

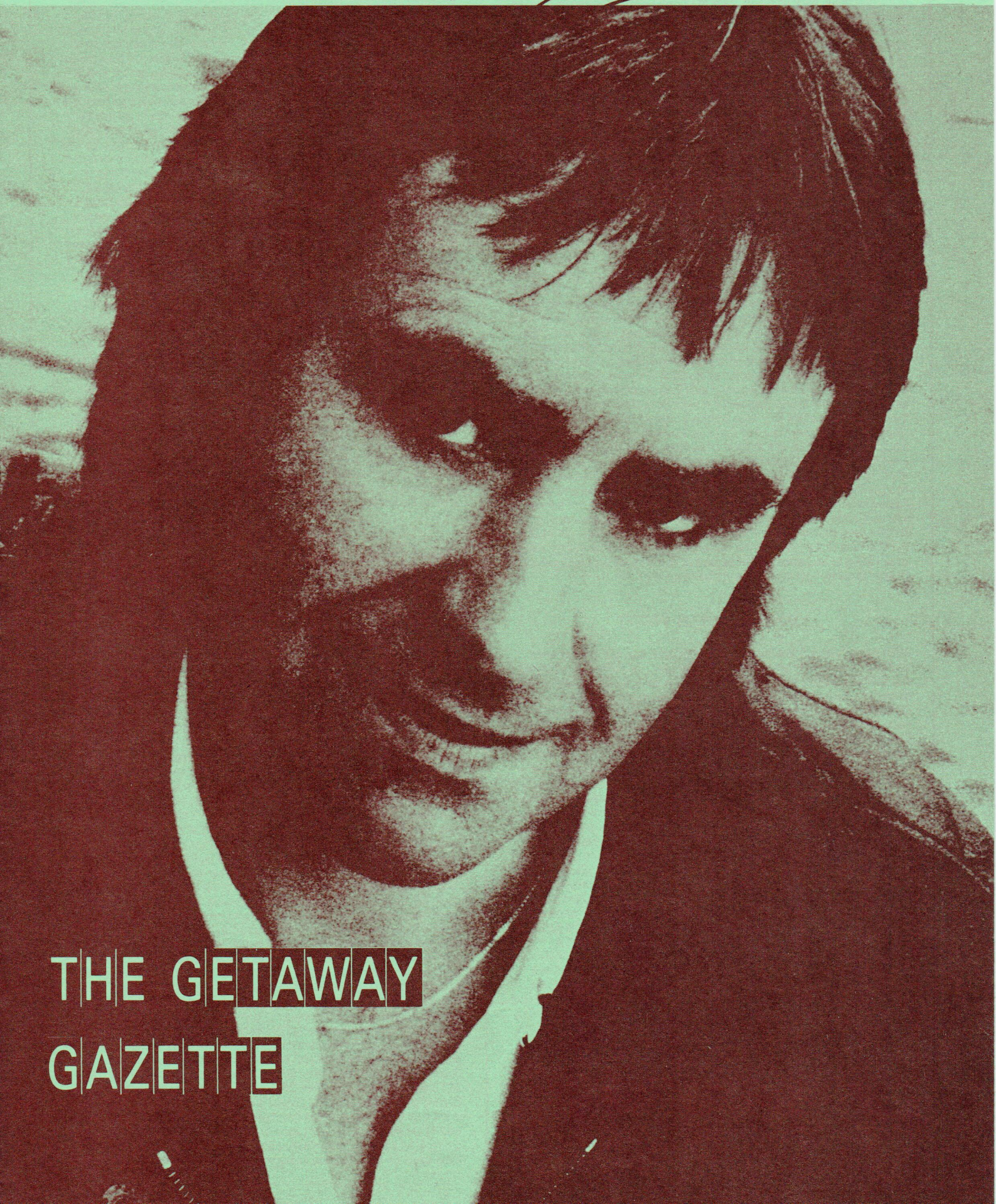
THE NEW

Chris de Burgh

CLUB

P.O. BOX 276 LONDON E2 7BW

DECEMBER 1990



THE GETAWAY

GAZETTE

BACK IN BRITAIN

"After that, I went home — it was great to be able to get home for two or three days during the week, you see — and then we went to play Zurich, to about 30,000 people, which was excellent. From there, we flew up to Hamburg, to an old airfield about an hour outside of the city. I thought a lot of people would have gone home but when we got there about 120,000 people were still there. Again, it was exactly the same story; one of those nights when everything just went perfectly. It was incredibly exciting — and that was about as big an audience as I've ever played to. The following day, I flew back, went to East Midlands airport and had a helicopter to take me to Alton Towers, where I did a day of press there for the up-coming concerts. Then it was back in the helicopter, back on the jet, back to Dublin! I was exhausted by then, as you can imagine Then, two days later, I had this awful accident to my back — which I'm sure you've all heard about by now. I just twisted the wrong way and - bingo!, I hit the floor and it was agony. That was on a Wednesday and on the Thursday night we decided, for insurance purposes, that we should get some proper medical advice. It looked very unlikely that I could do any shows, so we had to get a doctor to come in from Harley Street in London. He was nominated by the insurers, because they were about to lose an awful lot of money; they would have had to pay for all those people who bought tickets to a cancelled show. We were indemnified against that, which is one of the precautions you have to take when you go on a long tour; you have to indemnify yourself against things like accidents and cancellations. Anyway, the doctor took one look at me — literally, it took him about 90 seconds - and he said 'Move left! I couldn't. 'Move right'. I couldn't. 'Move forward.' Couldn't. 'Move backwards.' Couldn't! Apparently, the whole back was out of alignment by about half an inch. You could stand and look at it, I'm told. So the doctor said 'You can't possibly perform — cancel the concert.' And he rang up the insurance agent and said 'The concert is cancelled. He can't do anything.' So I said 'Wait a minute — I'm going to give it a try.' And he just said 'You're mad.' In the event what we did, as readers will be aware, was cancel the Friday night concert and move all the tickets from that show to the Saturday night. Saturday was a fairly dramatic day! You see, I had hardly been standing up at all since the Wednesday, but on the Saturday I just about made it down the stairs and into the car — and that was really painful. Then we got into a private jet with a stretcher in it, arrived in East Midlands and got into a helicopter with another stretcher in it! After arriving at Alton Towers, I literally spent the next two hours flat on my back in a room. And then . . . well, you saw the concert! I've had so much mail from people saying it was an amazing show and thanks for doing it. It was a long show, though, I'll say that; the longest of the entire tour. I get pretty pig-headed sometimes and think 'Well, I'm going to give this a try.' And I did exactly that at Alton Towers. I thought 'I'm here — so let's throw in a few more songs.' The band were really amazed — they thought we were going to pull a few of the songs out if anything. But I said 'No. Come on — let's push ourselves to the limit.' Funnily enough, the next day my back felt a lot better! I think a lot of the pain was caused by worry and tension due to trying to get the concert out of the way. I was fairly rooted to the spot during the concert, and I did have electronic impulse pads attached to my back during the performance. They put what's called a Tens Unit on me and that was sending pulses into the painful areas. I wasn't going to take painkillers because that would have made me feel very drowsy. Anyway, I got over it — and I feel fine now."

EAST MEETS WEST

"After Alton Towers, I flew home — only to fly back to England a day or so later to do some TV. From there I flew to Glasgow . . . I really pushed myself, I can now see, looking back at my notes. How on earth did I do it! I also had dinner with the band, as it was the last time I'd be seeing the band for a while, did the TV show in Glasgow on Wednesday, September 12 — and then I came home and just about collapsed! Not a lot else happened much after that, apart from a few more TV and radio things, until we got a call at my management office in London from the office of Chancellor Helmut Kohl — and also from the East Berlin Mayor — requesting that I headline a big show in the East just before midnight on Tuesday, October 2, which was the historic moment that East and West were going to be unified. The explanation behind me being asked was that I had a long association with Berlin and with the German people and, as an international artist, I would be the only one representing the international field of music — and the honour was to be given the last 20 minutes before the historic midnight to perform. The performance went out live on radio and one song, Borderline, which was the very appropriate song, was recorded for television, and it was beamed all over the world, right after midnight. It was an extraordinary thing, and the crowds were amazing. The whole feeling was indescribable. The performance was pitched very close to where the wall used to be. I was staying in the East and, the following day, I walked through the Brandenburg Gate — which is, apparently, the dream of most Germans because it represents freedom — right where the wall used to be. After the bash the night before, I went to a party with a lot of key politicians. I got talking to a number of them and, the following day, I also met Chancellor Kohl, the Mayor of Berlin, the President of the German Republik and a few other dignitaries. That was very exciting. The whole thing was amazing; to have been a part of history is not something which happens every day. There were hundreds and thousands of Germans all along the place where the wall used to be that night. I was quite extraordinary — indeed, it was frightening there were so many people. At one point, the car I was in could not move any further - it took us an hour to go one mile, going really slowly through people — and, finally, we just got blocked. I got out of the car and just got swept away by humanity — and lost everybody I was with. It was only by a stroke of luck that I managed to wind up where I should have been! It was pretty scary. But, naturally, I was delighted to have been asked. You know, I did an interview about it with a

very key German broadcaster and he said 'We feel here in Germany that you are a force for the positive, a force for the good. A lot of your music and a lot of your lyrics do tend to look at reality square in the face — but always offer hope, and offer sympathy and compassion and light at the end of the tunnel.' And I said to him 'Well, I have to agree with you; that's exactly my attitude towards life"

THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

"So, that brings us up to date. Now, what am I doing in the future? Well, I'm starting to think about writing songs — and I've already written a few, two or three, that I like. I played them to the band at rehearsals and they were extremely impressed. I have to admit that I'm disenchanted with the current state of music, certainly in England — and the number of people I run into who say the same thing is quite stunning. You see, you have to be critical in a positive way — and I'm trying to be critical. I know a lot of what's current is dance music, and that's great. I like dancing; there's a reason to make dance music. But, for me, the current music is about as interesting as last week's newspapers — and there are very few people being encouraged to write good songs that last forever. You know, really good material. I think it's a complete musical wasteland at the moment, and I have no great urge to get involved. I have this distinct feeling that if I wrote what I would feel to be a really good, crafted, melodic, well-written song and put it out as a single then the chances are very high that it's not going to do anything at all. And that's not because I'm not a selling artist in the UK; it would have very little to do with that, if anything at all. It would be because the radio and the singles market are representative of such a tiny minority of people interested in music that it's almost irrelevant to me now, personally. Album sales are rocketing, singles sales are falling — yet album sales do not get reflected, in radio play and do not get reflected, I don't think, in the media either. So I'm not particularly keen to get involved, certainly not in the UK. I think it's slightly different elsewhere. But, basically, the moment I start writing for an album, I know that I'm committing myself to entering that particular arena again — and I don't like the look of the arena. It doesn't seem to have anything to do with me or my music — or, indeed, with my fans. So that's the situation at the moment — and I don't want to sound down about it at all; I'm not. So no letters telling me I sound depressed, please! I'm enjoying the stuff I'm writing, so for the next three or four months I will start initial moves on the next album, and realising exactly where I want to be. I'm a person that enjoys a good fight, as you know, and that's where I respond really well to songwriting. I've got to be annoyed about something and feel that I'm not being listened to enough. In a very obtuse way, the more upset I get about something, the better the songs tend to be. So it's a very bizarre game that you play with your sub-conscious; if I'm too contented, I don't write very good songs. I've got to push myself a little bit. It's almost like a hat that I can wear; I go to work, put on the hat and say 'God, I've got nowhere. I've got to work hard — I've got to come back. I've got to have a successful record All these things, they all help, and then I take off the hat and I go home!'"

FOR THE RECORD

"As you know, since the last newsletter, my live album has been released — and I'm very proud of that. As a recording or, indeed, as a record of achievement of an artist live, I think it stands up there with just about any other live album I've ever heard. I think it's an excellent production and it's a fantastic example of the response of a crowd. I think you could take anybody who thinks Chris de Burgh is a complete waste of time and put them in front of that record — and there's no way that they can walk away without saying 'This fella has got something, and the way he moves a crowd is something else.' It's a phenomenon alright, but it's very easy to understand — because there a tremendous sympathy and empathy with the crowd. I think if you put your average let's say rock critic down blindfold at one of my gigs in the middle of, say, High On Emotion or any of my rockier numbers and then took off the blindfold, I think they might be very surprised to discover whose concert they were at. I seem to have, again in the UK, this image of being a softie with Lady In Red and Missing You — and I'm just saying that the great thing about the video and the live album is that it proves that point is completely wrong. Funnily enough, it seems that what's happening is that I'm getting the grudging admiration of even stern critics who have listened to this new album and said 'This really shows that there's a lot of really strong stuff.' Also, people have told me that they looked around at the audiences who came to see my recent concerts and saw a real mixed bunch; young girls, old women, hippies, trendies, young men in leather jackets . . . Well, that's brilliant. And that's the kind of thing that will draw me back into making more records. I know that I spoke earlier this year about being confused . . . well, not confused, but coming to a crossroads and saying 'Where should I go from here?' Well, when you get a barrage of mail saying, firstly, 'you mean so much to us' it becomes easier to get your focus back. Just the other day I got a call from somebody whose father had just lost his wife — this fellow's mother had died — and he'd spent the last four days listening to Missing You. All the time, day and night, he'd been playing the song over and over - because it meant something and gave comfort to him. Yesterday I was with a friend of mine who lost his wife, and Carry Me was a song he found had helped him through the loss. You know, all these things hit home with me and it's an important thing for me to remember how much affection, I suppose, there is for my music out there - and that's one thing that really will bring me back again. The public is not my worry, funnily enough; it's the route to the public that concerns me. It has become so bizarre in the UK, particularly through radio and television, and I don't have this problem in Germany or France or Scandinavia or Canada or the States. It's particularly the UK where the route is not a route that I understand any more. I know that the fans are out there waiting to hear the music and I know that when I put out a new album it will probably be a number one album and do double platinum sales — like the last three have. So that's exciting; to know that I have that strength in the market

Hello once again and welcome to another edition of the Gazette. First off, we're pleased to announce (to the few of you who won't already have heard) news of the latest great production from C de B; a bonny baby boy. Chris' wife Diane gave birth to a healthy and extremely strapping 8lbs 5oz son on October 30. The child had yet to be given a name at the time of going to press; Chris says the family want to get to know the new addition before deciding on which name suits him best. The imminent arrival of a third child for Chris and Diane was part of the reason why this edition of the newsletter—due, as you all know only too well, in September—has been so late. The other reason, which we warned you about in the June issue, was our decision to wait until Chris had completed his run of recent open-air concerts before publishing. By doing so, we are now able to bring you all the details of the shows within these pages. So, in every sense of the word, this really is the latest Getaway Gazette. . . . Apologies for this, but let's get on with the job at hand—and pass straight over to the man himself. He's been standing there for all this time with his diary at the ready.

GOING SOLO

"We left off last time as I was about to do the benefit concert at my old school, didn't we? Well, I performed it in a large marquee erected on a site outside the school, and I think about 2,000 people showed up. It was a great success and a very worthwhile thing for me to do. I enjoyed it a lot. I played for about 90 minutes—which I thought would be impossible within the context of a solo performance—but it was a great crowd and, with good pacing, it worked. Did it make me think more about the idea I've spoken about over the years of doing a solo tour? Well, it actually kicked off another idea in my head, which I'm calling the Jeans And Tuxedo Tour. It's just an idea of going into somewhere completely strange and playing—like Turkey. We actually planned to do some shows there but, unfortunately, they were cancelled by Mr Hussein, Saddam—or whoever he calls himself. So, Jeans And Tuxedo would involve doing a big open-air show, which you generally tend to do at weekends—leaving you with nothing to do for the whole week. That's the jeans part. The tuxedo part would be for me to do a couple of solo shows during the week; everybody turns up in tuxedos, I do a little solo number and we all enjoy the totally different ambience of a solo night out. And the band would have to sit and watch me doing it; they wouldn't be invited to participate at all! So, that's just an idea at the moment, and one I'm working on. . . . Anyway, after the school concert I flew to London the next morning and performed at the beginning of the ITV Telethon. (For non-UK members, this is one of the major fund-raising events in British television; a 27 hour continuous broadcast to collect money for charity). I sang a song specially composed for the Telethon called There's Room In This Heart Tonight. It's a tune never to be recorded. We thought about it, but then we decided not to. I sang the song again 27 hours later—although, unlike many of the people involved in the event, I did actually go to be in between! It was fun to be involved in the Telethon, and a record £26 million was raised—a tremendous contribution from everybody."

"Naturally, I got into the old golf during the summer! It's, without doubt, the trickiest and most baffling game there is. It's like meeting a woman, in a way, who one minute treats you extremely well—and the next minute treats you like absolute dirt. It's very hard! I'm a person who responds to a challenge, you see, and it's just one of those games where—and I just can't understand this—you go out one day and you play really badly and then next day, 24 hours later, you go out and you play like a god. Now that's very confusing. It's also a game in which the softer you hit the ball, the further it goes. Very odd. But I'm beginning to get relatively good at it, enjoy it a lot and get to play in many different places. In fact, I recently played in Terry Wogan's golf classic. We got a great picture of the two of us on the front page of a Sunday newspaper; he's got a golf ball in his mouth—and I'm taking a swing at him with a club from underneath! How's my handicap going? Well, it's still 22 but, to be honest, the only way I can reduce that is by playing in competitions—which tend to be on Saturdays. For me, Saturdays are very much family days, so it's not really on. I did, however, recently play in a Pro-Am competition—Christy O'Connor Jnr's event in Galway—and on the second day of two days I played ten strokes below my handicap. I was really flying; I got five pars in the last nine holes on a difficult course. So, some days I play to my handicap and, on others, I play way below it. Oh, I also had my own Chris de Burgh Celebrity-Am golfing outing. That was great, because the band could play in it as well, and we raised a lot of money for one hospital for people who have to use prosthetics, limbless people, and a lot of money for my own favourite hospital—the Rotunda. It was the first time I've had a competition like that, and it was great fun. I have to say that the boys in the band didn't disgrace themselves either. . . ."

WHEN IRISH EYES WERE SMILING

"Let's have a look through my notes and see what else I've been up to. . . . golf . . . golf lessons . . . photo sessions . . . oh; the World Cup. Wow, wasn't that something? Ireland in the World Cup was one long party. In Ireland, the whole event was fantastic. When Ireland played England in the World Cup the streets were deserted; everybody in the country was watching and, of course, we held England to a draw. When we finally got through the first stages of the competition, it was unbelievable—and the night that the Irish goalkeeper saved the Rumanian kick in the penalty shoot-out, everybody was just rushing out into the streets. Everybody knew that everybody else was doing that night! It's an unusual country in that respect. I remember looking out of my window here and listening for traffic; I heard nothing! It was absolutely deserted. I would say that, out of a population of 3½ million, 2½ million were watching—and a lot of the others were already asleep because they were youngsters.

The World Cup was a very exciting time and, in fact, I went down to Rome for 36 hours when Ireland played Italy. We very, very nearly beat the Italians—and we could have done it, I think—but it was 1-0 to Italy. But it was the most amazing feeling to be out there because, firstly, the Irish had been hailed as the best fans in the world—and they made a particular point of being great and well behaved. They were loved the whole length and breadth of Italy; they really got very fond of the green and orange and white flags over there. The Irish were adored! I was a guest in Italy of the FIFA people, the government here in Ireland and Jack Charlton—the Irish team manager—and after the match I went out on to the pitch. I even did a lap of honour for the fans because, after all the 80,000 Italian supporters had left the stadium, the 10,000 Irish fans refused to leave. They just wouldn't go! And they cheered and they sang and they waved their flags—for nearly two hours after the end of the game. It was the most moving sight. I remember an Italian policeman saying 'But the Irish have lost—why are they so happy?' And I said 'Because the Irish are different. We are a people who acknowledge that we nearly got there and that we've got this far. We went to the top of the world, and that's not bad for a little country.' That night, I went and had dinner with Jack Charlton at the team hotel, miles outside of Rome. This was at 2.30 am! And then we all went outside, sat in a huge circle and sang unaccompanied songs until 7 o'clock in the morning. It was amazing. Every single player got up and sang, and I sang a few. . . . Coming home, I even got to sing over the intercom there on the plane—and we were doing Mexican waves up and down the aeroplane, with the stewards starting them at one end and the remaining stewards completing them at the other. What a great time we had. Then, when we got home, something like 750,000 people were on the streets of Dublin and just completely blocking all the traffic to welcome the team home. It was a most moving thing and when it was all over there was a tremendous feeling of great congratulations—but everybody was just puffed out. Restaurants collapsed, nobody went anywhere; the party was definitely over. I'll never forget the summer of '90 for all that. . . ."

LIVE TIME

"After all of that, at the end of July, I took my family to the west of Ireland for ten days' holiday. And it's the most beautiful spot in the world, without any doubt. I know people will read that and say 'Well, what about Scotland?' For me, I'm afraid, it just doesn't match up. While we were there, we took a helicopter trip over, because I really wanted to see Ireland from the air, and it was just wonderful. So that was a great holiday, and then the band showed up and we started rehearsals. After that, we began the shows, in Holland, and we did something that I've wanted to do for quite a while—which was to play a small club, to just around a thousand people. It was totally jam-packed and it was a great night. The point of doing it was to just really get an idea of the running order, the lights and so on for the shows proper. The audience there was great and they arrived there very much by word of mouth, which was nice; there was hardly any advertising at all for the show. It was brilliant to have that close eye contact with them although, I must admit, I really get a huge thrill out of playing the big places. The thing about these large open air shows, as I said, is that we were mainly working at weekends—and in Holland, we found ourselves with three spare days. At the same time, it just so happened that Fleetwood Mac were over there and, quite honestly, they needed help selling tickets to their show—so I was put on the bill and the thing sold out in 10 days. I think there were about 36,000 tickets in all. It was my first support gig since, I think, the summer of '83—seven years before—and I absolutely hated it. But I was professional enough; I did it and knew what I was doing—but I thought Fleetwood Mac were awful. They didn't even bother to say hello. They were real big shots, you know; big stars. Also, the sound was horrendous—and it wasn't just me who thought so; everybody was putting their fingers in their ears as they listened. So, all told, it wasn't a happy experience but we just happened to be there. However, things blossomed out because then we went to Berlin and played East Berlin—to about 50,000 people, many of whom had never seen a rock concert before and certainly hadn't seen anything like the light show that we had. We had 12 huge searchlights which could be seen 25 miles up—literally from space. They were so powerful, in fact, that they were turned on to Danny's guitar set-up at one stage accidentally for about 30 seconds—and they melted his entire rig! The lights were also computer-controlled, which meant that they could do all sorts of amazing pyrotechnics like jump up and down, flash here, flash there. Actually, we had to get permission from air traffic control in Berlin to have these things in case they actually blinded a pilot flying over. You'd never think that such precautions had to be taken for a rock concert, perhaps, but there you go. But the show and the lights actually looked fantastic. I remember sitting in a bar about 20 miles away in the west, where we were staying, and looking out of the window at about midnight—and I could see these lights, clear as day, flashing around in the sky in the distance. Playing in East Berlin was a very moving occasion—and a first for me—and very enjoyable. Then, the following day, we immediately flew to Hockenheim in the morning. There, we played as the headlining act to 95,000 people—and that was sensational. They had enormous screens, left and right, and it was really one of the happiest concerts I've ever given. I was just on! You know, the green lights were on; everything was working and it was fantastic. The reviews afterwards were just amazing, too. Also on the bill was Tina Turner, who put on a good show, and Simple Minds—who, apparently, were good—but we got the applause for the best show of the entire weekend, of the two-day festival. Funnily enough, Tina Turner and myself didn't meet at all—you may remember she sang on my Man On The Line album—because although we were playing the same places, we were doing so on separate nights. When I was in East Berlin, she was in Hockenheim—and when I was in Hockenheim, she was in East Berlin. Apparently, though, she and I are still the two biggest concerts draws in Germany—and we certainly had the biggest crowds."

place. I understand that there is going to be a redefinition of pop and rock on the radio by the government — which is going to be terrific. And I wish that radio stations would have the courage to play more album tracks and not play this chart music all the time. But, anyway, as far as the next few months are concerned I'm going to start working at home. In fact, I've currently got builders in and they're going to build a little place in the garden where I'll put all my equipment, my studio stuff, which means that I don't have to go five or six miles away to work. I found doing that a little miserable, to be honest, and I think that reflects in the music. I think in a strong, happy up-beat album you've got to feel that way yourself - and the same thing applies to recording. I think it's going to be very hard for me to make a record away from home ever again. You know, with little children who miss you even for a day . . . I can't put them through that. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that I spent a lot of my early years apart from my parents - and I'm determined not to let the same things happen to my kids."

PEN PALS

And now, the latest list of club members wanting to write to fellow C de B followers from anywhere in the world . . .

Mrs Carol Corker, 18 Slaugham Court, Bewbush, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 8UL, England. (Aged 32)

Sandro Van Es, Lintforterstrasse 109, 4130, Moers 3, Germany. (Aged 16).
Debra McGowan, 309 Kingshill Avenue, Hayes Middlesex, UB4 8BS, England. (Aged 13).

Audrey Carville, Annyalla, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, Ireland. (Aged 18).
Claire Johnson, 9 Cravendale Road, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire, DL9 4EB, England. (Aged 15).

Mlle Sivy Anita, 4 Rue Des Sapinsverts, Lignol, 56160 Guemene/Scorff, France.

Jenny Roake, Whopshott Farm House, Bullbeggars Lane, Horsell, Woking, Surrey, GU21 4SQ, England. (Aged 16).

Kirsten Mai, Ostpreussenweg 8, D-4800 Bielefeld 11, Germany. (Aged 23).
David Rink, 1604 Maplehurst Circle, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada, V5A 3Z1 (Aged 25).

Geir Jaegersen, 26 Oak Hollow Road, Branford, Connecticut 06405, USA (Aged 16).

Carron Gibson, 17 Melrose Close, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 1NY, England.

Denise Meadows, 9 Jubilee Avenue, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 9LX, England. (Aged 31).

Mrs S. H. Moss, 10 Walsingham Close, Willingdon Trees, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 0UD, England.

Corinna Olbrich, Lornsenstr. 6, 2000 HH-Schenefeld, West Germany. Remember, if you would like your details included in future lists of C de B friendly pen pals, then please write your details clearly and in BLOCK CAPITALS — specifying your age if you wish — and send them to the P.O. Box address printed below. And now, mention must be made of a very special event which is shortly to involve two club members who met courtesy of getting to know each other through the C de B pen pal service. Neil Allison of Birmingham, England, and Debbie Reichart of Ohio, U.S.A., have both written to me . . . to let me know of their forthcoming marriage! The happy correspondents got in touch with each other for the first time after their names and addresses were printed in a 1986 edition of the Gazette. The following year, Debbie visited England to meet her many pen pals — and among those she stayed with were Neil and his mother Kay. Four years of letters later, they are due to be married in Debbie's home town of Columbus this coming January. Frankly, I'm speechless with delight for them; when I had the idea of putting club members in touch with one another, I never imagined it would lead to this! Suffice to say that the very best regards and sincere wishes of both Chris (he was overwhelmed by the news, too) and myself are yours for a memorable wedding day and a happy, C de B future together . . .

On the subject of putting people in touch with one another, I've recently received two letters from club members wishing to meet other club members in their areas and beyond. It seems like a good idea so, if you're interested, these are the people concerned: Karen Muldowney of 15 Yhe Oaks, Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland, says she has already been in contact with about 50 people, aged from 10 to 53, and from countries from Ireland to Iran!, who are interested in travelling to Ireland for a meeting and to see Chris in concert next time he plays in Dublin. She can be contacted at the above address if you wish to add yourself to the merry throng.

Secondly, Sandra Darwish of 16 Langstile Road, Glasgow, G52 4 AG, would like to hear from fellow fans of Chris with a view to organising meetings and 'some very special fan club members' social evenings.' She adds 'Please, don't delay — pick up that pen NOW and write to me, with your welcome comments.' If you think that sounds like a good idea, then contact Sandra — who has been very patient and waited months and months for me to find the time to put her request into an issue of the Gazette - at the above address. Please Note: While the club is perfectly happy to publicise the intentions of both Karen and Sandra, it is not involved OFFICIALLY in either of their schemes — which is not to say that, at some stage, this might not be a good idea. So, please, address your correspondence to the girls individually — and take up any queries you might have with them. We, of course, have no reason to believe that their intentions are anything but good . . .

WAX LYRICAL

Just a couple of queries this time around in the section that aims to answer all your questions about the meaning of C de B songs or what inspired them. CARRY ON: "I'm asked, as I have been several times, what the language is which is featured in one of the verses. Well, it's not a language at all! It's just English written backwards. Each line is written backwards from right to left and the words broken up. So, reading it from left to right it reads like a foreign language. What you do is write down all the letters, reading from right to left and writing them down left to right, and then make the words up. I'm afraid our

correspondents will have to work that little puzzle out for themselves; it will ruin the fun if I say . . ."

SAY GOODBYE TO IT ALL: "I'm asked if, when writing this song, I ever suspected that the division of Germany would end peacefully rather than through a war. Well, I must admit that, no, I never imagined for a moment that that's the way it would work. Also, it's Borderline Part II and I wanted to think about what happened to the couple in the first song, to see how they reacted in the second song and how their lives developed. It's just about a choice, you know; they become refugees and head for the west coast of France. Again, it was very much a movie in my head and has lots of echoes of various literary things like, for example, Hemmingway's A Farewell To Arms — where they escaped by boats across Lake Geneva and it was raining all the time. The rain became a great symbol for Hemmingway during that book, a very interesting book, actually. And then there's the mention of the beaches in Normandy where the Americans landed on D-Day. You know, it's all part of history, but part of future as well. It's not necessarily about one particular period in time."

PERSON TO PERSON

Another licence to be nosy, this feature allows members the opportunity to ask Chris absolutely anything about anything — and here are some of his latest replies . . .

At what age did you learn to play the piano and guitar, and can you play any other musical instruments? (Christine McGowan, Middlesex). CHRIS: "No, I can't play any other instruments . . . not really, no! I taught myself to play the guitar when I was about 15, and I suppose I tooted around on the piano for the first time when I was about 17 — I never got a lesson, unfortunately. All I did with the piano was fool around with it, trying to make some sense of it. As most of you know, I can't read or write music, but I have what I think is a very good memory for music and snatches of music — and it's very valuable. If I find myself writing a song, I recognise a melody line or even a second of melody and I can usually place it, just by teasing it out. And I can often listen to other people's songs — particularly some of this new stuff — where I can spot the plagiarism. I can listen to some stuff and pull out four different songs and say 'Well, I know which one that is — and that is', and so on, even just snatches. It's handy little knack to have."

When is your next tour to Sydney, Australia? (Nick S Marod, Australia). CHRIS: "Well, I'm hoping that will be next year, or as part of the next world tour — depending on when the next album comes out. We enjoyed our two trips to Australia very much. I think it's a terrific place, and want to go back there."

Can you settle a family argument; have you sung on a TV commercial for Northern Motors Nissan in Australia? (Elaine McAllister, Tasmania). CHRIS: "I have never done a song for Nissan, you know, a special tune, at all. In fact, I've never done a special tune for anything in the advertising world, although I've done a couple of movie things. However, they may have lifted — and this is perfectly legal as long as they notify the publishers — a piece of song from something else that I might have done from an earlier record. They can use that across their advertising. So, without hearing the commercial in question myself, I wouldn't really know — but I certainly didn't do something specially for this advertisement."

UNTIL THE NEXT TIME . . .

Once again, space is about to run out in another Gazette — but there's room still for a few final, optimistic words from Chris: "I think it's very important to leave the impression of an up-beat, confident, happy, looking-to-the-future kind of artist here - in spite of my remarks about the current music scene. I don't feel that I necessarily have to be any part of that because I have created my own niche in the world, and I do believe that my stuff is unique. I think that my next album, for me, will probably be the most important one I've ever recorded — for two reasons. One, I'll have been away for quite a while from the recording studio — and the longer you leave it, the more the pressure. But it's a self-inflicted pressure. The longer I leave it, the more people will be waiting and criticising and saying 'Well, it's not as good as the last' or whatever, and so on. And the second thing is that I've deliberately stopped myself from wanting to write until the desire is upon me to write. Do you see what I mean? Rather than flogging the thing to death. . . . As a songwriter I could sit down and write an album in a week, but to make each song really special, that takes the bubbling up from inside — and that's what I'm relying on. So I'm waiting, and every day is a further growth of ideas and stuff until the out-pouring of music will come. That's what I'm really holding on for . . ." Lastly, here's more food for thought for the future from Chris: "I'll be spending another family Christmas at home and, after, we were thinking of going to the sun somewhere — maybe back to Barbados like last year. And I've got this dream, which is already in operation — well, the initial part is — that I'm calling The Exotic Tours Dream. We've been offered gigs in the most bizarre places — like India. Apparently I'm a big star in India Same with Turkey. I'd like to go to the Philippines, South America . . . You see, when you're doing a world tour, the last thing you want to do is play the majors — and then slip off to do the minors, you know, places like Israel or The Lebanon or Poland or the Eastern Bloc, because you're so exhausted. You want to justify everything and it's acutely hard on one's psyche being away for that length of time. So I was thinking of doing two six-week tours, or four-week tours, in bizarre, strange places — and that would be something which I know I would never really have the chance to do again. This would probably be next year . . ." So, get your sunglasses and beach gear ready for that but, until the next time, please remember to send any Pen Pal addresses, Person To Person queries or questions for Wax Lyrical — along with any ideas or criticisms about the club or newsletter — to me, Mike, at: The New Chris de Burgh Club, P.O.Box 276, London, E2 7BW. Oh, and have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year . . .

(N.B expect the next Gazette in February).