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Bullsheets #162

Welcome, welcome, welcome to all you Bullsheeters. We here at Big Rock Records wish you all Happy Christmas and compliments of the season. We must also remind you that, just like the proper media, the content contained herein has nothing to do with the truth nor does it in any way reflect the opinion or views of the writers. Some names have been changed to protect the guilty, although some R'souls deserve to get caught in court.

It has been a hard working year here in Big Rock Land. Many gigs have been done and much recording happening. Sales are down but steady; we have sold to England, Scotland, Germany and the good old US of A, but Australia is letting the team down. Please examine your credit cards and consciences then repeat this mantra....

"Lord let me buy, Lord let me buy"

With young people convinced that music is obtained free from that faceless place in the online sky, one would have to wonder if there is any future in the recorded music industry. Technology has step by step killed the viability of the music and film industries. There will never again be a Beatles or Rolling Stones or the demand for music as social glue. The competition for the leisure dollar is fierce and dirty. Big Business Sports advertisers get free airtime on every TV station every day, every hour, year after year. "Foul" do I hear you yell? (Only the musos Eh! ☺) Thank you Mr. Murdock, Mr. Packer and Fairfux. Pirated films and cheap home grog, together with Draconian DUI laws combine to keep people locked up 'safe' in their homes. If you watch the joke that is "our Media" you would be scared to go out of your front door. Thank you Mr. Murdock, Mr. Packer and Fairfux. Local content is virtually non-existent and two or three multinationals control most of the music that the world listens to. The ABC (or Gay BC) continues to let down local artists and bands by choosing their chosen ones and ignoring everything else. RAGE continues to play O/S crap rap and bombard the poor young Australians with faceless, manufactured rubbish from slum dwellers or English twats. Have a nice day ABC ☺.

(Credit where is due: the Crowded House gig was a ripper!! ☺)

Recording is still viable on a local level if you can contain the recording costs. Sales of say 500 @ \$25.00 will bring in \$12,500, minus costs. Who needs a mansion anyway? People must stop thinking that local is shite and buy the Australian CD's.

(Good luck with that one ☺)

Having said all that here is the

Recording News

A number of albums are in the pipeline this year:-

Paula McMahon has completed an album of her favourite tunes; **'Lifetime Addiction To The Blues'** BRCD/Dist 38. It will be available through Big Rock Records soon. She has done a marvellous job and built a bloody wonderful studio to boot - "The Twang & Bang Parlour" is up n' running and open for business. Phone 9680 7853

The Rockwells are at mixing stage with their new 'band' album and it will be released in the New Year. Rockwells have tentatively entitled it **'Redback'** and from what we can gather they are 'professionally twiddling to ensure listeners' pleasure and radio airplay are respectively catered for'. There ya go, so it must be good ☺

Peter Pik is having much success with his new album **'Requests'** BRCD/Dist 36. He has just returned from a massive tour of Europe selling thousands of CDs on the way. Mr. Pik has a unique style of playing and every serious music collector should have one in the cupboard.

Chris Turner is working away on his studio album **'Rocks'** - BRCD/052. This album is well overdue and a restart was in order. Chris has taken a contract on Dave Dempsey from Wav Ranch to produce Mick O'Shea's drums and lend his eagle ears to the production of the project. Cletis Carr and Theo Kats are onto the artwork so watch this gap. This will be the first solo album from Chris for many years. Discography on www.big-rock.com.au / artists/ biography.

Jonny Gretsch has released an album of lost tracks BRCD/Dist39. Funnily enuf **'Lost Tracks'** is a collection of recently discovered early 90s tracks from Australian rockabilly outfit, the Wasted Ones, founded by Jonny Gretsch. The Wasted Ones' unique and original Australian rockabilly sound can be heard in these tracks which capture the energy of the late 80s / early 90s Sydney rockabilly scene. All youse twirly skirts take note.

Cletis Carr has a new album out that is bloody wonderful. **'Sedalia Blues'** BRCD/Dist 37 has very grown up world class songs. The pickin' is – well - marvellous and Cletis has well and truly put an arrow into the bullseye of music (Eh?) Well worth \$25.00!!!

The Blues Pirates second album is underway, setting sail on the high 'C's' and will feature a number of duets or 'two-ets' with various artists and band members. (Two is more than enuf for a duo!!) This floating line up will be setting sail, dropping the hook and generally making a nuisance of themselves at a gig near you soon. Past crew members: Cletis Carr, Eric Damburg (MIA), Robin Jackson, Phill Simmons, Pete Wells (RIP), Roger Tait, Terry Malone RIP, Chop Tone Charlie, Jim Finn & Lee Wilshire. Special guest **Blues Pirates** have included Paula McMahon and Dennis Val.

'Something old, something new, something plundered and something blue'

'The Wasted Seamen' and 'The Three Sheets' will supply backing vocals☺

Chop Tone Charlie

Choppy Farrugia is working on an album of songs that will suit his Blues Busters Band. He is accepting submissions for material and is working with Jim Finn as co-producer. Working Title **‘Chop It Up’**, the album will be available next year. We look forward to hearing this album ☺

Quotes

"To work in the NSW Clubs you must strive for mediocrity!"

Pete Wells

.....

"WTF!" - A US voter

.....

"I went to church but God didn't bother."

Chris Turner

.....

Dave's Rave from Wav

The Wav Ranch

is a private audio facility based in Stanmore in Sydney's inner west, owned and operated by independent music professional Dave Dempsey. Dave is a multit talented and versatile musician who plays keyboards and guitar, as well as an experienced audio engineer. "Rancho Del Wav" offers a mix of quality audio hardware and software equipment and provides very high quality audio. Available services include recording, mixing and mastering, post production overdubs and vocal recording, original composition and arrangement.

Pricing is very reasonable and negotiable depending on project budget and scale. A mobile recording service and live sound and lighting system is also available.

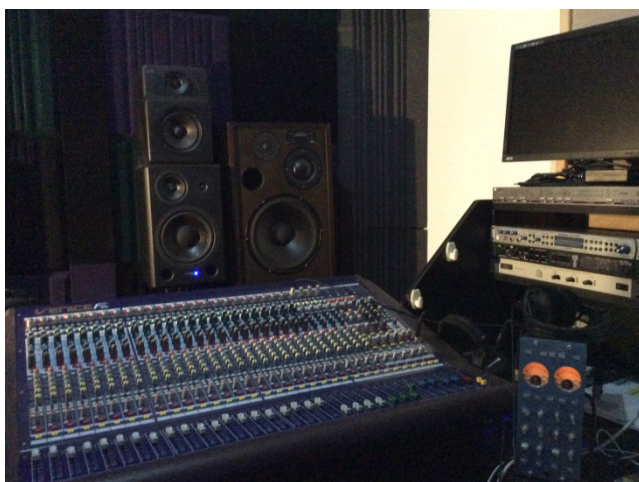


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Mastering is a huge part of the modern recording business. Dave Dempsey has been a musician, engineer and industry pro for many years and his list of skills is scary. Get Dave from Way and give it a save!



The Red Guitar Club

An officially official but unofficial casual guitar club has emerged. As you will gather it is called The Red Guitar Club. To get into this club you must have a red guitar that passes stringent tests of colour, design and cool. Don't try to join with a less than a cool red guitar; you will end up with a red face.

Red is no longer enuf; just to strut the planks with an orange, pink or purple guitar...it must be red – proper red, simply Fred (like the band☺) and although there is room for reddish, we must start making distinction. Now as you all know the computer is the colour mincing machine of all time, it can screw up a colour faster than Champagne in a virgin, so allowances must be made to protect the genuine red guitarist from the riff raff reds.

It was all downhill with the advent of the digital camera when it turned the family photo into a moon landscape. Red Eyes will not mean an automatic membership.

Our presiding camel, that used to be a committee, are at each other's throats, so to speak ('scuse the pun) over the colour Fiesta Red, a pink orange American car colour, as to whether it is indeed red, orange or pink. Submissions please.....The British would never have painted a Morris Minor pink (or even proper Pillar Box Red!) Fire Engine Red will of course get bells ringing and a fast tracked membership. Iridescent and fleck colours will have to be worn with black clothes and sensible shoes.

A list of unofficial members is below and will one day be vetted by our unpaid and unaware honorary president – **Hank B. Marvin**.

Max Paton
Chris Turner
Dave Dempsey
Gary Moore
Hank B. Marvin
Gwyn Ashton
Nick Croft
Mark Knopfler

Jeff Beck was not allowed in, his Strat is white, Eric Clapton tried but was rejected, blocked by his guitars' name – 'Blackie'!! (Smile when you say Black ☺)

Red Gibson members will be considered by our biased and bent judges. We make no promises ☺

Red guitars don't work without flares (just like a Morley Wah pedal ☺) so don't try to influence the judges with a photo from the seventies....the red guitar could be any colour by now – we don't trust photos or your lyin' eyes.

Some rejected members are feeling rejected because their guitars, although being red, are just not cool – I mean there must be some protocols, for fuck's sake.



Nick Croft – Custom Strat



Chris Turner – Blood Red



Phill Simmons – Still under review!!



Dave Dempsey – A tail to tell?



M'axe Paton - New Member

(Max Axe has a new band, 'Hanks For Nothin')

Note: to say that “I’m Hank Marvin” doesn’t mean you are impersonating him, it just means that you’re hungry!!

Phill's Rant, Rave & Review

(A bitter sweet story)



Mouquet Farm Plaque



British War Cemetery

Did the bucket list thing and got across to France to pay my respects to my uncle Mervyn Shute killed at Pozieres 9/8/16. I was there on the day 100 years later and I believe I am the only family member to see his grave. I saw where he perished with his mates of the 45th battalion of the Australian Infantry at the battle for Mouquet Farm. It took them 18 days to capture the farm advancing from their strongpoint only 1 kilometre away, just on the outskirts of the village that had been taken the week before. Mervyn was killed on day 3. It was such a bloodbath. On one day of the campaign, over 8,000 allied soldiers lost their lives. The German losses were even worse overall. We lose sight of what our forebears went through to provide us with the safety and comfort we now have in this country today. **Lest we forget.**



Mouquet Farm as it is today. They are still finding war relics in the soil to this day.

"To be a better person put your mind in someone else's shoes." Chris Turner

Chris Turner's Write Hand

Chris Turner writes, rants & generally jerks off



Please explain.....

How come Australian property in Hunter Street, Newcastle, is being advertised for sale in Japan?

How can a Pilipino woman buy the penthouse behind the coke sign in Kings Cross for 57 million dollars...with a cheque?

Why Pauline Hansen is being ridiculed by the media when the other incompetent tossers are just as much of a joke, probably more so?

How come the Politicians get a ridiculous amount of money and perks on retirement but tell us peasants, with a straight face, that the age of entitlement is over?

How can Korean businessmen buy 50 houses in Sydney while on a week's holiday?

Why can't I get bacon on my burger anymore?

Has some backroom deal been done for us to become an Arabic or Asian nation?

Why is Sydney being ripped apart by corrupt developers and councils when over half of the cardboard units being built are owned by O/S corporations and then kept empty for tax purposes? Is this to keep the rents high? Is there a problem or a rat here? (NB. try that in Asia and see what happens!!)

Why are the pollies and lawmakers legislating for the lowest common denominator and how come we are being treated as children?

Since when did kneejerk reaction become a credible way of running a country?

Why is Islam being taught to Aussie kids in our schools?

Why are there more police (and cranes) in NSW per capita than in any other state or province in the world? I think P C Sydney is the most boring and goody two shoes place on earth, so who's being naughty? ☺ We should all loosen up.

Has Multi-culturalism stolen our manners? End of rant ☺

Please explain.....

Lyrics

'Reefer Madness' - Jim Finn

Chorus

Reefer Madness driving me insane, Reefer Madness coming back again

Why are some drugs legal and others not, prohibition's failed lets free the lot

Or this reefer madness will never end

V1

A couple of guys in '36, had a problem they needed fixed

Friends in the white house performed the tricks;
But along came the war nylon short supply,
Grow hemp for your country was the cry,
All good things must come to an end.
So this Reefer Madness driving me insane

V2

Hemp is the weed that should be freed,
Good for many of our human needs.
Break down cholesterol with the seeds,
Make bricks and boards help save the trees,
But stupid white men, they say no, oil and trees are the way to go
And after all they should know about,
Greed and madness will it never end.

Chorus

V3

Pot's been around for thousands of years,
Lock up your daughters let out your fears,
U don't grow horns or turn queer
Much bigger bastard when u drink too much beer
But hemp's not for smoking, it's not for fun
You'll only get a headache if you smoke a ton
So why are hemp and pot treated as one
Reefer madness will it ever end

Chris Turner

'One More Gig'

1

Spent my whole life, singin' the blues
I've played for princes, I've played for fools
With a spring in my step, I set out to please
Covered this big country 'n' sailed seven seas
I sing out my songs then I pull down my rig
Oh lord can you grant me just one more gig...

2

I've been so lucky with life, music and years
I lay down to sleep with applause in my ears
Though my songs have deep meaning that a lot just don't get
And the radio don't hear me – that I regret
Still I sing out my tunes then pull down to go
Please let me thank you for one more show

3

The wheels are spinnin' 'n' the tarmac is hot
The audience is waitin'; just one more shot
(It seems) everythin's runnin' slow, 'ceptin' the clock
And everything is stiff 'cept I just can't stop ☺
But I still sing out my songs 'n' pull down my rig
Just to get through just one more gig.

4

I went to my agent, "Hello" he lied
He said "No more gigs man, my hands are tied"
"Your music is blocking their view of the screens
And the crowd is made up of loud mouth teens"
So no more music for the punters to dig
Sorry, I can't give you one more gig!
Yes I'm sorry I can't do just one more gig

If only I could do – just one more gig!!

Chris Turner 2016 APRA C

Jim Finn – Helping the Irish Economy

This missive is written from sunny Ireland, believe it or not the last 2 days have been just glorious. Jeeze, I even got burned yesterday. It is good to be back in 'Old Sod'; Lesley and I have had a bloody great time so far. Van is legal and on the road, thanks to Eamonn and Richie for your help, was almost painless this year.

We arrived just over 2 weeks ago and have been flat out since, Dublin, Enniscorthy, Meath, Clifden, Mullingar, Bishopstown and Armagh for the blues festival (look 'em up). Went to Dublin last Thursday for a jam session, and I met 2 excellent players: Hector who is just an insane guitarist and Mr Ferrari (his real surname) a real cool bass player, was a fantastic blow and hoping to do a gig in the very near future with these lads, the Dublin Crew.

Next it was off to Clifden in Galway, Foyles bar, the boss man, Jason, runs one of the finest musical bars I have run across anywhere.

Friday night played with a young fella called Nicholas Timothy, a fine guitarist and a great vocalist with a big blues timbre throughout his performance. We played acoustically; I used brushes; nice quiet little gig with plenty of spirit.

Saturday night we were joined by another brilliant young bass player a fella from Galway by name of Sam Wright. All I can say is the night was so much fun that I was disappointed at the last song with the thought that I might not get to play with these guys again, bit depressing actually; special line ups like this don't land in your lap every day. The Galway Crew.

It takes a while to understand the dance in different countries - even this one, which is so similar to our own (except for the weather).

Sunday night we headed to Armagh for the last day of their blues festival and caught a couple of excellent local acts. Irish people love music, it's part of their culture; an older bloke said to me one night, "I don't like the music you play, but I love the way you play it", 82 years old and attend both years we played there. I feel in Oz the great part of our audience is drifting away from going out to see bands and I wonder how much of the solo/duo 'man and machine' thing is responsible for this down turn.

Onwards & upwards ☺ Jim

Blacktown Sports Club

Being professional and businesslike is a part of my strategy in my 55 year career as a bandleader, singer and songwriter. I have been very lucky, I have survived in a business that breaks and spits out 90% of the participants.

Blacktown Sports Club has got to be exposed as the worst gig in Sydney.

Myself and my Cave Men (Lite) were booked to do a 4 hour gig there (Four fuckin hours!!) We turned up to find that there was no parking at the front of the club so that we could load in; we were confronted by rude and surly door thugs who told us that we had to lug in from a four story carpark across the road! "Everyone else does" we were told. I should point out how professional my Cave Men were when confronted by this ridiculous situation.

The carpark was almost full to capacity so that the lug was down four ramps with cars driving past us (the lift was out of action!), across the zebra crossing (like the Beatles☺), up a ramp into the foyer, through the crowds of milling and rude punters, through a security door into the smoking room (gasp Health & Safety?), through another security door into and thru the coffee lounge, down a ramp and right around the bottom area to the stage. This is with full production, stage gear, drums, PA and lights, lots of trips. The stage was covered with, yes, a sports screen which took them half an hour to find that switch so that we could set up.

The punters were from another planet, yelling out like Pterodactyls for requests and telling us what to do. Did I say how professional my Cave Men were thru all this?? Mick O'Shea, Slinky Pete and Dave Dempsey sounded and played wonderfully throughout; the band was hot and sounded great. The bar staff were also rude and sullen; I was charged \$10.00 for a Brandy & Soda and \$13.00 for a science project that doubled as a sandwich.

The lug out was a repeat of the lug in but in reverse☺. The door staff had changed but the manners were still missing. We waited six weeks to eventually get paid but my players were one hundred percent professional even through this.

Blacktown Workers (you remember the gig where the crew had to load a truck full of gear up and down eight flights of external fire escape stairs) owns this club but I can only blame the management and board of the club for allowing this dreadful behaviour and I only have one message to all the people who allowed this to happen to my very professional band – Go to hell, you are base & unworthy!

Chris Turner 2016

Cletis & His Tour Rave

Hello and greetings from the Great American Gigland Dustbowl. I'm writing this from Dallas, Texas, after six months of treading stages in taverns, sports clubs, wine bars, taprooms, brewpubs, coffeehouses, and living rooms across this trumped-up country. I'd like to share a couple of thoughts with y'all (that's Texan for "youse").

I'm lucky to be one of the Big Rock family who get paid to plane-n-play, and sometimes, it can be a sobering reality. To put it bluntly, the US economy is still rooted. Millions of people here are still struggling, really, truly struggling hard, just to get by day to day. I see it every day in my travels. And I see the result on the live circuit.

For years now, the going rates for live musicians in this country are roughly \$100-150 for a solo or duo gig. That's about \$135-200 AUD. Most bands I knew rarely got over \$300 for a three hour spot, and more than a few were playing for less than half that money, just to get the



gig. Of course, the ubiquitous tip jar can make the difference. Problem is, with the economy so tanked, the people who used to drop in fives & tens are now only slipping single dollar bills into the jar. If they bother at all.

If you've got a big name, the ticketed venues can be much more lucrative. But even then, it's hit & miss. My friend Peter Case - formerly of the Nerves & the Plimsouls, multiple Grammy nominee & feted by the likes of Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan – played a show a couple weeks ago in Fort Worth, to 12 payers. Most of my friends on the larger venue / theatre touring circuit tell me when they do make any money from the road, it's usually from CD & merch sales, and then, from maybe only 30-40% of the shows.

In closing, here're some positive steps we can all take to help maintain and protect our fragile but healthy live scene:

1. Try to go out more often, even if you can't stay the evening. You don't need to make an all-nighter of it, even by just dropping into a venue for the rest of the set, maybe only able to buy one drink cause payday's not til the weekend – this is better than you not being there at all. If

you've got things on that night, see if you can manage to stick your head in the door of a friend's gig on the way past.

2. Tell everyone that you're there. It's the 21st century, get used to social media, even if you feel awkward. Go to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, whatever you're using. Get the smartphone apps if you don't, and get a teenager to install them for you ;-). Post a comment or better, a photo. Tag the venue, use the "Check In" feature, tag the location or suburb. Stir up your friends. "Hey [tag name]Mark, how come you and [tag name]Sally aren't here at [tag band]The Detractors' gig at [tag venue]The Central? [also tag location suburb] - [tag band member] Robbo is wearing that Hawaiian shirt that [tag friend] Emily got him". You've effectively cross-promoted your post to seven different news feeds, where it'll be seen by many. Someone's gonna think, "Hey, I'm missing out..."

3. More social media. Be more active in sharing your friends' post. If you're stuck at home with the kids, but you have pals out at a gig, share their photos to your timelines. If one of your fave local bands puts up a link to a new song or YouTube clip, share it across & let your followers know. Music discovery has changed drastically from the days of the wireless and street press. Put those likes and shares of your fave music, instead of videos of cats falling off off sofas.

4. House Concerts. I'm at a complete loss as to why a country that's so driven by private social gatherings such as BBQ's and the like, have simply failed to embrace the house concert idea. The number of times I've heard people complain about bad venues, rude staff, noisy drunks and the like... well, gather a dozen or so friends, and hold a private gig somewhere. Ask a few bucks for the music, and get peeps to BYO booze, maybe co-op some nibblies. Do it at your house, or maybe rent a nearby hall (cheap!). Just Google "How To Hold A House Concert", and get a crew together to help out. Why keep putting your \$\$ into big biz developers' pockets when they about-face & close the room you've invested so much time and money into (Ruby, the Sando, the Exchange, the Annandale, on and on it goes).

These are just a few ideas where you can be pro-active in helping your local scene, and they don't cost much, if at all. Apathy will be the killer of live music. If enough people decide they'd rather lie on the couch, get pizza delivered & watch one of the gameshows, like Idol or The Voice, then the next time you feel like venturing out for some real live toons – there may not be any. The recent US elections should serve as a reminder, if you don't "vote" for live music – look what can happen.

Best to all for a safe & happy season, and hopefully will see you at Big Rock 37 in '17.



Like ducks at the fair ground we keep on getting up ☺ That's what musicians do.....

All the best from all @ Big Rock Records