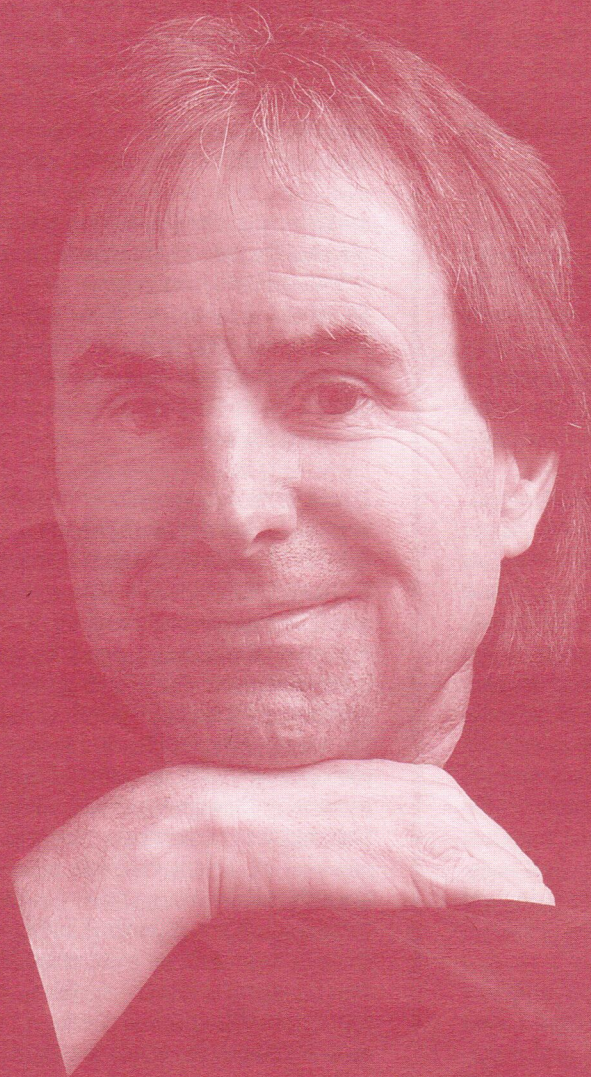


THE NEW *Chris de Ruig* CLUB

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THE GETAWAY
GAZETTE

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of The Getaway Gazette, our first since November, 2001.

As you read this, you will hopefully already have heard - and bought a copy of - Chris's new single, *'Guilty Secret'* (released on September 2), which is taken from his brand new album, *'Timing Is Everything'* (released worldwide on September 16).

In keeping with fan club tradition, established way back when Chris was about to release his *'Man On the Line'* album during the early '80s, we are giving over an entire issue of the Gazette to hearing what Chris has to say about his latest LP.

It really is as simple as that, so here's Mr De Burgh...

When did you first begin to put together material for the new album?

CHRIS: "I started thinking about this new album, I suppose, about a year ago. I always find that you need a pretty good lead time to start the ideas developing, a bit like, for example, if you're making a garden; you have to allow the seeds to fall in, allow the rain and the sun - with a bit of luck! - to come onto your ideas and let them grow. And if you're a single, solo, songwriter as I am, you have to give yourself as much opportunity for this as possible. In the past, in my little studio in Ireland, I've spent a lot of time - up to six to eight hours a day - really working hard at it. On this occasion, the songs flowed very freely indeed and I think the upbeat feel of this album reflects not only the writing process but also the recording process - which was very fast, great fun and working with people that I enormously admire and respect. The whole thing was a bit of a blast."

It is a very current, modern-sounding record...

CHRIS: "We wanted to make this new album sound modern and current by using, I suppose, you could talk about a few tricks of the trade - like vocoders and so on but, primarily, I think it's because my attitude towards the songs was 'I want to be able to bring these songs onto the road with my band and enjoy performing them'. I think that's usually the primary reason I write; I write for performance and not only personal enjoyment, but the enjoyment of other people."

It certainly sounds like you had a lot of fun making the album....

CHRIS: "Well, when I go away to work, I must admit I do like to work as hard as possible but, that said, there's always a time...on this occasion we usually started around midday, around 8 o'clock you fancy a decent dinner with a few glasses of wine - and I am long enough in the tooth to know that alcohol and studio recording do not mix so, after that - after a good dinner - some of the other guys, particularly Chris Porter (the album's producer), who's got this capacity to stay up till 3 or 4 in the morning working I just fall asleep - he would carry on doing what we would really term the 'housework' of making an album....and I would drift off then and maybe finish the lyrics and do those kind of things. But the most it was just great fun. As much fun - I have to stress - as a studio album can be. But, again, I think the upbeat feel of the way it was recorded, and the attitude of the people involved, is reflected onto the music."

Is the record representative of your state of mind right now?

CHRIS: "When it comes to writing for an album, you are - I think apart from the very first album you make, which tends to be a pot-pourri of everything you've done up to that point - then restricted to what you are thinking about and what sort of melodies are in your head, up to that particular point onwards, until you start recording them. And, frequently, what would happen is I would start a song because I'd heard a phrase or I'd thought about something, of which we'll talk about in a minute... And then, rather than tie myself to my studio situation which I have at home - I have a piano in sort of a large upstairs room which I rush to and play, although I have a guitar there as well - I turn to what I think is one of my most important assets. It's

a very cheap digital recording machine, which is kind of a second brain, which I immediately zap on and try and remind myself the following day exactly what I came up with. A fan actually sent me that through the fan club - and I believe it was designed for blind people. I'll tell you what, it's been a huge thing for me. When I'm down at my mother's place in Wexford walking through the fields... also when you have ideas, it's great to have something in your pocket. So the writing process, as you asked, does reflect those months, those weeks and months - as I'm sure in the future will happen when I start thinking about another project. I've kind of wrapped this one up; *'Timing Is Everything'* is recorded, finished - and now I move onto the third part of the process; the writing and the recording are the first two stages, and the third part is the touring with these songs."

For all of the modern sounds on the album, it's also a very traditional Chris De Burgh record.

CHRIS: "In a way, I feel very fortunate that I learned to write songs worshipping at the feet of the classic writers - like Bob Dylan, McCartney, John Lennon... And by this I mean that we, in the music business today - as it is currently structured - we rely primarily on chords; chords on guitar, piano, keyboards and so on. They are the building bricks of our melodies and, to be perfectly honest, I don't think even the most gifted person in our field is anywhere near the genius of somebody like Mozart or Beethoven. And ...by this I mean that the whole process of writing is one of learning from other people around you that you admire - and putting this into your own technique and your own ability to write songs. And following from that, I've noticed that a lot of the new writers and the young bands - where they actually write their own songs - and this is a completely different topic we could address another time, but the art of songwriting is diminishing because of a number of issues, including record company involvement. I think the feeling is that it's wonderful to be an overnight star, but the process of songwriting in the current bands...I can hear so many echoes of the previous classic writers that I've learned from. So, when I write songs, I do write in that chordal-structured way, in a very classic way, so in a way I'm determined not only to hang on to the way, the roots, that I write but also ...I'm trying to, as you pointed out, to bring something new to the actual sonic sound of the recording process."

It strikes me as a very single-minded album, very much your own record. Is that appropriate?

CHRIS: "I suppose so. Writing the songs was not a grind and a chore; they came out very easily. I discovered something a year or so ago - which sounds blindingly obvious, but I'll say it anyway - which is that, at a certain level, songwriting is not difficult. What *is* difficult is the finesse of it, the uniqueness of it. Writing a really great song is extremely difficult, but the craft of writing songs is something which I've been learning for 30 years or more. It's not hard, what is hard is coming up with different ideas. This is now 165 songs I've written and recorded and coming up with different ideas is frequently difficult. Listening back to the album, I felt that there was a lot of energy in it and a lot of...almost devil may care. That's why the cover of the album features a beach scene. The ship is leaving into the distance, there's a lovely fruit cocktail sitting on table by a deckchair. It's about being in the right place at the right time and whoever has the suitcase there, beside the deckchair, has just come from the colder spots - like Moscow and Alaska - and here he is in a very warm climate that everybody can relax into."

Is there any significance to the title of the album, and what is the title track actually about?

CHRIS: "I came across the phrase 'timing is everything' and....I liked it. I just thought 'This applies to so many things in life' and I've seen it and heard it subsequently so many times before and *'Timing Is Everything'* is really about being in the right place at the right time. So, rather than, like, missing an aeroplane or a bus, it's reallyfor example, in football - which I certainly adore - it's knowing that,

when Michael Owen drifts into the penalty area when there's action going on, on the left wing, you know that he is more likely than most people to be in the right place at the right time to score that goal. That's what *'Timing Is Everything'* is all about. And...I just had this fanciful idea, in two parts, that we have a situation that I'm sure most of us are familiar with, particularly in early years of being a young fellow and seeing an absolutely gorgeous young lady across the room at a disco and going "I've got to talk to her - I have to talk to this lady" and then you kind of get nervous and you say 'Right.....I'm going to' and as you go across the room, she's gone! You're thinking 'Aaargh! I've missed a chance. Damn it!' That's why timing is everything and, similarly, I suppose there's a slight reference to one of the great movies of all time, *'The Graduate'*, about a guy being madly in love with this woman, they split up because they have this row - and everybody breaks up - and to make sure that he's done the right thing, the whisper in the ear is 'Go down to the church - let her see you'.. If she says 'Not interested - I'm marrying the man I want to marry'....fine. But...who knows? You might just change her mind... And, on this occasion, yes, it's that thing and she says to him 'God! You finally got it right - your timing *is* everything'. It's a fun track and I think we're going to enjoy performing this one live. Very recently, they were talking about Tim Henman on the BBC and they said 'Timing is everything', and I smiled because it is a very common phrase. Whenever I mention the title to people, they say 'too true'."

Do you feel that's particularly appropriate to you in your career?

CHRIS: "I suppose it does apply. And there have been occasions where I have spectacularly missed the timing! - as we all have. It's not just about the clock...it's about football; the reason why Ronaldo put away two goals is because he was in the right place at the right time with the right skills. It's that kind of thing. It's just a phrase I came up with, or read or heard. I liked the phrase, I'd written this melody and the phrase just worked extremely well with it. I should stress that virtually any short-ish phrase in the English language has its own melody and movement. You give the same title to a dozen songwriters, and they'll come up with something fairly similar - as I did."

You're in great voice at the moment, that's for sure...

CHRIS: "Well, I've always taken the point of view that if you're a singer, you should be able to sing - any time, anywhere - without the sort of big wind-up and the pleading; 'Oh go on and sing'.... And on this new album I was doing four or five vocals in an afternoon, and to understand what that really means it's that - well, certainly, it's the way I work - I do 10 or 12 passes (performances) on each song with absolute total conviction, power, sensitivity and emotion, which is extremely draining. To do four or five in an afternoon means you're singing 50 or 60 times, which is a lot. I'd been doing a lot of shows earlier in the year, and my voice *was* in good shape. I have to say that, in the past, when making records there has always been that slightly freaky thing about saying to myself 'Today I'm doing a lead vocal'. In the past, I have been aware of the need to get my singing, my vocal performance, absolutely right in the studio - because what is recorded there stays with you forever. It's like taking a penalty in an important football match; you've got to get it right. However, with this album, I felt so good about everything that I was doing four or five full, finished, vocals in an afternoon. That's unheard of for me! To further describe what that means, you are singing each song a minimum of ten times. Absolute full blast, and you are doing them with as much passion as you can muster. It's a bit like a film actor; if you have a tearful scene, you've got to do it again and again - full blast - until it's right. It was the same with my singing on this album. It would have meant that, in this one afternoon I'm referring to, I did at least 60 passes, across five different songs. That was exhausting. It's the equivalent to performing several concerts, pretty much back to back. The following day I recorded vocals for four other songs; I just thought 'Well, I'm in the voice for it - why don't I just do them?'

It was like I was saying 'There's no big deal about this...' The speed with which we recorded reflected the fun we were having - and that was part of it...'

The song *'The Best That Love Can Be'* is a fine example of how well you're singing on the album...

CHRIS: "I had an insight, I suppose, by being close to friends who have broken up in the last few months - and it's happening a lot to so many people; that they split up. And what I had in my head with that song was that if you split up with your partner in a very aggressive, unpleasant way - even the memories become fouled and soiled and poisoned. Which is terribly sad because if you've spent, say, five or six years with somebody and you split up so acrimoniously you don't even want to *think* about those five or six years; it's out the window, gone - forever. And I'm saying, in my song, 'OK, we accept that it's all over, the two of us - but one last thing; before we say goodbye, let's just treasure the memories. That's the only thing I want to take from this. Accept that it's fallen apart and accept that the memories are the best that love can be'."

Why did you choose *'Guilty Secret'* as the first single from the album?

CHRIS: "The choice of first single is usually nothing to do with me. I'm usually the last person to be asked because I often have very different views on this. But the choice of single does come from record companies, management, publishers - those, who are, I suppose, much closer to their particular territories. *'Guilty Secret'* just sounded so dynamic and strong and energetic and bouncy and memorable that it wasn't just my choice; I think everybody that heard it said 'Yeah, this is going to make a great single.' It sounded to them that it could be, as we describe it, 'radio friendly.' Also, and as somebody pointed out, everybody has got a guilty secret. *'Guilty Secret'* was a song that I.....I remember clearly the day, it was a Sunday, and I was driving back with my son Hubie, who is 14, from the centre of Dublin, and I had taken him in to look at a War Hammer Exhibition. War Hammer is this amazing, futuristic sort of militaryI won't use the word toys...but it's all sorts of extraordinary things you put together in military manoeuvres. Very futuristic. And, driving back, I suddenly either heard or saw the phrase 'guilty secret' - and I immediately started hitting the steering wheel...(Sings) *"I'm living with a guilty se-cret deep in my heart"* and I thought 'That's good!' And I was banging the steering wheel and my son said 'What are you doing, Dad?' I said 'I've got this idea for a song' Got home, immediately ran in to a guitar and I got the melody shape down. Then I worked hard on getting the lyrics right because, often, ideas come absolutely out of the blue, they're not deliberated about, they're not thought about or decided on in advance like 'This is what I'm going to write about'. It's like watching stuff drifting downstream and you grab it and say 'Ooh, I like the look of that'. Frequently it doesn't work but, this time, I think it did. And it's part of three songs, as it transpired, about two people - possibly more involved - who are going through a process of change of life, change of partner, change of time and circumstance. In *'Guilty Secret'*, we have a situation where a man has, as you'll hear from the track...he is very attracted to this woman - who is either married or has a long-term partner - and they meet at night; subterfuge, all those little things that you do if you're trying to lure somebody away from somebody else, and I'm sure readers will know exactly what I'm talking about here! And it ties up...you asked me, incidentally, why it's the first single; I think it's because it's got a very sparkly beat and it's memorable. It sort of sticks in the head a bit."

Which other two songs link up with *'Guilty Secret'*?

CHRIS: "Well, there's *'Love & Time'* which is, I suppose, possibly the first of the three, where we have a situation of a youngish man and a woman...maybe they have children - maybe they don't....that's not important. But he is absolutely in full hot pursuit of making as much money as he can, and he hasn't seen that he is about to destroy

everything that he's working for by spending too much time in the pursuit of money. He's not spending enough time with his girlfriend or his wife - and she's looking at her life as it begins to fall apart. She's at home, he rings up and he says 'I'm going to be late, late at work again. We're getting *so* much money, we're going to have *such* a really good time to enjoy this' and she's thinking to herself 'Well, I'm not going to be here because the way I'm being treated, as second best, is *not* good enough'. And, in the second part of this particular song, they go out for the evening, the two of them, having a rare dinner for two - and, suddenly, he gets a phone call and says 'I've got to get back to the office' He says 'Have another drink - go on!'. And, really, he's not interested in her - he's interested in himself. And there's an awful lot of guys out there who are like this; who don't know when to take their foot off the throttle and say 'Enough is enough'. And she is about to leave him because she wants to be treated as somebody special and important - and I'm sure there's a lot of women who can understand this feeling, as well. Which brings us to the third song..."

Which is?

CHRIS: "Which is '*She Must Have Known*'. A woman, perhaps the same one, walks into a party one night and - across the room - is somebody they have an instant sparkle between and, within just a short time, they both realise that this is that person of their dreams, this is the soul-mate...waiting. I suppose that is what I am suggesting; that there is always someone out there, however long it takes, that someone will be there for you - eventually. And at the end, there's a bit of a smile for me because I enjoyed the film '*Shirley Valentine*', about the lady leaving and going off to Greece to run or work in a bar on the beach - and I'm sure a lot of people are tempted to do that. And that's what she does. So that kind of wraps the whole trilogy of songs up. It wasn't actually designed like that initially but, I think, being close to so many people, as I said earlier, who are breaking up in their relationships it makes you think; it disturbs the stability of your own lifestyle and it's very sad to see what used to be a strong couple coming to you in individual status - and both talking about the other in acrimonious ways. The three songs tell the same story but from different angles. I remember, years ago, I saw this famous Japanese film ('*Rashomon*'), which recounted four people's memories of a murder - and people's recollections were so utterly different. I was fascinated by that. That doesn't mean it's what I've brought to these three songs but, in fact, they *do* have something in common; they involve the same people. That's the way they started developing. I didn't do it on purpose, but I must have been thinking along the same lines each time, and so I kind of wove them into a sort of a story."

You're painting some very strong imagery in certain songs. Specifically, '*If Beds Could Talk*' conjures up all kinds of things....

CHRIS: "I travel an awful lot and I stay in hotels a lot - and I've always been a 'What if?' person. I suppose it even goes back as far as to '*A Spaceman Came Travelling*' and '*Spanish Train*', in the early days. And I have no idea where the idea came from but imagine if.... beds could talk, if walls could hear... There are actually people out there who do believe that human beings, all living things, put out an energy that is absorbed and recreated and regenerated and remembered. There are people who say that we leave footprints everywhere we go in life, with the energy we give out - and maybe I believe that, too. So, the song develops the story about a guy: 'If beds could talk, mine would be singing thinking about you'. You know, it's about the lover he misses so much because she was the best ever. It has absolutely no reference to me, whatsoever, and I am glad to admit that! It's just an idea. That's what I often do; take an idea, extrapolate it, form it and make it into something that everybody, or the majority of public, can say 'Oh, yeah - I can really dig that.' And this is, I guess, a bit of a laugh. The guy in the song has had a stunning relationship with somebody and, as you may have noticed from what I've been saying earlier, not too many of these new songs, I would say, drift off to the mists of time. They're about current things that have happened to me

or I've thought about - or have happened to people around me. And '*If Beds Could Talk*' is, as you'll hear, a fun song - can't wait to do this one live - about a fellow who's had a terrific lover, a terrific girlfriend, and if the bed *could* talk it would say 'Come back! I need you...on top of me again...beside me...let me hug you one more time'. It's, I guess, a feeling that 'if walls could hear every word you said to me about how much you loved me, maybe they could recreate that feeling' and 'if mirrors could see and pass on all that absorbed energy and interest about a relationship'. But it's not too serious - it's just fun."

Equally, '*Lebanese Night*', lyrically & musically, evokes a time and a place....

CHRIS: "I was very lucky to have been invited to perform with my band in Beirut, right at the end of the war in the early 90s'. I was told then that I was very popular in Lebanon and a lot of people derived comfort from listening to my music as the bombs rained down and the bullets flew. People were telling me that, during the war, a lot of people would go down into their basements and listen to music, and I was one of the top favourites the radio would be playing. People would take tapes down and the music, quite often my songs, would give them comfort, I guess, under fire. We, I suppose, in a stable society, find it very hard to believe what it's like living in a war zone. Anyway, about two years ago, I again went back to Beirut to do a concert and on two nights in a row we, me and the band, went to this one restaurant - which I mentioned to somebody recently from Beirut and they said 'Oh! This is Al...something or other'. They knew the restaurant because it's on a terrace on the first floor with waterfalls and flowers. It was a beautiful starry night and it was jammed full of young people; beautiful girls, good-looking guys, all of them mainly seemed to be in their 20s. And we sat at this big table with what they call their meze - where they bring lots and lots of different dips that you put your pitta bread in, and you drink the fabulous wines that they make in the Lebanon - under the stars. And it was so romantic and so beautiful - but what really struck me was that virtually all those people in there had lived through those war years, from maybe being born during or infants during. And it got me thinking when I got home about what it's like - and this is a familiar theme for me, I have to say - growing up in a war zone, and about how the fights that adults bring upon each other are also brought to the children for their lifetimes, in many ways, in the trauma that's involved. What kind of a legacy is that to leave our children? The things that we love the most and are most precious to us are our children - and yet we leave them with these legacies of hatred and war, we instill in them these dreadful things as part of their growing up culture, as part of their belief and background. So it's not specifically about what happened in Lebanon; it's about war zones everywhere. For example, the Israeli/Palestine problem, the situation in the North of Ireland where we have infants going to school in the Ardoyne and having things thrown at them and abuse hurled by adults. I mean what is *that* telling them? How bad is that? Not just specifically those places, but anywhere where children are brought up in atmospheres of hatred and war. And that's what '*Lebanese Night*' is all about. And, indeed, half-way through you'll hear a major Middle Eastern star, a girl called Elissa, singing those sentiments in her own language, about growing up in theatres of war. She sings and the words mean 'What is left for the children of war?' What I like particularly about it is the irony in one of the lines in the chorus: '*And did you go to your bed with a sweet lullaby and the sound of the guns in the night? Did you dance in the fields? Did you run for your life from the hell that came down from the sky?*' These are normal, everyday things that children live with in these places; going to bed with bombs going off in the distance, playing in the fields with jets overhead firing down on you and dropping stuff."

Lyrically, some songs on the new album travel back in time - as you so often have done over your career. '*Bal Masqué*' in particular, actually flips between time zones....

CHRIS: "*Bal Masqué*" arrived as an idea just around the phrase 'bal masqué', which... again, I have no idea where this one drifted from. But it's like a clue, a puzzle. And you say 'What does this mean?' I like '*Bal Masqué*' and, as a French speaker, I obviously know what it means - it means 'masked ball' - but I was also drawn into the sort of Louis XV Court of Versailles feeling of the masked ball where you have these beautiful ladies descending from the carriages with their long gloves on and...I can almost *see* the little feet stepping on to the platform, coming off the carriages with the horses pulling and a footman reaching forward to help her down and walking into the grand ballroom and...these are very vivid images in my head. And, in those days, the idea of having a mask...most of the time, these were actually held on a sort of a stick in front of you so everybody had a pretty clear idea of who it was. But some of the gentleman would actually wear masks, so you couldn't really tell who anyone was - particularly strangers. And then I thought 'Well, now how do I develop this into a more solid idea and not just about one incident, maybe a few hundred years ago?' And it got me thinking that, again, like a point I made earlier, we will always find that soulmate from another time - and I am a strong believer in the fact that we have been here before, in different forms. And perhaps it's fanciable to suggest this but, 'What if? - again - 'the one that was our father or our mother or a lover or a brother or sister...', in previous lives you're constantly attracted back to, as the centuries go through. It *is* a very fanciable idea but in '*Bal Masqué*', the second part is 'It doesn't matter *who* you are or *where* you are - I will recognise you the moment I see you or get near you.' As you'll hear, it's a very strong track with lots of driving electric guitars - and anybody who thinks that my music is quite simply quiet ballad stuff should have a good listen to '*Bal Masqué*'."

Once more, musically and lyrically, as well as looking back you're certainly looking forward. I can't remember another song where I've heard the phrase 'SMS' used before. I'm referring to the song 'Save Me' - and I'd be interested to hear your views on bringing the future into what you're writing about.

CHRIS: "Well, I've certainly noticed - living with two teenagers in my family and a boy of eleven - the impact that mobile phones have had on life - and particularly the text messaging services, the SMS, which is a complete undercurrent of information and communication which is unparalleled in history. And I think it's absolutely fantastic. It's an amazing way of keeping in touch with people - as, obviously, e-mail is - so I've become technically efficient, thankfully, finally!, and I've just decided to use some of the current phrases. Like in '*Guilty Secret*' we have 'textual delight' and, in '*Save Me*', we have a situation....this is a gentle little melody that jumped up from nowhere in particular (sings) '*Once in a dream I was falling in love*' and this took quite a while to figure out... So, he's had this dream about this beautiful girl and he wakes up and he's on the floor and...it was just a dream. But then he's at a party and he gets an SMS up on his phone that says 'Help...save me! I've had enough of this'. I'm sure we all have been to functions where you stand there feeling *incredibly* uncomfortable, thinking 'Oh, dear, who *are* these people? I have nothing in common with them. I feel as if I've strayed into somebody else's nightmare. I'm not even dressed for this!'. And imagine, then, an SMS coming up on your phone saying 'Help! I feel exactly the same as you' - and you look around the room and there, standing at the door, is the same girl that was in your dream. What kind of a coincidence is this?! So, that's what that's about. It's a bit of fun - and note the ending, which is, I suppose, and it has been suggested...fairly kind of *Beatle-y!* "

Among many other things, this is a very romantic album in parts, particularly a song like 'There's Room In This Heart Tonight' ...

CHRIS: "Well, some years ago, I had this idea in my head for a kind of a charity song - which turned out primarily into '*There's Room In This Heart Tonight*'. But I changed it quite a bit, subsequently. It's one of those paradoxes in the chorus; 'I can hear you crying in silence, I can see you lost in the dark'. This is really one of those songs that

suggests that whatever misery, happiness and turmoil is going on in your life, there is someone out there who's caring for you - whether it be a close friend or I mean, there are people who are there to help - I'm not talking about Samaritans - but the network of friends and family. And as you step back from the closer picture, you get into the broader picture, or the global picture, where I was thinking about the irony that the places that *most* need help in creating an environment that life can survive in are the ones that the disasters happen in, where they have the hurricanes, the monsoons, the desperate floods, the volcanic eruptions, the earthquakes - and these are peopled by races that really are the ones who are most at risk. And I suppose I am thinking about them in this song as well. And then, in the middle eight section, I'm suggesting in one of my further beliefs that there is always something or somebody listening - you may call it what you wish; God or whatever. For me, I do believe there is a complete infrastructure outside of us - a 'sixth dimension'. It's almost like an internet; absolutely full of information and full of advice and help - and all you have to do is really, *really* ask. I think if you ask, say, 'Ooh, I'd like to wake up tomorrow morning and have another 200 million in my bank account', it's not really going to work. But I do believe that if you are under such distress, then this almost turns on a light in your psyche, in your body, that attracts the attention of those who want to help. And just listen to the advice that you are given."

'Another Rainbow' sounds very personal, possibly autobiographical?...

CHRIS: "It's very rare that I write a song about, or indeed for, anybody specific. In the past, it's been suggested that I often have and, certainly, I've been amazed to read why I wrote various songs including, for example '*The Lady In Red*'. Who was it for? To suggest that you write a song for somebody means that you are making it a gift, a present, for somebody who obviously inspired you to write the song or about whom you were thinking. I have heard so many disparate theories about why I wrote that song ('*The Lady In Red*') and others, but '*Another Rainbow*', *is* - as you suggested - a bit closer to home. I'm actually, out of friendship and honour, not going to reveal who it's about, but it's about a close friend. I suppose I'm the kind of songwriter who believes that what you should be trying to do is put music out there that others can relate to and say 'That's *exactly* how I feel about my friend' or whatever. I think the moment you get intensely personal you make it almost impossible for other people to connect with; it's nothing to do with their lives. So it's always really important for me to make sure that the songs that I write are connected to other people's lives - otherwise you've missed the point. On this occasion, a boyhood friend, really, who like so many boyhood friends sit there dreaming that they're going to change the world and they're going to blaze a trail to the stars and they're going to do this that and the other and become hugely rich and hugely successful - without putting much work into it, hopefully! That's what you dream about when you're in university, I can tell you! And if there's any university students out there reading this - keep on dreaming because, you know, if you don't have a dream, you won't go anywhere. As far as I was concerned, I wanted to get to the stars - but getting halfway there isn't bad. You know, have a dream; see what happens. There's no point saying 'I *could have been*' with your grandchildren at your knee. So, with '*Another Rainbow*' it's a situation where my friend went off into different areas and he didn't have that one thing that he could really concentrate on, as I did - which, for me, was music. For him, he became, as I suggested, a jack of all trades but king of none. I hope he's not been too offended by that, but this man is so skilled at so many things, brilliant at so many things, but not one thing could actually really classify him as a great...A,B,C. It's not supposed to be feeling sorry for anybody or anything like that - it's not even supposed to reveal that somebody has not been as successful as they might have been. It's just a very affectionate view as two friends who find themselves, all these years later, still

very close friends and just reminiscing about the past and how their lives could have been if they'd changed or done certain, different things in the past. But I think the bond of friendship is what we're talking about here. And, just to summarise about the gold at the end of the rainbow - I know an awful lot of unhappy rich people... That's never the answer; 'Let's go and make lots of money', as I suggested earlier in *'Love & Time'*, happiness is one of those very, very deceitful things and very hard to find - like a butterfly, just drifting around; every so often it lands on your particular patch - and grab it and hold onto it for as long as you can."

Are all of the new songs written by you?

CHRIS: "All but one. The one that did make it as a co-write is one by Mark Spiro and myself; *'She Must Have Known'*. The day that I left the songwriting thing in France (a writing trip referred to in a previous issue of *The Gazette*), I said to him on a private basis, 'Why don't we just sit down for a couple of hours in the sunshine, before I head home?' That song was the result."

The album has ballads, mid-tempo material - and a real rock edge in there, too. That mix represents and encapsulates pretty much everything you have become known for in your career, musically - barring the orchestral side of things and, possibly, the more solo performances...

CHRIS: "I'm feeling so good about my songwriting at the moment that, since I finished the new album, I am already in the process of working on and expanding another six songs. They're all very melodic - and five of them are very ballad-sounding and...orchestral, I think. I'm already halfway through to the next project, which I hope to start properly next year."

Finally, you speak with much enthusiasm about your new album and about how much you're looking forward to taking it out on the road. Where in the world can we expect to see you tour this time?

CHRIS: "By the time people read this newsletter, we should have started the next world tour in Ireland in September. The tour will then move into Europe; Holland, Germany...a lot of shows in Germany...Austria, Switzerland. France, Holland and then come into the UK - north, south, east and west. Beyond that, next year, I'm dying to get back to Canada and who knows, USA and South America - where I came from originally - and Australia. We shall have to wait and see what develops."

PEN PALS

Once again, it has been a long time between issues of the *Gazette* and, consequently, requests from members to have their Pen Pal details published in the newsletter have not exactly been flooding in. In fact, we have just the one name to bring you right now:

Mrs Donna Ross, 157 Cross Lane, Radcliffe, Manchester, M26 2RJ, England. (Aged 31).

However, if you would like to be included in a future list of Pen Pals, then please write your name and address **CLEARLY** and in **BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS** - specifying your age only if you wish - and send them in to the fan club P.O. Box. Be aware, though, that if we can't understand your writing, we obviously won't be able to pass your information on.

Finally, just a brief note to point out that Pen Pals is an international service. We'd like to put as many people from as many different countries as possible in touch with one another as we can - and don't forget that you already have one major shared interest; a love of Chris de Burgh and his music. So, get writing!...

PERSON TO PERSON

For the benefit of any newer club members, we should explain that 'Person To Person' is *your* chance to interview Chris by sending your questions for him in to the fan club. Unfortunately, having established that, space prevents us from printing any answers from Chris in this particular issue. However, if you have a question for Chris - whether concerning his music, career or personal life, and regardless of how trivial the enquiry - then send it along to the fan club P.O. Box address, marking your letter **'PERSON TO PERSON'**. Remember that the purpose of this feature is for you, as a fan club member, to ask Chris for answers to *your* questions, no matter how weird, wonderful or just plain nosey they might be - so USE IT! Assuming enough of you send questions in, we'll print a selection of answers in the next magazine.

UNTIL THE NEXT TIME...

Once again, that brings to a close another issue of the *Gazette*. The next edition is most likely to be with you early in the New Year, when we ought to have had the opportunity to catch up with Chris about all of his news following the European and UK legs of his *'Timing Is Everything'* World Tour 2002/3. Also, and as just indicated, we really would like to publish some more 'Person To Person' answers - so, please, do send some questions for us to ask Chris!

Meanwhile, don't forget to call The C de B Hotline to keep in touch with what Chris is up to during those frequently lengthy (!) gaps between newsletters. Remember that the telephone number to call was *changed* some time ago to:

090 63 63 33 40

NB: Calls cost **60p** a minute at all times. Please ask permission of the person paying the phone bill before making a call. This service can only be accessed if you are living in the UK.

Also note that the system we use for the Hotline allows us to update the phoneline remotely, via an automated 'prompt' system, whereas previously messages could only be changed if a human being (remember them?) was available to actually record a message using a reel to reel tape recorder (remember *them?*). In all other respects, The C de B Hotline remains exactly as before and, as such, is only up-dated when required - with each message always announcing the date of recording in the first few seconds of the call, to allow you to hang up immediately if you have already heard it. Listen out for any messages from Chris.

So, until the next time, don't forget to send any comments, criticisms, Pen Pal addresses or Person To Person questions to me, Mike, at the fan club address:

**THE NEW CHRIS DE BURGH CLUB
P.O. BOX 102,
STANMORE, MIDDLESEX, HA7 2PY, ENGLAND**

As always, many thanks for your continued support and legendary patience.

See you out there somewhere on the *'Timing Is Everything'* tour!

PS: If you are on-line, or have access to the Internet via any means, do check out Chris's OFFICIAL website at: www.cdeb.com