



HELP ON THE WAY

What is wrong with nostalgia? Why shouldn't we enjoy the past as long as we don't remain there on too permanent a basis? Deadheads with their ever burgeoning tape collections probably find themselves ensconced in the past more than most. How often have we warped our way back to the 60's and 70's, relived past shows, whether we were at them or not and indulged ourselves in the whole nostalgia trip. For the more committed Deadheads, probably every night!

Even the G.D. themselves are part of the nostalgia cult to some extent, but unlike some they have moved forcefully into the 80's and 90's, always progressing and changing but with an eye to the past. How could it be any other way? Furthermore, with the Millennium not too far away they will no doubt be there too, playing their own singular brand of music with more than a passing glance at years past but with all sights set on the 21st Century.

So what is it with Nostalgia that we constantly feel the need to refer back to it? As its positive aspect, it's a map reference point of preserving the past in the present and handing it on to the future; something the G.D. have been striving at for many years, and succeeding too.

Some of the few complaints we receive here at S.L. revolve around what some people perceive to be an obsession with the past glories of the G.D. rather than on an emphasis on the present.

That's certainly the way our American readers see us and judging from the few reviews we get in other GD publications so do other Dead 'zines,

but they have 80 shows a year to go to when we are lucky to have a dozen every decade or so. The situation here is that Deadheads do tend to rely on tapes far more than their American counterparts and plainly some of that time is spent listening to shows from the 60's and 70's. To that end it seems only fair that S.L. should devote some space to tape reviews from years gone by. Tapes from the late 60's and early 70's are still turning up from the vaults (see Black Peter this issue) and these will continue to be covered as they arrive. Nostalgia it maybe, but it has its place and like the G.D. we at S.L. will move into the future changing and progressing while still keeping an eye on the past.

Right now however, the present is uppermost in our minds. Recent conversation with Dennis McNally' the G.D.O's publicist tells us that the band were extremely pleased with the way Fall Tour had progressed and Phil and Mickey in particular were raving about Edie Brickell's appearance at MSG on September 20th especially during Space where Edie's jazzy non-verbal sound singing added yet another dimension to that portion of a show that to these ears at least is still one of the most intoxicating parts of the G.D.'s entire repertoire.

Despite what you may have read, Bob Weir's voice is as good as ever although the official line on the rumours of minor surgery is a terse "no comment". We think it safe to assume that Bobby will still be screaming out those tortured vocals for a long time to come yet!

Touring plans for 1994 are running very much along the same lines as this year apart from Summer Tour which may need some re-scheduling due to the Football World Cup taking over some of the primo venues. No Euro-dates again but we probably expected that anyway. The rumours of a J.G.B. tour are also unfounded so don't hold your breath on that one either.

The Dead's recording plans, re their next studio CD, have at last reached the discussion stage and it's possible that some progress on this will be real-

ised in 1994 but we cannot confirm that at time of writing. Bob Weir continues to work on the "Trios" project along with Rob Wasserman, Edie Brickell, Jerry Garcia, Cindy Wilson and Neil Young amongst others with a probable release date around January next year. By the time you read this III From The Vaults now re-titled "Dick's Picks" via Dick Latvala, the G.D.'s tape archivist, should have been released. Initially available only through GD Merchandising this latest recording spotlights the Tampa, Florida 18.12.73 show which if my memory serves me well features a well jammed out **WRS > Dark Star** amongst it's many highlights. The technical nuances are way above my head but word is that the mastering techniques follow a much simpler formula than previous Vaults recordings.

Many of you may have seen recent reports in the UK media of proposals to re-create Woodstock featuring many of the original performers. We might have expected the G.D. to appear but this seems unlikely as does an appearance on MTV's "Unplugged" though we understand that offers to appear on the latter come about once a week but so far the band have not shown any interest. Anyway, when was the last time the Dead played anything acoustic?

All of the above indicates that the GD star still shines as brightly as ever and that we can all look forward to another year of delights in the GD's own stately pleasure dome.

Thought you'd seen the last of R & M. Enterprises? Wrong again, and so were we! This issue we intended to bow out with dignity (is that possible for a Deadhead)?, say our farewells, maybe list out a few of S.L.'s achievements over the last four years or so and then fade gently into the background.

We would have outlined the continuing improvements we've all brought about in Europe's only G.D. 'zine. The increased Retail Sales, the ever growing subscription lists, the constant developments in print, layout, cover designs and general presentation, the enhanced tour and news coverage to



In Spiral Light # 29 our panel of experts looked at the G.D.'s latest additions to their repertoire, however one song was premiered too late for inclusion. PAUL MALLET, DAVE SMITH, TONY WILLIS, RICHARD LEE and ROB KEDWARD make amends.

EASY ANSWERS.

PAUL: This plods along nicely and reminds me of *Shakedown* in parts. I look forward to hearing the development of this one. They could expand the jamming to hit a second set slot or keep it straight as a first set number.

DAVE: While not an immediate brother to *Corina* this is still close enough to be a first cousin, especially in Weir's phrasing. I'd suggest that they have a large amount of work to do with this but the possibilities are there, but only just. The lyrics are nothing special ("Listen to the colours of your mind". Oh come on, Please) and the whole thing drags on far too long but then again it's early days for this so lets hope they continue to work on it. At least there are some nice guitar lines in the back ground.

TONY: Like *Wave To The Wind* you're not going to be able to forget the title of this song because it's repeated thirty or so times in the lyric. Who wrote these lyrics anyway "Shut your eyes and listen to the colours of your mind" Donovan perhaps? There is anger in these words and Bobby spits out the lyric with venom like some bible bashing Preacher and this is enhanced by the call and response construction of the song.

The song was premiered by the Dead at Giants Stadium in June and it emerges smoothly from *The Music Never Stopped* as if it has always been there. The drive of *Music* gives impetus to

the new song and it is played well, finally veering back into the closing riff of *Music*. Bobby gives an 'erm committed vocal and I like the Victim like chord progression through the chorus. An exciting debut. However the third performance at Louisville finds the song tucked in near the end of the first set and shorn of it's coating of *Music* it sounds, well frankly, dull!

I don't see this as a major addition to the repertoire but partnered with *Music* it seems to work well and in any case I'll take a new Weir song anytime.

RICHARD: To appear and exit into *The Music Never Stopped* as smoothly as it did the first play (5.6.93) must have been well planned. The whole band knows exactly where its going for a change.

In some quarters this is being hailed as a Weir - Barlow - Bralove - Neil Young composition. Sounds improbable, but who knows? The first time I heard it I thought it was a Vince song sung by Bobby! In fact, a great impression is not what it created. Some of the lyrics didn't sound like Weir-Barlow territory. Sounded even crass at points, dare I say it? "Shut your eyes and listen to the colours of your mind" indeed. Initially it reminded me of the type of thing one would expect from Def Leppard or Foreigner.

Further listens created more of an impact. There's definitely more going on that was initially apparent, musically speaking. This '92/93 batch of new songs seem to have had more work on them than has been the case usually. Weir, Phil & Vince all get some tasty playing in. Shades of →



EASY ANSWERS

Promises made in the dark
Dissolve by light of day, Easy Answers
Ain't no telling what will be
Always been that way, Easy Answers
Just one thing I know for sure
Someone got to pay, Easy Answers
Ain't no easy answers, is what I got to say,
Easy Answers

CHORUS

Easy Answers, you'll find them anywhere,
yeah
Ain't nobody cares
Say, come on now, lets go
Cause I don't wanna know
I don't wanna know, I don't wanna know.

Love's an easy word to say
Rolls right off the tongue, Easy Answers
Seems to crop up like a wheel
Every song that's sung, Easy Answers
Always sounds so easy
The way it rolls upon the ear, Easy
Answers
Ain't no easy answers, listen to me here,
Easy Answers.

CHORUS

Easy Answers, I don't care to hear
Easy Answers, Ain't no' nothin' there
Oh yeah,
Say, come on now, lets go
Cause I don't wanna know, I don't wanna
know

Shut your eyes and listen
To the colours of your mind, Easy Answers
Give yourself a breath of air
Let your soul unwind, Easy Answers
You don't have to say a word
If you got ? to say, Easy Answers
Cause no one ever said
There's gonna be an easy way, Easy
Answers

CHORUS

Easy Answers, find them anywhere
Easy Answer, Ain't nobody cares
Yeah, Easy Answers, take it nice and slow
Cause I don't wanna know
I don't wanna know, I don't wanna know.
(Verse one & repeat).

REDDY KILLOWATT SPEAKS!

An interview with Phil Lesh.

The following interview was first published in Comstock Lode #9 (Autumn 1981). Grateful Thanks are extended to John Platt the Editor and publisher who also conducted the interview. John is currently working on a photo-history of the Fillmore East which will include a section on the Dead.

There's a quote in the Harrison book that says "After the second Acid Test the Dead started playing dragon music, esoteric, asymmetrical music unable to be conceptualised except by a few" or words to that effect. However all the early Dead recordings from that period, good though they are, sound like slightly psychedelic R'n'B.

It's hard to differentiate because Hank was not at the Acid Tests. He wasn't welcome as far as I know. He had been our manager, for a short time, he got us one gig and then we were working with an Agent. After that we had our first major gig, a month long stand, 6 nights a week, 5 sets a night.

So this is all post Harrison having anything to do with the band, anything other than as a friend of mine. So anyway he wasn't at the Acid tests, the only reason I think he might say that, is because - well he and I took acid together and naturally assumed the rest. The way I remember the Acid Tests is that we played normally except we

were stoned. It was kind of easy, strangely enough, it may not seem so

The way the music developed from 1965 to 1968, lets say, it was like one long breath, long and slow. But I would say that your description of the slightly psychedelic R'n'B band was pretty correct up to the Anthem of the Sun period.

In fact that description sounds more like

Hank Harrison!

Well that too. But musically it sounds like the Anthem/Carousel Ballroom period.

That's right. That music lasted about two years from the end of 1967 to early 1970, whenever we went in and recorded Workingman's.

Do you remember the demos the Warlocks did for Tom Donahue?

What are the cuts, can you remember?

There's a thing called Can't Come Down.

God. That's a song that I can't

Pig Pen was always a soloist with his harp and voice and his personality, but he wasn't really much of an organ player.



Phil keeps an eye on things. Photographer Unknown

remember. I know that we wrote a song called Can't Come Down but I can't remember it all.

There's also Early Morning Rain with you singing.

Yes it is. I never did that much lead singing, cos I never felt comfortable with it, especially live. For some people it's easy, but for me to play the bass and sing - almost impossible.

It's curious that Jerry and Bob now play in the same place that we auditioned for the live gig with Donahue. It was Mother's then but it's now called The Stone. Its still a piece of shit place.

The other thing about the demos is that in some ways→



**Phil and Bob: Haight Street 1968. Phil: : "That was the highest day of my life"
Credit: J. Marshall.**

keyboards. Pig Pen was always a soloist with his harp and voice and his personality, but he wasn't really much of an organ player. So when we started getting into spaces that were more extended he would lay out which was for the best, I guess. On the other hand during the **Other One** he'd play little parts which was always helpful for the texture. But we always had that problem even up till '72 when Keith joined.

Tom Constanten is doing pretty well for himself. Pretty soon I expect to see his name on a movie score. He has a lot of contacts in Europe so it could come from there. He's gone back to performing his own work and lecturing. I met him when he was 17 years old, God, he was a weird guy.

That was my favourite period of the band.

Mine too. Although we've become quite proficient at pulling out imitations of that style. But as that time fades into antiquity there are nights

when I feel like a parody of myself. But that's got to be natural, because that is a very large part of music, to parody. I find that when we do the feedback stuff I have less and less to play. I have less and less ideas, not a lack of ideas per se, just that they don't seem to relate the same way that they did in the past. To me it's getting to be a mistake to do that every night. Back in 1968 we did it every night because that's what we did, by God. In those days we used to say that every place we played was church and that's what it was like. A pretty far out church but that's how we felt.

Back in the early days some nights were amazing and some were terrible but now we've reached a level of professionalism where we can almost always make it good for the audience but the chances of the amazing nights has been dramatically reduced. But we did learn how to play and we can now stumble through a whole 3 hours and 15 minutes and it will still get the crowd off.

To backtrack again, why didn't you use the complete version of **St. Stephen and The Eleven on Aoxo moxoa** (the original has bagpipes, telephones ringing etc. as well as **The Eleven** which wasn't used at all).

I forget, but I'd love to hear it.

OK. There is also another interesting track - the **Barbed Wire Whipping Party** (possibly the weirdest thing the band ever did).

God! As far as we knew there was never even a mix of that - so some slick sucker did make a mix of it. "Meat, meat give me my meat. Hump snippet, lump snippet."

What was it all about? Why did you do it?

Why not! Well Hunter has this lyric, well it wasn't a lyric it was just a rave which went something like "The Barbed Wire Whipping Party in the razor blade forest" that's the first line I think. "Last week I went to Mars and talked to God, and he said "Tell" em→