

## THE GETAWAY GAZETTE

"My personal and heart-felt thanks to all those people who have offered generous help in running the fan club, to those who have extended kind wishes to my wife and child – and to everyone who has written in with such warmth, enthusiasm and understanding about my music. Hopefully, I'll be able to meet you all in a situation which isn't just after a concert, when I tend to be a bit tired. I'd also like to say that the response to the new club has been marvellous. It has been difficult following the collapse of IAFC, but we feel that there are so many people who want to keep in touch with me, that the choice was to have no fan club at all – or to try to do something. I think it's better to try to do something."

That's Chris's considered opinion of progress so far, and what better, more positive a tone on which to introduce the latest, fact-packed issue of The Getaway Gazette – hot off the presses and sizzling with information. Inside this edition, we're confident that there's plenty of interest and importance to look forward to, not least of which is some exciting news about Chris's next album. The bad news is that it won't be out until next year, but the good is that Chris has agreed – without any hesitation – to give you an exclusive, pre-release breakdown of all the tracks. He'll be talking in-depth and at length about them in the next Gazette – which you will be receiving either shortly before or concurrent with the record's launch – but, for now, he merely faces the small problem of writing the songs! More of Chris's progress on that front later – and on his plans for a new single later this year.

Since the last Gazette, Chris has fulfilled a personal promise to himself – and taken a well-earned break with his family. But he's still been far from idle! Most of you will doubtless have witnessed him in superb form at one or other of his recent concerts. He played a series of packed-out open-air shows in England, Switzerland and Germany – where, at the Nurburgring he performed before his largest ever audience of an estimated 100,000, supported by such little-known acts as U2, Joe Cocker and Rick Springfield! – as well as finding time to play in Ireland and dashing over to France for a well-received mini-tour. We'll leave it to Chris himself to relate some of the stand-out moments of his past few months. He called us long-distance from his home to bring you all up to date .....

### A ROYAL AUDIENCE

"Let's see, what have I been up to?" he said, consulting his diary. "Well, I went to London and did something pretty interesting there. I was invited to appear at a charity function in aid of Birthright, of which Princess Diana is the patroness. The charity looks into children's birth defects, the dietary problems of mothers before birth, cot deaths and all things associated with infants and infant care. The event was at the Savoy Hotel and there were about 250 people present, many of them top doctors, and there was an absolute rash of royalty! The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were there and, at the table I was sitting at, I had the Duchess of Westminster on my left, and the Duchess of Abercorn on my right!

The Duchess of Westminster is a big C de B fan, and she subsequently turned up at my Liverpool concert. Anyway, everyone at the event was most charming. I was guest celebrity of the night, and it was announced that 'This man can usually sell out Wembley Arena and always appears with his band – but this evening he's appearing solo.' I played for about 30 minutes and initially, everybody was a bit quiet because, for a start, there was no booze; it was just natural foods and drink. But towards the end I really got the crowd going and it was a great success. The Duchess of Gloucester came up personally and thanked me on several occasions. We raised about £14,000 – just amongst that many people."

### 007 de BURG

"I also made several trips to other countries – among them Switzerland. I went to Zurich, up a fantastic mountain where they made the James Bond film *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. There was this place right at the top, a revolving restaurant. That was an amazing day; 10,000 ft. up the Swiss mountains – to do a press conference! It was gorgeous".

### ANOTHER AWARD

"Recently, I was given my second award by the Ampex Company – called the Golden Reel Award – for one of the best records of last year made on Ampex tape; *Man On The Line*. I also got one for *The Getaway*. I donated the award, of 1,000 dollars, to the Friends of the Rotunda, a children's charity I support. In Munich, I did two shows to raise money for a hospital for under-privileged children in the city. We collected about 10,000 DM. which was very satisfying".

## MORE TALES FROM THE ROAD

"When we played Basle in front of 35,000 people, at one stage – as I did in all the concerts – I said 'light me up a fire for freedom'. And there must have been 20,000 lights flickering in the darkness. It was one of the most stirring things I've ever seen. Belfast was very special, too. Everybody has always been a bit apprehensive about playing there but, of everything that's happened to me and the band in the past year, I think we're all agreed that the two shows we did there were the most emotional highs that we've ever had. The people were so thrilled we were there. At the end of the second show I said: 'I'm going to go and tell everybody I know in the business that they should come to Belfast and play – because there is nothing to fear'. When I said that, the place went crazy! The cheering just went howling on and on non-stop for about three minutes. We almost had to get up and leave the stage. It was incredible"

"One point I'd like to raise about my live show in general is the fact that I know a lot of my older fans don't really like stuff like 'High On Emotion and I Love The Night. That point is, I've always been a man of many parts, and you only have to go back to Spanish Train and Other Stories to see that I've always been making rock music as well as ballads. The fact that I'm doing them on stage now in a rock format doesn't change the original concept of who I am; I'm a person who likes to write, record and perform both styles of music. If you look at High On Emotion, you'll find that it's one of the subtlest lyrics I've ever written. It took me a long time to write it because I had to say something in a very understated way. I Love the Night is no different from Don't Pay The Ferryman, for example"

"I do come across people, who could be described as C de B purists, who don't want me to change from the "At The End Of A Perfect Day" era – but there's nothing I can do about that because, apart from the fact that that's what I want to do and where I want to go – I also know that when you're playing huge auditoriums it's necessary to have more rhythmic songs. Both for entertainment and personal reasons. It's not just the quiet, romantic ones that get the keenest emotional feedback. I love people physically reacting to my music now and, since I'm currently writing for a new album, that's very much what I have in mind, you know, the fact that people like that physical release – and so do I".

## FROM CHRIS TO YOU ...

"There's another thing I'd like to say about all those big shows – which I think is very important. I feel very strongly that I've forged an intimate relationship with my fans, and as I stood up on the stage in front of so many thousands of people, I felt kind of elated – but sad. Because you lose that personal contact – and I would hate to think that the fans out there think I'm ignoring them. I'm not. I'm very aware of who they are, I'm aware of the special nature of our relationship and I'm kind of upset that it seems to be threatened. It's because of the fact that success demands that you can't really play to the two or three thousand in your audience that you'd like to – not when there's 30,000 who want to see you. It's kind of hard to explain ... but there are compromises which have to be made because of success – and I'm just as sad about them as the fans who feel it as well. But I do get a fair amount of healthy criticism about this! I understand it, but really there's not a lot I can do about it. However, I haven't abandoned this idea that I had of doing the solo shows. It's certainly something that's in my mind which I hope to get around to, sooner or later. If there's a way that I can bridge the ever-widening gap ... I just want you all to understand that I know what's happening, I'm not a fool about it – and it's not as if I'm going to get lost in the upper stratosphere of rock stardom. On the contrary, I make an effort to keep in touch with people at street level. I definitely want to remain a man of the people, as it were, because that is the oxygen for me; the people. I listen to my fans – not just when they applaud – but I listen to them when they talk to me and write to me. I've recently received a number of letters which were very moving. For example, a woman wrote to me whose husband had died, at the age of 29, and they played his favourite song at the funeral in Holland – Transmission Ends. Then a famous German athlete, when he died, had Don't Pay The Ferryman played at his own request. It seems that a lot of people are being supported and helped by my music – and that's something that I could never change, either. I'm glad that people appear to take my music to their hearts, and the knowledge of that makes it very interesting for me when I come to the writing stage. I know that I can't let myself down and, apart from that – I can't let anybody else down. Because a new Chris de Burgh album is seen by a lot of people – perhaps hundreds of thousands – as something meaningful to them and something to look forward to. I remember when I was a real Beatles fan – I used to go to my local shop and ask 'Has the new record come in yet?' And, when it had, I'd take it home and just sit there. I'd give it the star treatment; listen to it, categorise it, read the lyrics – it was a meaningful thing to me. I have a suspicion that this happens for a lot of people with my music and therefore, as a songwriter, I have to be really aware about it, not make any silly compromises and make the best record that I can"

Which brings us on very nicely to the subject of Chris's proposed activity on the recording front – so it's back to the man himself again .....

## THE SOUND OF SILENCE

"People often say to me 'Why has it taken so long to put a record together, why have you been so quiet?' The first thing, of course, is that I did want to take a break at the start of the year. Then, if an artist of my stature doesn't release an album by September of a year there's actually no point putting one out until after Christmas – because of the way the competition is so heavy around that time. You really have to give your record a chance, and September is the latest, the deadline. Again, to release an album in January or February is also a bit grim – because then you also have to tour, which is pretty dismal at that time of year. You also get this post-Christmas phase of people rush-releasing their new records. So what I've decided to do is have my next album released in about March or April of '86. It's a lovely time – spring time – and a period when there's a spirit of rejuvenation in the air. Although it will be two years after *Man On the Line*, I've done a year's touring in between – plus all the travelling and promotion accompanied by that – so I haven't simply sat back. However, I do plan to have a single out before Christmas – not a 'Christmas Single' – but a taste of the new album. I'm in the writing mode now. We did a new song in our recent set called *Late Night* – it could be that. It's a real stand-out for me, a lot of people picked up on it. I was very pleased about that."

## A NEW DIRECTION?

"The kind of album that I'm planning is one with a lot more fire to it, I think. I've been through my synthesiser phase – which a lot of people will be pleased to hear! – and I find nowadays that synthesisers are very useful tools to colour a song, but I find them very dry indeed if you use them too much. In fact, I just got very, very bored with that kind of style. My next record will be much more open and classical, as well as modern. It's hard to explain ... but sort of a combination between *The Getaway*, *Spanish Train and Other Stories* and *Man On The Line* – all moved forward a couple of years. The fact that I now play with a live band so much, and people like it so much, means I'll also be going for that live kind of feel – maybe like a Bruce Springsteen record or something. Something which sounds exciting straight off the record and makes you want to go and see the act live. In the Autumn, I'll mainly be writing. I plan a short trip to Canada, perhaps in October or November, to see the boys in the band and play them my new songs. They know me better than anybody musically, and I respect their opinions. I tend to be very protective of my own songs and I always put up a real struggle if somebody says they don't like a song – but I'll always listen to somebody else's point of view, without fail. The boys let me know what they think, so I'll spend a week with them running through the new stuff and rehearsing – just finding out what the general feel is with the new tunes. I'll most likely record the new album somewhere in England but I haven't decided on a producer yet. It won't be Rupert Hine. I did two albums with him and it was an extremely good association – but I think that the kind of record I want to make next time is not the kind of record that he likes to produce. It's the complete other side; the wild thrash, drums and real orchestras and stuff. Rupert's particular style is the synthesiser, sort of Howard Jones style, which I've certainly moved away from and don't enjoy as much as I did."

"I'm often asked why I don't produce myself. Well, it's got a lot to do with the hard work involved and a knowledge of my own limitations. You see, in the studio I much prefer to have an outside standpoint at all time – especially as regards the music. My forte is the vocals. I prefer to sit back, listen to what's coming through the speakers and make a judgement – rather than being the creator of all that stuff. I design the house, as it were, get a builder in to build it – while I approve the plans and make sure everything is being built – but my forte then would be decoration. That's a strong simile, but it's as good a one as I can think of. To produce yourself you must have a really strong vision of what you want to do and an ability to stand back and look. Quite honestly, it's so much of a hassle recording as it is that I don't think that I would have the brain energy to do the production as well! However, I would be interested in producing other people, because that way you can have the ability to remove yourself and have an over-view".

## THE ROSANNA INFLUENCE

You'll recall that, in the last newsletter, we promised an insight into how Chris's lovely daughter could alter his song-writing. So, here goes .....

"Anybody who has ever had a child knows exactly what it's like", Chris explains. "It can be tough conveying it to others. Having a child just makes you feel so extraordinarily fulfilled and happy – and even if I'm away from Rosanna for a day, I miss her. It's ridiculous, I suppose, but I'm a sentimental kind of person. I just have this overwhelming feeling of contentment and responsibility since she's been around. It's a brand new set of emotions that are thrown at you, from depths that you never imagined were there before. People ask me if I'm religious and what is the meaning of life, well, for me, children are the meaning of life. Quite simply, we are here to support the human race. There may be a long term plan, then again there may not be. I've no idea. But the fact is, I think, that having kids IS the reason. I can't think of any other reason – it certainly isn't banking, or telecommunications or anything like that. I'm sure that having Rosanna has affected my thinking sufficiently for it to have an imprint on my writing in future. I can't actually tell how it's going to happen – but there has to be an effect, because it's been a major occurrence in my life. But, again, I will only know that subliminally after I've written a song – probably about a year after I've written a song, actually. I look at songs like *Head and the Heart* and *Transmission Ends* from the last album and I can see them much

more clearly now after they have been recorded for a year or so. Things are always very blurred after I've recorded them. I do need time to look back on an album and see it the way someone else would see it – fresh. But now I'm a father my horizons have suddenly become much wider. That's what it was like before", he says, holding his hands apart. And then, drawing them further away still: "This is what it's like now. We had Rosanna Christened on February 17 – named Rosanna Diane – and it was a gorgeous day. She was so sweet and looked wonderful. Both she and Diane are in great form. Rosanna is in terrific shape, running around the place. She's very used to people, probably because we took her on the road a lot. She talks to everybody – just goes up to them and smiles. She's just adorable!"

## WAX LYRICAL

Since we introduced the 'Wax Lyrical' section in the last newsletter, we've been receiving a healthy flow of concise questions about those certain songs of Chris's – or parts of songs – which you've always wondered about but never before had explained. Chris really enjoys solving these little mysteries – so keep the enquiries coming. Now, let's clear some of them up ...

**PATRICIA THE STRIPPER:** "I'm asked where the idea for that song came from", says Chris. "It was on an aeroplane flying from London to Dublin. I'd just been at an English country weekend where everybody was terribly 'Haw, haw', wore dinner jackets for dinner and got up at 6 o'clock in the morning to go fishing. Stuff like that. It was a strange trip, although I enjoyed it very much. It's just that I could imagine myself doing something completely different – like thinking, as you sat there sipping Pimms and watching tennis 'I'm going off this evening to have dinner with a stripper!' It was so bizarre a thing to do. That's where the idea started!"

**THE SOUND OF A GUN:** "Several people are curious about the words 'Bella soma' in this song. Well, 'soma' is from the book *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley. It's the name of the drug that people used to take just to forget about all the pains and stresses of life; they disappear into a glorious, warm glow. I thought soma was a great word – I can remember pulling it out. 'Bella' means beautiful – so; beautiful drug. Basically, the phrase means that you can ignore the way that gunmen and terrorists are ruling the world – if you wish to, just take the bella soma – and ignore it. However, if you do feel strongly about it, then something has to be done, you have to bring pressure to bear. Certainly, living in Ireland as I do, that's something we're all very aware of".

In the next Gazette, hear Chris tell the fascinating tale about what inspired him to write the haunting and classic *Spanish Train*. Meanwhile, get a load of this: "There's a song on my first album, called *Good Night*", says Chris, "and in it I refer to all the other songs on the album. It's just a very short song, but it was an interesting puzzle trying to get either all the titles – or bits and pieces of them – encapsulated. You see, when you're making an album, there's always all sorts of things going onto the record – that only I know about!" Makes you wonder, doesn't it!

## UNTIL THE NEXT TIME

Right, that's about it. But, before we go, here's a couple of ideas; is anyone out there interested in contacting fellow C de B followers? We thought it would be a good move – and so do many of you – to start a Pen Pal section. If you're keen, then simply send in your address and we'll print a selection in each new Gazette. Secondly, it's been suggested by Mrs Camella Langham of Edmonton in London, that club members ought to try their hand at sketching either Chris or visually interpreting one of his songs. Chris thinks it's a superb idea. If anyone agrees, send the pictures in and we'll use one chosen by Chris for the cover of each new Gazette. In the meantime, if you have any ideas about what else you'd like to see in future editions – or criticisms of this one – then please write to me, Mike, at The New Chris de Burgh Club, P.O. Box 276, London, E2 7BW

Until then, goodbye, good luck – and Merry Christmas! (Better early than never!)