



*Where but for
Caravan Would I?*

The Unauthorised Breakfast Item



FOREWORD

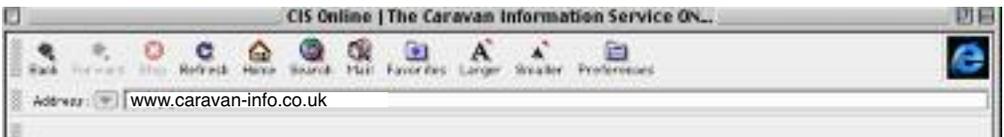
A happy New Year to all readers. Undoubtedly, this will be an important year for the band given that the new album has been completed and should be released shortly. The band will be touring France in February and I understand that a return visit to Japan is a possibility for later in the year. I'm hopeful, as the band and management are well aware, that Edinburgh will feature in this year's tour schedule.

As most of you will now know, there has been a personnel change in the band with Dave Sinclair leaving and the return of former member Jan – welcome back.

As ever we will endeavour to issue 2 editions of the newsletter per year, but have decided to be flexible on issue dates – when we have sufficient material we will publish. In this connection if any of you consider that you would wish to submit articles please forward them to me or e-mail them to Codge at codge@btinternet.com Remember, the newsletter is for you the fan and is read with great interest by the band. Similarly, Codge has informed me that we are running short of photographs/memorabilia so if you have anything to offer please forward it to Codge or me.

This edition includes a number of interesting articles and I'm grateful to Martyn Ford and Ralph Cross for their fascinating pieces. I'm also grateful for the band's contribution to this issue, particularly in respect of the background to the new album.

Special thanks to Codge; your invaluable input is greatly appreciated. Anyway, enough from me and enjoy the read.



Full secure cardtaking facilities. All orders delivered within 21 days and all prices include postage anywhere in the world. The site also has a mailing list facility if you would like to be kept up to date with any new Caravan or Caravan related products/releases.

The address is www.caravansongs.co.uk

A NIGHTS TALE CD £11 DVD £15 inc. p&p.

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BAND FOCUS

I'm very grateful to Geoffrey Richardson for sharing with us his musical influences and details of equipment etc.

What were the first and last records you purchased?

First: Ebony Eyes – The Everley Brothers

Last: The Incredible String Band CD – 1st Album 1966

Which five albums would be your desert island discs?

1. The Incredible String Band CD – 1st Album 1966

2. Penguin Café Orchestra – PCO (2nd Album)

3. A Beatles LP

4. Tasmin Little – Fratres

5. Best of Elgar - EMI

Who would be with you in your ultimate supergroup?

Jim Leverton – Bass, Vocals

Simon Jeffes – Funny Guitar

Tim Goldsmith – Drums

Steve Fletcher – Keyboards

Pete Veitch - Keys

Favourite band other than Caravan

Kathryn Tickell

Incredible String Band

Most memorable incident from your time in Caravan
First Show Ever! Sept. 21st 1972. Bern "Gaskessel", Switzerland. Just left Art School; No idea what the next 30 years had in store...Derek lost his jacket, my amp died...I thought "is it always like this?!!". Often is...

Details of equipment used on stage

1. Mark I Mesa Boogie, 60w. Combo Amp. Old

2. Coloured lead.

3. Rugged Instrument Stand

4. "Derazey" 15.7/8" viola 1849. Historic Canterbury Instrument – belonged to Reg Forwood, founder of excellent music shop and legendary viola player. Me lucky to be next in line with this beautiful thing made in



Mirecourt, France

5. Rudall Carte Flute with solid silver head joint

6. The Electric Spoons – my invention (pat. pending)

LATE NEWS



As we were going to press I received the news that Geoffrey's new CD with Francis Kendall is now out. It is called "Oh Sister" by Francis Kendall & Geoffrey Richardson and is on Klaremont Records, KRCD 001. The album has a definite folk feel to it, comprises 10 tracks and I would best describe it as "Roots, reels and ballads". Francis Kendall has played all over Europe and Canada as a solo artist and with the Fat River Band, Ron Kavana, Kieran Halpin, Tom McConville and many more. I enjoyed the album. It is certainly not Caravan but is worth exploring nevertheless, particularly if you like acoustic music. I understand that Geoffrey & Francis are not averse to playing live, so if anyone would like to consider booking them write to me or e-mail Codge (codge@btinternet.com) and we will pass on the details.

A BIT OF GOSS!

A letter from Chris Burgess to say that a couple of weeks ago, as part of the Brian Matthews R2 show Sound of the Sixties "three in a row" feature, Brian played Chris' requests one of which was "Place of my Own". He thinks it is the first time the band have been featured on the show and he was delighted!

PS His other two songs were "Love makes Sweet Music" - Soft Machine and "Meet on the Ledge" - Fairport Convention.

BAND FOCUS

A big thank you to Jim Leverton for sharing with us details of his musical tastes and influences.



What were the first and last records you purchased?

First: Cumberland Gap – Lonnie Donegan
Last: Otis Blue – Otis Redding

Which five albums would be your desert island discs?

Otis Blue – Otis Redding
Tim Hardin – Tim Hardin
Blood on the Tracks – Bob Dylan
Anymore for Anymore – Ronnie Lane
Good Old Boys – Randy Newman

Who would be with you in your ultimate supergroup?

Luce Langridge
Steve Cropper
Geoffrey Richardson
Steve Fletcher
Favourite band other than Caravan
The Band

Most memorable incident from your time in Caravan
Getting to the festival site at Herzberg in Germany and having to wait for the Hippies to get up before we could start our set.

Details of equipment used on stage

Fender Precision Bass
Ampeg Portaflex

I'm very grateful to Jan for providing the following information so quickly after re-joining the band. I'm sure there must be a story in respect of one of the answers.

What were the first and last records you purchased?

That'll be the day - Buddy Holly
2 against nature – Steely Dan

Which five albums would be your desert island discs?

1. Sergeant Peppers – The Beatles
2. Mahlers 5th Symphony
3. Aja – Steely Dan

4. Rumours – Fleetwood Mac
5. Otis (Best of) – Otis Redding

Who would be with you in your ultimate supergroup?

Otis Redding and Steve Winwood – vocals
Charlie Watts – drums
BB King (guess!)
Walter Becker – bass
Junior Walker & David Sanbourn - saxes

Favourite band other than Caravan

Stones or Steely Dan

Most memorable incident from your time in Caravan
Meeting Frank Zappa at Edgewater Inn, Seattle 1975 or Breakfast finished at half-past nine, Morecambe Hotel 1976

Details of equipment used on stage

Keyboards – Yamaha P 80 and Roland SK 500
Amps and speakers – Samson TM 500 stereo mixer amp
2 x JBL TR12s 15inch with horns

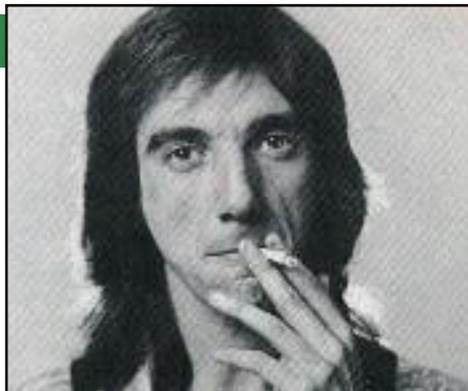


A LETTER FROM AMERICA

We are back from Nearfest! The band's performance was totally awesome and we got to meet everyone after the show! I am still coming down from the massive high of it all. Pye is one of the most wonderful people I have ever met! I was really pleased with the newsletter. Thank you so much for everything you have done. This has meant so much to me - you will never know how much.

Much love, Barbara Hulse





Welcome back Jan Schelhaas. As many of you will know, Jan was a key component of the band in the mid '70s during the Blind Dog and Better By Far period. Ralph interviewed Jan in 2000 and I have provided a synopsis of that interview below, supplemented by Jan's thoughts on re-joining Caravan. What probably doesn't translate into print is Jan's great sense of humour.

Born in Liverpool, Jan's first instrument was bass in a soul outfit called Pride and Joy: the lead singer was Bernie Wenton who won a "Stars in your eyes" heat as Nat King Cole. Signed to Deram, the band had a no.1 hit in Liverpool (Jan's words), a Sam & Dave number called "Don't knock it". The band disbanded in 1969 and Jan switched to keyboards in a band called the Business. Playing around Liverpool, the band was spotted playing in O'Connor's pub by the Scaffold who asked them if they would be interested in supporting them. The Business did lots of work for the Scaffold and the money was good. The gigs were varied, some student gigs, others more commercial, playing "Lily the Pink".

Moving to London, the band met Mike Hart and recorded an album with him for John Peel's Dandelion label. Jan even remembers sleeping on Peel's floor one evening! Mighty Mole Management then spotted the band. These were the days of hype and their name was changed to the National Head Band. They were signed to Warner Brothers and a second drummer was added: Lee Kerslake, Uriah Heep. They recorded an album with Eddie Offord of "Yes Album" fame but the results were disappointing.

Following his spell in the National Head Band, Jan was asked by his management, Clifford Davis, whether he wanted to be part of the Gary Moore Band which went out on CBS. Unfortunately it was decided subsequently to go out as a three piece and Jan lost the gig.

Moving to Ireland Jan linked up with some other musicians in a house outside Dublin writing "Steely Dan" type material. At that time things were desperate; and Jan managed to relocate back to England with his split Hammond organ, courtesy of Ray Clegg, a roadie for Mungo Jerry.

In London Jan met up with Phil Lynott and was asked to join Thin Lizzy. After several weeks intense rehearsal Phil decided that this was the band that was going on stage. Unfortunately rehearsal tapes dictated that this was not the band that was going on stage, as the band didn't sound right with keyboards. It was decided to run with a twin guitar approach and the rest is history.

The Caravan connection came about when Jan replied to an ad in Melody Maker, having no idea it was Caravan. At the auditions Jan was asked to jam with the band and play anything he liked. This was Jan's first

encounter with Coughlin who said "He's alright, he's got a shoulder bag" (Richard had one also). Jan also thought that his tour perm might have helped.

Jan almost immediately went on the road with the band and toured extensively all over the world. There was no pressure on him to copy the existing Caravan keyboard sound, but he was happy with the organ, fuzz box sound. Sadly the band broke up after the Better By Far album because of management and financial difficulties. Jan also undertook a world tour with Camel, along with David Sinclair.

Leaving the music business Jan got a degree in music and philosophy and ended up in partnership running Greenhills Studio in Herne Bay. He also for a time ran a small record company. Jan then worked as a cabby and subsequently became an instructor with BSM in Canterbury where, between musical excursions with Caravan, he can be seen with his proteges careering around the streets of Canterbury.

I asked Jan what it was like working with Tony Visconti on "Better by Far"

Tony was a lovely bloke to work with. I recall that he was a quick worker and relied a lot on instinct. At the time of Better By Far, he had just completed recording "Low" with David Bowie and we were his next clients. He carried some of the techniques used with Bowie into the studio with us and you might notice that the overall sound on "Better By Far" is a bit different to some of the other Caravan recordings. That's because Tony used a lot of harmonised snare drum, similar to that used on "Low". He was always pushing the boundaries of recording and was interested in new technologies. Jan also stressed that "Man in a Car" which he wrote for that album had nothing to do with his current activities!

How did he feel about re-joining Caravan?

Being in a band is an on-going process and it's always difficult when there are personnel changes. I don't live that far from Pye, and I have to confess that when I was approached I was raring to go - I was just up for playing again. After running the recording studio, I didn't

JAN SCHELHAAS

want to play at all for a year or so, but my interest was somehow rekindled. And I did enjoy playing with Dave and the band at the Canterbury festival.

Did you have much chance to rehearse?

Absolutely not. I had a tape of some of the new stuff and managed to get a feel of how the band played and had developed. And I had little time with the band before the UK dates. Personally, I would have preferred a series of gigs rather than the one-offs as it would have been easier to get into the groove and develop the music.

A number of fans have remarked that the band seemed to be enjoying themselves on stage

I certainly was. It was instantly enjoyable and I can remember thinking "I can remember what this was like" (a reference to Jan's time as a full time musician).

Do you play on all the tracks on the new album?

Yes, although on "Revenge" and "Nowhere to Hide" the main keyboards are Dave's with a little of mine added. The main backing tracks were recorded in London with overdubs at Pye's. This probably gives the album its continuity of sound.

What was it like working with Julian?

Great. Julian was very professional and was held in great respect by the band. He was also producing and

engineering simultaneously. He pulled no punches and was very decisive in determining what worked and what didn't work. He is very experienced with new recording technology. When it came to mixing in the old days there would be a mammoth mixing session on analogue at the end of recording. Now with the new equipment you can mix as you go.

What do you think of the new album?

It's difficult to be objective when you have been absorbed in the recording process. Like any album there is always a slight trade-off as you always feel that there is never enough time to achieve perfection! You always think, there's stuff I could have played better. For example, a track on the album "A whole lot better", which I like a lot, was recorded in about five minutes. I could have worked on my parts for 4 days.

Overall, I think the album stands up well. Working in the studio in London with the band has greatly assisted the continuity and feel of the album. And the result of Julian's production is a big plus.

So you are enjoying the Caravan experience again?

Immensely. I'm writing again so I hope to build up material which might be considered suitable for Caravan. I'm enjoying playing live with the band and am looking forward to France in February. Mind you, I wouldn't mind playing Edinburgh!

Review - A Nights Tale, Live in the USA

Ref: Classic Rock Productions, CRP 1013

I heard a lot about Caravan being the surprise success of Nearfest. On the evidence of their performance on this live CD of the concert, it's well merited.

All the Way and a pithy Oik provide a gentle opening and feature two cracking solos by Doug. Next up is the classic Nine Feet Underground featuring extended solos by Dave, underpinned by the solid backline of Richard, Jim and Simon. Pye's vocals, as distinctive and tuneful as ever, were well supported by Geoffrey's viola playing. If I have one minor gripe, it would have been great to hear the trademark dirty Hammond sound. That said, the interplay between David and Doug is spot on, as are Pye's and Jim's vocal harmonies. The final section of the song features a jazzy, Holdsworth style solo by Doug.

The medley is particularly worthy of inclusion and acts as a snapshot of the band's back catalogue. The songs in this section highlight Geoffrey's wonderful multi-instrumental talents. As I have said before one of my all time Caravan favourites is Nightmare and this version doesn't disappoint. From the Battle of Hastings album we have an uplifting I know why you're laughing followed by the climax of the show For Richard. In the introductions to this song, it's a close call for the star of the show, but the whole CD serves to illustrate a cohesive group effort: tight playing which allows each member to put their individual stamp on the music.

To sum up, an excellent recording combining good sound quality and packaging. A worthwhile purchase for any Caravan fan.

Also worth investigation is an accompanying DVD (PAL ref: CRP 1011) which features some extra tracks and interviews, although some of the concert footage could have been better lit. Both products are available from the new Caravan on-line shop.



Bright Shiny Day - The Caravan Recording Sessions



Ralph on Triangle at the Recording of Unauthorised Breakfast Item

It was a bright, sunny August day as I disembarked from the train from Norwich and made my way by tube to Finsbury Park. As I took the long walk to my destination, 407 Hornsey Road, I was wondering just what the day would bring, invited as I had been to make a small contribution to the recording of Caravan's new album, being made under the working title of, 'The Unauthorised Breakfast Item' *.

I arrived at the 'Sweet Georgia Brown' recording studios and made my way up to the second floor, to be greeted warmly by Pye Hastings. I felt so welcome and this feeling continued as I met all those present at that time. Julian Hastings was seated at the mixing desk, Doug was sat reading a newspaper on one sofa, while Dave made notes in a book on another. Julian was playing through a partially completed Hastings number- the skeleton of a song with 'guide vocals'.

Simon Bentall appeared and it was clear that he was going to be a busy boy adding his bits to a range of songs. Initially, these were the Sinclair compositions. Already I sensed that for everyone, recording in the studio consisted of lots of sitting and waiting. As experienced musicians they were obviously used to this and regarded it as something you just had to put up with. Around about this time, Jim Leverton and Richard Coughlan arrived and settled into the same pattern of hanging around.

The period from lunchtime to around four o'clock

consisted mainly of Simon sat in the recording booth doing his bit. It was fascinating to see the ideas develop. For the Sinclair songs, Dave was totally in charge. He would suggest to Simon the kind of sound or instrument he wanted and Simon would oblige. Simon's contribution would either be accepted or rejected. Those present in the room at the time would also contribute with ideas (invariably Doug). Pye and Richard at this stage tended to remain in the other room next door. Overseeing everything was Julian and I was impressed, not only by his obvious technical skill, but by his control over all things- almost autocratic in style- but absolutely essential to move things along and to keep things together. At times he would overrule the songwriter and say, such and such wouldn't work. His status as engineer and producer was respected absolutely by the band members. I remember, for example, when Simon was made to do seven takes using a 'rainstick', until Julian was satisfied with the timing and the type of sound. On another occasion Jim was doing take after take for a Hastings composition because Julian wasn't satisfied with the style of bass playing: I don't know how Jim stuck to the task so valiantly without so much as an expletive!

My own moment of glory arrived when Dave invited me to contribute to his composition entitled 'That day' by playing finger bells. Although it involved a simple 'ting' four bars into the song, I must admit to being nervous as I sat, earphones on, in the studio, trying to ensure that I managed what was required of me. I did it on the second take, although Julian informed me that in any case he was able, by technological wizardry, to sample the sound and move it, ever- so- slightly, to the absolute precise spot in the recording.

Without doubt, the most intriguing part of the day was taken up by watching and listening to the development of a song from initial chords, through to a stage where one could envisage the final product. I walked in on Pye playing a new song on acoustic guitar, called at this stage, 'I'll be there', to Richard Coughlan, so that Richard would have a feel for the outline of the song when it began to be laid down. Typical of the way Pye works, at this stage there were no lyrics. He is well known for making up his words at the last minute. Later in the day, Pye and Richard entered the recording room and before long they were playing the song from a start to finish point, Richard deciding which drumming style would go best with it, altering this over time until he was satisfied with the outcome. Then Simon joined them, adding the appropriate percussion. At

Bright Shiny Day

this point Jim, who was seated in the mixing room, started to play along on bass. Doug, meanwhile, sat on the floor, working out a guitar part to accompany the emerging song. Dave would listen intently for a while, play along on keyboards and then return to reading his newspaper before once again working out a possible part. As it was Pye's song, there was no doubt whatsoever who was in charge of the direction the song should take, although he was happy for people to add what they thought appropriate, as long as it was set within the basic framework. Once the bass, drums and rhythm guitar had been laid down the song was 'put to bed' and would be completed at Pye's home studio.

The recording sessions were due to continue for one more day- Jimmy Hastings would be there-with completion at Pye's house. The only absentee throughout the recording had been Geoffrey Richardson as he had been fully occupied down at the Sandwich Folk Festival. He would be asked to contribute later- hopefully space would be available for him to develop the songs further. I say this because I know on one song for example, a solo part had been added on guitar rather than keyboards simply because Dave was absent that day.

The time for me to leave had arrived as I had a train to catch back to Norwich. I was therefore unable to stay and listen to Dave adding keyboard bits to some of the songs, but still I shouldn't be greedy! I had had a fabulous treat of a day and it had been an absolute privilege to witness the development of songs from their embryonic stage and to experience the talent of an exceptional group of musicians and the songwriting talents of Messrs Hastings and Sinclair.

**You may be interested to know that this title originates from the band's recent trip to America to play at the Nearfest. Geoffrey Richardson was at breakfast and was filling his plate according to the menu he had chosen. By error he took something which was not on his 'list' and put it on his plate. As he sat down he was approached by the waiter who said, 'I'm sorry sir but do you realise that you have collected an unauthorised breakfast item?'*

***You may also like to know that I have it on good authority that Ralph's "bells" have been incorporated into several tracks of the new album.*

Post script

Little did I know that I was the last 'outsider' to witness Caravan members performing with Dave Sinclair, albeit on parts of songs, rather than a full band performance. Moreover, I was witness to



songs that might not see the light of day, although I desperately hope Dave's tracks are salvaged and put out on a solo album. It certainly is true to say that they have a very different flavour to material you are used to from Caravan, but its release would enable you to judge whether the record company were right to consider them unsuitable as band material. As ever his tracks exhibit a real songwriting talent.

Much has already been written about the sad episode of Dave's departure, much of it pure speculation by some fans, whose emotive comments were in danger of aggravating a sensitive situation, with the potential to sink both Caravan's and Dave's future ambitions. For my part, I was upset at Dave's departure, but am looking forward to the latest incarnation of Caravan. The band have a great keyboard player on board with Jan Schelhaas and a new album on the way, while Dave will hopefully be able to finish and release his recordings and maybe play some live dates at some point. As an optimist I can see that maybe we've got two for the price of one here. Long live Caravan and to Dave our very best wishes and support for the future.

Photos and Article: Ralph Cross

THE UNAUTHORISED BREAKFAST ITEM

Pye: we were having a particularly difficult (and rancorous) time in the studio, and I felt that I needed to do something to pull things together. I wrote this straight off and got everyone to play on it. It's a bluesy sort of number, and is crucial in that it possibly helped to prevent the band imploding. I described to Geoffrey the type of line I needed and he played it perfectly on banjo.

"WILD WEST STREET" 4m 47sec



Totally different to anything else on the album, this instrumental track is a grower. Features Geoffrey (who wrote it) extensively on cello, viola and acoustic guitar. Fairly ambient in texture, this is an excellent

atmospheric track.

Geoffrey: This reflects my time living virtually next door to Coughlin's pub in West Street, Faversham. At the time I was living in a Georgian flat which had a huge space which I set up as my music room. I placed one mike in the centre of the room and laid down the tracks on my portostudio. I think the size and acoustics of the room add to the atmosphere which is present on the track. I handed the tape over to Julian who worked his wizardry and added some keyboards by Jan. I developed the song about 2 years ago and it only took about 5 minutes to compose.

"NOWHERE TO HIDE" 8m 54sec

An excellent heavyweight track by Dave Sinclair which features tremendous lead

vocals by Jim Leverton. This track just builds and builds and features powerful playing by Geoffrey, Doug and Dave which climaxes with stunning guitar and keyboard solos. Some of you may have heard this one live.

"LINDERS FIELD" 3m 36 sec

A Doug Boyle instrumental. Doug wrote the guitar part initially to go over the end of a Dave Sinclair number. Doug subsequently went into the studio with Julian and developed the guitar part and then Doug also put down the bass part. A loop was produced with Jimmy adding flutes and Jan piano. This is a very gentle number which is excellent. Doug was slightly reticent about the inspiration to this tune – any guesses?



In summary, Caravan have delivered an excellent album which grows and grows the more it is played. A few friends (both Caravan and non Caravan fans) who have heard it were most impressed and hopefully with the right exposure, it will sell in decent quantities thus rewarding the band for all their efforts. Highly recommended.





As I had not had my Caravan fix for some time, it was with great pleasure that I renewed old acquaintances with Ralph and Codge at the Astoria for the double bill with Focus.

On entering the Astoria at around 7pm what became apparent was the large crowd which had already gathered. And by the end of Focus' set no one else was getting into the building.

I have to say that Focus played an excellent set featuring all of their well-known numbers: Sylvia, Hocus Pocus, etc. Each of the quartet was able to demonstrate their excellent musicianship, but special mention must go to Mr Van Leer who was outstanding on the flute and the Hammond. I did wonder whether Jan might try to borrow it for Caravan's set. Focus thoroughly deserved their excellent reception.

Caravan made a gentle start to their set opening with a combined version of "All the way" and "Oik". Next up was "the Dog" with Jan finishing the number with an extended synth solo. When Pye next introduced "9ft underground", I thought that this would probably be a testing and nervy time for Jan, given it was David's trademark number. If it was a test then Jan passed with flying colours. The keyboards had evidently been brought up in the mix, and it appeared that some rearrangements had been effected to allow several band members the space to solo. To the observer, there appeared to be a lot of smiling faces on stage and I detected a funkier band.

Two numbers from the forthcoming album followed, both Hastings compositions. The first "Tell me why" was an upbeat, floaty number that will grow on the listener the more times it is heard. On the other hand, "Revenge" was an immediate driving number with a powerful guitar riff that I'm sure will become a favourite. It was also great to see a Pye solo: a much underrated guitarist.

Geoffrey Richardson and Doug Boyle stole the show on "Nightmare". Geoffrey began the number and received a rousing reception with a finger picking solo on his viola. This must rank as one of the band's best live numbers and showcases the talents of two outstanding musicians. The Coughlan, Bentall, Leverton rhythm section came into its own at the denouement of the set as we witnessed powerful renditions of "Backwards" and "For Richard". I have to mention that throughout the set Jim's vocals were excellent: his recent work with Slim Whitman paying dividends. "Marigold" Richardson again excelled himself with his spoons solo on the encore "If I could.." to end a t h o r o u g h l y enjoyable and excellent set by the band. My only gripe was that there was only time for one encore.

On this display, I consider that the band can enter optimistically 2003. They have a great replacement in Jan; strong new material; and next year I do hope that they manage to fit Edinburgh into their tour schedule!



THE UNAUTHORISED BREAKFAST

The much anticipated new studio album from Caravan has now been completed and it has been well worth the wait. The band's management is currently in discussions about the release of the album. I received a preview copy of the album which comprises 10 tracks: 7 by Pye Hastings and 1 each from Geoffrey Richardson, Dave Sinclair and Doug Boyle. In my opinion, it is an exciting and very contemporary album, with something for everyone; and should surely attract a host of new fans, given the right promotion. It is also pleasing to see the return of Jimmy Hastings on a number of tracks. Special mention must also be made of the superb sound quality due to the excellent production and mixing skills of Julian Gordon Hastings. My own thoughts on the tracks follow, and I'm grateful to Pye, Geoffrey and Doug for providing additional background.



Julian Hastings and Doug

"RIGHT FOR ME" 5m 37sec

A song that immediately grabs the listener with its melody. Mainly vocal based, it is a fine band effort which features excellent lead guitar work from Doug. Pye informed me that this track is to do with current world tensions and worries about war etc. Who knows the truth of what we are being told.

"REVENGE" 5m 15 sec

A rocker, this track has been played live at the recent gigs to great reaction. More immediate than "Right For Me" given the powerful introductory guitar riff. With excellent keyboards by Dave and Jan, it builds nicely and features a keyboard solo at its conclusion. I understand that Doug persuaded Dave to play a wah-wah pedal through his keyboard to stunning effect.

Pye informs me that this song is about a promoter who used to represent the band and let them down. An all too familiar tale in the music business.

"THE UNAUTHORISED BREAKFAST ITEM" 4m 44sec

This track has its origins from NEARFEST, USA when Geoffrey was accosted by a waiter at the band's hotel for taking for his breakfast an "unauthorised breakfast item" which was not part of the set menu. I understand there is a bit more to it though, and the lyrics in particular are worth a listen. This is an excellent track which has a slightly jazzy Steely Dan feel, and features some great keyboards and jazzy guitar. Ralph Cross' bells are well up in the mix; and the lyrics by Pye are tremendous.

Pye told me that Geoffrey had come down to breakfast and taken the set menu only to be informed that he had taken an unauthorised breakfast item. As Geoffrey had come down to breakfast without any money etc Pye ended up paying by credit card due to the



mysterious disappearance of two unnamed band members who were sharing Geoffrey's table. Pye says that in retrospect, it was worth paying given that the incident has spawned an album track and title. Listen to the lyrics!

"TELL ME WHY" 6m 16 sec

A track which has also been played live. It starts quite acoustically with vocals by Pye. The track has an upbeat happy feel to it. Fine playing by the band, it is a floaty number with splendid solos by Jimmy on sax.

Pye says this is a straightforward love song. He had purchased a brand new Taylor acoustic guitar and this was the first song he composed on it using open string chords. For those technically minded, Pye said that this type of guitar needs to be worn in to develop the richness of sound.

"IT'S GETTING A WHOLE LOT BETTER" 8m 57sec

For me and a few friends who had the pleasure of a "blind tasting" while visiting my house, this is one of the highlights of the album. A slow tempo number, it is underpinned by a steady beat and fine percussion by Richard and Simon. Supplemented by some excellent strings by Geoffrey, it has a light feel and is classic Caravan. Doug adds an excellent guitar break and the texture of the keyboards (mainly piano) help to build the track. The icing on the cake is the solos by Jimmy which melt into the tune. Stunning.

Pye said that this track reflects going through an unhappy period and thinking that things could only get better. They did and have been fine for a while.



Photos: Ralph Cross

"HEAD ABOVE THE CLOUDS" 7m 21sec

In contrast to the previous track, this is a very uptempo number with a happy celtic feel. A slow string introduction segues into a guitar driven song. It features excellent backing vocals which play off Pye's lead vocals. Keyboards and guitar challenge each other resulting in some blistering extended soloing from Doug. If played live, I'm sure this number would quickly become a favourite – one of my favourites.

I (and certain other members of the band) were sure that this song was about Pye's birthplace. But Pye says that the inspiration for this track came from the book "Highland Wilderness" by the photographer Colin Prior. The book illustrates what the Highlands of Scotland really look like. Pye wanted to convey a dreamy feel to the song of hills, clouds and mountains. He does this perfectly.

"STRAIGHT THROUGH THE HEART" 4m 40 sec

This track features some fine banjo playing by Geoffrey – are there no limits to this mans talents? A blues type number, it is probably less immediate than some of the other tracks. Nevertheless a fine track which develops the more it is played.



Au Revoir: Dave Sinclair

Life on the planet Caravan is rarely dull and is analogous to a roller coaster ride: plenty of ups and downs.

The news reached me – of which most of you will, by now, be aware - that David Sinclair, the talismanic keyboard player had departed from the band. A press statement setting out David's departure was posted on the official website in October. The main reason given was an apparent difference in musical direction which was emerging between David and others, which came to a head during the recording sessions for the new studio album. I also understand that the record company did not consider some of David's material suitable as Caravan material.

In my own humble opinion- and I have to declare that I don't have as much day-to day contact with the band as you may imagine – it's a pity that such differences could not have been addressed before most of the recording had been completed; and I think there was a general recognition that David's departure could have been handled better. Some speculative comments on the website portrayed Pye as the villain of the piece and suggested some kind of ego trip. Those of you who have had the good fortune to meet Pye will realise how well off the mark those suggestions were - I don't think I've encountered anyone with less ego. But we should perhaps remind ourselves that Pye and Richard have been the only constants in the lifetime of the band, so is fairly obvious who will make ultimate decisions on the band's musical direction.

This was a very sad episode and one that I gather came close to breaking up the band. However, most bands have line-up changes, and I do believe we need to look forward and support both Caravan (as they move towards their 35th year in existence) and



David with their plans for the future. I sincerely wish David well and hope that he continues to carry on making music (which I know he is determined to do). I also hope that the tracks, which were recorded, but not used for the studio album, will see the light of day at some stage, perhaps on a solo album. Ralph, Codge and I have made clear to David that the newsletter and the website will continue to be vehicles for him to publicise his music.

At the same time I'm delighted that it is Jan who has replaced David in the band which helps to maintain continuity. Those of you who saw Jan on the short UK tour will appreciate how quickly and seamlessly he has integrated himself into the band, with little rehearsal time. It all augurs well for the future.



Martyn Ford - All this just "For Richard"

It all began when I decided to look-up some websites of some of the groups and artistes I had worked with back in the 70s & 80s and to try and make contact with some of my old friends and colleagues. One of those that I found was for Barclay James Harvest, a band I had worked with both in the studio and on the road as an arranger and conductor with my orchestra. Through original BJH member "Woolly" Woolstenholme I then spoke to their manager Mark Powell who, coincidentally, also manages Caravan. This was in the spring earlier this year, and by a remarkable coincidence, Caravan had just been booked to appear at The Quebec International Summer Festival on July 7th. Oh, and would they like to perform with an orchestra that just happens to be available?!

A few days later Mark again contacted me and asked me if I was interested in performing with Caravan in Quebec? Was!! I should say so. I had nothing but the fondest of memories working with the group both live and in the studio, and I jumped at the opportunity of working with the Band some 28 years later! Mark then asked if I had any of the original music scores from the studio days of "For Girls that Grow Plump in the Night", or the live The New Symphonia album, both of which I conducted and arranged.

I should explain that, having worked as an arranger, conductor and producer in the music business for about 25 years, I have a somewhat large "archive" (consisting of brown envelopes stored in dozens of cardboard boxes in my loft!) which I had dutifully transported with me on every house move since the early seventies, an amazing thirteen homes in thirty years. That's a lot of moving!

Lying on top of the very first box I randomly open is a brown envelope clearly marked "Caravan" and inside it was the music for several songs and a couple of scores, including a score and "dots" (music) for "Virgin on the

Ridiculous" and "Mirror for the Day", both arranged by me, and the dots only for "For Richard", arranged by the late Simon Jeffes. An extraordinary find - it was obviously meant to be. I spent a further two days going through every other box and envelope only to find absolutely nothing else Caravan related. For some reason, hard as we tried, we could not locate the score for the latter, so I got my old friend and collaborator John Bell to generate a new score from the parts on his wonderful computer programme.

Mark successfully negotiated an acceptable deal on my behalf to appear with the Band and soon my flight tickets arrived. It was really going to happen. I also had the chance of chatting to Pye on the phone who told me that everybody was really looking forward to meeting-up again after so many years. Although, somewhat understandably, there was a certain amount of nervous anticipation within the Band as they had to re-work the songs which had evolved and changed considerably over the years. I know that they worked very hard to get the arrangements exactly as they had been on the live album.

The Festival organisers proposed schedule was that I would arrive in Montreal on the Friday night, rehearse with the orchestra on Saturday morning, travel to

Quebec Saturday afternoon, do a Sunday morning rehearsal with both Band and orchestra, a sound check with both in the afternoon and the gig in the evening.

On my arrival I quickly found out that most of this went out of the window. There was to be no Saturday orchestra only rehearsal, no Sunday morning rehearsal and all that we were offered was a sound check!! After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, we managed to negotiate one hour with

the Band and orchestra in the afternoon. This meant dropping one of the planned orchestral numbers so we ended-up playing just "For Richard".

On the plus side, I had arrived in Montreal on the last night of that city's famous Jazz Festival and the city was buzzing. Walking out of my hotel straight into the streets that were alive with stages and performers around every corner. It was a wonderful atmosphere.

I have non blood related family in Montreal. My brother's wife's brother and sister and their respective



Martyn Ford - All this just "For Richard"

families both live there, so it was very pleasant to be taken out for a spectacular Portuguese (!) dinner on the Friday night, followed by a guided tour round the sites at night. A beautiful and vibrant city. The richest and most well to do live on Mont Real itself, and I was seriously impressed when we drove past my host's mansion close to the top of the city's central hill.

The following morning saw my brother-in-law (twice removed!?) and I wandering round the quaint and historic old part of the city in beautiful sunshine. Then it was back to the hotel to be picked-up by the Festival transport for my journey along the main highway to Quebec. My travelling companions were David Palmer (ex Jethro Tull who was conducting the other half of the concert) and drummer Kevin Campbell. We all got on famously and had lots to chat about, especially as I had also worked with Tull a little back in the 70s. We were driven by a "resting" actress who insisted that we sample the delights of a restaurant that specialised in roast chicken, and it was extremely good, and me who doesn't normally eat chicken unless I know where it's come from!

We arrived at the Quebec Hitler, sorry Hilton, where immediately in the lobby it was big hugs all-round with Pye, Geoff and Richard and then introductions to Dave, Jim, Simon, Doug and Mark. It was a great reunion and there was lots to talk about.

Quebec, like Montreal, was buzzing, and the city was filled to bursting at the seams with visitors for this two week long festival. We all had time on our hands, so it was drinking, eating and shopping until the Sunday afternoon where we all met-up for the one hour's allotted rehearsal time.

The orchestra was made-up of professional, freelance players drawn from the internationally renowned Montreal Symphony and other smaller orchestras in the Montreal/Quebec region. On the whole they were very helpful, very good and very responsive to my needs and requests. The stage was huge and the sound system superb, so I have no doubt that what the audience was about to hear was light years ahead, technically speaking, to what was heard in the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane back in 1974.

It was time to go on. There were thousands out there, and I later heard that the audience guesstimate was somewhere in the region of 60,000. "For Richard" was to be the final number and climax of the Caravan set, so I had the luxury of being able to go out front and listen to the band play. They sounded incredible. They were tight and all very obviously having a great time. The audience was well up for it, and each song was greeted with rapturous applause, both at its beginning and end. I suppose the things that really stood out for me were that Pye's voice still sounded as distinctive

and internationally accurate as it always had been, Richard's drumming was as solid as ever, Geoff's playing was still delightfully musical and quirky, and Doug Boyle's guitar playing was a revelation. Such fluid, free flowing, musical and technically brilliant playing was inspiring.

Now it was my turn. I couldn't wait to get on. I was introduced to the crowd and we were off for 12 minutes of Drury Lane revisited. The orchestra played out of their skins, driven by my flailing arms, and the Band rose to the occasion brilliantly and we even managed to finish together! The crowd went wild. Oh, the smell of the crowd and the roar of the greasepaint! It takes some beating I can tell you! In hindsight, we should have gone back on for another bow and even an encore, but as always there was not enough time and the crew were already shifting stuff around in readiness for the next set.

For ten Canadian dollars, people could buy a plastic lapel badge which gave them access to every concert over the entire fortnight. Each badge had a red, flashing LED in it. The site of 60,000 of them winking at you in the night across the Planes of Abraham was a sight to behold and one I shall never forget.

We all met-up backstage, flushed, high and uplifted by the reception and the musical experience. Already there was talk of "We've got to do some more", and "Why have we waited nearly thirty years to do this!"

The next day I travelled to Montreal where I spent the day making contacts with various people involved in the arts with a view to doing some more work in Canada. I even had time in Quebec and Montreal to meet up with other friends who I know through my hobby of breeding a rare and unusual breed of gundog - the Irish Water Spaniel.

The only downside was that I somehow managed to leave my Filofax in a telephone booth on a Metro Station in Montreal, so half of my life has disappeared in one moment of forgetfulness.

That night I flew back to Heathrow and then on home to Leicester. I had flown to Canada and back for 12 minutes of music, but I would do it again and I am pleased to say that there are already plans in the pipeline to do some more. Can't wait. Mark tells me that he had heard much more in this performance than the original, and I am now looking forward to hearing it on CD.

Thanks guys - it was brilliant. My strongest memory, apart from the music, was that we got on so well and laughed such a lot!! That was lovely.

And Simon - hope you were listening mate.

Martyn Ford.

Caravan at the Limelight Club, Crewe

3rd November 2002 - by Terry Westhead

As usual I was looking forward to another concert by Caravan. November 1996 seems a long time ago now when I first drove across the country to see Caravan play at Norwich to a couple of hundred die-hard fans. A lot of water has passed under the bridge since then. I've seen the fan base increase and the web-site evolve, now taking "hits" by the thousands. I've seen them at the Astoria several times, been to their gold disk award party, met the band, Richard Sinclair, plus some of the supporters responsible for this recent sustained increase in interest in the band - Ralph Cross (web-site co-ordinator), Eric Gray (Newsletter editor) and Codge Barber (Newsletter publisher). All good people willing to share a laugh; and a pint!



Time to take stock. What do I think of the present band line-up? A good question, because Dave Sinclair has taken an early bath. Again. The first time Dave parted company was after "Land of Grey and Pink", one of Caravan's strongest albums. This was particularly damaging. After a return for "For Girls.....", "New Symphonia", and "Cunning Stunts", he was off again. This time he was replaced by Jan

Schelhaas whose keyboard sound fitted in much more with Caravan's music and, luckily for Caravan, has in fact re-joined the band for the 2002 tour. Now it is a well known fact that band line-up changes cause damage in terms of following and inevitably sales. Look at the huge wobbles musically and financially encountered by Pink Floyd, Yes, Jethro Tull and to a lesser extent Camel when they had significant departures. The two most damaging departures for Caravan over the years have been the two Sinclairs, and of course they are missed. But then again, listening to some of the material they have produced outside of the Caravan framework, you have to say that Pye has been right on the button in both cases deciding that the band didn't want to go in the particular direction that Richard wanted to go in in the early seventies (towards freer jazzy rock, a la Hatfield and the North), and now with Dave (generally M.O.R. country-rock/slower material). This is my opinion, and you may think differently. But Caravan have a certain sound that, over the years, has stood the test of time. So I think Pye is quite correct in sticking to his guns. Hopefully, Dave will produce a CD of his music that didn't make it onto the Caravan new album (not out yet as I write this) and you can make your own minds up. So here we are in November 2002. It was a damp Sunday evening as I crawled down the M6 from Blackpool to Crewe. I thought about the venues chosen for the latest tour. Rotherham, Crewe, Great Malvern??? Surely this is prompting poor turn-outs? Again? Why can't they do Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow etc.? i.e. places where a lot of people live, and with big student populations? They must be the only band I like that makes me get out my Ordnance Survey map of Great Britain whenever a tour is announced. The omens weren't good - Crewe on a damp November Sunday evening seemed hardly the stuff dreams are made of, and must have felt a million miles from their American and Canadian concerts in the Summer. But a gig is a gig.

Caravan at the Limelight Club, Crewe

The 350 capacity Limelight Club was actually a good choice. It looked about two-thirds full which made things quite comfortable, whilst being pretty busy. There were three real-ales on hand-pump, and the acoustics were good. On came Caravan with new(ish) keyboardist Jan Schelhaas, sliding into action with "All the Way" from "Blind Dog at St. Dunstan". Not a total surprise - I thought they might pick a few off this album since he played on it. They then went into "Very Smelly Grubby Little Oik", again off "Blind Dog...". On came "Nine Feet Underground", Dave Sinclair's best song. How would Jan cope with it? Supremely professional is one way of describing it. He played much more of the actual tune from the original piece than Dave had been doing it recently. Also the keyboard he was using gave a much more authentic organ sound to it. Caravan then did a couple of new songs, "Revenge" being particularly good. "Liar" from "Battle of Hastings" came across well too. I always smile when the newer songs are given an airing because a lot of people see it as a cue to scuttle off to the toilets or the bar. It must cause some irritation to Pye. I don't think it's a case of the fans giving the thumbs down to the new songs. With any band I've ever seen, whenever new songs are played, it tends to happen. The funny thing is ten years later, these new songs are referred to as "Classics"!!

Noticeable by their absence were no songs from "Cunning Stunts", "Waterloo Lily" or their first album, which was a bit of a disappointment. But you can only fit so much into two hours or so. Most welcome was a rendition of Pengola/Backwards/A Hunting We Shall Go (Reprise) which showed the band in fine form. The band also made a great job of "The Dog, The Dog, He's at it Again..". It must be said how well Geoff Richardson and Doug Boyle are playing these days. I don't know if the mixing has generally improved but Geoff's viola and flute came across brilliantly. And Doug seems to have eight fingers on his left hand - some of the runs he was doing on guitar were phenomenal. When I first saw Doug in Norwich I thought "Who the hell is

he?". Now I couldn't imagine a Caravan performance without him. Of course the steady as a rock Richard Coughlan provided perfect rhythm supported by Jim on Bass. Also, Pye's voice continues strongly. Back into the set came the traditional finisher after a couple of years off - "For Richard" brought the main set to a deafening climax. So onto the encores. I spotted Geoff's spoons hanging off the mic. stand ready for "Golf Girl". But it didn't happen. The band came back on stage to rapturous applause and shouts of "More!". They went into "Memory Lain Hugh" / "Headloss" and that was it. No "If I could Do It All Over You..." either. I was a bit surprised. If they weren't doing "Golf Girl", why were the spoons there? Maybe they had run out of time. If this was the case then it's a shame - they came on just after 9:30 PM - late for a Sunday gig and surely mis-timing shouldn't have been an issue. Perhaps they never

intended to do it or they were tired. Who knows. I thought as a whole that the concert was excellent and felt that it had gone down with the Cheshire crowd really well. As for Jan's playing, he played marvellously. Caravan have a tailor-made replacement for Dave Sinclair, and all credit to Jan for stepping in when the chance came. It must beat giving driving lessons. He seemed to be really enjoying himself - he smiled quite appropriately like a Cheshire cat throughout the entire set.

So that was it. I shot back up a now-empty M6 puzzling about Geoff's unused spoons but nevertheless thoroughly pleased with how the concert went.



The Continuing Adventures of the Blind Dug

As our hero's will (again) be concentrating their energies in touring south of the border, this year, it has been left to the Blind Dug to try to establish a pawhold in central Scotland.

In the last edition I highlighted the Dug's intention of trying to get some gigs and this has borne fruit. The band sent me the following prior to the Canterbury festival: "Cheers for the mention in the newsletter, it made our day again, especially as we received it on the morning we were leaving to go to Manchester and see Roger Waters which was a rockin' gig, but not as rockin' as the ferry gig (Renfrew Ferry) of legend. We thought we'd write prior to this year's Canterbury festival and tell you what we've been up to.

The band has been going from strength and everyone involved is still totally up for it. We played our first gig on the 9th of June at Bar Bliss which is a tiny rock pub in Kirkintilloch (near Glasgow) and everyone loved it. Our set ended up being about 2 hours long as we were allowed to do whatever we wished, hence having to play some non-caravan songs in the first set to ease people into the weirdness to follow. We are now preparing for our next outing to the same pub, but this time we have managed to wangle a smoke machine and light show out of the owner because he was so impressed last time.

We have still not got a proper recording of ourselves but enclosed is a CD recorded from rehearsals and a live version of Waterloo Lily at Bar Bliss (is this the first time its been played live?). We have been sending the CD to all gig venues in Glasgow so we should be getting some more gigs throughout the autumn. We will keep you posted if you fancy coming along and are not easily offended musically (we played Symptom of the Universe by Black Sabbath between Waterloo Lily and the Dog)."

The band may be pleased/shocked to learn that the CD is now in the possession of one Pye Hastings – and we eagerly await his feedback! On the gig front, the fates conspired against me seeing the band in Edinburgh on 22 September. I had also arranged to attend the band's Edinburgh gigs on two previous occasions, but both were cancelled because of bad flooding in central Scotland and the illness of one of the band. We wish the Dug well, and hopefully, I'll get the opportunity to see them in the not too distant future.

On the canine theme, I was interested to read in Mojo's "hound sounds" column, their explanation of the "Blind Dog" title. Apparently, the title is derived from Noel Coward's explanation to a child who saw two dogs getting overly friendly. "The one in front is blind and the other one is pushing him to St Dunstan's (school for the blind)". I understand from a reliable source that this is only part of the explanation – any guesses?

Letters and Emails

Caught 'the boys' at the Fringe Theatre, Malvern last night. Very good [although pity about D Sinc.]. Haven't seen them possibly since Drury Lane days! Gifted to 'Nine Feet', 'The Dog' plus surprise encores 'Memory Lain/Headloss' then 'If I could do it'!!! -expecting 'Hoedown'. Pity we had to pay twelve quid, when the Londoners can see Caravan AND Focus for a tanner!

Bill Treen.

Hi, Just a line to say i've just seen caravan at The Brook in Southampton and well what else can i say except Fantastic it made the hairs on my neck stand on end. I have been a fan for as long as i can remember and i always will be, I last saw them in Brighton in the 70s that was great too. Of all the music that i like and thats a very wide range when i need something to perk me up it always come back to caravan. If you have any contact with the group please pass on my thanks to them for all the joy they have given me over the years from there music and i know their have been some struggles for them over the years but they will always win through, some people don't know a good thing when they see it. Great to see a rearrangements of caravan well deserved and can't wait to see them again, The small venue was great you felt they were playing just for you, all the best

to you and thanks for setting up this site..... A question, have you any idea who the girl on the front of Plump in the night album is....

Thanks Sam

Hello everyone at Caravan info.

Two days ago I decided to get all my long stored vinyl out and guess what I put on first? If I could do it all over you. And now I discover that I am not the only one in the world who remembers the great Caravan, thanks to your site.

I have been busy starting a family for a while now so music has taken a back seat but I am up for Caravan at the Astoria and so are several much younger people who I know who are very much into them. I feel like the world has gone on without me for a while as I thought the band would all be comfy slipped grandads by now.

One thing I did not find on your site is how do I order from the releases list. I have most of the 'proper' albums up to 78 ish but I fancy getting the cd's for the extra tracks. Well done you lot you have really made my year, honestly.

With best wishes Cameron.

Nice town. Good hotel. Good meal beforehand. Everything set fair. Fine band - played well (as always), lots of our favourites, but the venue!! Have I gone completely soft and standing at gigs is no longer the done thing? Compared to Milton Keynes last year this



Letters and Emails

was really slumming it. Surely a band as talented and popular as Caravan can book better venues. When you have got a good product, a bit of promotion would not come amiss (where apart from this site is the tour being promoted?) I know lots of Caravan fans who knew nothing about the tour. The alternative would be to go for a bigger and better venue with a popular support who would appeal to the same type of fans (Focus may do the trick, but why midweek?) Sorry if this seems like a moan. We really did enjoy the gig, but we also want to see the band prosper as they deserve to.

Alan & Ann Jones

Hi Ralph, I don't know if you will remember but I met you one evening about eleven years ago at a school one evening (near to your home, not mine) where you had arranged for Caravan to play - I think as a surprise for your 40th ?? I had spotted the advert for the concert in the "Independent". Afterwards you invited me back to meet up with the band (in the library I think). Anyway, I just did a "search" for Caravan and found your web-page. That was an excellent surprise. And from the tour dates I see that they will be playing in Wolverhampton which is somewhat closer to me than your school. I think this will be something like the tenth time of seeing them. I still enjoy playing their albums (well CD's now) and will certainly take the opportunity to see them play again, anywhere within approx 100 miles of where I live. Thanks for taking all of the time to produce a website for the likes of people like me. As you say, just another (long time) fan. It all started 27 years ago with The Land of... (which I have two vinyl copies and one CD off).

Regards, Geoff Toy.

Thanks to all the guys for coming over to the US to perform at NEARfest. I've been a fan since the late 70's and couldn't believe in my absolute wildest dreams that I'd have the opportunity to see the band live and in person in my home state of New Jersey. I hope the band had a good time here. I know it probably was taxing on the guys and gals to come all this way, but judging from the response from all the folks at the show and on the message board at the NEARfest website, I'm positive that a return to these shores would be very well received. You could at least count on me coming, LOL! Thanks again to Pye, David, Geoffery, Richard and all the others for making a 42 year-old's dream come true: hearing 'For Richard', 'Nine Feet Underground', and 'A Hunting We Will Go' done live and sounding as good as they day they were put onto tape. The music got me through tough times during my teen-age years. Now it brings a smile to my face and tears of joy from my eyes. You folks are the best! Bravo!

A dream come true last Sunday in Trenton. Caravan put on one hell of a set...standing ovations from the start from a packed house. I overheard a fellow at the vendor table say the group was going to Canada, but "would be back". Someday soon, I hope. I was thrilled that Caravan still does "9 feet Underground", it's the song that made

me a fan and always has been one of my favourites. Of course "For Richard" was the set closer. Can't wait to see them again, hopefully they'll play in the Philadelphia or Atlantic City area next time.

Tom Born

First of all, thank you so much for your marvellous site. Without it, I would be lost, and yearning for news about my favourite band. This is to comment on the recent news of Dave Sinclair's departure from the band. I must say, this seems to be a well-established pattern. Indeed, when back in 1971 he left for Matching Mole, as a result we all lost that distinct Caravan sound which was never recaptured, not even when Dave rejoined the band.

'For Girls That Grow Plump in the Night' is objectively a very fine record. But with Richard Sinclair gone, much of the whimsy and quirkiness is missing; and with Dave Sinclair back in the fold but seemingly muted, his distinct keyboard mood is lost. I realise that Pye has bravely and tenaciously kept the band alive, but must confess my frustration at Dave Sinclair's impatience back in 1971, when he quit the band at a time in which they were about to make it. I know, hindsight is 20/20... I have been a fan of Caravan for a long time, and especially of Dave's distinctive organ-playing. Caravan's first three albums never cease to be a delight. It is my opinion that his use of the Hammond organ is simply the best in the history of pop music. It is often hard to listen to keyboard sounds from the Seventies and even Eighties without smiling with derision. That is never the case for Dave. On the contrary, his Hammond is as classic as Jimi Hendrix's Stratocaster.

This summer we spent, as usual, a month at our villa on Lake Como, in northern Italy. One day, one of our guests was the CEO of Edel Records, the world's largest independent record label, out of Germany. I began to speak about Caravan as we were sitting outdoors overlooking the lake and sipping drinks. Then I invited him to join me in the drawing room to listen to "the best organ solo in the history of rock", as I put it. I put on "Winter Wine", and he, his wife, my wife, I and all the other guests flew on the wings of imagination as Dave's masterful solo unfolded. And then, when it seems to be over, but continues in an unexpected reprise, I could see him smile with utter delight. Not without some serendipity, it was then twilight. The Grigna Mountain (made of Dolomitic stone) across our villa took on pink and grey hues. Everybody remarked how similar the landscape had become to the cover of "In The Land Of Grey And Pink". Indeed, my thirteen-year old son asked me if the cover artist had been inspired by this landscape (you must be aware that the Dolomites invariably take on a pink hue at dusk). And, as "Winter Wine" ended, the church bells tolled--in the exact same key!

Anyway, I'm sorry to hear about Dave's sudden departure from Caravan. Is there any chance that his material will be released on a record of his own? I, and many others, would just love that. With all good wishes, toto corde,

Guido Mina di Sospiro

FINALLY

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

HTD Mail Order 01322 557355
www.htdrecords.com

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 who is 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 3-15 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

20 Greenbank Loan,
Edinburgh EH10 5SJ

Email: ralph@caravan-info.co.uk

Website: www.caravan-info.co.uk

Photos or memorabilia to be sent to:
codge@btinternet.com

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