

Where but for Caravan Would I?



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PROFILE & INTERVIEW

GEOFFREY RICHARDSON

Although in some quarters regarded somewhat absurdly as the "new boy" in the band, Geoffrey Richardson has graced the stage with Caravan for over 30 years. In terms of the band Geoffrey has become an absolutely essential element, given his fantastic stage presence, multi-instrumental talents and excellent musicianship. With Caravan having celebrated their 37th anniversary it seems a fitting time to take stock of Geoffrey's contribution to the band and to music in general. I'm grateful for Ralph Cross for laying the foundations of this piece, and to Geoffrey for providing the vast amount of information.

Geoffrey was born in Hinckley, Leicestershire on 15 July 1950. Music ran in the family: his grandfather was a music teacher and pianist and his father was a semi-professional multi-instrumentalist, playing guitar, banjo and clarinet in the "Syncopated Players", with brother Reg on drums.

It was no great surprise therefore that Geoffrey took up violin at the age of 8, and moving to secondary modern school became leader of the orchestra. Moving to grammar school, Geoffrey suffered from a certain amount of bullying. But he had been learning to play the guitar and was asked to play at the local folk club in 1964 where he played Woody Guthrie numbers. Some of the school pupils saw him and overnight he was in. "I was like a butterfly coming out of a chrysalis, seen as groovy and cool".

Geoffrey was also gifted academically and for "A" level studied Maths, Physics and Chemistry. He then undertook a foundation course at Nuneaton School of Art, followed by the Manchester College of Art and Design. Around this time – 1967 – he was playing guitar around the folk clubs in the Midlands and Manchester performing Renbourne and Jansch numbers for around £12 per night. During 1969-72, Geoffrey attended Winchester School of Art and Design studying painting and printmaking where he attained a first class honours degree.

At Winchester, Geoffrey formed a band called "Red Acid". In 1970 the band travelled

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



FOREWORD



Well, by some remarkable feat we have managed to reach Edition 20 of the newsletter. The main credit for all this rests with

Ralph Cross, yes he of the website, who put together many of the editions and to Codge Barber and Chris Varela, great supporters of the band, for their design skills in putting the whole thing together.

It's been a bit of a year for the band, and I suppose the highlight was their well received performance at the Isle of Wight Festival — much thanks to John Giddings for booking the band. This has certainly helped to raise the band's profile.

As many of you will be aware, there has been a downside, in that a few gigs had to be cancelled due to Richard's illness. We all hope that Richard is able to resume his powerhouse duties in the not too distant future.

I would strongly recommend the new 2 DVD release of the band. It comprises the Bloomsbury anniversary concert with special guest Jimmy Hastings, interviews with band members and a promo video which appeared on the Whistle Test many moons ago.

This edition includes an interview with John Giddings (see above), a preview by Rob Adams of last year's Edinburgh gig, a message (and competition) from Japan by Dave Sinclair and an in-depth feature on Geoffrey.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition and I hope you enjoy the read.

Over to you.
Eric

GEOFFREY RICHARDSON continued

to Southampton to see Caravan play at the local university. In Southampton, Geoffrey bought a copy of "If I could". Unfortunately Geoffrey and friends went drinking, got pissed and missed the gig. However, the Caravan connection was well established and Red Acid started covering Caravan numbers (so Blind Dug had competitors).

Geoffrey also undertook various solo gigs, playing viola at art exhibitions, and this proved a lucrative source of income as he was sometimes paid in prints which became quite valuable. His destiny with Caravan was becoming closer and was cemented through a meeting with Steve Borrill, bass player in Spirogyra at Kent University. Geoffrey was invited to join the band who were about to embark on a British tour. During rehearsals the band broke up and Geoffrey was left high and dry.

By chance, Caravan were looking for replacements for Steve Miller and Richard Sinclair. Pye turned up at Steve Borrill's house and asked him to audition for the bass position. Geoffrey was also invited to attend. It transpired that Pye had already heard of Geoffrey and wanted to hear him play with Caravan. The band rehearsed without a keyboard player and Geoffrey was knocked out by the results and flattered to be signed for a two week stint for the sum of £13. Derek Austin and Stu Evans also joined and Caravan began rehearsals at Graveny Village Hall. Geoffrey's first gig was on September 21st 1972 in Bern "Gaskessel", Switzerland. This concert was memorable as Geoffrey's amp died and Derek lost his jacket. Geoffrey was now a fully fledged professional musician on £25 per week.

By February 1973, the band were embarking on a tour of Australia with Slade, Lindisfarne, Status Quo and Black Feather. On their return it was clear that personality clashes were threatening the stability of the band so Derek and Stu departed.

It took time for Geoffrey to feel an equal partner in the band, but by the time of the first American tour in 1974 he was on a par with the others. Geoffrey also started to get sessions outside of Caravan. Work on a Kevin Ayers album was followed by recordings with Cafe Jacques and the Penguin Cafe Orchestra. Around 1977 Caravan's popularity was starting to diminish as the recording of Better By Far approached. The advent of punk was to take its effect. But for Geoffrey this period was quite prosperous as he was undertaking a lot of session work that paid well. John Perry, ex Caravan, and Rupert Hine were putting a lot of work Geoffrey's way. He decided to leave Caravan and on April 14th 1978, Geoffrey informed Pye. Fortunately, there was no animosity over Geoffrey's departure.

Miles Copland, Caravan's manager at that time, advised Geoffrey to start a band with Stuart Copland and Sonja Kristina. Despite

rehearsals in London it was not working out. One can only speculate, but if Geoffrey had persevered he might have ended up as the guitarist in the Police. Session work continued, but Geoffrey managed to find the time to help Caravan record The Album and play a number of live dates.

As well as his session work, Geoffrey played in a band "The Purple Hipsters" between 1979-81. This contained also John Atkinson who wrote "Golden Mile" on which Geoffrey sang the vocal part.

During his time with Caravan, Geoffrey developed the front man role and undertook most of the MC duties. There was never any deliberate intention for that to happen, but Pye was content for that development given Geoffrey's more extrovert nature.

Geoffrey continued to be extremely busy and spent long periods away from home with such luminaries as Murray Head, Penguin Cafe Orchestra, Paul Brady (as witnessed on a recent Whistle Test repeat), Renaud and Bob Geldof. He also had a studio and publishing company in Milton Keynes, with Peter Veitch (Cafe Jacques) who unfortunately died in 1990. Working with Steve Hillage also led to work with Rashid, an Algerian star who is absolutely massive in France. With that work and his involvement with Renaud, another French megastar, Geoffrey's profile was given a substantial boost.

In 2005, Geoffrey has been extremely busy working again with Murray Head, Steve Hillage and Renaud. And he has teamed up again with Francis Kendall for their second CD "Estella In Lux". Despite his other commitments, Geoffrey is firmly committed to touring and recording with Caravan and he also finds the time to play with Jim Leverton most Friday evenings at the Neptune, Whitstable. I caught up with Geoffrey and asked him the following:

I was fascinated by the history of your viola—can you explain a bit more about its history and how you acquired it?

The viola that I play most of the time was made by Honore Derazy in Mirecourt, France in 1849. It's a famous Canterbury instrument, having been owned and played for a very long time by the late Reg Forwood, founder of the excellent music shop and principal violist of the Canterbury Orchestra. He put the viola up for sale in the shop when he retired and because of its history and because it's beautiful I got a loan and bought it. It's worth the equivalent of a couple of years in a retirement home in Ramsgate so it's my pension plan! Despite its value it loves very loud rock music and after a few beltin' Caravan gigs it loosens up a treat and sounds lovely in the studio or in a school hall in the morning when I'm storytelling with Francis...

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

They're one of the classic English rock bands, forever associated with what's come to be known as the Canterbury scene and cited as influences by younger bloods including Air, Blur and Oasis.

The man who has steered Caravan for the greater part of the past thirty – six years, and continues to guide them, comes not from Kent, though. Pye (nee Julian) Hastings was born and bred in... Tomintoul, a location more familiar from winter road reports than for its place in rock 'n' roll Babylon.

Queen Victoria apparently thought Tomintoul was a god-forsaken hole, a description that piques Hastings, who has

Wilde Flowers, the group that spawned both Soft Machine and Caravan, and figures such as Robert Wyatt, who continued to appear on the periphery of Caravan's story at regular intervals for several years. As 1967 headed towards 1968 the soul music and R&B that the Wilde Flowers had been playing were supplanted by what was first called psychedelic and then became – whisper it – progressive rock.

"It seemed to happen overnight," says Hastings. "Suddenly everyone was playing their own stuff and we wanted to do that too. We had a clear idea of where we wanted to go: we wanted to be different from everybody else – well, everybody had that dream – and we were prepared to work day and night and sleep rough, if need be, to get there."

With cousins Dave and Richard Sinclair, on keyboards and bass, and drummer Richard Coughlan, Hastings moved into a house in Whitstable and the four of them practised all hours. When the neighbours complained, they found a village hall, in Graveney, and continued rehearsing there, pitching tents outside until the weather forced them to sleep indoors.

Their dedication produced a style of music at once intimate and suggestive of wide-open spaces and complete with trademark metallic organ tone, catchy melodies, often whimsical lyrics and compound time signatures that swung. Verve Records, in competition with Island, signed them in 1968. The late John Peel was an early champion and the band would guest on his Radio One programme well into the 1970s.

Things were looking good – usually, it seems in Caravan's case, a clear sign of imminent disaster. The collapse of Verve's UK wing not long after the band's first, eponymous album's release was an early set back in an odyssey whose ups include having an impromptu guest guitarist in the shape of Frank Zappa, a Caravan admirer, during a festival appearance in Belgium, and the building of a following that by the time Caravan released their third album, the classic *In the Land of Grey and Pink*, suggested that they might be heading for the first division.

The downs began seriously with the departure of first one Sinclair then another in the early 1970s, to be replaced by a series of new faces due to personality clashes, continued with various record company travails and peaked at the height of the punk rock boom. At this point the by now deeply unfashionable Caravan were unceremoniously dumped by their manager, who left them with several years worth of unpaid VAT and income tax bills – and promptly entered Millionaires Row with

To coincide with Caravan's Edinburgh concert last December, the Scottish broadsheet *The Herald* ran a sizeable feature on the band. It's not often newspapers take such an interest and the band themselves were all very pleased with the results. Although it covers familiar territory, most subscribers won't have seen the article. So we're grateful to long-time Caravan supporter **Rob Adams** for giving permission to reproduce his feature in full here.

Caravan

AS TOLD BY **ROB ADAMS**

recently acquired a run-down house near the old family residence and who – tradesmen permitting – will be spending his first Christmas and Hogmanay in Banffshire since the days of black and white TV and Andy Stewart first footing the nation.

Leaving Tomintoul at the age of twelve, Hastings missed out on the musical training in local dance bands that set up his older brother, saxophonist Jimmy, for a career playing with everyone from Frank Sinatra to Radiohead. Older sister Jane gave Pye his first guitar when he was seventeen and her then boyfriend, Kevin Ayers, showed him his first chords.

"Kevin was a blond, good looking chap whom the girls seemed to flock around, and I thought, I'll have some of that," says Hastings. "But within about a month I was totally hooked on the guitar and I'd pretty much decided that this what I wanted to do for the rest of my life."

The Ayers connection took Hastings into the Canterbury band scene with the

WHERE BUT FOR CARAVAN WOULD I?

ROB ADAMS' CARAVAN continued



the most successful band to emerge from the punk era. Did someone say "Sting"?

To add insult to injury, by 1981, *In the Land of Grey and Pink* had qualified for a gold disc – a feat that passed unnoticed and unmarked by the band's record label for another eleven years.

"That was frustrating," says Hastings with some understatement, "because we were all broke at that point and getting some tangible token of our achievements would have been a real fillip."

As it was, the band broke up. Hastings took a job as a builders' labourer, knocking down walls with an enthusiasm borne of imagining record company executives and former managers' faces on them. But not for long. Within weeks he was writing songs again. Dave Sinclair, who had returned for 1973's *For Girls Who Grow Plump In The Night* album and then left again, returned once more. As did Richard Sinclair.

So the original line-up recorded the recently reissued – and still rather good – *Back to Front* in 1982 and then split up, although not for the last time. That happened after a further reunion in 1990

that proved that there was still an audience for Caravan's music, if only they could stay together in one form or another to play it.

"When the original members started leaving in the 1970s, it was really down to the fact that they wanted to play more serious music and not really bother with the audience," says Hastings. "On the other hand, I've always thought that you should put on a show of some kind and at least talk to the people between songs."

Hastings himself is the first to admit that he's no born rock star. Shy and slightly awkward on stage, he's happy to draft in players who can make a visual impact – and no one has done this better in Caravan than the current front line partnership of long-serving violist (and spoons master) Geoffrey Richardson and guitarist Doug Boyle, whose previous employers include the far from shy and retiring Robert Plant and Nigel Kennedy.

The current sextet, Hastings concedes, is more of a rock band than Caravan has ever been before but with still instantly recognisable Caravan elements in Hastings'

singing and songwriting and fellow original member, Richard Coughlan's directional drumming.

After losing Dave Sinclair yet again in 2002, the band has recovered and is reaching new territories. First-ever tours of Brazil and Japan this year look set to be followed by trips to Argentina, Chile and Mexico, as well as a swift return to the US, in 2005, and their latest CD, *The Unauthorised Breakfast Item*, has been generally received as the best Caravan album in thirty years.

"The internet has obviously been a great boon to bands like us," says Hastings. "You find pockets of fans all over the place. We're just about to go to Poland for the first time, before Christmas, and the band's been sounding really good on recent gigs. We also have a lot of younger fans as well as the ones who remember us from the 1970s, and as long as there's an audience who want to hear us, we'll go on playing. I'm not looking at our place in Tomintoul as a retirement home just yet." ©

As some of you may know, Dave Sinclair is now living in Japan. I caught up with Dave recently, and he kindly agreed to write a piece which encapsulates his musical career to date. Read on...

MOVEMENT IN TIME...?

Starting off on the Caravan trail back in early '68, I could never have imagined what lay before me, and what I'd be doing thirty-eight years later. My only interest at that time was to contribute my bit to the band in the form of playing, writing and arranging, with little thought about the future.

It's amazing to see the albums still in the shops now, and it makes me realise what a unique little unit we were. Although our albums have been steady sellers over the years it is generally known that, like so many other bands of the period, we saw little of the money generated then. This eventually led me to opening my piano shop when I became a family man in the early 80s. Since then I have been very busy with the business, restoring and selling pianos, spending the rest of the time - except for the occasional Caravan excursion or album - with my family.

Recording my latest albums, Full Circle and Into The Sun, made me realise how important music was to me, and I finally packed the shop up, after almost twenty-five years, earlier this year. During that period, though, any spare time I had for myself (which wasn't a lot!) was either spent sailing my catamaran, or working on my songwriting in my music room. I gradually accumulated another collection of songs, most of which were probably not suitable for Caravan.

Back in the mid-70s, having been in and out of various bands, including Matching Mole, Hatfield and The North and the Polite Force, I had also collected up a number of songs, some of which eventually ended up on my Moon Over Man album. The only song of mine in all that time that appeared on another album apart from Caravan albums, was "O Caroline", with Robert Wyatt writing the lyrics (and making rather a good job of it vocally) for the first Matching Mole album.

So in 1976, feeling that these songs would otherwise be forgotten for all time, I was persuaded by Jeremy Darby to record a demo solo album, in the hope of getting the backing of a record label and re-recording them. This demo album took over a year to put together as most of the gear, apart from my Hammond organ, had to be borrowed bit-by-bit. Jeremy actually gave up his job as a lighting technician at the Gulbenkian Theatre in Canterbury to concentrate on this project.

Most of my time was spent driving around in my open-top MGB collecting and returning various bits of gear, which sometimes stuck out precariously from the back seat! Add to that the fact that Jeremy was so intent on reducing the noise level when bouncing the sound from one tape recorder to another, it sometimes took three or four days to record a single part that lasted only a few seconds. But they were halcyon days, with the summer

of '76 going down as one of the best on record. (I'm sure there's a pun in there somewhere!)

Eventually, though, after all the work was complete, I found myself in the middle of the Punk phenomenon, and was unable to secure the deal I wanted. Nevertheless, many years later, when there seemed to be a resurgence of interest in archive material, the original recordings, which had been stuck away in my loft for sixteen years, were dusted off and, in 1993, appeared on CD as the Moon Over Man album.

This album hasn't been available in recent years, apart from, apparently, bootleg copies in Russia! Because of this, I am putting together a thirtieth-anniversary Special Edition for 2006, with remastered audio, many original photos from the period, a larger, improved booklet with new artwork, and at least three bonus tracks. (Information about this release, and other projects, will soon be available on my web site www.dave-sinclair.co.uk)

In 1978 I joined Camel for a world tour

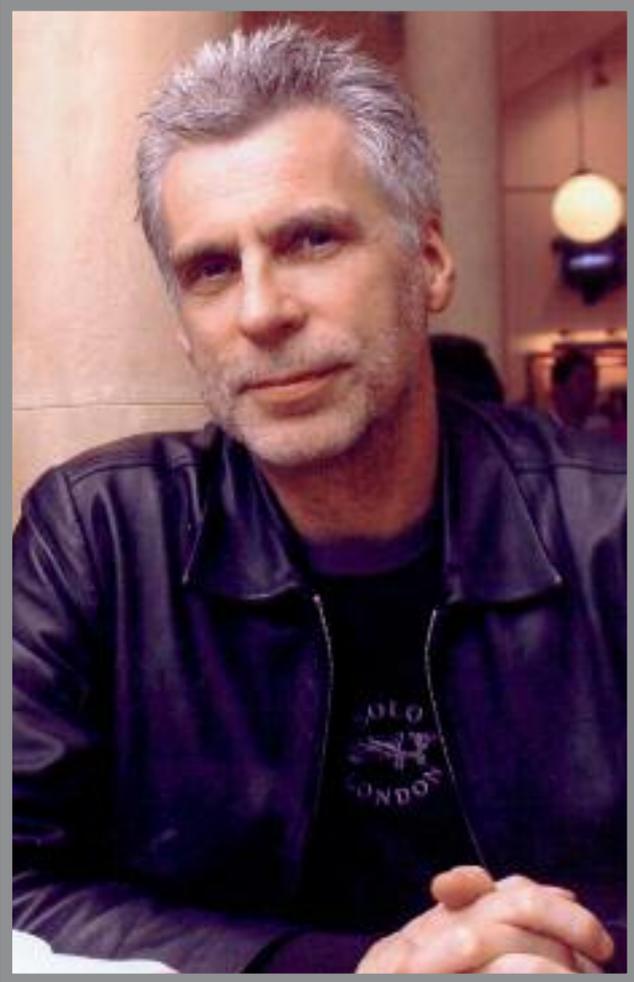
that took me to many countries, including, in January '79, Japan. I had always been fascinated by the country and its history and culture, to the point where I had even started cooking Japanese food at the age of nineteen.

A visit to the Ryoanji Temple in Kyoto, on a day off, left a deep impression on me, and I was sure that I would return there one day. In fact it was very nearly a quarter of a century when I finally returned there, in September 2003. I sat in the very same spot, looking out across the famous Zen Rock Garden, established six hundred years previously. Nothing had changed; the fifteen carefully-positioned rocks, "floating" on a sea of raked sand, gave me the impression that only a moment had passed between my two visits.

I had come back to Japan, having spent the best part of six months working on my Full Circle album. In the seething capital, Tokyo, I had come to visit record companies with some promo copies. I was interested to see what kind of reaction I would get from the progressive, Canterbury-type aficionados,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 10)





interview with John Giddings

Perhaps the highlight for Caravan this year, which again put them in the spotlight, was their appearance at the Isle of Wight Festival. The band obtained a great deal of publicity, further recognition by their peers, and most importantly, a great reception by a predominately young audience, most of whom had never previously witnessed the band.

The man responsible for this upsurge in the band's popularity was John Giddings, promoter of the festival, whose tentative enquiry on the Caravan website led to the booking.

Following the festival, John, who is also head of the Solo agency, agreed to an interview. At the time of making initial contact with John, I hadn't realised how big a player he is in the music industry.

It was a feature in a Scottish Sunday newspaper on a week in the life of Geoff Ellis (leading promoter in Scotland) in the run up to T in the Park and Murrayfield, at the time of G8, that the penny dropped. I quote "Because so many artists are involved, there are lots of people here (Murrayfield) whom Ellis deals with when he puts on shows. He shakes hands with John Giddings, who represents Madonna and U2, and is "probably the most powerful agent in the world"

Well — how do I follow that, but say thanks to John for putting aside some time to conduct the interview.

Tell us a little bit about your background and how you got involved in the music business.

I went to university specifically to become social secretary, as I knew this could get me in to the music business. I was the only one there who knew what they wanted to do for a living.

I hadn't realised until recently that Solo is one of the biggest music agencies and that you were described in a recent press article as "probably the most powerful agent in the world". How has the company evolved over the years and who do you represent?

Every 5 years I have changed my company.

- 1st 5 years: I worked for MAM and signed the Adverts, X Ray Spex, Iggy Pop and the Ramones.

- 2nd 5 years: Formed TBA International (Tours By Accident?) with a partner. Signed Paul Young, Alison Moyet, Howard Jones, Big Country and Tears for Fears.

- 3rd 5 years: Split up with my partner (he stole from me) hence the 'Solo' title – I went solo and it is a musical term. The logo is the Spirit of St Louis, the first solo transatlantic flight.

- 4th 5 years: I sold half of Solo to ITG, a New York agency half owned by Labatts, the brewers. Through this I began to work with David Bowie, Genesis, Rolling Stones, Celine Dion.

- 5th 5 years: The partners in ITG split up, so Solo came back to me. I took on U2 and The Corrs.

- 6th 5 years: I sold to Clear Channel and continued world touring and developing the agency side with Westlife, Ronan Keating etc., BUT, more importantly was asked to re-start the Isle Of Wight Festival by the Isle of Wight Council. The first one was a one day event in 2002 with The Charlatans and Robert Plant. The second was in 2003 with Paul Weller, Bryan Adams, Counting Crows, The Thrills and The Darkness. The third was in 2004, the first festival we sold out, with The Stereophonics, The Who and David Bowie. And you know this year's story – we sold out quicker than last year with REM, Travis, Roxy Music, Faithless and Razorlight.

Could you give us some idea of the logistics of putting on a festival such as the Isle of Wight?

It takes 9 months of planning to put together. It starts with meeting the council, police, fire and ambulance services, putting a traffic plan in place, laying out the site, all during which, the bands are being booked. I really enjoy planning the site and coming up with ideas to entertain the audience. there is still a lot more



to do on this side-it is nowhere near perfect-on the other hand you will never get enough loos for an audience...

How did you decide on and go about booking the bands for the event?

We book bands we like that can sell tickets!



The hard bit is getting them to do it. It is dictated by price and availability. We provided three aeroplanes to get REM back from Italy. Any band we book, from whatever era, has to be good live and credible to the audience. Trying to book



WHERE BUT FOR CARAVAN WOULD I?

someone who is in the charts, just to sell tickets, does not work. Bands need strength in depth, and good catalogue.

The Caravan connection — what made you decide to book the band?

Caravan – simply – I love them. I grew up on their music, and have enjoyed it all my life. People thought it was a strange choice, but I was certain (and it came good) that they would work in the early afternoon sunshine. You can not fail to be impressed by the musical ability and melodies. My nephew, who is 21 and into garage music, loved them.

I understand you are a bit of a Caravan fan – any favourite album or line up?

I am a huge fan! I love the 'Land of Grey and Pink' and 'IICDIAOAIIDIAOY'. I could listen to them forever. The combination of melodies, time signatures, rifts, lyrics is incredible. They mean the same to me as classical music (which I have never got in to) does to other people. For your reference, my musical taste is Cream, Procol Harum, Pink Floyd, The Who, David Bowie, and every guitar band since 1990 — Oasis, Verve, Manics, Charlatans, Razorlight, Snow Patrol.

From the feedback I received, Caravan played a great set, received an equally great reaction and made a few new fans – would you agree?

Definitely. I got very positive comments from it.

Pye said that he regarded the festival as the best organised outdoor event he has played at. No doubt you would agree.

Do you place particular emphasis on making sure that the bands are well looked after?

Looking after the bands is a common courtesy. They have made the effort to come and play for you, you should respect them and treat you properly. Without being fawning it is important to treat them as one would like to be treated. It is a shared experience for all concerned and they are a part of it.

Do you encounter any prima donnas?

Of course I do, but I understand the pressure of getting up in front of 40,000 people. I too would be a bit nervy (it's always the singer!).

Given the number of bands you come across, do you have any tips on who we should look out for in the future?



Razorlight are the real deal. Kasabian are good.

And finally, any chance of Caravan appearing at one of your festivals next year?

We only do one festival! Maybe we should put them on at Ryde Theatre.

Many thanks to you, Pye and the band. It was one of my dreams come true.

Cheers John. ☺



PHOTOS BY STEVE MARSDEN, WILLIAM HAYTER EXCEPT J. GIDDINGS

WHERE BUT FOR CARAVAN WOULD I?

GEOFFREY RICHARDSON continued from pg. 2



Looking back over the past 30 years with the band, what is your favourite Caravan album and why. My favourite 'van albums are Girls Who Grow... and Cunning Stunts because they were the first things I did in the studio and they're so full of ideas, energy and texture from everyone.

How do you rate the Unauthorised Breakfast Item? Any favourite tracks?
Unlike some of the other albums, it sounds like what the group does live – it was a long time comin' but has some lovely things.

I understand that most of your parts were put on after the main recordings. Were you unavailable and did that make it more difficult to influence the sound?
I was eventually there for most of the recording, but because the others make such a racket, I played most of my parts as peaceful overdubs in London and Canterbury.

I gather your actions in the USA inspired the title of the album—explain.
"Breakfast item" – Trenton, New Jersey – American or Continental breakfast? Eat one, try to take the other away... croissants. In pocket for later... scary waitress: "Pardon me, Sir. I believe you have an unauthorised breakfast item on your person at this time!"



Have you always been interested in folk music as you appear to be becoming more and more involved in that direction?

I ran folk clubs in the Midlands in 1965 & '66 – met Francis 6 years ago. He wanted some violin playing and he totally revived my interest in "Roots" music. The Penguin Cafe Orchestra was often not far away from some kind of folk



music (Simon Jeffes latterly described it as "Imaginary Folk Music"). I've always been keen on acoustic music and recording and now I have a fine acoustic music studio, on a hill overlooking the sea, called "Beacon Hill" oh! The weather in November when the north winds blow... but in the Spring...heaven.

A little bird tells me you have been working again with Murray Head? How did that come about and what sort of music is emerging?

Worked with Murray Head since 1978 – met in the car park of the Farmyard Studio in the dark. "You're the chap who plays the flute aren't you – I hate the flute – too pure!" Of course, eventually at some point I had to play the flute with Murray - Bangkok! I've certainly played the flute with Justin Hayward – there's a claim – pure enough. Murray is Jack Hollis in "Heartbeat" at the moment and has hung up his superb vocal chords for a bit.

Your track "Wild West Street" on the Breakfast album is excellent. My own view is that this sort of track could be used on a TV/ film score. Any thoughts on developing that side of your music?

West Street in Faversham, recorded on a 4 track portostudio. I've also written for film and TV (see later). Blossomville Ink, my company and studio near Milton Keynes ceased abruptly when my partner and best friend Peter Veitch died in 1990. I know a lot about MS. However, I'm about to extend Beacon Hill to include Cakewalk Sonar 4 Producer which will expand my acoustic studio to a 5.1 surround DVD facility so that I can make (and sell!!!) little films and pieces of music that you can put on your

home cinema and enjoy (or not) – a complete experience from the Geoffrey Richardson imagination. Look out!

You have been involved over the years with the Penguins – was it a real blow with the untimely death of Simon Jeffes?

Simon's death (of a rare cancer) was awful but the PCO still exists and we all meet occasionally to play the music. Jenny and I have learnt Simon's guitar parts and we're planning an evening of music including the PCO in London soon.

Am I right in thinking that you have composer status at the Royal Opera House?

I am a composer of the ballet "Still Life..." and am written up in the programmes as "Geoffrey Richardson 1950-", i.e. not dead yet!

Any particular reflections/stories on your 30 odd years within Caravan?

I wouldn't have spent the last 33 years with any other progressive rock group of the 60s' from Canterbury!

How does the current line up compare with other versions of the band you've been part of?

They've all been fun, one way or the other. Doug Boyle is an inspiration.

Did you enjoy the Isle of Wight?

It was lovely, and I got to be on Channel 4 playing the spoons.

GEOFFREY'S RECORDS

To highlight the sheer versatility of Geoffrey's musicianship, this article would not be complete without a selection of his work:

Kevin Ayres *Confession of Dr. Dream*

Paul Brady *Primitive Dance*

The Buzzcocks *Why She's A Girl From the Chainstore*

Cafe Jaques *Round the Back and International Caravan Many!!*

The Cross *Blue Rock*

Chris De Burgh *Power of Ten*

Dubh Chapter *Silence, Cunning and Exile Faudal*

Bob Geldolf *Vegetarians of Love and the Happy Club*

Morgan Fisher *Minatures 2*

Murray Head *11 studio albums, plus live releases and compilations, including Find a Crowd*

Justin Hayward *View From The Hill*

Nick Heyward *Tangled*

Rupert Hine *Immunity and Waving Not drowning*

Howard Jones *Album*

Milla Jovovich *Divine Comedy*

Khaled

Wolf Man

Linda McCartney *Wide Prairie*

Microdisney *The Clock Comes Down the Stairs*

The Ozark Mountain Daredevils *Don't look Now*

Penguin Cafe Orchestra *12 albums & compilations*

John G Perry *Sunset Wading and Seabird*

Quantum Jump *Barracuda and Mixing*

Rachid Taha *6 albums*

Renaud *3 albums, plus recording the new one!*

Jim Leverton *Bright New Way*



How long did it take to write and record the new album with Francis? Are you happy with it?
 We made "Estella In Lux" in Fran's front room in Canterbury over a couple of years. The new one is nearly finished, recorded at Beacon Hill.

Francis has a bit of a pedigree of his own...?
 Yes. Francis is a Canadian citizen and has toured extensively in Canada as a solo artist and with Ron Kavana, Tom McConville and Kieran Halpin.

The album seems a good mix of your two individual styles...

On the album, we have an equal mix of tracks. On the opening track *LA QUEBECOISE*, I'd been working all day with Caravan and the Quebec Festival Orchestra and from the 12th floor of the Quebec Hilton, I looked out over the Plains of Abraham and down to St. Lawrence. It was early evening and a thunderstorm sparkled silently in the distance as great ships lumbered in the Seaway. I was playing the mandolin and thinking of the beautiful Quebec girls I'd seen that day: dark hair and blue eyes... a Celtic combination!

"HOLD ON" was written by Francis who has always been a Bluegrass fan – its roots are in the old European folk ballads that found their way to the New World. This song contains a classic Bluegrass sentiment – a man riding the train home to see his loved one. My driving mandolin gives it an authentic feel!

The future seems to look good for Geoffrey. What can we expect to see happening in the coming months?
 Lots of live work with Jim Leverton – we'll try to

play Edinburgh. And folk clubs and festivals with Francis. A lot next year with Renaud in any country that will have him – recording his new album in Brussels in November and whenever Caravan rolls again. The future looks good! ☺

GEOFFREY AND FRANCIS' NEW ALBUM ESTELLA IN LUX IS WORTH A PURCHASE AND CAN BE OBTAINED FOR £10.50, INC. P&P FROM ECLECTIC DISCS LTD, UNIT 1, THE BREWERY BUSINESS CENTRE, 75 STOUR STREET, CANTERBURY, KENT, CT1 2NR, TEL: 01227 462490.

JIM LEVERTON'S BRIGHT NEW WAY WHICH IS ALSO RECOMMENDED CAN BE OBTAINED FOR THE SAME PRICE FROM ECLECTIC (DETAILS ABOVE).

Can I take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported and helped Caravan over many exciting years – and believe me it is exciting – there's nothing on earth that feels as good as being on stage at a lovely festival with a brilliant band and a great crowd... phew! I've come over all unnecessary just thinking about it!

THANKS.
 Geoffrey Richardson

GEOFFREY RICHARDSON Violin, Viola, cello, acoustic and electric guitars, acoustic and electric bass, mandolin and mandola, ukelele and cuatro, flute, clarinet and penny whistle, kalimba, percussion, electric spoons, hedge clippers, arranger, composer and musical director.

MUSIC FOR TV AND FILM

- 1977 *The Shout* MUSIC AND EFFECTS FOR A FILM BY JERZY SKOLAMOVSKI AND RUPERT HINE
- 1980 *Life In Focus Jenny Gilbertson* AN STV DOCUMENTARY
- 1981 *Wallace's Warblers* AN STV PLAY
- 1982 *Death Before Dishonour* AN STV DOCUMENTARY
- 1982 *Pour Cent Briques T'As Plus Rien* COMPOSITION, PERFORMANCE AND RECORDING OF THEME AND INCIDENTAL MUSIC FOR A FILM BY EDOUARD MOLINARO
- 1982 *Space To Breathe* AN STV DOCUMENTARY
- 1983 *Aunt Suzanne* A BBC NORTHERN IRELAND PLAY
- 1984 *Fire at Milligan* A BBC NORTHERN IRELAND PLAY
- 1985 *Bloodhunt* A BBC SCOTLAND PLAY FOR SCREEN TWO
- 1986 *Better Off Dead* INCIDENTAL MUSIC FOR A US FEATURE FILM COMEDY
- 1988 *Still Life At The Penguin Cafe* AN ADAPTATION OF SEVEN PIECES OF PCO MUSIC BY DAVID BINTLEY FOR THE ROYAL BALLET. THIS INCLUDES MUSIC CO-WRITTEN BY GEOFFREY RICHARDSON AND SIMON JEFFES AND IS NOW PART OF THE PERMANENT REPERTOIRE OF THE ROYAL BALLET. THE BALLET HAS BEEN RECORDED BY THAMES TELEVISION FOR BROADCAST BY MELVYN BRAGG. THE BALLET WAS RECORDED BY THE BBC CONCERT ORCHESTRA, CONDUCTED BY BARRY WORDSWORTH AND RELEASED BY DECCA.
- 1989 *Le Dernier Ete* COMPOSITION, PERFORMANCE AND RECORDING OF MUSIC FOR A FEATURE FILM WITH MURRAY HEAD.
- 1992 *Sirgar Le Lion* FILM WITH MUSIC BY STEVE HILLAGE AND SALIF KEITA
- 1993 *Quand J'Avais Cinq Ans Je M'Ai Tue* PERFORMANCE OF A SOUNDTRACK FOR A FEATURE FILM
- 1997 *All The Little Animals* PERFORMANCE OF FIVE PIECES OF PCO MUSIC FOR A FILM BY JEREMY THOMAS

INSTRUMENTS

Mittelwald violin c1900 with Thomas with Spirocore medium strings and Fishman transducer ■ Mittenwald Stainer model violin c1900 with Spirocore medium strings and Fishman transducer ■ Niklaus Rittel bow 19"C and H A Stoller bow 19"C ■ Honore Derazy viola Mirecourt 1849 with Thomastik Spirocore medium strings and Fishman transducer ■ Hans Schuster viola Mittenwald 1957 with Thomastik Spirocore cello strings (tenor viola) and Fishman transducer ■ K. Penzel bow 19"C and C. Gotz bow 1972 ■ Roderick Paesold 603 cello 1992 with Thomastik Spirocore medium strings ■ Roderick Paesold bow 1992 ■ Epiphone A Style mandolin 1989 with Andy Perkins strings and Fishman transducer ■ Robert Offen octave mandola 1964 with Martin light gauge strings and Earthwood transducer ■ Windsor Whirl ambassador supremus tenor banjo 1928 with Andy Perkins strings and transducer ■ Alvin Keech A model long scale ukele 1928 with Augustine strings and Barcus-Berry transducer ■ Larkukele 1980 with black shadow strings ■ Martin D8 acoustic guitar 1968 with Elixir light gauge strings and L. Baggs transducer ■ Yamaha F310 acoustic guitar 1990 with Elixir light gauge strings and Fishman transducer ■ Santos Martinez SM 150CEA Spanish guitar 2005 with Augustine strings ■ Schecter custom stratocaster electric guitar built by Doug Chandler in 1982 with Elixir light gauge strings ■ Fender Precision fretless bass 1968 with Rotosound Superwound strings ■ Rudall Carte Romilly solid silver flute 1960 ■ Yamaha YCL 34S Bb clarinet 1980 ■ Clarke Meg whistles ■ Overton Chieftan superbrass low whistle ■ Stockwell Kalimba 1980 ■ Percussion Plus percussion instruments ■ Richardson electric spoons with Richardson custom control/DI ■ B & Q hedge clippers ■ Mesa Boogie 60watt combination amplifier 1975 ■ Richardson custom 15 watt acoustic amplifier 2003 ■ Khun shoulder rests ■ Pirastro Oliv rosin ■ Hiscox Lifelite cases, HKB hard cases and Gewa soft foam cases ■ Hardcase flightcases ■ Jim Dunlop 88mm. flat picks, National thumb picks ■ Shubb capos

WHERE BUT FOR CARAVAN WOULD I?

DAVE SINCLAIR continued from page 5

knowing what a difficult home-grown market it had become there, with less opportunities for foreign musicians. Having received a lot of interesting feedback from friends and companies, not only in Japan but also the UK, I went back into the studio in October to finalise what had by now become two albums (having realised that there was far too much material for one).

A new version of "O Caroline" was recorded with my cousin Richard singing, and the Christmas song, which I had failed to finish back in '96, was revamped. What had started out as a daunting prospect in early 2003, with no band or financial backing, had developed into a major project for me, with over thirty-five musicians involved (not including a dozen or so children singing on the Christmas song).

The fact that I had one foot in the mainstream market had worried me a little, as I thought that I might disappoint some of the more ardent Caravan fans who have supported me over the years. But musicians change and evolve, being influenced by everything around them, and in the end I was lucky enough to have tremendous support and encouragement from all quarters, including that of other musicians such as Dave Stewart and Robert Wyatt, whom I greatly admire.

The Full Circle project was always intended to be more of a song-orientated album, although there are some extended solo sections, "Nowhere To Hide" being the most notable. This track, originally written with Caravan in mind, typically had the song at the beginning, followed by a long instrumental passage.

But I feel that the melodies in this recent music are only an extension of the melodies I played in the early Caravan days, not only in the songs that I wrote, but also in the free-form passages we played together. All I have done is to structure them in a different way, and use different musicians to interpret the music.

Talking about the musicians involved, it must be said that Marcus and Rozz played a major role in the two albums, and it was their studio that I used throughout. I'm looking forward to hearing their own album, which is coming out very soon. I was also pleased to be involved with their music, playing on some of the tracks. (Info will appear on my web site as and when.) But I think the unsung hero involved with my project must be Doug Boyle, who played on almost every track, but kept a very low profile. The parts he played don't stand out so

much on their own, but, if removed from the track, tend to leave a gaping hole. I am also looking forward to playing on Doug's new album, which I hear is taking shape. Jim Leverton, another Caravan man, was also involved, and the three tracks "Best Life Of All", "Outside Of Your Love" and "Nowhere To Hide" were ideal songs for him to sing. Again, a great performance from a very experienced and seasoned musician.

For me, the timing of this project couldn't have been more important. I started recording in March 2003, just prior to the invasion of Iraq. A few days later I wrote the song "How Long" about the conflict. Originally intended for the Full Circle album, it ended up on Into The Sun. And within a few weeks I had written two more tracks, "Without You" and



I imagined walking, on a cold, bleak day, across the gravel path into the mighty Cathedral. Once inside, the song starts up and, with a crescendo building up, purveys its message of hope. With the song still ringing as I leave, I'm confronted by a terrifying scene of carnage and destruction. I'm suddenly reminded how history has shaped our lives.

The continued underlying message of hope throughout the following piece is structured within a sequence of repeated chords, set against a ticking clock, and sung in French, English and Japanese. The fact that "Peace In Time" is a repeated cycle of chords, and was written in the days of Matching Mole, brings a certain poignancy to the piece. Especially poignant, for me, is the single voice at the end, with Naomi, in Japan, taking a whole month before she was finally satisfied with the four short lines of lyrics she was writing, and then going into the studio to sing them.

Bringing things up to date, I am living most of the time, and working on my music, here in Kyoto. At present I am halfway through recording a new album with a Japanese colleague, Hideyuki (Hide) Shima (a graduate of Berklee College), and musicians from the UK are also involved, including another Canterbury man, Tony Coe. Although we have recorded some songs, we are trying a very different approach from the Full Circle project, more in keeping with recent releases from Björk. I am also in discussions about recording an acoustic album, and working on my own music at home.

For anyone who has a copy of the Full Circle album, I am running a little quiz. The first seven correct answers will win a copy of the limited-edition CDR of "Always There", a song that I wrote and began to record in the UK, finishing it in Japan in the spring of 2004. My cousin Richard Sinclair, and the very talented Chizuko Ura, star on vocals. Hide Shima did the arrangement for the nine Japanese female backing singers. This CDR, not on general release and currently still not for sale, has only been given to the fans who attended my Japanese concerts in Osaka and Tokyo in April 2004.



"Like To Know". These three tracks replaced some of the ones already partly recorded for the new Caravan album, which I had intended to re-record for my own album.

"Without You" was written as a testimony to the various atrocities and natural disasters that have separated so many people from their loved ones in recent years. Now, finding ourselves living in an increasingly dangerous environment, it offers a message of hope and a plea for more peace, understanding and co-operation in the world. The soprano sax solo by Theo Travis completely caught the mood of the song, which is one of my favourites from the two albums.

Apart from the very last track on Full Circle, "And When The Sun Sets", which was written as a tribute to my father and played at his service, the "Sancti"/"Peace In Time" section, for me, fitted very well at the end of the album. The choir I used for "Sancti" were choristers from Canterbury Cathedral. This worked neatly with the original idea behind the two pieces of music, which I shall now describe.



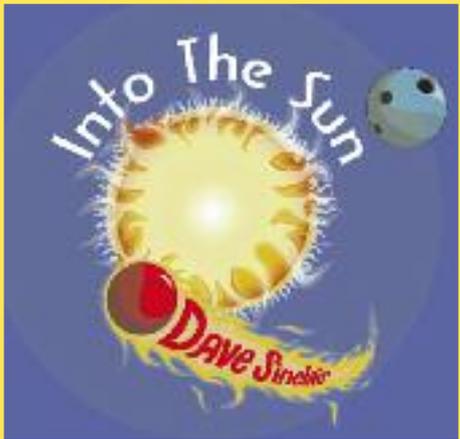


The question is: *In one song on the Full Circle album there are three references made to Caravan songs or lyrics. Which song is it, and what are the lines?*

I'll send out signed copies to the first seven correct replies. Please e-mail me at: dsincs88@hotmail.com with the answers, and remember to put your full postal address.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported me over the years!

With very best wishes,
Dave Sinclair



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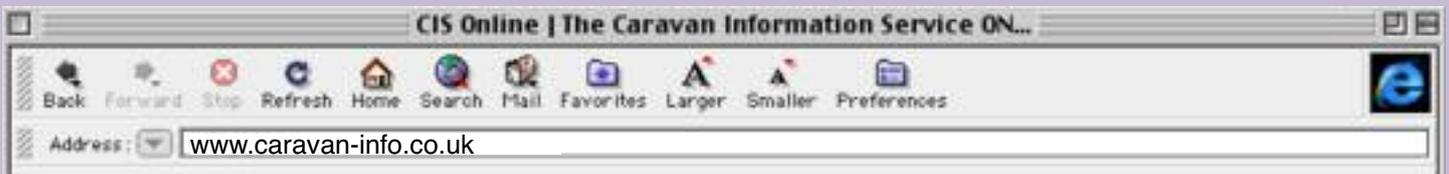


Last year, I splashed out and bought my wife a copy of Martin Strong's excellent **The Great Rock Discography** (6th Edition). This is a marvellous work, including a poignant introduction from John Peel, and a must for every fan of rock music.

However, browsing through it I was shocked to see that, even though just about every artiste imaginable in history was there, there was no reference to Caravan at all apart from a few oblique comments. After Christmas I got straight onto Martin and, whilst congratulating him on his otherwise excellent work, pointed out this glaring omission! I received no reply or comment at all, so wondered if my message had gone at all heeded, but I eagerly leafed through the following addition this year and, lo and behold, there it was, a full and complete discography and review of our favourite band! I don't know if I can claim any credit at all, but it is good to see the boys where they rightfully belong.

Thanks for everything, keep up the good work, and we will all keep hanging on with baited breath to hear, hopefully, of announcements of more gigs in the New Year.

Patrick Coffey



Jasper Smit Continental Caravan Campaign* and European Information Services. Kleingouw 34A, 1619 CB Andijk Tel: 0031-228 59 35 25 - Fax: 0031-299 42 99 85 (copies of the double CD Back On The Tracks - Live in Holland are available by contacting Jasper)

Manfred Bress publishes 'Canterbury Nachrichten' which covers the whole Canterbury scene. This can be obtained from Nikolaistr. 90, D-47055, Duisburg, Germany.

Calyx, Canterbury Website:
calyx@club-international.fr

I get lots of people saying how difficult it is to find Caravan's material in the shops. Try the following: **Piccadilly Records** of Manchester. Tel: 0161 839 8008

GFT of Surbiton Tel: 0181 339 9965

www.kelkoo.com An excellent source for material supposedly unavailable elsewhere. In addition, this web site searches out the cheapest copies from a variety of suppliers.

Many thanks to Codge Barber and Chris Varela who are helping compile this Issue of the Fanzine - I couldn't do this mag without you.

The latest Newsletter remains FREE i.e. all that is required is an S.A.E. in a decent sized envelope or International Reply Coupon for Europe and The World (any donations are welcome however, simply to defray costs of production which are down to Codge and myself).

Back copies i.e. combined issues 1/2 and issues 3-19 as well as the booklets for the 1990 and 1991 concerts at Old Buckenham can be obtained for 2 x 1st class stamps per issue **as well as** a stamped addressed envelope (2 x 1st).

ERIC GRAY

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