richard and Simon back in 1975 in Sour Grapes, completed the line-up on drums. Geoff Muldaur also joined the crew for a soulful rendition of Bobby Charles' "Tennessee Blues". Also performed that night was "The Keelmans Pertition/Shew Me the Way to Wallingford/Sword Dance" which can be found on Dave Swarbrick's new album FLITTIN' on Spindrift Records (available in North America via Rounder Records and Down Home Music). FLITTIN' is taken from the same sessions as SMIDDYBURN, with the entire Full House Fairport line-up, as well as Beryl Marriott, John McCormick, and Bruce Rowland.

While definitely a weaker selection of tracks than SMIDDYBURN, there are some standouts - "Nathaniel Gow's Lament on the Occasion of the Death of His Brother/Rory of the Hills" and a sublime mandolin/mandocello acoustic track "The Rakes of Solihad". The most exciting recorded outlet for Dave Swarbrick's fiddling remains the Swarbrick/Nicol LIVE AT THE WHITE BEAR disc on White Bear Records (available in North America from Alcazar Records). Woodworm Records also distributes a Swarbrick/Nicol cassette, IN THE CLUB (a studio tape, of course), though it has many of the same pieces as the live

FAIRPORT'S FOURTH REUNION

On August 12 and 13 of this year, the annual Fairport Convention Reunion will be held at Home Farm, Croppedy, near Banbury, Oxfordshire, England. The Friday night show will feature the Richard Thompson Band, with Pete Zorn, Pete Thomas, John Kirkpatrick, Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg, and Dave Mattacks. The Saturday show will feature the Albion Band and, of course, Fairport with Dave Swarbrick, Richard Thompson, Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg, Ashley Hutchings, Dave Mattacks, and Bruce Rowland. The evening will also feature Cathy Lesurf (of the Albion Band) singing selections from LIEGE & LIEF with the original lineup. For ticket information and travel tips for the weekend write to Woodworm Records, P.O. Box 37, Banbury, Oxon, England. Fans will be interested in a very nice package tour being offered by Festival Tours, 3101 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, California 90405, U.S.A., telephone (213) 828-8037. Departing from East and West Coasts, the price of \$1200 (approximate) includes airfare, all hotels and transportation, tickets to the reunion, the warmup gig by Fairport at the Half Moon, and 5 days at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland as well as tickets to THE TRANSPORTS at Queen Elizabeth Hall which features the Watsons, John Kirkpatrick, and Peter Bellamy. Write or call for information - the final payment due date is June 15. An organization called FRIENDS OF FAIRPORT has been set up to provide a service, through which supporters of Fairport Convention may contact each other for information on anything related to the group. For further information write to Martyn Kenney, 85 Woodland Way, Kingswood, Bristol, Avon, England.

SONGS AND SESSIONS

Several of Richard Thompson's songs have been recently covered by various people. Maggie Holland has recorded "The Great Valerio" on her solo album, STILL PAUSE on Rogue Records (2 Eastdale, East St., Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7TB, Great Britain). Happy Traum does a live version of "It's Just the Motion" on his cassette FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS on Vest Pocket/Homespun Tapes (Box 694, Woodstock, New York 12498, U.S.A.). Skyline, a New York City based band that includes banjo player Tony Trischka recently cut a somewhat uptempo version of "A Heart Needs a Home" for their soon to be released second album on Flying Fish Records.

During Richard Thompson's solo U.S. tour this past fall, he sat in on the sessions for Loudon Wainwright III's latest Rounder/Demon album, FAME AND WEALTH, contributing mandolin and searing electric guitar to "Reader and Advisor" (probably the best track on the record) as well as some acoustic guitar on "April Fools Day Morn". In March of this year Richard also contributed his electric guitar to a forthcoming album by David Thomas (formerly of Pere Ubu). The record is a followup to last year's THE SOUND OF THE SAND (Rough Trade Records) (on which Richard had guested as well on guitar and hammered dulcimer) and also features the brilliant woodwind player Lindsay Cooper. Interestingly enough, David Thomas, in a performance at Danceteria in New York in May of 1982, did a typically eccentric version of "The Old Changing Way" to Ralph Carney's plucking violin accompaniment. Ralph McTell's SLIDE AWAY THE SCREEN, produced by Dave Pegg and originally released in 1979, has been re-issued by Mays Records (available from Down Home Music) in a re-mixed version under the name LOVE GROWS. The new issue deletes two of the original songs and adds two new ones. Richard Thompson is on guitar on two of the re-issued songs (plus on one of the deleted songs), as well as on three tracks of Ralph McTell's 1982 album on Mays Records, WATER OF DREAMS. Richard's guitar is also on one track on Martin Carthy's latest Rounder/Topic album, OUT OF THE CUT, a record that also features John Kirkpatrick on accordion and concertina and Howard Evans on trumpet and flugelhorn. E.H.

LOOKING BACK

It was just over a year ago that the first ever U.S. tour of the Richard and Linda Thompson band was wrapping up its last shows on the West Coast. As it turned out, it was a swan song tour, but all those who saw them had to leave impressed. The band was a tight four piece, with Linda delivering some of her most intense live performances to date. It is also noteworthy that those U.S. dates featured the band doing songs rarely performed previously: two Fairport chestnuts, "I'll Keep It With Mine" and "Sloth" as well as the Everly Brothers' "The Price of Love" and Jerry Lee Lewis' "Great Balls of Fire". Another beauty which featured Linda's fine vocal interpretation was Sandy Denny's "I'm a Dreamer", also recorded for the Rafferty LP but never released. And performed as an encore was a rocking version of "Danny Boy" (yes, that one!). Richard also reached into his extensive song grab-bag on his solo tour - in January, 1982 doing "Meet on the Ledge" and the instrumental break from "Roll Over Vaughn Williams" at the Bottom Line in New York; and on the fall tour of that year doing "Never Again", "Rainbow Over the Hill", "The Old Changing Way", "The Great Valerio", "Strange Affair", "Nobody's Wedding", "When I Get to the Border", "Flowers of the Forest", and the old George Formby English music hall song "Why Don't Women Like Me?"

EVENING AT THE IMPROV

Some of you may be familiar with the late night show EVENING AT THE IMPROV. Watch your local stations for a repeat of the show which features Richard doing two songs, "The Backstreet Slide" and "It's Just the Motion". Host for the show was Tom Reid of WKRP IN CINCINNATI, which will help you know you have the right rerun should you tune in late.

CARTHAGE RECORDS

Carthage Records is a new label affiliated with Hannibal Records. Initially started with the idea of becoming a mail-order label for hard to find imports, Carthage has since developed into a re-issue label. Its first releases are the first two Warner Bros. albums by Kate and Anna McGarrigle. And they expect to re-issue the various Island/Chrysalis discs by Richard and Linda Thompson, with SUNNYVISTA due to be released by mid-June and POUR DOWN LIKE SILVER following a month or so later. Among the other records planned for re-issue by Carthage are FIRST LIGHT and HENRY THE HUMAN FLY. Special care has been taken for the Carthage discs to be released with particularly high quality pressings. For further information, you can write to Carthage Records, 611 Broadway, Suite 415, New York, New York 10012, U.S.A.

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