

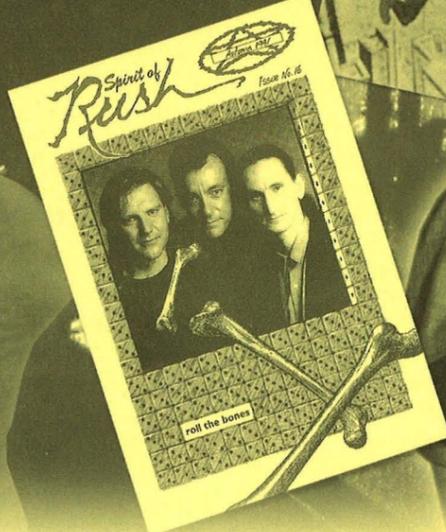
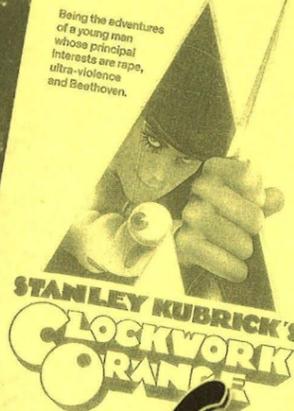
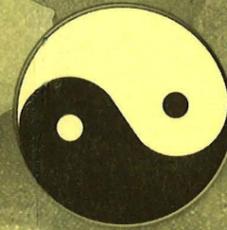
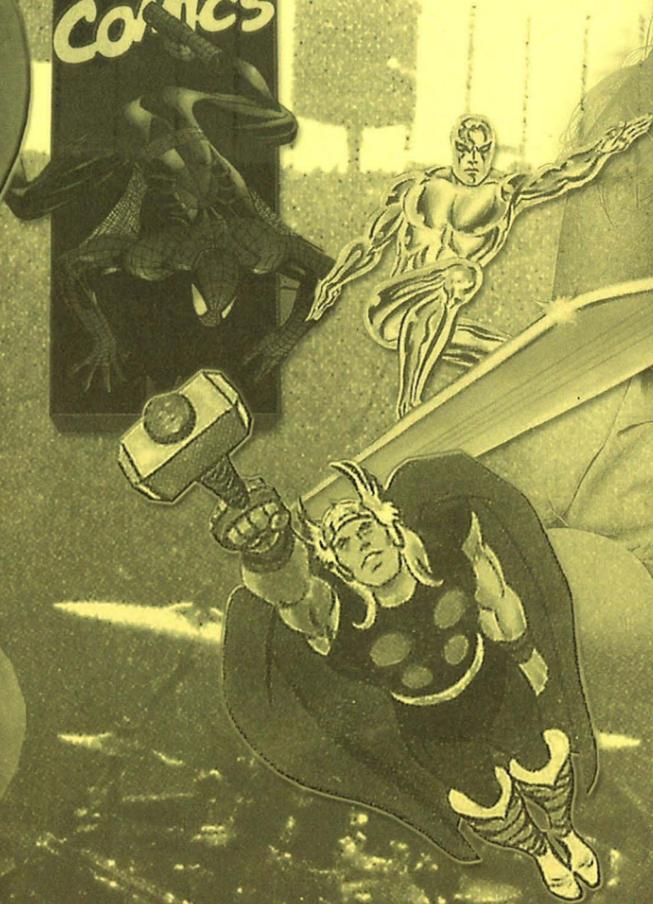
spirit of rush

SPECIAL ISSUE ~~64~~⁶⁹ SPRING 2003

A TRIBUTE TO
Mick Burnett



MARVEL
COMICS



The Spirit of Mick Editorial

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This issue is Dedicated to Mick Burnett

Dear SOR readers,

Welcome to Issue 69 of The Spirit of Rush! As most of you know, this is the very last issue of the fanzine.

'Why Issue 69, what happened to issues 64-68' I hear you ask? Well, I decided to dedicate this issue to Mick and it was always Mick's intention to run the mag up to Issue 69 and then call it a day - 69 BTW, was Micks favourite number (for obvious reasons!). The greatest tribute I could give him is to realise his wish - 'Mick, I hope you like it!'

Before I go, I have a lot of info' for you plus some good news and some bad news. Firstly the good news: check out the 'Message From Geddy' on page 6. He has some really promising words regarding the future - both in terms of another album and of touring in Europe. If it ever happens and they do tour here again, I'll see you all down the front ok?

Also, check out the Rush News on page 3 regarding the 'Rush in Rio DVD'. From what I've heard so far, it sounds like it's going to be a cracking buy.

I can finally confirm to you that there will be another 'Rush Convention' this year. It will be held on 27th September 2003 at the Limelight Club, Crewe. The event is being organised by tribute band 'YYZ' and Ray from the Limelight. As I have mentioned in earlier issues, myself and The Spirit of Rush decided that the 2002 Convention would be the last event in which we would be involved. See inside back cover for full details of how to obtain tickets etc. I'll see you there on the day!

Now for the bad news (of sorts!). Jock Cornell has decided that he will not be producing his intended Rush fanzine, 'Turn the Page' due to personal matters. He would like to thank everyone who has offered encouragement and support, but said he would rather not do it at all than not be able to do it properly. Having said that, I understand that Simon Fraser-Clark of YYZ is considering starting a Rush fanzine himself. I suggest that anyone interested in helping him out or supporting him, should contact him as per the details given on the Convention ad at the inside back cover of this issue. I wish him luck!

With regard to those of you who still have subs outstanding for future issue/s, I will be reimbursing you (via cheque) for this. If anybody would like me to donate the money instead to Mick's benefit fund or to any other charity, just drop me a line or email me at janet.balmer@bt.com and I will do so. The cut-off date for this is June 30th - the date I will be mailing cheques out to everyone.

At this point, I'd like to offer my apologies to those of you who have been waiting and wondering as to when this final issue was going to materialise. Basically, my life has been well and truly shoved into 'overload' mode over the last few months due to work commitments and other shit happening. It's been a bit of a struggle but I hope you all like the end product despite the wait! This issue has some great stuff for you to read.

We have some fitting tributes to Mick sent in by SOR readers who were his closest friends. I haven't been able to put into words how I feel about him, but these tributes say it all better than I could ever do. Mick was a man of many facets. It's impossible to describe him in a few words but if you read pages 7-13 you will understand why he was so special. I guess my enduring memory of him is on the road.... following Rush or DT....being given an education in rock music, comics and films and an (undesired) tour of the porno shops of the world! It was also Mick who 'pushed' me to start photographing bands (beginning with Rush, New Orleans, Counterparts tour) - from which I have never looked back. I still feel an enormous gap in my life and have to say that doing the mag without him has not been easy.

Moving on, you will still find plenty of Rush material in this issue, however, - which we have made fatter than usual in order to accommodate everything. Thanks to everyone who contributed. Check out the webchat with Geddy which also has some very encouraging news regarding the future of the band, the on-line chat with Andrew McNaughtan, the great article on Neil from Cycle World and the final part of the interview with Alex regarding the making of VT. Finally we have more hilarious tour diaries for you and a bumper crop of Signals letters. Enjoy!

I'd like to thank all our 'regular contributors' who have helped out over the years - Chris, Sue, Lesley, Monica, Ray, Margot & Dave, Brad, Joe, Andrew, Steve A, Joe, Steve S, Neil...etc.. Not forgetting all readers who have submitted material or created artwork, to the artists who have given us interviews, everyone who has helped organise the conventions and to Anthem, East West Records, SRO, Kennedy Street Enterprises and all other folks in the 'industry' who have generously contributed Rush items. Lastly, I'd like to thank Alex, Geddy and Neil for their support and for giving us so much great music. Take care.

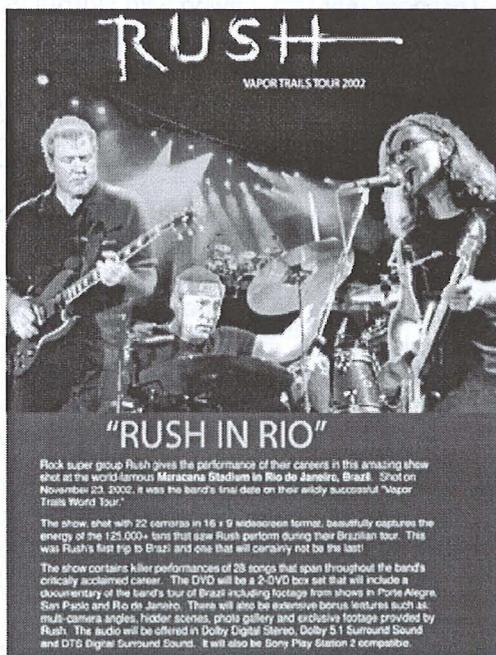
Janet

RUSH NEWS W S

Rush in Rio DVD

The Rush in Rio live concert DVD is currently scheduled for release in mid-August (August 5th is rumoured to be the exact date). It was shot with 17 cameras with an additional three shooting exclusively from the feet of each band member and includes documentary footage. Full details below:

- 22 Cameras in 16x9 widescreen format
- Show contains 28 songs
- 2-DVD box set including a documentary of the band's tour in Brazil including footage from shows in Porte Alegre, San Paolo and Rio de Janeiro
- Extensive bonus features such as multi-camera angles, hidden scenes, photo gallery and exclusive footage provided by Rush
- Audio in Dolby Digital Stereo, Dolby 5.1 Surround Sound and DTS Digital Surround Sound. Also Sony PlayStation 2 compatible
- Executive Producers - Allan Weinrib, Pegi Cecconi, Ray Danniels, Bryan Domyan



- Audio Producer - James "Jimbo" Barton
- Track Listing
 - Tom Sawyer
 - Distant Early Warning
 - New World Man
 - Roll the Bones
 - Earthshine
 - YYZ
 - The Pass
 - Bravado
 - The Big Money
 - Trees (sic)
 - Freewill
 - Natural Science
 - Closer to the Heart

One Little Victory
Driven
Ghost Rider
Secret Touch
Dreamline
Red Sector "A"
Leave That Thing Alone
The Rhythm Method
Resist
2112
Limelight
La Villa Strangiato
The Spirit of Radio
By-Tor & the Snow Dog/Cygnus X-1
Working Man

Brad Parmerter
fye.com - Trans World Entertainment

RUSH Rocks Canadian Museum of Civilization

Gatineau, Quebec, April 1, 2003 — The Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation (CMCC) is welcoming the recent acquisition of an important collection of popular music artifacts donated by the legendary Canadian rock band RUSH.

"We are glad to welcome RUSH to our collection," said Dr. Victor Rabinovitch, President and CEO of the Corporation. "This acquisition is part of an ongoing joint project between the CMCC and the Music Division of the National Library of Canada to develop a national collection of important popular music artifacts and archival documents."

The acquisition includes a complete stage set-up of vintage RUSH instruments and equipment — trademark double-neck bass and guitars from Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson, an elaborate Neil Peart drum set, keyboards, amplifiers and famous stage props from various international tours. The collection also includes a number of the group's Juno Awards, gold and platinum album awards, and other memorabilia from its illustrious history. "What an honour it is for us to be included in the national collection," said RUSH guitarist Alex Lifeson on behalf of his fellow band members. "To know that the spirit of our contribution to Canadian music will live on for years to come, and that it will be shared by so many, makes us very proud."

"The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland, Ohio has already asked to borrow some of the instruments for a special tribute to one of Canada's

R U S H N E W S

finest groups," stated Carmelle Bégin, Curator of the CMCC's Ethnomusicology Programme. "They will be on loan for the next two years and will be seen by hundreds of thousands of visitors." In honour of this year's Juno Awards, which are being held in Ottawa for the first time on April 6, the Canadian Museum of Civilization is presenting a special display: **The Juno Awards from Our Collections**. From March 28 to April 14, 2003, visitors can see RUSH's Junos side by side with ones awarded to pianist Glenn Gould and songwriters Jim Vallance and Bryan Adams, among others.

www.civilization.ca

Peart's Ghost Rider Inspires Godsmack's "Serenity":

"The song was inspired by a book I read by Neil Peart, *Ghost Rider: Travels On The Healing Road*, and it's about the tragedies he went through. The poor guy lost his wife and kid within a 10-month period, his dog died, and then his best friend went to prison for dealing weed when he was supposed to go out with him and ride his motorcycle to just clear his head and help comfort him. He had been through so much, he just got on his motorcycle, and within 14 months drove 55,000 miles — from Canada to Alaska, to America, to Belize, Mexico, back to Canada — and basically journaled out this thing about how he tried to heal himself and not put a noose around his neck.



It's just an amazing book, and the meaning I got out of it was so inspirational, because I'm thinking, 'God, if a guy can get through that kind of @#%\$, why should I @#%\$ about anything?' That's pretty heavy duty. So I got this beautiful song, and the cool part to the story is, I got to meet Neil Peart and hand him this song and ask him to play drums on it. Though he had to decline because they were touring and stuff, he wrote me back a letter and signed my book, wished me the best of luck, and kind of gave me his approval

on the song, because I was really nervous about it. For one, he's one of my drum heroes, and for two, I didn't want him to feel like I was prying into his life on such a sensitive subject."

Godsmack vocalist Sully Erna (Metal Edge, Mar. 2003)

Own A Rare Andrew MacNaughtan Print And Support A Worthy Cause

Andrew MacNaughtan, Rush's principal photographer, has created a special print that captures Alex, Neil and Geddy in concert on the Vapor Trails Tour. The print is 13.5" by 36" and features all three members on stage.

Only 35 of these prints will be offered and each one will be signed by all of the band members.

Proceeds from this beautiful print will benefit Fife House, a Toronto based organization that provides affordable housing and vital services to persons living with HIV/AIDS.

www.Rush.com

Spirit Of Radio Greatest Hits 1974-1987 Rush

The Japanese edition of this compilation of the best of Rush's early years (1974-1987)", comes with a bonus CD which is expected to contain 2 tracks - including "What You're Doing".

Rush Trivia #1

According to the Rush Digest chatgroup: "an obscure TV show called "Freaks & Geeks" back in the '80s was the best show for Rush cameos (songwise anyway). One of the kids was a major Neil freak, exclaiming to his would-be girlfriend at one point that his drum kit had "more pieces than Neil Peart's". The same kid has a fantasy sequence in another episode where he's playing along expertly to "Spirit of Radio" on his headphones but in reality he's sounding god awful. A later episode comes back from the commercial on the first note to "Tom Sawyer" and one episode had one high school teacher trying to make small talk to a student by muttering out "Have you heard the new Rush album? Its pretty cool" Being 1980, or thereabouts, that must be Moving Pictures he's referring to.

Gus Martinez

R U S H H N E W S

Rush Trivia #2

A Canadian TV show called 'Trailer Park Boys' has just aired an episode in which Rush feature. The synopsis goes: "Bubbles is devastated when he can't get tickets to the Rush show, so Ricky kidnaps guitar player Alex Lifeson and forces him to perform in the park."

Some highlites were:

- Old Rush tee shirts
- Alex in the bathroom
- Alex undressing
- Real concert footage (but not enough!)
- Alex swearing
- Alex flipping the bird!
- Behind stage footage to DIE for..

It was a real treat and they did a great job of blending Alex in with the show, while making the band a focal point.

Margot Orenchuck

Rush enters Hall of Fame

TORONTO - Canadian rock band Rush were inducted into the Canadian Music Industry Hall of Fame last Thursday (Feb 27th 2003).

The band, featuring singer Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer and lyricist Neal Peart followed The Guess Who as the second band ever to join the Hall of Fame.

The award acknowledges Rush's

contributions to the growth of the Canadian Music Industry - "while inductees are traditionally chosen from the business and executive ranks, officials thought the contributions of Rush...to the growth of the industry needed acknowledgment."

Neil's Car For Sale

A third party car dealership specializing in selling celebrity vehicles recently had Neil's black 1994 Porsche 911 up for sale on ebay motors.

When asked if Neil Peart actually owned the car and how they aquired it, the reply was.....

"It was made for him by Porsche and yes he just traded it in to us." The description says it was custom built for him and has a little metal plaque with his name on it. Apparently the car looks legitimate and has very low miles. Bidding was last known to be at \$35,000. It has CA plates on it but it is being sold in Texas.

Steve Teebagy

Bootleg Warning

SOR has been alerted to the fact that there is a Brazilian copy of 'A Show Of Hands' doing the rounds on DVD. Avoid it like the plague - it's mastered from a video copy and is basically bootleg quality.

Chris Loydall



A Message From Geddy

From www.GeddyLee.net

Hellooooo.... Is it spring yet?

Whoa, we have had a brutal winter up here in the great white north, I mean, here it is April and there are still bags of snow in my backyard and worse yet, there have been 5 Blue Jay games in the Skydome already and no sign of opening the roof yet! Sorry it has taken me so long to write an update on this site. It has been a whirlwind of a year for us and at the end of it all I kind of needed to disappear into my family for a while.

Just to recap (in case you don't know already) after spending 14 months preparing and recording Vapor Trails we embarked on what began as a North American Tour. Now, it had been quite a few years since the last tour, (5 to be exact) and in that time a lot of things had happened in our lives. So to be perfectly honest, no one was quite sure if it would all work out. I mean, could we come back from that long a lay off? And play well? Could Neil, Alex and myself (all for different reasons) survive the rigors of the road? And most importantly would our fans come back and enjoy what we had to offer?

As a result of these insecurities we were reluctant to plan very far into the future. I guess we just wanted to take things a few weeks at a time. Of course, this made things a little difficult for our management and it meant we couldn't even think about leaving North America for a while. So we went into rehearsals and started putting together a set of songs and as things progressed we started to remember how hard it is to design and put together a show and select the right songs for a set-list. But after 8 weeks we got it all together and did our first show in Hartford Conn. and I don't mind admitting to you that it was kind of an emotional experience. I mean, we hit the stage and were greeted by all those fans with big smiles on their faces and holding up signs proving that they had come from all over the world specifically to welcome us back. We glanced at each other and smiled a little nervously as we charged into the first few chords of Tom Sawyer and sometime during those first few minutes we gave each other a look that was a kind of an appreciative acknowledgement of 2 things. One, that we had been missed (thank goodness!) and two that we had missed this. This was our job! Playing music, live and in colour and working hard to make it good as we could! Everything would be o.k.

Well, it was a great night for us and the buzz of that night took us into what turned out to be the most satisfying tour we've done in quite some time. We rolled right along. The crowds kept showing up, kept smiling and so did we. This fired us up and we found ourselves playing better and better and as a result we started to add more shows as we went along. We even decided to get a little adventurous and go to a couple of places that we had never been before. We had been asked many times to play in Latin and South America but had never seemed to find the time to make it there. Oh well...better late than never we thought!

So it was Mexico City first and then on to Brazil, where we were greeted by enormous numbers of fans that had been waiting for over 25 years to get a chance to see us perform and hear some of their favourite songs. What a greeting it was! The crowds in these places were astounding and really took our breath away. They sang along with every word even though many of them did not speak English, and they smiled and cheered and thanked us for coming. Why had it taken us so long to go to these places?...I can't say really...lots of reasons I guess...all seeming to be right at the time...but feeling well...a bit stupid now.

Fortunately we had the good sense (good luck really) to have decided to film one of these shows. The last show in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It was quite an evening with another incredible crowd and we managed pull off a pretty darn good performance to boot. We hope to have the editing of this footage finished soon and plan to release it on D.V.D. sometime in the coming months, complete with some fun extra stuff like pictures of Big Al at home in his pajamas, a documentary on the Brazilian tour, and some other er..unusual things hidden in there somewhere. I guess my only regret of the last year was that we somehow managed to screw up our opportunity to go to Europe and play for our long-suffering fans there. I apologize for this, I guess between not knowing how well things would go and our desire to go to new places we miscalculated our time and simply ran out of steam before we got there. I assure you all that a visit to Europe will be a priority whenever we decide to tour again.

Which brings us to the future. What is in store for us? Well, at the moment we are enjoying our time off and that is something that personally I really needed. What with the production of My Favourite Headache being followed immediately by the production of Vapor Trails, followed immediately by the Vapor Trails Tour, I've been going at it pretty hard for almost 4 years straight and my wife and kids were forgetting who I was ! So after a reasonable amount of time off I'm sure we will wander back into the studio and attempt to make another collection of esoteric yet unrepentantly bombastic rock ditties. Or something to that effect anyway. After which (providing that goes well of course) we will probably throw ourselves back out there on the road so we can give and take the abuse that we and you so richly deserve!

So thank you all so much for coming along, and for sticking with us while we were away and for making it all the easier to try and do it again when the time is right. best wishes and peace to you all . Geddy

Our Memories of Mick Burnett Founder and Editor of The Spirit of Rush

I first heard of Mick Burnett and The Spirit of Rush fanzine in 1987/88. Another fan that I traded Rush collectibles with mentioned a new fan magazine out of the UK. He sent me a brochure with contact information and I wrote Mick and signed up. My subscription continued as 1990 approached as well as Rush's Presto album and tour. The band had scheduled dates to play the Northwest US in March of 1990 and I was ready to attend the three shows in my area. Two other fans/ from Germany that I knew had contacted me about coming to Seattle to attend all the West Coast shows so I invited them to stay with me. I soon found out that Mick, Lesley and Neil Elliott (who helped Mick run the mag) were coming over also for the shows and were going to be staying in Vancouver with our mutual friends, Dave & Margot Orenchuk. I was excited to see the three shows (Seattle, Vancouver and Portland) but was equally excited to meet Mick and the others from overseas. When the meeting finally took place we all hit it off immediately. Everyone was so nice and Mick had brought over all kinds of Rush goodies for all of us including the latest SOR issue, 7" and 12" singles, CD's and the 2112 tourbook which at the time I had never seen up close. I was shocked and surprised that someone I just met would so generously share these items with me. Mick was just that kind of guy. The entire trip was incredible seeing three shows with my new foreign friends and Mick was able to get four backstage passes for the Seattle show so Mick, Dave and Margot and one other person went backstage. I didn't get to go and he felt



Mick and Lesley in the States for the Presto tour, 1990

bad that I was left out so after we all got back to my place to crash after the show he presented me with an autographed copy of SOR issue #10 with all THREE signatures. Yes, including Neil's! He had managed to get Alex and Geddy to sign and then Andrew MacNaughtan had obtained the unobtainable for us by getting Neil to sign. A few days prior at the Vancouver show Mick had received a tip that if we were orderly and didn't take photos, we could possibly catch the band leaving their hotel on the way to the venue. Sure enough we all pulled in just in time to get quick signatures of Alex and Geddy. This was my first time meeting them and it was the first time for most of us in our small group. It was an amazing moment that came about because of Mick. Mick and I (and several others in our close knit group of fans/friends) continued meeting at almost every opening show on the following tours and the closing shows of Counterparts and Test For Echo. One of Mick's favorite restaurants to visit in the states and Canada was Denny's. For those not familiar, it is a 24-hour family restaurant chain with 100's of locations and features a large menu selection and reasonable prices. Plus you can get breakfast any time of day or night. We hit at least one Denny's on every trip and I remember one in Florida or Louisiana where the waitress (who was an older, grouchy woman) kept referring to Mick as "honey", "hon", etc. as he asked for tea with his breakfast. I also remember in Ottawa in 1997 where we dined late at night after the final T4E show at a Denny's and Mick finally got his own Denny's coffee mug to take back home that he cherished like the rarest Rush collectible.

My most recent and fond memory of Mick was our last trip this past summer during the opening of the Vapor Trails tour. We saw the first five shows together and Mick had a large group of 7 from the UK traveling with him. We saw the first two shows in the Northeast US where we enjoyed the company of all our Rush friends including Ray W., Chris K, Joe M, Brad, Pete, Steve T, Bill, etc. We all met up before that opening show to greet each other for the first time since the final T4E show in 1997. Mick had scored great seats for all the shows thanks to his friends at Anthem. He also obtained photo passes for several of the shows where he or Janet could take professional photos (to use for SOR) from the "pit" right in front of the stage during the first 3 songs. He got these for several shows and he mentioned that he had two photo passes for the upcoming Charlotte show and would I be interested in using one. I was ecstatic at the possibility but I am not a very skilled photographer but my boyfriend, Steve, is and he was to join us in the Southeast US for those three shows. I gave him a call (since he was still in Seattle) where he was ready to head out in a few days and he was thrilled at the opportunity to take photos of his heroes

We saw the next two shows, VA Beach and Raleigh and during the times we weren't at the shows we stayed at the same hotels, met for meals and hung out together whenever possible. We met for breakfast in VA Beach at a Denny's adjacent to our hotel on the morning we had to travel from VA to NC and Mick, Steve and I shared a booth and had our last meal together. We treated Mick and he ordered "Moons Over My Hammy" which he admitted he loved the meal (eggs and ham) but was always embarrassed calling it by that silly name every time he ordered it!

The final show we saw was in Raleigh, North Carolina on July 4, 2002 - our Independence Day. It was a hot sweltering night and Rush put on another great performance as usual. They had a special display on the rear screen "Happy 4th of July from Rush" and shot some fireworks as they thanked the crowd and left the stage. Then as we left our seats after the show but while we were still in the venue, the amphitheater did a fireworks display of their own that we all stood and watched before leaving. We all met again in the parking lot to say our final good-byes of the trip and to take a couple last group photos. I remember Mick saying (as he always did at the end of a tour), that when Rush finally plays the UK again he expected me to be there. Even though Mick is no longer with us I still plan on making that trip someday hoping Rush will finally make it over there again. I know the fans have been desperate for a European tour for nearly 12 years now. When that tour does happen I know that a dream of Mick's will finally come true and that is the day when his two boys can finally see the band that Mick knew and loved so much.

Mick - thanks for all the incredible times and generosity you always showed me and for the happy memories that will live with me forever.

"...Though it's just a memory, some memories last forever..."

Monica Davidson
Seattle, WA, USA

How do you sum up your feelings for a special friend in a few short paragraphs? I can't paint my feelings for Mick on paper, but I can share a few memories I have.

When I think back over all the years of friendship with Mick the following comes to mind, in no particular order; toast, bacon, Spirit of Rush colour pamphlets (OMG we still have a HUGE pile!!) , "Hi Leslie!! Is Mick home? He's in the bath", Kiss dolls, "are you having a party?", "hello, it's Mick", "your cat moves too fast", brilliant, Dave, GET OFF THAT PHONE!! , waiting up until 1am to call England, parcels with British postmarks, "OH please, Margot, tell me you are driving??" , calling ticketmaster for hours long distance from San Diego to Vancouver to buy Rush tickets for 8 for Seattle; plastic bags for tour programmes; checking out hiding places for recorders, following buses; "are you from the Twilight Zone?", "where's your camera?".

I had hoped to see Mick during this tour. It didn't happen. The last time I "spoke" on the phone to Mick was a truly funny story that I want to share. A few years ago, when I was mastering MP3's, I had downloaded Pieces of Eight. I have to just tell you that although I am married to a Rushie, I'm not a musician, and so what happened to me makes this story so funny. I had burned Pieces of Eight to a CD about 20 times in a row. I went to a gathering on a Friday night on my own, and late on the way home I listened to it. It was a long drive. About the 5th time a lightbulb went off over my head.... There were RUSH songs in this!! Songs that had not been released before this piece came out!! I picked up the cell phone and dialled my husband. He was so surprised! He listened to it, and agreed. I had discovered something that no Rush fan had ever pointed out!! Amazing!! So we sat up and picked out, I can't remember, 4 or 5 songs. I e-mailed all my Rush friends in the quest for the search for the 8 songs.

Well, the very next day if Mick doesn't call us. He is just laughing and mad at me.. he had stayed up the night listening to Pieces of Eight trying to figure it out!!He totally agreed with me and couldn't believe he hadn't twigged it before, either. We never did figure it out. It turned out to be the last time I heard his voice.

About 11pm on the night of the first concert of the latest Rush tour, when I saw that set list, all I could think of was, man, Mick must have just gone NUTS when he heard Cygnus! That encore was so perfect for Mick. To know he got to hear By-Tor, Cygnus and Working Man live again is just about the only good thing that I can think of in all of this.

Margot Orenchuck

I first hooked up with Mick in the summer of '87. A good friend, Steve, was in the UK that year. He went to a record meet and brought back for me a whole lot of Rush LP's, UK 12", UK 7", all kinds of things. The most notable was a copy of the first issue of 'Spirit of Rush'. I was hooked! I sent my 20 bucks to Mick right away, along with my phone# etc...

I rec'd issue 2 about a week later. A few days later, I was home from work with the flu. I was snoozing in the pm when the phone rang. It was Mick! He said he had to call, as I was the first person from Canada to contact him. What a Rush! A fellow fan in the UK. As this was long before the e-mail age, it was letters and phone calls for years. We traded a lot of tapes/videos for a while. Living in Canada, I was able to tape a lot of video from MuchMusic, our version of MTV. It was always special to share this with him. I always knew he would send me something cool in return. Then along came PRESTO! No UK tour. I said, come to Canada! We have a place to stay, transport, all you need. We will go to the shows in Vancouver, Portland and Seattle. Well, Mick, Leslie and Neil made the trip. Let the fun begin.! We hooked up with Monica, from Seattle. She had invited Ralf and Reiner from,Germany. A truly international Rush entourage! This was a first for all of us.

Vancouver was the first show.23/03/90. We found out that 'the band', as Mick always called them, was at the Four Seasons hotel in downtown Vancouver. We raced to the hotel, from Langley, where we reside, about 60 km east of Vanc. Well, we made it just in time to catch Geddy and Alex making their way to the bus to get them to the Pacific Coliseum for the soundcheck. We followed them along Hastings Street to the 'rink on Renfrew,' as we hockey fans call it, the then home of the Vancouver Canucks NHL hockey club. A truly great venue. Neil and I were listening to the sound check at the main door, while Mick had gone around to the east doors. Neil spotted Andrew McNaughton walking around with an armload of Rush items. I took him around to the side to find Mick. He gave him a pair of sticks, guitar picks and a few misc items. Best of all, he said there will be 3 after show passes for Mick to pickup at the Seattle Coliseum on 03/26 for that show. Many thanks to AM!! The Vancouver, show was very cool. We stayed up late afterwards drinking some 'wobbly pops', chatting about the show. The next day,24/03/90,we were off to Portland, about 5 hours from Langley. We stopped for a meal at Dennys, which was a favorite of Micks. Our German friends loved it as well. They didn't have to read the menu. They just pointed to the picture of what they wanted. We all laughed about this. We did finally make it to the Memorial Coliseum in Portland for the show. We were a little high up in the seats, but it was still great.



Mick, Neil, Dave and Lesley - Presto Tour, 1990

After the show, we drove back to Seattle. We all met up for a day to remember forever. Mick had arranged to interview Andrew M. for 'Spirit of Rush' at the hotel in the afternoon. I just hung out in the lobby with Randy. After a couple hours, I rang the room to see how it was going. Monica said they were almost done. She decided to come down at that time. Good decision! We were lounging on the sofas by the main entrance when we noticed a tall, thin man walking down the stairs carrying a bicycle. Who else but Neil Peart himself! We just sat there and did not even say a word to him. He took the bike out the door, got on, and rode away. A short time later, still waiting for Mick and Neil to come down, a taxi pulls up to the main entrance. In the door walks Geddy Lee, tennis racket in hand. He took a quick right turn and headed up the stairs.

About 15 seconds later, in walks Alex Lifeson, also with a tennis racket. He stopped, took his last gulp of diet 7up, and put the can in the ashtray. He then turned around to look right at us, then up the stairs he went. At that same time, Mick and Neil were riding the elevator down from Andrew's room. When the doors opened for them to exit, Geddy and Alex are waiting to get on. Talk about timing! Needless to say, we had a lot to talk about for the next while. One more thing. I grabbed the diet 7up can. I kept it for a while, then gave it to Monica. She still has it today. Now it was time to get to the Seattle Coliseum for the show. One thing I did not mention earlier, was that Mick had brought with him was a suitcase full of issue 10 of 'Spirit' to mail out to the North American subscribers. This would save money on postage. Not! We ended up selling all of them outside the venues in Vancouver and even more in Seattle. We got mobbed.

Mick went to the will call to pick up the passes that Andrew had arranged. He also included 3 floor seats. Row 16. Mick sat there as these were better than the seat we already had. Of the 3 shows, this was the craziest. Seattle can be very wild. I ended up standing for the entire show. The show was a blinder! We hung around for a bit, then met up with Andrew and he led us to the meet and greet room. There were about 20 or so other people in the room. We waited for about 30mins then Geddy and Alex arrived. They made the rounds chatting with people and posing for pictures. Mick wrote more about this in issue 11. Too bad we had no camera. However, we will always have the memories.

Afterwards, we all went back to Monica's for a while, said our goodbyes and headed home to Canada. We spent most of the next day walking around downtown Vancouver. The weather was great. The Pacific Northwest can be very wet and dismal at this time of year. It did not rain a drop the whole time they were here. We could not have asked for more. They flew home on 28/03/90. This time with Mick was very special for all of us as we got to meet Leslie as well. We love you Leslie. Hard to believe it was 13 years ago. Mick and I always kept in touch over the years, trading videos, tapes, cds etc... We spoke on the phone a few times a year as well. We talked about a lot of things other than music, which to me makes us great friends. Sadly, I was never able to meet up with him on any of his other trips to North America. One last thing I was able to do that will always mean a lot to me occurred on 09/09/02. I was able to win meet and greet passes for the VT show in Vancouver. I finally got my photo op with Rush. Even better, I was able to tell Geddy and Alex, in person, about the funds raised by donation and auction at the convention for Leslie, Jamie and Steven. Also, I thanked them for their contribution to the funeral. This truly means a lot to me. Mick, I will never forget the great times we had. Your 'Spirit' will always be in my heart. Rock on Buddy.

David Orenchuk Langley, BC, Canada.

Suddenly you were gone ***From all the lives you left your mark upon....***

The last conversation I had with Mick Burnett was during the evening before he passed away. We talked about the VT tour, the impending Convention, family stuff. We had the usual banter, I made him laugh, and he made me laugh. At one point in the conversation he said to me "don't get me too excited, I've been to see the Doc today and I've got high blood pressure". I didn't think anything about this, and indeed ribbed him about being a "stress monkey". When I found out the next day that he had died, the first thing I felt was shock, as everyone else did. Shortly after that, tears. And anger. There was so much more I wanted to say to Mick, to do with him, to share with him. He had become one of my closest friends, someone I spoke to at least once each week, and now he was gone. I said my private goodbye to Mick at his funeral. Gone, but not forgotten.

I first met Mick in 1987, just after Hold Your Fire was released. Considering I was only 16 at the time Mick gave me a lot of his time and was supremely generous. I used to ride my motorbike to his flat in New Cross, and he would introduce me to new music, record rare Rush stuff for me, and put bootleg videos on for me to watch. Poor Lesley must have become sick of the sight of me, because in the early days – before Mick's boys were born – I was semi-resident in their flat!

As I got older and wiser, so it became that we had more and more in common. The early days of our friendship were ONLY about music. Later on we came to share many other interests, including clothes, family, classic TV and (I must be honest) certain types of adult reading material!

Mick and I listened to ASOH, Presto and Bones together for the first time (famously, Mick's response to Presto was "well, I guess that's it for another two years"). We went to Canada together (plus Janet, Mad Jock and others) for t4e. We travelled around the UK for RTB tour. We went to see Dream Theater together. So many of my memories involve him.

Mick could moan for Britain, was impatient, and permanently stressed. This was never more apparent than during the run up to his annual convention. A couple of months before each one he would only have sold a hundred or so tickets, and would rant at the members of his "inner circle" that we needed to get off our asses and promote the damned thing. On the day of the Con he would be up at the crack of dawn (Mick didn't understand the concept of a "lay in"), hammering on people's doors, screaming "get your fucking arse out of bed". At the Con itself you would be best to sell all your raffle tickets, or else you'd get "what the fuck have you been doing for the last hour? SELL THE FACKIN TICKETS. Un-belieeeeeevable!". None of us really minded Mick getting on our backs, because that way things

got done. He was single-minded, and wanted those around him to share his passion. He was positively Hitler-esque during the Bones tour, when he had everyone flying the venues. It was bloody hard work, but resulted in many new subscribers to Spirit (and kept the magazine going at a time when readership was starting to decline). To be this single-minded took a lot of energy, and Mick had energy in abundance. This energy came because, for all his moaning about life – Mick loved it, and made the most of it. He made me realise that I don't always make the most of my life, and I have learned from his example.

After a Convention or something else he had organised, Mick would relax. On the dance floor in the 2112 club he would let his hair down, badgering the DJ for some Rush, Sabbath or some other classic rock ("This is the 2112 club, innit? Where's the fucking Rush then?"). On one occasion I passed out during a party in our room, and he tucked me up in bed with his usual charm ("come on, honey, into bed. You don't want to catch a fucking cold").

Those who haven't known Mick for long may not be aware he lost a LOAD of weight during the mid-1990s. In his youth, like many of us blokes, he didn't look after himself. Later in life, keeping his weight down became a mission. I once asked him his secret: "I eat a lot of fuckin rabbit food, mate". And once he quit the fags he became a rabid anti-smoker, admonishing me every time I fell off the wagon. Once, at the Marquee seeing Dream Theater in concert, he took a cigarette from my mouth, put it out and said "you'll thank me for that one day. Stinkin' habit".

Talking about Dream Theater, Mick was so blown away by their debut "When Dream and Day Unite" that he asked me to set up an interview with them through their record company. Back in the early days, I thought Mick couldn't interview for toffee. So I arrived at his house all set for Mike Portnoy to call us. I made Mick agree on questions to ask, conscious we wouldn't have a huge amount of Mike's time (and because I believed, as stated, that Mick needed guidance at interviewing). I opened the interview with a few pertinent questions, then Mick started tapping me on my shoulder, anxious to get on the line to Portnoy.

I handed the phone over to Mick, who then subsequently failed to ask any agreed questions AT ALL. Instead he and Mike chatted about films, Frank Zappa, their "bitches", the weather, money (or lack of it). It was like two old mates chatting over a beer. Horrified I tried to prise the phone off of Mick, who was having none of it ("fuck off, I'm lovin it!"). So I went off to the lounge, resigned to the fact I had spoken my last to MP.

After the interview I said, "well done mate. Nice one. That ain't gonna be any use for Spirit". Mick replied, "yeah, but I've arranged for you to stay with Mike when you go out on the Presto tour. You can do an interview with him then".

And that was Mick all over. Portnoy apparently LOVED the interview with Mick, which opened Dream Theater up to Spirit – creating the friendship between Mick, Janet and the band which exists today. The fact I had no plans or money to go out on Presto was beside the point as far as Mick was concerned! (And, yes, I stayed with Portnoy, and it were great!).



The 'gang', after the show in Calgary - T4E tour. L to R: Back - Joe M, Andrew, Ray, Mick (with dodgy tash), Andy F, Monica, Mr \$, Jimmy. Front: B-Man, Mrs \$, Cheryl and yours truly

Mick was not perfect, but he was loyal, generous and enthusiastic. As far as Rush is concerned, Mick's generosity was unbounded. If he got a classy bootleg in the post, his first reaction would be to copy it for all his friends. If he were offered front row tickets for a Rush show, he would tell the promoter he needed 100 more tickets for SoR readers. If he were going to the States to see Rush, he would organise and pay for the flights ("you can pay me later, honey"). If he were given a photo pass, he'd give it to Janet.

As I wrote in Spirit of Rush some five years ago, the best week of my life was – and still is – the week I spent with Mick on the t4e tour. Mick was "very Mick" that week – in seventh heaven seeing his favourite band in concert, good fun in the bars and sightseeing, infuriating if he wasn't driving the car we hired (a typical backseat driver: "Your driving is \$hit. You better let me do it"), and not the man you'd want to follow into the toilet! No one says "fucking 'ell" like Mick, and he said it a lot that week. Janet and I will always remember walking down the high street in Toronto, when Mick saw a sex shop and dashed in for a look. Janet and I waited outside, wondering what the hell he was doing.

Next thing we know he's tapping on the window, waving a six foot dildo at us – oblivious to the horrified looks he was getting from passing Toronto shoppers.

If Mick were with me now as I write this he would tell me to stop being maudlin and get on with it! It makes me chuckle just thinking about him. Few people really AFFECT your life, CHANGE it for the better. But he did that for / to me. Everyone who met Mick felt the same way: he made you feel like you were (or were going to become) his very bestest mate. If he promised to do something, he did it. If he said he was going to meet you somewhere, he was there – and early. If you needed something, Mick could deliver it for you. Such people are rare. Mick had a load of faults, but they were far FAR outweighed by the many wonderful traits in his personality.

I make no bones about it, the man meant a lot to me. Mick Burnett, truly a diamond in the waste.

Andrew Field

ONE LAST REFLECTION: Dedicated to my friend Mick

By: Ray Wawrzyniak

Please stick with me with this one. It may seem like for a moment or two that I'm just bragging. That's not my intent... It's now Sunday, March 3rd, 2003. I'm sitting here at my trusty computer, while the temperatures outside here in Buffalo, New York, in the northeastern United States, drop down close to zero once again. Just less than 72 hours ago, I was rubbing shoulders with Rush. Again. Geddy, Alex, and me. And a few close friends. This is the 21st time I have met at least one member of the band. I know I am totally lucky in that regard. Most Rush fans will probably never get to meet any one of them even once. However, this past Thursday, February 27th, after Rush was given an award signifying their induction into the Canadian Music Industry Hall Of Fame, I rubbed shoulders with them for the 21st time. Incredible.

Now, I'll admit this; I don't want to say that the "thrill has worn off", but... I mean, it *was* indeed totally cool, don't get me wrong. Geddy looked typically himself- that being, impeccably cool. Alex looked great as well, as was about as friendly and congenial as you could possibly hope. Both of them each signed an autograph for me, and each posed separately for a photo with me as well. But I've done all that before. Gone are the days that I would feel nervous as I would see them approaching me (or actually, as I would approach them!). This was now almost business-like. I was there for one reason: to meet Geddy and Alex, get an autograph, get a photo taken, and be on my way. As I had imagined, then, all of that happened. Of course, my immediate reaction was very adolescent. "They were so great!!!" "I can't believe how cool they looked!" "Look at my autograph!"

However, the real thrill in any such episode is sharing it with others. In this case, I was not alone. My good friend Paul was right by my side, and my #1 Rush friend of 18 years now, Monica Davidson, who had flown all the way across the country from Seattle, Washington, was right there by my side as well. A new friend of mine, Heidi, who had also flown considerable distance to be in attendance, was right there as well. So, thankfully, we had each other to share the event with.

But, I am a reflective soul. I'm not one to let an exciting event die a quick death. I want to analyze, synthesize, and criticize every little minutiae that made up a particular event. Thankfully, for years and years and years, I always had the outlet. I always had the canvas to paint my reflection upon. I could reflect back upon a chance meeting with a band member, a concert, a unique discovery of a rare Rush collectible, and then share it with you. And thousands of others. For what "The Spirit of Rush" offered me was a chance to share my reflections with you. It was always so rewarding, so cathartic, so much fun. It made me feel important. "Hey," I thought, "there's gonna be more than a thousand people reading this! I must be pretty important to be writing something that is going to be read by so many!" I knew that wasn't the case, though. I was just one little Rush fan, who loves to write. But, thanks to the fanzine's visionary, it's editor, it's driving force, I was made to feel important. Mick Burnett made me feel that way. He made me feel important. He made me feel like he really needed me, to convey important Rush-related information to you. I was an important wheel in the cog of the fanzine. Well, at least that's how he made me feel.

It was late 1986. I was a 20 year-old college student. After class one day, I took a walk down to a local record store, which specialized in important everything. Import records. Import posters. Import magazines, books, you name it. I loved this place. It had an underground feel to it, and I somehow felt like this dirty little record store was keeping me abreast of what was going on musically on both sides of the Atlantic. So, one day, I aimlessly picked up a copy of the current edition of KERRANG! Magazine. That simple, innocent behavior changed my life. As I thumbed through it's pages, I came upon a classified ad. It read something like this:

"Rush fanzine. Please send photos, stories, etc., to: Mick Burnett, "Wow. A Rush fan on the other side of the ocean," I thought. Now, at this point in my development as a fan, I had begun trading/corresponding with quite a few people. But, they were all North Americans. No one from "the other side of the pond", as Mick with often jokingly refer

to it, ever showed up in my mailbox. Anyway, I dropped him a line. Ya' know, "Hey Mick, I read your ad. Love to help. Let's talk." Simple. The next thing you know...



Mick and Ray after the show in Scranton, Vapor Trails Tour, 2002

The next thing you know, I'm sitting here at my computer, eulogizing my dearly-departed friend. Somehow, he and I were able to overcome the geographical boundry that separated the two of us, and we were still able to become friends. It wasn't just one chance meeting. In the 16 years that Mick and I knew each other, we were able to spend a good deal of time together. Yeah, we both raked up probably close to thousands of dollars in phone bills talking to each other. But, we were together, geographically, often. We were friends. Our primary bond, or link, was Rush, but that's not where our relationship began and ended. I don't know how many model cars I had to buy for him, or videos, or toys for his two beloved boys Jamie and Steven. We had graduated from the point of just trading Rush memorabilia, to doing the things you normally do for a friend.

Maybe that, as I sit here and reflect, is the best thing that came out of knowing Mick. Yeah, he always let me write for the fanzine. Sure, I would love to be sitting here right now, telling you every little detail about my meeting with Geddy and Alex the other night. But I can't. "The Spirit of Rush" is no more, and I will no longer be able to share my stupid little stories that made me feel so important with you. But that's o.k. For 16 years, I had a great friend. Mick was a very important person in my life. I miss him in only a way you would know if you, too, have lost a close friend. But ultimately, I am so thankful that he was indeed my friend. I hope I made him feel half as good as he made me feel. I miss you Mick. Thank you so much for everything you did for me...

Convention Pics



Webchat with Geddy on Talk Today, Feb 5th 2003

Portsmouth, Va.: I understand the song "Countdown" was inspired by your viewing the Space Shuttle Columbia during liftoff a while back. How has the recent Columbia tragedy affected your thoughts on technology?

Geddy Lee: I'm a huge supporter of the space program. We've been fortunate enough to meet many people from NASA and be privy to some pretty sensational tours. When something like this happens, you really feel for the people involved, because they're so dedicated and bright. It's a tragedy, but sadly there are no lack of tragedies in the world, so we have to put it in perspective. These people volunteered for the job and knew the risks.

Fairfax, Va.: The show at Nissan Pavilion this summer was amazing. How long did it take the three of you to get back into touring shape after the time off?

Geddy Lee: We rehearsed for about six to seven weeks before the tour started. About five weeks were strictly musical rehearsal, with another two weeks of full dress rehearsal.

San Ramon, California: As musically and technically talented as you and the band are, have any of you ever been asked to collaborate or add your unique stylings to another artist's album? Alternatively, are there other musicians, past or present, you would like to work with on one of your own or Rush's albums? Thanks

Geddy Lee: From time to time we get contacted to do something. We've done some guest appearances, mostly for friends in Canada and occasionally on the outside. We don't do a lot of it. There are lots of talented people out there who would be fun to work with.

Buena Park, California: Geddy, Rush fans all over the internet are in great anticipation of any news about your upcoming DVD Release. Can you shed some light on the content of the disc and a release date? Thanks...Steve

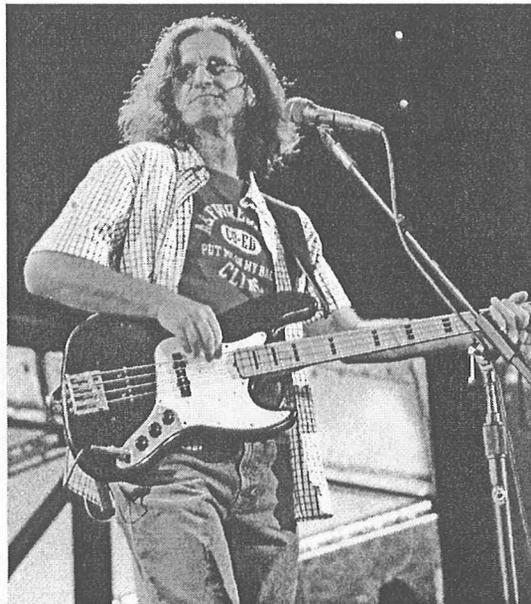
Geddy Lee: We're in the process of editing it now. It will feature the full show we presented in Rio this past November. It'll be about 2 hours and 50 minutes' worth of music. I can't tell you when it'll come out - when it's done I guess!

Manchester, NH: Do you see another album and tour in the band's future? If so, is there going to be another 6 year wait?

Geddy Lee: I would hope not 6 years! We're feeling really good about what's happened in terms of the record we made and the tour we just finished, so sometime over the next 3 years we'll make another record and go out and tour it.

Tel Aviv, Israel: Shalom Geddy :-)) I was wondering if you recall who came up with the chord progression for the chorus of Freewill? and also, was the Live intro music to Distant Early Warning composed by you? or with Alex together?

Geddy Lee: I can't remember who wrote what in Freewill! Alex and I work really closely together, and it's hard to go back that



far in time.

San Antonio, Texas: The DVD on the new release is a nifty "carrot" that will motivate even those of us who've already bought every release (twice). I'm curious, though, is this Rush's way to combat the sad but steady trend to download music? Also, will the new CD stimulate radio airplay of your songs (which would be great!)?

Geddy Lee: That was a record company decision, and I'm sure that was their thinking. I'm sure they feel the necessity to give bonuses to stem the flow of illegal downloading.

Fairfax, Va: Was Neil upset when "South Park" trashed Ayn Rand, the author who inspired some of his early lyrics? Or was he amused? (Or were you all more irritated by "Blame Canada"?)

Geddy Lee: I have no idea how Neil feels about any particular South Park episode. Blame Canada was very funny and I fully support it.

Comment from Geddy Lee: Besides, Matt is a big Rush fan

Latrobe, Pa: Geddy, Rush music to me, at 45, sounds still very fresh with a great combo of metal and memorable melody. Is this difficult to continue in a 3-man format, or maybe easier?

Geddy Lee: I think the three man format means it's easier to get along and communicate with each other. From that point of view, it's more conducive to longevity. There are times, of course, when you feel less inspired than at other times, and that's difficult to work through.

Ontario, California: Considering that the United States is such a big market for your music, how do you feel about the current state of radio here re: consolidation, narrowing playlists, and stations seemingly ignoring your newer releases?

Geddy Lee: I don't like it and don't think it's good. It's not good for music. What's happened is there's been too much monopolizing and too many consultants consulted. It's bad for exposing music.

Nashville, TN: Will Rush ever go back and do another concept album? i.e. 2112

Geddy Lee: I have no idea. No crystal ball.

Albany, New York: Are there any plans for a "greatest hits" compilation from Rush's Atlantic catalog?

Geddy Lee: There's nothing planned at the moment, although I'm sure it's an inevitability.

ypsilanti, michigan: My Favorite Headache featured excellent songs and players (Ben Mink, Matt Cameron...). Any chance for another solo album soon?

Geddy Lee: I'd like to think so. I don't know about soon, but I hope to get some writing time on my own and play with those people again.

Colfax, California: Geddy: Just a technical question for you...I've been playing Bass for over thirty years and would like to know why you switched from the Rickenbacher bass back to the Fender Jazz Bass you are currently using?

Geddy Lee: I switched because I wanted a sound that had a richer and more powerful bottom end. The Fender delivers that.

Fairfax VA: Rush has strongly influenced many bands and musicians on both a broad and instrumental level. Are there any bands that you find influencing Rush?

Geddy Lee: There have been hundreds of bands and writers and artistic influences. That continues to happen. I think that anyone you really admire in terms of songwriting or musicianship or sound production or any of those areas who impresses you enough to do something becomes an influence.

Albuquerque, New Mexico: How much input did the band have on the song selection on this album? Since this is a compilation from 1974 through 1987, are there plans for a second compilation covering the period from 1987 through the present? Rumor has it there is a limited first edition of this album that has special DVD features. Is this true and did the band have any input as to the content included?

Geddy Lee: We did not have a lot of input in this. This was mostly a record company project. Our opinions were made known and they were very cooperative about doing good packaging for us. At the moment there are no immediate plans for further compilations, although it's always a possibility.

Rochester, NY: What did you do with the infamous Dryers from your tour? Mine is "on the fritz"!

Geddy Lee: The infamous dryers are in an infamous warehouse waiting for further instructions.

Westampton, NJ: Good evening, Geddy! Thanks for taking the time to chat with us. My question for you is that with each Rush album over the years, the musical direction and sound are different than anything you have done before. For instance, Vapor Trails has a harder, edgier sound than say, Hold Your Fire. How do you keep that fresh? Also, what direction, or sound, would you like to see Rush take on the next album? Of course, we are all hoping there will be one!

Geddy Lee: We just don't preplan what we do. Our records are very much a result of what we happen to be going through as musicians at that time. Because of that I can't really say what the next Rush album will sound like, and I think that explains why they're all so different. As we change, so does our music and the context of how we put our music together. Our records end up being time capsules. They capture that period and we move on. It's hard to repeat yourself.

Sydney Australia: Hi Geddy, One of my great teenage memories was seeing you guys at Madison Square Garden on your Signals tour many moons ago. Any plans to tour Australia?

Geddy Lee: Not at the moment, no.

New City, NY: Now that the tour is over, how often do you pick up the bass? How long do you practice?

Geddy Lee: I haven't picked up my bass since the tour ended. Towards the end of the tour I developed a problem with my right hand involving stretched ligaments, so I'm letting it rest.

Boston, MA: Hi Geddy: I'm a big fan and was fortunate enough to attend 3 shows during the VT tour (Mansfield MA, Boston, and Manchester, NH). My question is whose idea was it and how did you decide on the "acoustic" version of resist? I thought it was a great idea and something different. And do you think Rush will tour again? In my opinion you put on the best show in the business, by far. Thanks for all the great music. John - Boston, MA

Geddy Lee: Every tour for the last 2 or 3 tours we've threatened to do an acoustic song, and have never done it. This time when Alex and I were listening to all our old material, when we heard Resist we thought it would sound interesting in a simple format. We said let's try it in rehearsal, and weeks went by without an attempt. We tried it and weren't 100% with it, but kept at it. We just love that part of the show. I love doing that song that way.

ON-LINE CHAT WITH ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN

Q- Many thanks for all your hard work and dedication -- What is the most interesting moment, in your opinion, whilst following Rush ?

Andrew: Well, right off the top of my head I would have to say going to Brazil with the band... it was the most incredible thing I have ever seen...In Sao Paulo the band played to 60,000 fans... the biggest show of the bands career!...I felt so excited for the band... and you could tell that they were having a great time too.....

Q: The first thing that attracted me to your portrait and group photography was the saturated color and "flatness" of the scene sort of like a puppet show, or those old Russian labor posters, or a Japanese print... So to my question ? have you looked to other arts for influence; painting or printmaking for example? Do you have any particular favorite works or artists?

Andrew: Well I am a fan of vibrant colors and a lot of people do notice this about my work. I agree, there is an element of my work where it looks like my subjects are "cutout" characters like you'd see in those Russian labor posters... I think it's because I like to use strobe studio lighting outside, which gives the image a hyper crisp look.

Q: What can you tell us about the filming that took place in brazil for the upcoming dvd? Will there be backstage footage on the new DVD?

Andrew: Yes, I think the plan is to have a second disc (but don't hold me to it!) which will have a short documentary film I did of the band's travels in Brazil.... you will see very rare moments of the band doing a variety of daily "being on the road" type things like; sound check, Neil in his drum room warming up before the show, Alex eating his breakfast while make happy faces out of his eggs... stuff like that...it's going to be great! They filmed the Rio show with 20 cameras!!! It was an amazing concert... especially since the band wasn't able to do a sound check that night.... in fact the crew (who are amazing) were setting up the gear until 9:30pm... that's how crazy it was... but it's going to make a great story for my documentary, but also it was a great show for the band.

Q: Will the DVD be a full show?

Andrew: Yes, I believe it will be the full show, but I can't confirm that... it all depends on how much space is on the disc. But again, I don't know the details, sorry.

Q: What are the guys frame of mind after the tour...what was their reaction and what are their future plans in terms of timeframe for a new album and tour?

Andrew: The guys felt that the tour could not have ended in a better way. Everyone was so excited how every aspect of this tour went so smoothly. They felt that they all played really well and delivered a great show for the fans. As for a new album, I have no idea... there are no plans at this time.

Q: I love the composition in your photos.... Do the guys have any input on the staging of the shots? And what was your favorite photo?

Andrew:- well for the recent Vapor Trails photos, it was the bands idea to all sit down on the sofa and just hang out... they wanted something very natural. It was a crazy day, because I had only 2 hours to get enough photos to last for the whole year of publicity. The guys quite frankly aren't big fans of getting their pictures taken... so they came up with the idea of just taking some pictures that seemed very natural... like the one of them all sitting.

Q: Do you use large are medium format cameras?

Andrew: I use medium format cameras... Hasselblad!

Andrew: Here is a good story... By coincidence, a couple of days earlier before the day of the shoot, I gave Alex a Xmas present (this will explain why in almost every single shot the guys are laughing) a silly toy that when you push a button, it makes a rude noise. If you look closely in Alex's hand, you will see a small black "clicker".... I must say that it made for a very funny photo shoot, and I think it captured some great moments of how the guys really are... big jokers! My favourite photo... is of the guys all sitting on the sofa in B&W, where Neil is covering his face... it says a lot about how Neil feels about his picture being taken and how much of a goof Alex is. I think it shows that everything is fine with Neil and all is well. It sends a positive message to the public that everything is fine and life goes on.

Q: Do u go on the whole tour with them?

Andrew: No, I only went out to certain shows to shoot still photos for potential future projects and tour books

Q: How did you get involved with Rush?: maybe u can tell us how u came to be rush's photog?

Andrew: to answer a question a while back...I became Rush's photographer in a round about way..... I was working for Geddy as his assistant many, many years ago. I was a budding photographer and had several part time jobs. One day I asked him if I could do a portrait of him, which as it turned became his portrait in the Presto album package. Once Geddy saw the picture, he suggested to Alex and Neil that I shoot their portraits as well... so those are the ones in Presto

Q: Historic too, the first real Geddy profile I think.

Andrew: I love the Geddy profile... he has never really done a photo like that before, but since he was wearing those cool sunglasses, I really liked the idea of a profile... he has such a great face to photograph... lots of character! He's probably my favourite subject to photograph.

Q: How much input do you have in the have in the crazy Alex shots that you've done of him (lawnmower, muscle beach guy)? are these collaborate, or does Alex come in with wild ideas?

Andrew: I will suggest to him that we need to shoot a crazy photo for the tour book. I will make suggestions that sparks an idea in Alex's head... he's the one that comes up with most of them.

Q: There was filming at each of the concerts that I attended. Can you tell us if the only footage being used in the DVD is from Brazil or will they be using any from the States?

Andrew: only footage from Rio will be used

Q: What is your all-time favourite picture of the guys?

Andrew: My favourite shot... hmmm Quite frankly, I really do love the b&w of them sitting on the sofa... the one that I have at my art store. I just love that Neil is hiding his face. I just printed that image and it's very "arty" when it's printed so large... I think I going to give the guys one... I'm very proud of it!

Q: Andrew, why are the guys so reluctant to vary the setlist on tour? I know they were set to play VT, Nocturne & Bangkok but didn't. They would increase attendance by 10-20% just by changing a couple songs every night and every month...I know for a fact that a lot of fans would attend another show or two if it was different.....

Andrew: They weren't set to play those songs... they were just possible songs that they thought they might play. They are all such perfectionists that they just aren't the type of band that want to keep changing the set around each night. In saying this, as you know in the last leg they did add Trees and Freewill for the cities that they went back to. They had to quickly learn Closer to the heart when they went to Mexico, because it was such a huge song down and all the local press were constantly asking them if they were going to be playing the song. So the guys had to quickly learn it during the sound check the day of the show. I think they played it 4 times and were good to go! They played it in Brazil as well... 'as most of you all probably know. It was a little crazy for Neil... again, he is a perfectionist and likes to practice the songs a lot before playing them publicly... but hey... it's Neil, like we'd notice a mistake by him?

Q: Andrew, knowing the band as you do, do you get the impression that they are aware of the extent that their music has made on the lives of Rush fans??

Andrew: The guys definitely know that their music means a lot to the fans... websites like this do not go unnoticed!

Q: Tell us about the first time you saw Neil play a solo again, I hear that was a pretty special moment for you? I had heard that you had gotten so used to working with them that it was a quite a moment for you to reconnect with the musical aspect, catching Neil practicing his solo for the first time etc.

Andrew: I can tell you this.... when I was up at the rehearsal space where the guys were getting ready for the tour, Neil asked me to come up and shoot all his drum kit photos for the tour book and Modern Drummer cover. I remember how overwhelmed I was when I first walked into the space. Neil was practicing his new drum solo. I felt like I was 16 again - not to mention it was very loud!!!! Also....I remember when I was filming Geddy in the studio when he was laying down a vocal for his solo album. As most of you know, I was a big fan of Rush when I was a kid, so just for a moment when I was in the same room as him as he sang into the microphone, I experienced this surreal moment... I never would have thought that when I was a young kid I would be filming my hero! Now I see him as this big goof that I take pictures of... it's not really that same anymore, which I guess in many ways sucks. My dog Bob is my hero now!

Q: I know that the guys (especially Alex) are notorious pranksters... They ever get you with one? Andrew: We're all friends and I'm usually the brunt of their jokes... so all is good.

Q: Andrew - you could see the smiles on their faces throughout this tour...why did they seem to enjoy themselves so much more this time around even 4 months into the tour when it wasn't so new? They did seem fresh and excited even at the later dates.

Andrew: I'm not sure, I think because they hadn't toured in so long and every aspect of the tour went so well for all of them.

Q: Andrew...I am just curious. Have you ever worked with Hugh Syme on any album art, and if so which ones? How does your collaboration work with him in using your pictures with his art schemes?

Andrew: Hugh and I have worked very closely on several packages. The one package that stands out the most is Different Stages... it was a total nightmare for me! Shooting all those Rush items took me weeks... I mean weeks!!! Plus, I had to shoot most of the Disc 3 cover. We had the original shot of the Hammersmith Odeon, but everything else had to be photographed. The road, Geddy, Alex, the ambulance... it was a big job, but I think it worked out great. Hugh is amazing designer! Jolly Teabag was Geddy's idea...

Q: I would like to ask a follow up regarding the VT picture of the band (sitting on the couch on the couch). I noticed in the tourbook that the framed photo of "The Fool" tarot card was added.

Andrew: Yes, Hugh added the framed pictures behind the band for the tour book.

Q: Andrew where did you first hear the new album, and what went through your mind?

Andrew: Neil played me the album in his car...It was very loud!!! I couldn't figure out how he was able to play the opening drum part of the song One Little Victory, so I had him show me on his knees. It's easy.... easy for me to say!

Q: How do the guys feel about their display at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame?

Andrew: I think the guys are very pleased that they were able to contribute the display... however, I'm not sure if they have actually seen it

Q: Didn't you have something to do with that display, giving up a certain doubleneck bass for instance?

Andrew: Yes, my black double-neck... well, Ged called me to see if I would be willing to trade guitars with him. He really wanted to include his black Rickenbacker in the display at the Hall of Fame along ... with Alex's white double-neck. I had the guitar for 16 years... but I felt that the fans really should be able to see it. So Geddy and I made a swap... I have his white double-neck now. Actually, it's a better sounding guitar so I am still very lucky.

Andrew, in shooting the band live and otherwise, what format do you prefer and do you like to alter your images digitally after processing?

When I shoot Rush live only use 35mm... I have Leica cameras for that. With technology nowadays being so easy to retouch and alter things, I have fallen victim to PhotoShop... but only for the past 3 years. Everything prior to that was all shot within the camera and my lighting. I really only use digital retouching to fix small things like a light stand that I missed when shooting the picture or the occasional face touchup for the ladies! Chicks always want to look good... ha ha. However, anything really difficult, like putting Alex's head onto a different person's body... I leave that to Hugh Syme!

Mick, Ray and Monica



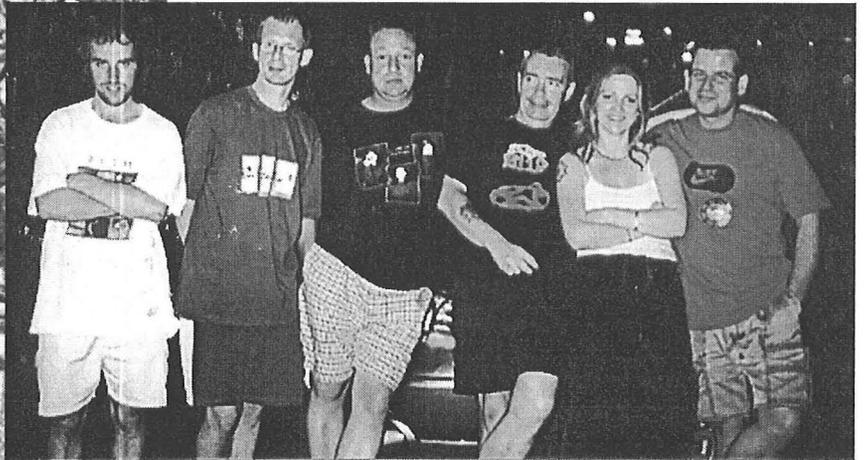
Mick, myself and madjock, Virginia Beach, Vapor Trails tour



The early days....

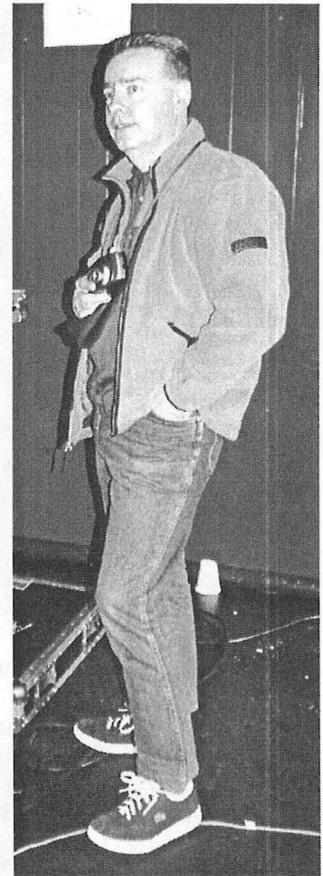


"Hurry up bitch, I'm freezing
me cods off"



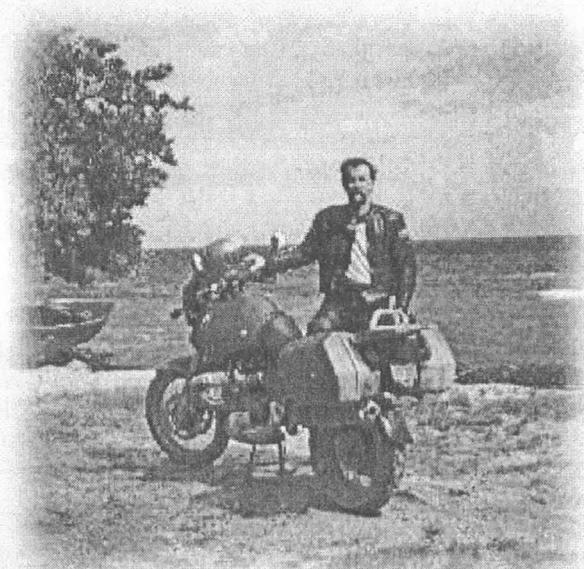
Steph, Ian, Neil, Mick, Myself and Cliff - VT tour

Mick with his winning competition entry



**Mick's favourite place -
soundcheck!**

Rush's Neil Peart: Rockin' and rollin'...rollin'...rollin'...



IT'S SEVEN MINUTES 'til sound check at Salt Lake City's Delta Center Arena and Neil Peart is on the phone with Ride West BMW in Seattle scheduling a service appointment for his R1150GS. Liam Birt, the rock band Rush's long-suffering tour manager, had poked his head through the tour bus door a few moments

ago to make sure the band's drummer was "coming along," but the service manager just transferred Peart to the parts department, and now he's on hold pending word on whether the taller windscreen and driving lights he desires are in stock. Meanwhile, across the aisle, the band's security manager, Michael Mosbach, is seated at a computer calculating mileage for the following day's ride from Salt Lake City to Denver.

Such is life on the road with rock music's most acclaimed percussionist.

I'm here because I had contacted Jack David of ECW Press about getting a review copy of Peart's new book, *Ghost Rider* (\$19.95 from ECW Press, 2120 Queen St. E. #200, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4E 1E2; 416/694-3348; www.ecwpress.com). An act wherein I disclosed the fact that I'm a lifelong Rush fan, having first seen the band perform live in 1978. This led to a phone call from Rush's publicist, Shelley Nott, who informed me that Peart is a devout *CW* reader, and had asked her to invite me to accompany him as he rode from one concert to another on the current tour.

"How does next week look?" I replied, doing my best to contain my enthusiasm. Noting that the band had a night off between the Albuquerque and Salt Lake City shows, I suggested we meet there.

Agreed. Shelley gave me Michael's cell phone number and we arranged to meet in Gallup, New Mexico, one week later.

In his book, Peart admits that he's always perceived concert

touring as "a combination of crushing tedium, constant exhaustion and circus-like insanity." While he enjoys the planning and rehearsing in preparation for a tour, and the early shows as the band and crew strive for the perfect performance, once they've achieved that, the thrill is gone.

Motorcycling has made touring palatable again. "The good parts are lots of riding, and I can eat anything I want

because I drum for three hours every night," Peart says.

After which, most nights, it's a mad dash to the tour bus, where Neil and Michael snooze as bus-driver Dave Burnett navigates through the darkness. In the morning they pull over, unload the bikes from the enclosed trailer in tow, and Neil and Michael ride to the next show, arriving early before the throngs. Like we did this afternoon.

A late-bloomer in motorcycling terms, Peart didn't take up the sport until the age of 41, when his wife Jackie bought him a BMW R1100RS for Christmas '93. An avid bicyclist, he always suspected he'd enjoy motorcycling, but once the bug bit, Peart was infected, and quickly made up for lost time. He and his best friend Brutus rode all over Canada, and shipped their bikes to Mexico and Europe for extended moto-vacations. And then, during the 1997 *Test For Echo* tour, the pair rode from concert to concert, clocking tens of thousands of miles as they visited 47 of the 48 contiguous United States.

Life was good: In addition to the new album, which Peart considered his masterwork as a drummer, he'd just completed his second Buddy Rich tribute album and an instructional video. Though always something of a cult band, Rush had by this point sold upwards of 35 million records, won a score of Canadian Juno Awards and been nominated for a Grammy three times. Perhaps most impressively, the three band members had been awarded the Order of Canada, the commonwealth equivalent of being knighted by the Queen.

BY BRIAN CATTERSON

GHOST RIDER

And then the music stopped. On August 10th, 1997, Peart's 19-year-old daughter Selena was killed in a car accident en route to beginning her freshman year of college. His wife Jackie never recovered from that emotional blow, and just 10 months later, she passed away, too. "The doctors called it cancer, but of course it was a broken heart," Peart later wrote.

Suddenly alone, and stricken with grief at the loss of his loved ones, Peart told his bandmates to consider him retired and set out on an epic 14-month, 55,000-mile motorcycle journey. A journey that ended happily when he met and ultimately married Carrie Nuttall, a fine-art photographer whose work, "Rhythm and Light" (www.carrienuttall.com) captures her husband back at work in the studio. Peart chronicled his adventures in *Ghost Rider*, and in a song by the same name on Rush's long-awaited new album, *Vapor Trails*.

That album is a milestone in that it marks the return of the man who *Modern Drummer* magazine voted "Best Rock Drummer" so many times he was finally retired to his own personal Hall of Fame. And the man who, during his self-imposed "exile," didn't touch the drums for *two years*.

Equally significantly, it marked the return of rock music's most thought-provoking lyricist, because while it's bassist Geddy Lee's voice that you hear, it's Peart's words; with rare exceptions, he's written every lyric since joining the band for their second album, *Fly By Night*, in 1975.

Taking his penchant for the written word to the next level, Peart in 1996 penned his first book, *The Masked Rider*, about a bicycle journey through West Africa. Though an entertaining read, with colorful imagery and no shortage of the author's thoughts and observations, that effort was rather impersonal—his family and bandmates barely rated a mention.

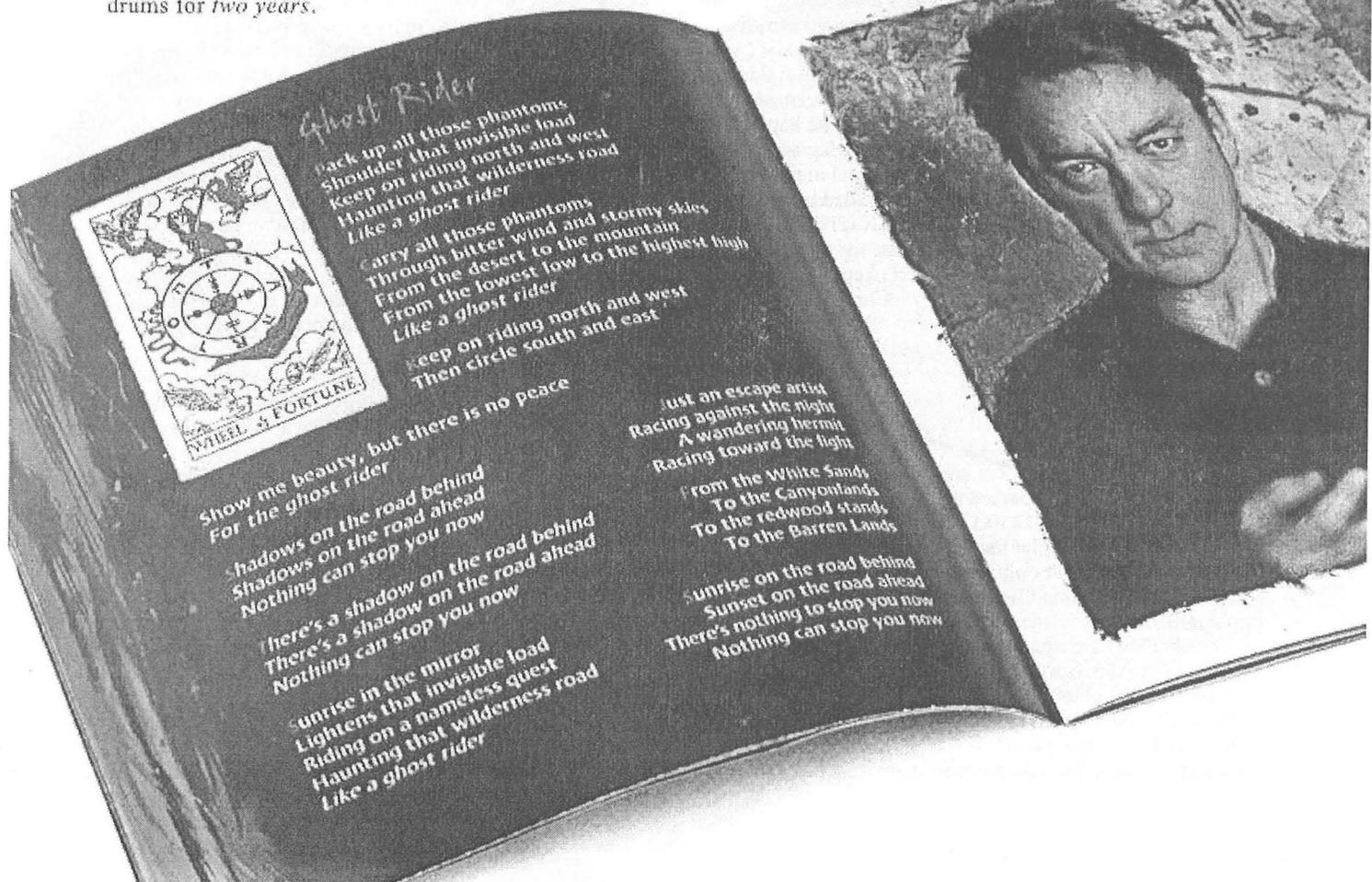
In *Ghost Rider*, however, Peart bares his soul, candidly detailing his progress on what he calls "The

Healing Road." A heady read destined to rank alongside *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, the book works on three levels, appealing to Rush fans, motorcycle tourers and, perhaps most importantly, anyone who's ever suffered the loss of a

GHOST NOTES

For this momentous departure I had hoped for a better omen than this cold, dark, rainy morning, but it did have a certain pathetic fallacy, a sympathy with my interior weather. In any case, the weather didn't matter; I was going. I still didn't know where (Alaska? Mexico? Patagonia?), or for how long (Two months? Four months? A year?), but I knew I had to go. My life depended on it.

—Neil Peart, *Ghost Rider*, pg. 4



loved one. Motorcycling, as many of us have come to know, is therapeutic.

How therapeutic, I'm in the process of finding out. We'd rendezvoused the previous morning at a truck stop off I-40 in Gallup. By this point, I'd been in touch with Peart's publisher, publicist and security manager, but I'd not actually spoken to the man himself. And as I approached the tour bus door, there was only one Rush lyric on my mind. It was from a song called "Limelight" on the 1981 *Moving Pictures* album, about the harsh reality of fame: *Living in a fisheye lens, Caught in the camera eye, I have no heart to lie, I can't pretend a*

stranger is a long-awaited friend.

And so it was with more than a little apprehension that I knocked. An anxious few moments passed, and then Neil himself threw open the door and greeted me with a warm handshake and a smile. He quickly proved to be an educated *CW* reader, a fan of Kevin Cameron and well aware of Off-Road Editor Jimmy Lewis' exploits in the Dakar Rally and my reputation as the staff Italophile—never mind that I was aboard a BMW F650GS for this outing. Neil himself had owned a Ducati 916, which he kept parked in the living room of his lakefront home in Quebec, but had traded it in along with a K1200RS to purchase his current mount.

He kept the original Christmas present RS for sentimental reasons, and the R1100GS he rode during the making of

Ghost Rider now serves as a back-up bike, parked alongside his and Michael's newer R1150GSs in the trailer.

Not surprisingly, the TV in the bus was tuned to the Weather Channel. Looking at the forecast, I noted that it read, "Ceiling Unlimited"—title of one of the songs on *Vapor Trails*.

"Yes, that's where that came from," Neil said, smiling. "You're the first person to make that connection."

"So what's the plan?" I asked.

"Well, I've never been to Canyon De Chelley, so I'd like to go there first," he replied.

I actually figured we'd be going there, since Neil wrote

in his book that he'd been turned away by bad weather during a previous attempt.

We saddled up, then headed north and west, back across the Arizona border (for me), and up into the barren grasslands of the Navajo Nation. We paused at a couple of canyon overlooks, then departed to the northeast, taking the dirt turnoff for Route 13—a number that we should have regarded with the customary suspicion.

A mile or so up the road, we encountered a construction crew that was preparing to pave the road. A series of large highway markers stood in a row, and the three of us began slaloming between them. The party ended abruptly when the dirt turned to slippery mud, a water truck having just done its thing. We pressed on—carefully—and eventually returned to pavement, where we marveled at the fact that we would

probably be the last motorcyclists to ride that road in "unimproved" form.

We continued in the dirt on Route 63, only to have the main road dead-end, symbolically, at a cemetery. So we turned back and took the path less traveled, which quickly deteriorated from graded dirt road, to two-track jeep road, to single-track. It then merged with a sandwash, whereupon Michael's rear wheel promptly sank up to the axle.

I snapped the obligatory humiliating photo with my new digital camera, and then we headed back the way we came, turning the other way at a fork. The day before, my younger brother Paul had said to me, "Whatever you do, don't hurt Neil. I have tickets for the Madison Square Garden show." Those words reverberated through my head as I watched Neil's BMW slither sideways climbing a rise and then fall over, pitching him over the top and back down the hill!

Fortunately, the desert sand broke his fall, and Neil emerged unscathed. And not the least bit embarrassed, because he encouraged me to snap another photo before righting his bike.

"Do you guys always ride like this?" I asked.

"No, the only time I've ever ridden off-road in the desert was in Baja, and when Brutus and I tried to cross the Sahara," Neil replied.

Forging on, we arrived at a rocky ledge, from where we spied a graded dirt road leading to a highway on the horizon. And so we eventually made our way back to "civilization."

By now it was late afternoon, and we still had a couple of hundred miles to go to Moab, Utah, our evening's destination.

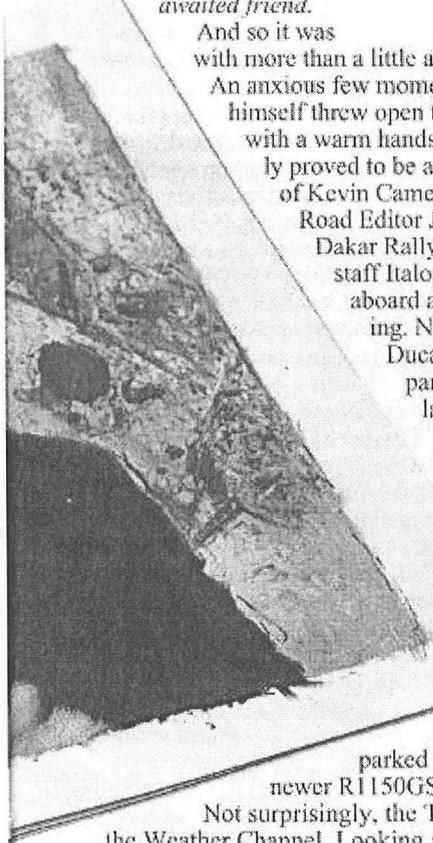
"If there was a show tonight, we'd be calling in a chopper right about now," remarked Michael. He carries a satellite phone for just such emergencies, but so far, the worst the pair has suffered is a ruptured oil line.

With Neil leading, we high-tailed it to Moab, covering the distance in little more than two hours.

"You said your 650 cruised comfortably at 95," he told me



PHOTO BY BRIAN CATTERSON



GHOST RIDER

later, "so I took you literally."

"Actually, I think I said 85," I replied, "but I stand corrected."

Our accommodations for that evening were at The Gonzo Inn (expensive—and worth it), where we were booked under the aliases Waylon Smithers and Nelson Muntz, *Simpsons* characters. Security is a never-ending concern for musicians of Peart's stature—especially when they're as intrinsically private as he is.

"Neil wants to be known for his hands, not his face," offered Michael.

And privacy is more important than ever in the wake of Peart's recent "sabbatical." To avoid having to re-live past events over and over, he currently isn't doing any "meet-and-greets" with fans, or granting any interviews. As Shelley told me, "*Cycle World* and *Modern Drummer* are it."

GHOST NOTES

Concerned only that the town name "Fernie" appear on the postcard, I hadn't really paid attention to the picture, but before I started writing I noticed the caption at the top: "Ghost Rider." Turning it over, I saw a photograph of a lenticular cloud trailing off the peak of Trinity Mountain. Ghost Rider was apparently the local name for this atmospheric phenomenon.

Now, it must be explained that Alex and I shared a particular mode of writing to each other in "Moronese," and with the pen in my left (wrong) hand I started scrawling, "Eye em thuh gost rydur." Then I stopped, my head jerked back, and I thought, "Whoa, yeah!—I am the ghost rider!"

—Neil Peart, *Ghost Rider*, pg. 104

Neil gave me a copy of the September, 2002, issue of *Modern Drummer* with him on the cover, and I read it at my first opportunity. According to the author, William F. Miller, Peart is a changed man. "In my many get-togethers

with him in the past, there was never any sense of weakness or vulnerability. The old Neil was driven, self-assured, strong, brilliant, and at times a tad aloof. He's different now. Brilliant? No doubt. Confident and strong. Perhaps. Aloof? No way. There's a greater sensitivity in him today, a look of compassion behind the eyes. Neil Peart has emerged from tragedy an even greater human being."

Strong words, and ones for which I have no basis for comparison. But in my two days of paling around with Neil, he struck me as a happy-go-lucky guy—polar opposite of the nerdy intellectual I'd envisioned while listening to previous radio interviews. Not to mention a gracious host: He and Michael picked up my hotel room, meals, gas...my

money was no good, they said, "You're our guest." And so in one evening, I recouped all the money I'd ever spent buying Rush records—first on vinyl, then on CD. The concert-ticket score would be settled by the "All Areas" laminated pass that Michael had given me that morning, with the words, "You must be special, because *nobody* gets one of these."

I certainly felt special. We had dinner at a restaurant that Neil had discovered during a previous visit, predictably talking about music and motorcycles, each obviously curious about the other's "gig." At one point, I noted that Neil had been into cars, cycling and now motorcycling.

"What's next?" I asked.

"Nothing," he replied. "Motorcycling is it."

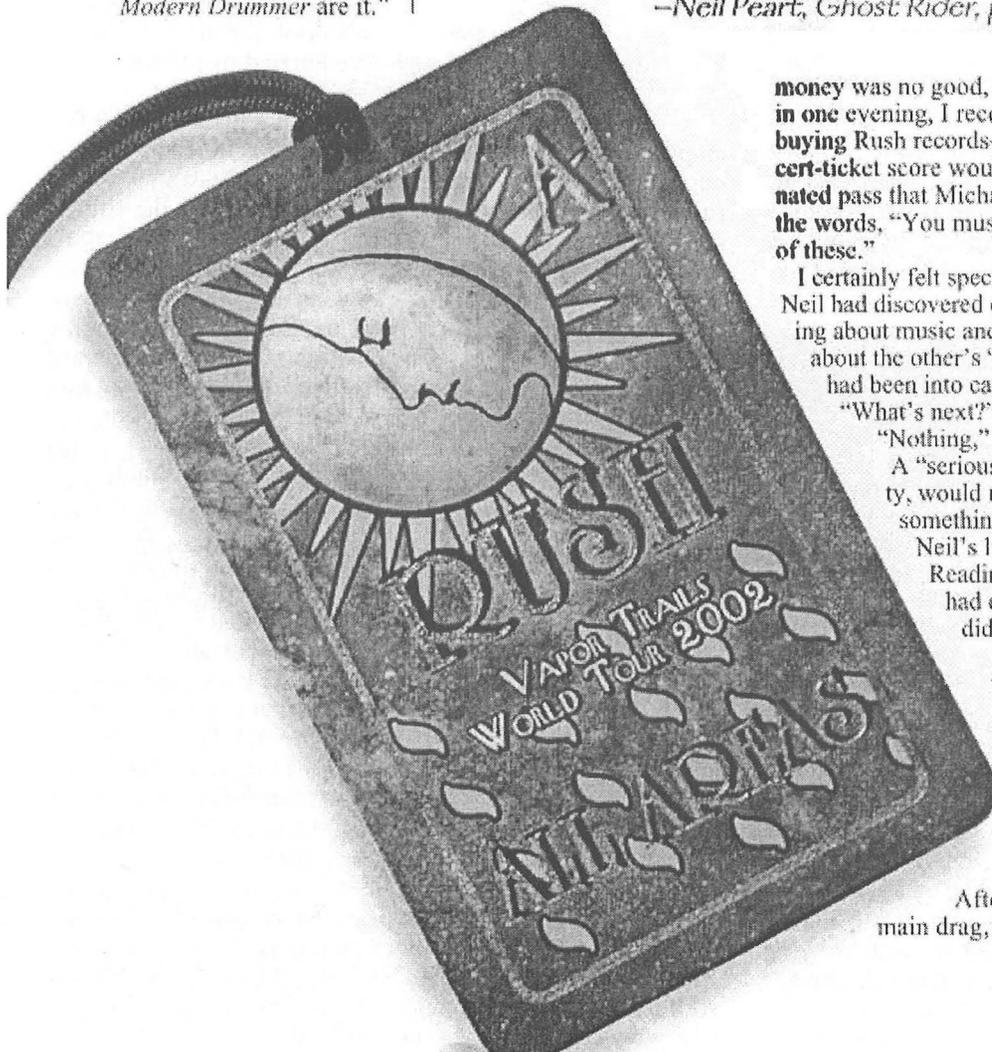
A "serious" journalist, if afforded this opportunity, would no doubt have asked The Big Question, something to do with the unfortunate turns that Neil's life had taken. But I couldn't do it.

Reading his book, I got the sense that he'd had enough sorrow to last two lifetimes; he didn't need me to bring him down.

And maybe it was the wine, but as we talked about past albums and concerts I could feel myself regressing, the inquisitive journalist replaced by the teenage Rush fan I used to be. A teenage Rush fan sitting across the dinner table from Neil friggin' Peart!

It was a memorable evening.

After dinner, we walked down Moab's main drag, ducking into the Back of Beyond



Bookstore, where on Neil's recommendation I purchased a copy of *Desert Solitaire*, a superb novel about author Edward Abbey's experiences as a park ranger in the nearby Canyonlands National Monument. Or "Money-mint," as he called it.

We then retreated to Neil's suite for a nightcap of The Macallan, poured from the flask made famous (or infamous) in *Ghost Rider*. Noting our upscale surroundings, Michael remarked that because the other two members of Rush travel in private jets that cost 10 times as much as Neil's bus, the management company lets him splurge on hotels.

The next morning, we had a lazy breakfast at a converted jailhouse, then took the scenic route to Salt Lake City over Route 191. It was my turn to lead now, and not having ridden many twisty roads the previous day, I took it easy at first, unsure of my companions' skills. But I needn't have worried, because both turned out to be very capable.

This stands in marked contrast to the story Peart tells in his book. The spring after Jackie gave him the R1100RS, he and Rush guitarist Alex Lifeson (who had just bought a Harley) enrolled in a new-rider course, and Neil failed on his first two attempts.

Despite being one of the world's preeminent drummers, Peart insists he's actually quite uncoordinated, and has convinced himself that drumming is really more "dis-coordination." This struck me as humorous considering that my brother Paul had just taken an MSF course, and told me that the instructor had stated that riding a motorcycle is "a lot like playing the drums." Yeah, says who?

In Price, bus-driver Dave joined us on Neil's old R1100GS, and led us on the final leg of our journey into Salt Lake City. We arrived at the Delta Center early that afternoon, and Neil and Michael got straight to work—changing their oil!

"Ah, the life of a rock star," I remarked as I watched.

"If ever there were a term that I despise, that's it," Neil shot back. He prefers the unadorned title "musician."

Oil change completed, Neil escorted me inside, introducing me to Alex, Geddy, manager Ray Danniels and

the various members of the 50-member crew. He took me up on stage, where I snapped a photo of him wearing a *CW* cap behind his drum kit, then invited me to have a seat on the stool. I declined on the grounds that

it was "his" place—and besides, I'm a bass player, not a drummer. I didn't tell him that, though, figuring that telling Neil Peart you played an instrument would be like telling Valentino Rossi you rode a motorcycle.

We then went backstage to the dressing room. "Make yourself at home," Neil said. "Sound check is at 5, and dinner's at 5:30. If you need anything, I'll be on the bus."

I showered, changed into my street clothes, then headed back to the bus, where Neil was on the phone and Michael on the computer. Neil finished inscribing a copy of his book for me, and then we hurried inside for sound check, where I grabbed one of the 15,000

empty seats in the arena and watched, an audience of one. We then adjourned for dinner in the dressing room—just Neil, Alex, Geddy and me. I felt like the fifth Beetle, the talentless one.

Grabbing my digital camera, I showed the photos of the previous day's "desert crossing" to Alex and Geddy, remarking that if they knew what Neil was really doing on his bike, they'd make him ride in the bus.

Geddy smiled and said, "We couldn't stop him anyway."

Time came for the show, and with Neil planning to depart immediately after the final cymbal crash, he invited me to come backstage during intermission to say our good-byes. Which I did. We shook hands, he encouraged me to keep in touch via e-mail, and then, out of the blue, said,

"Aw, give old Neil a hug." So much for that whole "stranger" thing...

At the end of his book, the Ghost Rider symbolically rides off the end of the Santa Monica pier, never to be seen again. Peart, though, is still riding. Truth be told, he's been riding with me for years—seldom have I traveled without a Rush CD in my case. But it was nice to finally get a chance to ride with him.

GHOST NOTES

As I stood by the bike an old man parked his ancient Mercedes beside me, then struck up a conversation. Admiring the BMW, he told me in a heavy German accent that back in the '30s he had ridden a BMW, then later a Zundapp with a sidecar, which he described as "much better zan zee BMW." Casually, he told me of abandoning the Zundapp in Kiev for lack of fuel, then walking 800 miles home, with nothing but a bottle of vodka and a piece of frozen bread, marching day after day, even in his sleep. Suddenly I realized he was describing Hitler's retreat from Russia in 1943, and that he must have been a German soldier then. Another ghost story.

—Neil Peart, *Ghost Rider*, pg. 113



PHOTO BY BRIAN CATTERSON

Signals

Janet

Although we are back playing this week, unfortunately that will be too late for Spirit. Would really appreciate a mention in the last edition. 2112 really does appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in the fanzine - it gave us the chance to develop a fan base and the opportunity of playing at the convention. No website sorted as yet but I'd be happy for people to have my email address to keep in contact. We will maintain the confidentiality of the subscribers and keep them up to date with all things 2112.

Canucks01@bopenworld.com

I'm not sure if you are aware that YYZ are organising a convention this year. We were asked to take an equal share of the organisation and everything that went with that. We initially agreed but could not resolve the running order of the bands for the day. Regrettably we have decided to withdraw from the convention. We hope that those who attend will have an enjoyable day nonetheless. Regards,

**Graham
2112**

Dear Janet,

I hope we may be able to keep the club going beyond Issue 64, and I would be able to try and contribute material and spiritual support. Good luck for the future. Kind regards.

**Andrew Ball
Chesterfield**

Dear Janet,

I cannot thank you enough for the whole New York trip that you helped me with. You would not believe where I actually watched the concert from, it was truly amazing. So nice to meet up with Ian (Nelson) and Neil (Dennant) and his family. Ian and I are still in touch, hopefully we will get together soon.

What a show though. I tried desperately not to go near websites and reviews because I did not want to know the set list and I was not disappointed. When you have waited as long as I have it really would not have mattered what they played.. Thanks again Janet, you have made my year. I will never forget the experience. Kind regards,

**Graham Hollick
Leicester**

Dear Janet,

I know it's not much, but please could you put the difference in my cheque towards Mick's children. *(thanks Richard- Janet)*. Even though I have been a Rush fan for about 23 years I only recently came across your fanzine. It has brought me a lot of pleasure and knowledge over the last couple of years and it was with deep sadness I heard about your loss.

I have two children aged 11 and 8 yrs old myself and you cannot feel anything but extreme sadness

Signals

when you hear such news. Thanks for everything and good luck for the future. Thank you.

**Richard Final
Port Talbot**

Dear Janet,

Please find enclosed cheque for final copy of SOR and a donation to Mick's Benefit Fund *(thanks Ian - Janet)*. I was saddened to hear the news last summer. People like Mick (and yourself) have helped to keep Rush's name alive in the UK for many years and we thank you for that. I do hope the band see fit to visit Europe at least one last time or have the common sense to release DVD tour footage for both American and European regions. Kind regards.

**Ian Dessant
Nottingham**

Dear Janet,

I still can't believe it's going to be the last one after all this time, having bought the first one all those years ago. I remember seeing the advert and thinking I wasn't the only Rush anorak around.

I have had some contact with Mick, mainly phone conversations - but always sought him out at the conventions to have a chat. After getting me some front row tickets for the 'Bones tour I always regarded him as a best mate! I was shocked and saddened to hear what happened and can only pass on my condolences to you and his family. If there are any future plans for fanzines or conventions in the future please get in contact.

**Anthony Nolan
Warrington**

Dear Spirit,

Many condolences to Mick's family. Thanks for a truly fabulous Winter issue. Two points:

1) Great montage on the cover of last month's issue. Any chance of getting hold of the 4-colour digital artwork for producing a poster for personal use? *[Sorry it was in mono and has been deleted - Janet]*

2) I need a copy of 'Prog-rock Top 10' screened on Channel 4 on 4/1/03 on VHS. Just about to wallow in my favourite bands - ELP, Crimson, Yes and Rush when I had a power cut and missed the lot.

[Can anyone help Wayne? If so, write to me and I'll put you in touch - Janet].

Kind regards,

**Wayne Brunson
London**

After reading 'Signals' in the penultimate issue of S.O.R. I see that a number of fans are looking for another way of getting their Rush 'fix'. There is a European website that helps fill the gap. here is the address

<http://www.t-n-m-s.com/> Cheers.

Lee Bool

Janet,

Following the sad and premature death of our editor I would like to thank you for your efforts in getting the final 2 issues of this great fanzine published. I for one, without the benefit of the internet, will greatly miss the information I get from these pages and I will look forward to the new publication from the Mad Jock whatever format it takes.

Sadly, but as expected, the Vapor Trails tour did not reach us so it was really good to read other people's adventures in North America. I fear this is the last chance I will ever have of seeing my favourite band live especially with the lack of promotion and interest in the band in Europe now. The planned DVD/video release from the Brazil leg of the tour will be very welcome, despite the fact they only played 4 new songs each night throughout the tour - which was a huge surprise considering how strong the VT CD is. It's certainly in my top 3-4 Rush albums of all time despite it's sometimes unclear production.

I would be very grateful if anyone can help me with my Rush collection of tapes, CD's, videos, programmes, photos etc. etc. I have quite a large amount of various memorabilia but am always on the lookout for anything new. If anyone can help I can be contacted at the following address:

Brian Swales
14 East Lea
Thornley, Co Durham
DH6 3EA, England

Before I sign off I would just like to say a brief hello, or should that now be a goodbye, to the many friends I have met through this fanzine: Simon Harris, Graham Young, John Gilchrist, Michael Kerr, Kevin Owen and finally Ray Wawrzyniak. Stay in touch my friends. Best regards to you all and to anyone I forgot.

Brian Swales
Thornley, Co Durham

Dear Janet,

Thanks for the issue of Spirit which arrived on Xmas eve. You and everyone associated with it should be proud, it was a great effort. I'm sure Mick would've approved, in fact the best compliment I can give is that if you didn't know the background you would think Mick had done it. Many thanks also for publishing my drivel of 'No Sleep 'til Newcastle'.

I don't know how we'd do it, but the best tribute for Mick would be to get them to tour over here one last time. I would happily settle for 'no show' just a backline and some lights would do me. On that basis, the country is full of 'classic rock' acts - Cheap Trick are coming over as are Saga and BOC have just been. To be honest, there isn't really an excuse, maybe we should try and persuade Carrie to take a trip to Europe then the rest may tag along.....cynic! Until then we live in hope. Best wishes,

Graham Parker
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Dear Janet,

I heard about Mick's sudden passing in a letter from Tom - I managed to get convention tickets from Ticket Web and had a great time, even managing to win a couple of raffle prizes (bootleg CDs and tour programmes). This was my first convention and I'm

only sorry I never met Mick because I've been trying to get to Crewe for the last couple of years -but something has always stopped me. My friends and I managed to speak to Tom towards the end of the night and he told us he hoped the convention would continue next year.

I'm sorry I never got to meet you but I did see your photos from the last tour (excellent). I never purchased any because I had spent most of my money on the back issues that were available -25 and I'm still reading them.

Best wishes.

Alan Hopwood
Liverpool

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your efforts regarding the Spirit of Rush fanzine. Looking forward to any future Rush publications! Here's hoping that Rush will one day tour the UK again, as I've never seen the band live. Best wishes.

Patrick Sullivan
Aldershot

Dear Janet,

Thanks for sending me the latest issue of Spirit and please find enclosed a cheque for the final issue. I'd be grateful if you'd pass the balance of the money to Lesley and the boys (*thanks Gary, will do - Janet*).

Please forgive me for not writing earlier to express my feelings over the loss of Mick. I have subscribed to the fanzine from the beginning and was just as shocked and saddened as everyone else when I heard the news. I guess I couldn't convey to others what I personally felt inside. The last conversation I had with Mick was late last spring and I recall that he was scheduled to interview Geddy later that day. We spoke about seeing Rush in America and I very nearly joined the party that travelled over for the early part of the tour. As it was, I went on my own towards the end of the tour and saw the band in Chicago and Minneapolis. It was my first ever visit to the US and my first Rush concerts in 10 years. I had a fantastic time and even met Alex and Geddy backstage at Chicago -truly a dream come true.

I'm obviously sorry to hear of the demise of Spirit, but know from my conversations with Mick that it was sometimes a struggle to keep the fanzine going, particularly with regard to maintaining subscriptions. Please accept my sincere thanks for all your work and effort in producing it and indeed the conventions. I look forward to hearing about Tom's plans for a new fanzine and would like to support it in any way possible. Yours sincerely,

Gary Cross
High Wycombe

Dear Janet

Please find enclosed my subscription for the last issue of SOR. You can use the change for whatever purpose you see fit [*thanks Dave - I have sent it to Mick's family - Janet*].

Although I never met Mick, I have appreciated the time and effort he and the team have put in to bring us the news and information about Rush. I am sure I speak for all the other fans and readers when I say a big thank you for the pleasure we have received from each issue. Good luck in whatever you decide to do in the future Janet. Once again many thanks,

**Dave Close
Millisle, Co Down**

Dear SOR,

Please find enclosed a photograph of Mick Burnett, looking rather pensive with a pint in his hand. I think it was from the first Convention..



Not knowing about the fanzine (I only joined at 37) here we are at No 64. It's a pity this is the last one. Hope the Mad Jock's mag 'Turn The Page' (great title) will be a success.

Michael Kerr and I saw Rush on the VT tour, last July at Milwaukee and Chicago. Many thanks Michael, you did a great job booking the tickets for the gigs and hotels. I can remember him with street map in his hand Finding My Way - whoops, I mean finding our way. The best two gigs of my life. We only had a three night stay but what a time, fantastic, awesome.

The weather was in the high '90's, ideal for the outdoor shows. The atmosphere -you could cut it with a knife - or should that be excitement! Quite a few Brits there - very animated. Me in my NUFC shirt. Rush were superb..... they can still kick ass. I remember Alex skipping onto the stage at the start of the shows, Neil in hysterics at Alex during la Villa Strangiato, Neil's drum solo, Geddy on top form throughout. The whole band thoroughly enjoying themselves. The light show and effects were not bad either!!

Now it seems the talk of a UK tour is not going to happen. The fans here have certainly missed out. Let's hope Rush do tour here next time. In the meantime check out 2112. I saw them at The Office, South Shields and they played a blinder. Only arriving at 22-00 - delayed because their van broke down. Played from 22.30 for nearly two hours. Also check out the VT baseball top- \$20 from the Backstage Club. Nice one for your collection. Many thanks to all at SOR for all your hard work and dedication over the years. As we Geordies say 'Gan canny' - take care.

**John Gilchrist
Choppington, Northumberland**

Hi Janet.

Many thanks for the latest issue of SOR. I thought I'd send a few words for the next issue regarding Mick. I barely knew Mick, we had e-mailed each other a couple of times and spoken a few polite

words at the convention. As I thought about what I was going to say about him I realised that he has had a direct and indirect influence on my life.

Before I started to subscribe to the SOR I was a Rush fan in the wilderness, nobody else I knew was remotely interested in them and were often surprised to find out that they were still recording and touring. The SOR and the convention changed all that. Thanks to Mick, and everyone else connected with the magazine and convention, I have made friends with a great many fellow Rush fans. Kevin Owen, Stuart Borland, Stevie McNally, Brian Swales, Kevin Henry, Lorraine Borland and John Gilchrist are just a few of the many people that have become friends and acquaintances. If it wasn't for meeting these people I never would have travelled over for the VT tour. What Mick has done is brought people together who have a love for Rush and has allowed them to forge friendships. That's not a bad legacy to have.

**Michael Kerr
North Berwick**

Dear Janet,

Just thought I'd drop you a quick line like most readers to express my sadness upon hearing of Mick's death. Although I never met him I have been an avid reader of Spirit of Rush since the very first issue and this excellent fanzine has been my main source of information for many years. I can appreciate that a lot of time and money went into keeping it going, especially when news was scarce and the readership low on numbers.

On a lighter note, I also wanted to say what an excellent album Vapor Trails is, which I have been listening to pretty much constantly since it came out - especially as it contains two of the best songs they've written in ages (in my opinion) - Ceiling Unlimited and Ghost Rider. May they continue to rock for years to come! Things are even brighter still, with a DVD on the horizon.

Anyway, please pass on all my sympathy to Mick's family and thank you for all the hard work everyone has put into the fanzine over the years. I look forward to the last issue of Spirit of Rush as eagerly as ever. God bless you all.

**Martin Withers
Bournemouth**

Dear Janet

I am writing to apologise about not having written a letter into SOR about Mick as I promised ~ I have been away and `rushing` about so much to prepare left me no time to say what I wanted to say about Mick. I don't know if u can print this, but I'll say it anyway.....

Mick had a big impact on my life. I first met him outside the `Moving Pictures` building in Toronto he was with you and Andrew, and he has been winding me up ever since !!! He inspired me to see Rush in Canada - Test for Echo tour where I met some amazing people like Mad Jock and a great friend Andy F. (yeah ~ you know who you are man) and lately Mick made sure I was at the VT tour in the US when I was out there on a trip. In fact his very last words to me were `you'd better make sure you see that f%\$ing band when you're in the States you wanna f&%ing well sort yourself out!`

So I did and what a great time I had !! Cheers again Mick. Janet, I have to say that you guys at SOR have been the only place for me to keep in touch with the band and get quality information even in the 'lean' years and Mick well, what can I say ? The most bad tempered, miserable, 'outrageous' generous and genuine guy I ever met ! Keep on rocking Mick where ever you are - you are a star.

Sean McCabe
Email

WANTED FRIEND - Still!

Must be - Rush-Nut, born 1958, straight with two young children, movie-lover, fussy tea drinker and dreams of mastering guitar.

Who knows? - Having these things in common with Mick Burnett, perhaps may have led to us becoming friends? (like to think so). Mick kindly brought back, on his return from seeing the band, Vapor Trails tour t/shirts and programmes for me, as thanks for past SOR cover designs. Although I thanked him for these, through liaison with Chris Loydall, a mutual friend, sadly, I never actually had the opportunity to meet him face-to-face and to thank him personally. As hoped, that first chance would have been at the last Crewe Convention. (bad timing Mick). Oh well - maybe

another day? Hence, this tribute cover goes only a short way towards thanking him again for those goodies and for especially all his hard work relating to the band. Hope he, his family, the band and

other fellow Rush-Nuts like it. Mick - Your Spirit
ROCKS ON!!!

Phil Dee
email

PS: A special mention goes to Janet and Chris, for photos of/insight into my wanted friend still!

Dear Janet,

So sorry to hear about Mick's sudden death. It was a total shock when I heard the news. I only ever met him once at a Rush convention and he was a nice, genuine guy. Thanks for a great convention - bought loads of Rush stuff. Loads of alcohol and was amazed at how much money you raised towards Mick's family. Had a good laugh at the person who was bidding against himself for the stuff that was on auction. Big thanks goes to the Mad Jock for running the show (how's the voice?). I thought 2112 were very good and they even played new songs off the VT album. It took a few plays to get into the new album but it really rocks just like the good old days!). Look forward to this year's convention and I hope Mad Jock's new magazine takes off. RIP Mick. Yours sincerely,

Gary Miller

Ashington, Northumberland

P.S. Big thanks to John and the lads back home (Graham, Norman and Bill).

P.P.S. Rush, please come back for the final British tour i.e. Newcastle Arena. If not, USA here I come!

Reader's Vapor Trails Tour Diaries

LIVING ON THE ROAD*

It wasn't ever really an option, was it? I mean, NOT going? Hanging on and hoping for European legs to previous tours had proven hopelessly optimistic; the five-year hiatus gradually eroded belief in realising a life-long dream (in 1977, gigs in Toronto might as well have been on the far side of the moon), but as news of the band's return to the studio began to seep out there was an obvious corollary - a tour! Toronto! Anthem! You know the rest... The doubts: it might not fit in with work (there are other jobs); it's going to cost (why do you think God gave you two kidneys, if not to sell the spare one?); it can't possibly live up to a lifetime's expectations (hmmm, we'll come to that), but as the Professor said "if you don't take the chance, *nothing's* going to happen - Roll the Bones!" Of more concern was the recollection of our last Rush adventure - a near-death experience on the way to the Convention. Bloody Hell, if Andy can try and kill me in a Ford Ka on the A52, what damage will he do with a left hand drive Pontiac automatic in downtown Manhattan? Oh well, Roll the Bones - spill the blood.

Yes, Manhattan...well, if Toronto is the home-town gig of our own dreams, surely Madison Square Gardens is the gig of everybody else's. Hard to resist, isn't it? And NY to YYZ doesn't look *too* far to drive - if you hold the map at arm's length. Sorted - fly to JFK, drive to Toronto (comfort break at Niagara - we'll need it with all that running water), couple of days for gig, Walk of Fame, Queen's Park Building, Massey Hall, you know the rest... Then, drive all the way back again (maybe go round that big lake the other way - for variety, wouldn't want to get bored driving a thousand ks would we?) and catch the MSG gig and all the Rush landmarks in NY (Radio City, er...). We *could* stay on for the Hershey gig, but I've got tickets for Rod Piccott at The Beresford Arms, Ashbourne - you think I'm kidding? - and playing Hershey sounds just a bit surreal, in a Willy Wonka kind of a way.

And off we went, happy to tell admiring workmates and girlfriends that we were spending a week across the Atlantic just to see a gig, a little more reticent to let on exactly *whose* gig - you know how it is, being a Rush fan. Got plane, got car, started driving (do you think I have a future as a travel journalist?). Got petrol (sorry, gas) for about 2p a gallon and drove some more, counting pine trees as the towns disappeared on the road to Buffalo, when...."Look, look, what the hell is that?" "What, where?" "There, that sign said 'Rush', I swear it said 'Rush'" "We're in the middle of nowhere, you're seeing things. Maybe we should swap drivers" "No, I'm sure. Yes, there's another one. 'Rush 3m'. We're going". Wild swerve to the right.

Coollest Address in the World?

There is indeed a town of Rush in NY State, too small for our map, and it had just materialised in front of us. At that point, we knew it would be a great trip.



NOT the Cover of Moving Pictures

So we had a look around (no obvious signs, but I guess 2112 is a sought-after house number), and met a photography student (as you do) who took our picture, then shook her head and drove off uncomprehendingly. We followed her out of town – it can't get any better, right? Some hours later, across the border:

"Andy?" "Yeah?" "See that sign?" "Not again – now what?" "Lakeside Park!" Swerve.

And so the pilgrimage continued, the merry-go-round, the lighthouse, the willows (yes, it was breezy). Seriously, a great, chilled out place to look out to 'sea' and reflect, those lyrics looping over. Went to the pub, some wonderful people opened up their guest house especially for us (it was late Autumn) and discounted the rate, we watched the World Series, everything great – then Andy spent all night throwing up and the next day on prescribed Coke! I drove.

Willows in the Breeze

So we hit Toronto on a fabulous bright day – must get up the CN tower while it's like this. Looking out from the top over town, we ask the anglophile waiter where we might stay (very organised, this trip!). "Over there" he points to the horizon "plenty of motels, very cheap". We look unmoved. "OK, if you want to be closer, there are places near the University – it's quite an alternative area, but fun". Sounds good. As we're heading off, Andy says "what do you think he meant by 'alternative'?" "I dunno, you're the vegetarian."

And so it was that two young, single guys came to be driving, slowly because we were looking for a B&B, past the Toronto YMCA, just at the point that Andy winds down the window and says "we need directions, ask that guy there – that construction worker". Sound of pennies dropping! Anyhow, we got the rooms, conveniently opposite the 'Brass Rail' Club (more of which later), and began 'the tour' with The Orbit Room. Whatever preconceptions you have of the OR, it strikes you immediately that any swinging that might be going on could not be of the feline variety. Anyhow, the atmosphere was great and the first band of the trip excellent. They even gave us birthday cake and drinks (not quite the treat it sounds in Andy's case, still suffering from transatlantic tummy). We'll not hark on the next day's tour (you know the rest...) except to say that we met the stereotypical camera-toting Japanese fans and group of "crazy Dutch guys" at Queen's Park; had a great welcome at Anthem ("Don't tell us, you've come all the way from England and just wondered...") but, best of all, on a pavement outside the Uni, some artist/protestor/paranoid schizophrenic/Rush fan (or all four) had painted the word 'FEAR' in six foot high letters. Balancing on a wobbly pile of traffic cones to take the picture seemed sensible by comparison. And so to the gig...

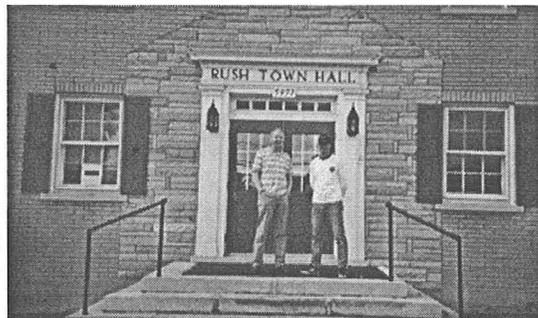
Part V of 'Fear'?

Nothing I can tell you about the gig that you haven't already read. On a personal level it was overwhelming just to be there ("stop hugging me, Dave!"), emotional to see Neil playing again, the dragon was fun, By-Tor took me back to Hammersmith '78 and Alex's guitar in Earthshine signposted a direction I'd love to see the guys take. Elation. Then back to the OR – "hi crazy Dutch guys", "hi girls", "no, Andy, I'm sure the lead guitarist won't mind me chatting up his girlfriend – she bought me a drink – I didn't ask to dance – you think we better leave before we're thrown out? OK." So, into the taxi and we give the location of our hotel "corner of Yonge and North please" "Ah, you guys want the Pussy Club, right?" Embarrassed silence..... Next morning it's on the road and Toronto to NY in one hit, stop at 1000 Islands for the view (girl in the tax office eventually shows me the tattoo on her bum, but that wasn't the view we had in mind), long hold up at US Customs (Andy, being a vege Animal libber, starts muttering 'fascists', perhaps confident that the prospect of a full body search on two guys who've been on the road for four days is pretty unappealing). By now, our consciousness is so elevated that it couldn't be bothered to come back down to ground level to check the fuel gauge until all the bells and whistles start going off. Oh great, the middle of a forest, it's dark, our phones don't work in the US. When did we last see a gas station – this morning? Can you push an automatic? Have you seen Deliverance? Then, out of the gloom - you know the rest... So to NY, hotel on Time Square (sounds grand, but...) and off for the nightlife. But first, a treat for Andy, whose constitution needs a boost. Accost two girls (we're on Broadway – they *must* be actresses) and ask them "where's the coolest vege joint in NY?" "The Zen Palate – two blocks." Andy asks if I'm sure about this. "Yeah, I'm cool, need a drink more than food, anyway." Seated at the restaurant (we would have been amongst the glitterati, if they hadn't already gone to bed), Andy orders wood bark soup (or something) and I request the wine list. Confucius the Waiter looks shocked, as if I've asked him to conspire in the defilement of my bodily temple. Still, the demin, degas, detox water went a treat with the wood bark soup.

We decide to visit a Comedy Club (strictly speaking, the decision is made for us by the hyperactive hawkker outside who practically manhandles us in, with promises of 'famous guys – from TV, like Jerry Seinfeld.' We find what he means by 'like' Jerry Seinfeld – and it's not the fame. For a city with such a diversity of culture and propensity to litigation, how do they get away with giving all the comedy jobs to the Irish and the Jewish? Don't any other communities want to tell jokes? Well, not

the Germans, obviously. Good fun, though, even the disturbing guy with the piercings (you don't want to know). The next day was gig day – an even better show I reckon, band a bit looser, audience much more vocal and Earthshine guitar even more enveloping. Sonic tapestries indeed. At this point, we've seen four gigs – two Rush and two OR. Acceptable, but not outstanding. All this is about to change. Greenwich village, here we come. First a Rolling Stones tribute band (where a girl at the bar (Guinevere!) greets me with an embrace and eulogises about Wales, the land of our forefathers. Going well until I try the old 'remove the glasses (hers, not mine) and look stunned by her beauty' trick, which just prompts threats of a lawsuit. I learn two lessons – Es are great until they wear off, and Welsh-Americans are more American than Welsh. Still, live to fight another day. Then a change of tack, a soul band. Pretty good, but we can't get to the bar, so it's into a taxi with the command "music and alcohol".

We're taken quite a way, out of town, to a collection of low buildings including a bar. From the front, we can just see drinkers along the narrow wall and a circular bar, but we can hear music, blues. As we walk through we see the band, just sitting together at the back of the room. Five or six guys, guitars, a piano, a small electric bass, a little drum set. None of them is under 50, closer to 60 I guess, and what a sound! Real music, right up close. We stay for ages (3am, 4am?) and I don't remember getting back. There's only one more gig to go – awkwardly, it's in Derbyshire, so back to JFK via Yankee Stadium (like Stamford Bridge but with more trophies), Central Park and Radio City (must have taken the Rush plaque down for cleaning). Time for reflection on the plane – was it so great, or is life a succession of disappointments linked by hope? It wasn't as I'd imagined – maybe the gigs were, but everything else was so much *better*, there were events so impossible that some fate must surely have intervened (the town of Rush, for God's sake), people were open, welcoming and interesting (especially Toronto), much of the world was beautiful and music was everywhere. Oh, and Andy didn't once try to kill me in the Pontiac. Pity, then, that I crashed my car on the M42!



The Two Stooges

As a footnote, I'd like to say a huge thank you to Neil, Alex and Geddy for enriching my life over 25 years and reassuring me that integrity is its own reward, to all at SoR, especially Mick of course and now Janet, for sharing their enthusiasm and to Andy for being a tolerant, entertaining and trustworthy mate.*Man, oh man, I guess that's it.*

[* "Finding my Way" – Album #1, Track #1, 1974(!)]

Another fine mess

Although planning to come along in any case, I travelled up to the convention for the first time feeling quite solemn about the sudden loss which you'd all suffered. When I experienced the convention gathering itself in numbers I sensed the real enthusiasm that people had for being there, and the genuine goodwill that pervaded the day and into the evening. I found it hugely sad though, to watch the auctioning of what would otherwise have been fascinating and unique gear, and after staying a while, I remembered that I'd travelled up at short notice and had nowhere to stay.

So, I went off for a brief but fruitless search for a room, before deciding to make the trip back home again.

My turn was to come the following month, when I lost someone very close to me – absurdly I had been sharing with them my desires to get over to Canada just days beforehand. The sudden change was almost insurmountable, the numbness I felt – incomprehensible. And so I went into overdrive, running on some kind of autopilot – contacting those who had to hear the worst and organising what had to be organised, not fully engaging with anything much but attempting to catch everything – nothing could fall now. Then, when I came back down to reality I wanted to get out, to keep running – if it was going to sink-in, then it couldn't be here. And so I booked a flight to Canada just a couple of days before it was due to fly... and escaped. It took me a couple of days to realise that I didn't have to keep running so fast, that I could afford to look around me, that no-one was expecting anything of me. That was something which was reinforced by the friends who'd offered to have me stay with them in an apartment with a beautiful 11th-floor view of Toronto. They didn't say much about the things which were still so sore for me – they were just patient, kind and there.

On my penultimate evening of the 6 days I spent in the city, I went to see the band play at the Air Canada Centre – something massively personal in so many ways. I remember feeling – strangely – more than a little sorry for the people stood alongside me in the floor area in

front of the stage, because they clearly didn't know as many of the numbers as I did (it finally hit me that I had to label myself "a fan" when I became aware that I knew everything they played... singing and swinging to them all). And what with Alex & Geddy larking about on stage, well it must have been the first time I had laughed out loud in a month. I left Toronto and headed east by train - first to Ottawa and then to Montreal. And finally Quebec. Next it was time to head west, so I turned and made for the Rocky Mountains via Calgary right over in Alberta. And that was where I had originally wanted to be - in the mountains. In a different reality, I had planned to get to see Rush play in Seattle (or Vancouver as it would have turned out to be for me) but I had made it to the Columbia Icefields and would go on to Jasper, Vancouver and even Vanc. Island. So I'm asking myself "Why I am telling you all this?" Well I've returned home now, after doing it all in 5 wks. and whilst I didn't carry on "running", I now know that I rarely stopped "jogging". I tried to throw myself into Christmas, but you know what happens at that time of year. In fact, you no doubt know exactly what it's like - and I am saying this so you know that another has also been trying to deal with something indescribably painful, at a time when it's been least expected. And it doesn't just magically begin to "go away" or "get better" - and I get smacked sideways by things like when I first played "Slipping" on Geddy's album (which I'd brought back over with me). I suppose it's meant to be this way - though the question "Why now?" is so tough. I can't say that I know what you've been dealing with, because your loss and the way it's come at you and everything you've managed afterwards - it's relative. But just so you know - I appreciate what you've produced in getting SOR #63 out, and it means more to me than you'd imagine. Thank you,

Martin Sharp

CELEBRATE THE MOMENT or Michael and John's big adventure.

The thought of travelling to North America to see Rush had been a long held ambition for both John and myself. The very idea that it may actually happen seemed slightly unreal, surreal even. John's wife was quite keen for him to travel over for the tour. My wife would be a harder nut to crack, although if approached in the right way an agreement could be reached with as little violence as possible and my testicles still intact. I never was one for sweet talking so I decided to take a more direct route. "I'M GOING TO AMERICA TO SEE RUSH!", I boldly stated. Silence! God, I hate those long silences. It usually means a long and lengthy argument that only ends when we both agree that I'm wrong. "How long would you be away", came the reply. "About 3 or 4 days", I hesitantly responded. "What about the cost". I've been saving for it" I said, not knowing if that was the right or wrong thing to say. "Okay then", she said with a distant tone that implied that it was time I grew up. This is undoubtedly true, as a 38 year old father of two, a boys trip to the US should be a thing of the past. Still, this is RUSH for Gods sake. 10 years since their last UK tour and their recent tragedies had made this trip just about impossible to miss.

It was decided that we would see them in Milwaukee and Chicago. Toronto was the preferred option but this didn't fit in with the time that John and myself had organised off work. How the hell do we get tickets I thought to myself? The internet came the not so inspired reply. Of course, the internet, you can get anything on the internet. From second hand records to second hand panties (well that's what Stuart Borland says anyway), surely a couple of Rush tickets would be easy to track down. I trawled the net for a while before coming across Ticketmaster. Oh Shit! The tickets go on sale on Saturday and I'll be through in Glasgow getting together with a few fellow Rush fans (the panty searching Stuart Borland included). Now, this was the time for some sweet talking. After the sweet talking and the "piss off and do it yourself" came the crawling an begging. I'm particularly good at this as I've been practising for a number of years. Ten to be exact, the same number of years as I've been married, funny that. After a few minutes of me begging and blubbing like a baby she gave in. As long as I left lengthy instructions of what to do she would try her best. So, it came to pass that John and myself were going to see Rush in Milwaukee and Chicago on July 19th and 20th. Only 3 months to wait, we've waited 10 years another 3 months would hardly make a difference. Flights and hotels were booked, train timetables were obtained and map directions downloaded. If nothing else the trip would be well planned. The only thing left was for it all to go horribly wrong.

On July 17th I said my farewells to my family and boarded the train to Morpeth where I was met by my exhausted traveling companion. John had only just returned from Italy that very afternoon. The following day we jetted off to Chicago via Paris and Atlanta. We arrived in Chicago at 11.00 p.m. tired after our fifteen hours or so of travelling. The flights had not been unpleasant although neither John nor myself could agree on whether the champagne was better on the flight to Paris or the flight to Atlanta. However, we did agree that the wine served with dinner was most pleasant. As you can see great hardships were undertaken on this trip but we both felt it would be worth the struggle. Our first requirement was to clear immigration control which involved a very big man with a very big gun who requested that we take our shoes and socks off! I was relieved to find out that there would be no rubber gloves and no bending over involved. John, however, appeared slightly disappointed! We arrived at our first hotel thanks to a bad tempered taxi driver who claimed he didn't know the way so thought he'd take the longest way possible just to err on the side of safety, and who charged over \$20 for a 1.5 mile journey. It's nice to see that cabbies are the same the world over. At the hotel we were greeted by a man who gave the answer to the question of 'who ate all the pies'. It also looked like he'd eaten all the doughnuts and an unhealthy share of the pizza as well. I think his official title was **THE MAN WHO ATE CHICAGO**.

The following morning, after turning down the hotel's healthy breakfast option of stale doughnuts and pastries, we ordered a taxi and headed for Union Station. The cab driver was a far friendlier version than the previous nights effort. He was a Newcastle United supporting Macedonian. What are the chances of meeting one of those? This pleased John who is a Newcastle United season ticket holder and is therefore used to under achievement and disappointment. John takes his revenge by working on the great British rail service and is therefore a cause of under achievement and disappointment. The train journey to Milwaukee was very pleasant, unlike any rail journey in the UK. After a journey of an hour or so we

alighted the train and made the short walk to our hotel, a mock art deco effort. Well, at least it wasn't mock Tudor. After a shower and a rest we set off to find the Marcus Amphitheatre and to collect our tickets from the box office. At the box office we met some other UK Rush fans. After a brief chat about what shows we were all going to see we decided that the consumption of some alcohol might be a good idea. There must be a law somewhere that states that whenever British people meet abroad they must drink alcohol. The nearest place to buy a drink was in the grounds adjoining the venue. Things started to get a bit surreal at this point as there was an Italian festival taking place at the time. There was the usual Italian things going on, singing, eating and diving in the penalty box. I wondered to myself if Italian-Americans were forbidden from growing beyond 5 foot 2 inches tall, it was like a dwarf's convention. There was the usual T-shirts with various claims about Italians being sexy, if the word sexy had been replaced with sweaty I might have believed them. At one point I thought I saw Joe Pesci but it turned out to be a small Italian woman in need of a shave. After a few honey lagers, they tasted about as good as they sounded (they were more the bees piss than the bees knees), we headed over to the amphitheatre. We both bought some merchandise, I bought some tour programmes for some of the unlucky ones who couldn't make the trip with us, as well as a copy of Ghost Rider. John bought enough T-shirts to dress the whole of the north east of England, he even bought some more the next night. We eventually got to our seats and the final wait began.

At this point I started to reminisce about past Rush concerts, especially my first. February 18th 1978 at the Glasgow Apollo. It was my first ever concert and I was about as excited as you can get without pissing your pants. I was just about as excited this time, especially when they uncovered the drum kit and the 3 tumble dryers that were there instead of Geddy's bass cabinets. To take my mind off things for a while I read some of Ghost Rider, an excellent read if slightly over long. It's incredibly sad at times but does have a happy ever after ending. I personally found it thought provoking as well as very touching. Having read the book it only makes it more remarkable that Neil ever made another album never mind another tour.

After the reminiscing and the wiping of nostalgic, tear filled eyes came the moment both John and myself had been waiting 10 years for. The 3 stooges intro started and the crowd rose to their feet. Unfortunately, we had our own 3 stooges sitting in front of us. I think they had misheard one of Neil's lyrics. I'm sure I heard them sing "why are we here, for the beer" during Roll the Bones but I could be wrong. Why couldn't they go and piss on someone else's rug (if you've seen The Big Lebowski you'll know what I mean). Alex was first on stage, acting the fool as usual and slightly heavier looking than on the T4E tour. Slightly heavier is an understatement, he is beginning to look like **THE MAN WHO ATE TORONTO**. Neil appeared next, as focused as ever, and then came the coolest man in the world. Geddy strolled onto the stage as if the past 5 years had never happened. The oddest thing about the whole situation was the fact that it was in broad daylight and that they looked like they could have been playing at the bottom of my garden. What the hell I thought to myself, this is as good as it gets. The intro music stops and....."today's Tom Sawyer mean mean pride, today's Tom Sawyer mean mean stride". At last the wait was over and the last ten years disappeared into, well the last ten years.

You will undoubtedly have read/heard many reviews of the numerous tour dates so I'll not repeat what has already been said. I will, however, mention a few highlights of the show. **Tom Sawyer** was the perfect opener, a big in your face, here's our best known song but we'll play it first anyway, so fuck you type of opener. **New World Man** might not be everyone's cup of tea but I was glad to hear it once again, especially since Alex played it with a Fender Telecaster. **Roll The Bones** sounded really fresh, as did **Dreamline** (cool lasers) and **The Big Money**. **Earthshine** sounded like the big piece of loud rock and roll that it is. **The Pass** is one of the best Rush songs ever and sounded even better live, as it always has. **Between Sun & Moon** has always been a favourite of mine and it didn't let me down, verging on the chaotic but played with enough restraint to make it gel. **Vital Signs**, God I don't think I could have picked a better set list, was as good as the best song on Moving Pictures gets. The first set finished with a flawless version of **Natural Science**, if life gets much better than this then pitch your tent and stay for the duration.

An intermission at a Rush show was a new experience for John and myself although obviously not for the other beer guzzling Americans in the audience, they headed for the beer stalls like there was no tomorrow. When I go to see Rush I want to be sober and remember the occasion, unfortunately others felt that paying \$75 was enough reason to get as pissed as possible. I don't want to come across as being dour and Presbyterian because in reality I'm a raging alcoholic but there are certain things in life that are due respect, and Rush live is one of them. Here ends the sermon on the mount. The second set was even better than the first, I didn't think it possible but it was. The opening video sequence consisted of a very long sunrise before a dragon appears. It sniffs at a cigar it has in its hand/claw/talons before peering at the audience. It then lets rip with a breath of fire that ignites the back of the stage. How the hell Neil never got his arsed singed is anyone's guess. He was too busy pounding out the double bass drum intro to **One Little Victory** too notice. This song is one of the most important in the history of Rush. If it said we're back on record then it said we're definitely back live. The groove it has in the studio is amplified live, celebrate the moment, how could we do anything else. **Driven** followed with Geddy's extended bass thingy, this man is as close to a hero as I have. **Ghost Rider** sounds better live than it does on record, is that possible, it surely is. I had felt for some time that Neil should give up on the drum solo spot that he had been torturing us, sorry entertaining us, with for the past few tours. I bow before the professor and ask for his forgiveness. This was probably the highlight of the show, especially the triggered big band sequences towards the end when he showed that not only is he the most creative rock drummer there has ever been, but also the most adept and enduring. The gong signified the end of the solo, as it usually does, and the roar was the most deafening of the night. Next up was the Val Doonican spot, Alex and Geddy reappear centre stage and balance themselves on top of two stools before playing a truly beautiful version of **Resist**. Another couple of acoustic numbers would not have gone amiss and Geddy strumming away on an acoustic guitar was a sight to behold. Another of my favourites, **La Villa Strangiato**, made a long overdue comeback. Once again, I can't remember hearing a better version than tonight's, it even included Alex rambling on about a dream he had. In this dream he ended up in hell where it was humid, but a dry kind of humid. Demented to say the least. By this point Neil had his hands covering his face in an attempt to stop laughing. The final song was **The Spirit Of Radio**. The encore was a medley of **By-Tor & The Snow Dog**, **Cygnus X-1** and **Working Man**. Geddy really hit those high notes and Alex even brought out his white Gibson which sounded and looked incredible. During the encore fireworks could be seen from the neighbouring Italian festival which only added to the occasion. Geddy said his farewells and it was all over, at least until the next night. That was supposed to be a short review but I got a bit carried away.

The next day it was back to Chicago for the next show. We managed to get slightly lost when trying to find our hotel in Tinley Park (the suburb of Chicago where the venue was situated) but were saved by a very nice family who rescued us from the sweltering heat by giving us a lift to our hotel. This was not untypical of the friendliness we came across on our visit. The vast majority of Americans were extremely friendly and hospitable, although I was mistaken as a Australian at one point as well as a German! Nein, Nein, Nein! The Chicago show was possibly better than the previous night, if that was possible, we had better seats and the 3 stooges were off pissing on someone else's rug. I have never seen the band play so well as they did on those two nights. It's miraculous that they ever got back to doing what they do best and I feel genuinely privileged to have witnessed it. The next day was set aside for some last minute shopping and it was off to the airport for the flight home. We flew home leaving our own vapour trails behind us (I apologise for the cheesiness of that last line but I just couldn't resist). At Newcastle Airport John and myself said our farewells to each other and I booked in to a nearby hotel where my wife and children were waiting for me.

For a long time I had resigned myself to the fact that I would never see Rush play live again. I feel extremely fortunate to have had this opportunity and to have had such a fine traveling companion as I had in John. When I saw Rush for the first time in 1978 I never imagined that 24 years later they would still be going strong and that I would be traveling to the US to see them. As the man says, "celebrate the moment as it turns in to one more".

Michael Kerr
North Berwick

Alex Lifeson on the making of Rush's 'Vapor Trails' Part 2

Q: Neil hasn't always been known for the personal nature of his lyrics, so were you surprised how personal this set seemed to be?

A: Well, he had to. In the past, his lyrics were more from an observer's point of view. He never dictated an opinion. But he left things open in his writing, to challenge people to think. That has always been a trademark with us, and that is how we earned our geeky kind of reputation. But this record was a lot more personal. I don't think I was surprised by it, when he submitted lyrics that were personal. He needed to purge himself of thoughts and feelings. He is a writer. Not just lyrics, he is working on his second published book, and he has been writing travel journals for 15 years now.

He needed to vent. He needed to get a lot of things off his chest. We knew it was important for him. A lot of these things weren't lyrics. They came in the form of lyrics, but he has a way of dealing with being in that position, dealing with those thoughts.

Geddy and Neil both worked closely on the lyrics. If Geddy is going to sing, he needs to feel comfortable with them. If it is too personal, it is a little difficult for him, as you can imagine. They worked closely to make sure they were lyrics that anyone could attach themselves to the emotion.

Q: Neil has been pretty consistent about his privacy. So did you discuss how you were going to deal with this topic when it came up, since he isn't handling press interviews?

A: As we finished the record, we talked about touring. That is a very difficult thing for him. He is not keen on touring, and hasn't been for 10 years. But he understands the importance of it. Put a record out -- you have to tour it. We have got great fans. There is an obligation to them to present your latest work. We share this experience with our fans. Our fans are the greatest fans that any band could imagine.

He indicated it was a big concern to him, how he was going to deal with being on the road. It is a difficult thing for him to think about what happened. He has started on a different course. He has remarried. He is deeply scarred by what he went through, but he is building his strength. He has come a long way in the last year. From when we started the record to now? A long, long way.

As friends, we are thrilled. At the end of the day, all we cared about was his happiness, his recovery.

The band didn't matter at all. Honestly, we had a great run for a long time. We had a lot of success. If this thing tore the band apart, that's the way it goes. We are friends, and we will just carry on and do the best for each other.

Q: So you were prepared to call it a day, if making the record didn't work?

A: We were committed to starting (an album). We were committed to the attempt. But there were no guarantees it would work. We all understood that from the beginning. Even when Neil told us he was ready to go back to work. He said, "I don't know if I can, but I think I am ready to try".

He hadn't played his drums in four years, except for a short, two-week period. This is a guy who is probably the greatest rock drummer in the world, if not the greatest drummer in the world. He practised every single day, because he wanted to, because it was such an important part of his life. All that joy in playing died in him. So it was a lot of work he had to go through. He really asked us if it is okay if he just step out of the whole (promo) thing. "Of course", we said, "don't even think about it." Geddy and I will do everything and try to represent it as best we can, and answer questions about him in a way he would feel good about.

Q: Was there any finished material left over from "Vapor Trails"?

A: Our intention was to write 13 songs and pick the best 10 or 11. When you add it all up, that is about an hour's worth of music, which is fine. We wrote the 13 songs, and we couldn't leave any of them behind. It is about 68 minutes. It is a lot of music, and it is a tough record to put on and listen to. This one, I think requires three or four listens before you figure out what is going on.

Q: Did Geddy's experience making his solo album, "My Favorite Headache," have an impact on the way you worked together?

A: Absolutely. He learned so much from the making of his own record. When I did (Lifeson's side-project) Victor, I did it for personal reasons. I needed a strong kick in the pants. I have a tendency to get lazy, and I needed to push myself. I learned a lot about my abilities and weaknesses. Geddy spent over a year on his record. He came out with such confidence and sense of arrangement and composition. I was really impressed.

I was very proud of the work he did. His record sounds great. I like things a little harder. That is what we bring to the table -- I bring the heavier, harder stuff, and he is the more melodic stuff. It is well recorded. The songs are good. I just think it made him feel so much better about his strengths. It made everything easier for us to work together.

I knew we would be producing the record. I knew the involvement would be pretty intense. We decided to do it ourselves, although we brought Paul Northfield in, six months into the project. From the beginning, we decided this is something we would do ourselves. I felt it was important to do some production, so I would know something about diplomacy in the studio. Get to sense ups and downs and how to keep an even keel through the whole thing. We prepared ourselves very well for the beginning of this record.

Q: Earlier in the band's career, there was very little hip cachet in being a Rush fan, and certainly a lot of critics had a field day with you. Lately, it seems to have turned a corner, whether it was Pavement mentioning Geddy in their song "Stereo" or the Beastie Boys opening their last tour with "Tom Sawyer." Is there any sense of vindication?

A: We never really troubled ourselves with that. We just did what we did and keep going and going. Journalists that we felt were unfairly critical, who jumped on the bandwagon to put us down - I don't think any of them are around. But I'm still doing what I do. We stuck to our guns. If that wasn't cool, I don't particularly think I am a cool guy. We are musicians in a band. We love what we do, and we work very hard. We take it seriously, but we are all easy-going, middle-class guys. A sense of revenge doesn't come into play. It is nice to know. It is flattering. I guess since the early '90s, this has been something that has come back to us, that we have influenced a lot of bands. That grunge period. It makes sense, we were playing all those cities. We were always a cultish kind of band. Not on the radio a lot. We played hard, but on the muso side. I can see that that was perhaps an influence. I think the greatest influence we have had on these bands is that we have proven you can do it on your own terms. I don't think they sound like Rush, any of these people. But we have shown if you stick to your guns and persevere, you can do it on your own terms.

Q: You were in the studio on Sept. 11. Did the attacks in New York and Washington have any impact on the music?

A: Everything was already written by that point. The last song that needed to be finished was "Peaceable Kingdom." It was already written and slated to be an instrumental song. Paul (co-producer Northfield) said "You guys are nuts if you make this an instrumental song. You should really come up with some good lyrics for this". Neil gave it some thought, and what happened on Sept. 11, that was really a direct result of that. I think he wrote the lyrics the following week.

(The lyrics to "Peaceable Kingdom" include these lines: "All this time we're shuffling and laying out all our cards/While a billion other dealers are slipping past our guards/All this time we're hoping and praying we all might learn/While a billion other teachers are teaching them how to burn".)

I'm glad it wasn't an instrumental. It is my favourite song on the record. It has such a weird character to it. Lyrically I think it is great. The chorus, ("a wave toward the clearing sky ..."), it is so powerful and visual. It is such a great contrast from the heaviness of the rest of the song.

Q: Rush fans are organizing the second Rush convention in Toronto this year (July 12-14, three days prior to the band's July 17 performance at Toronto's Molson Amphitheatre). How do you feel about that kind of stuff?

A: We are really thankful for it. It is really wonderful that happens, that people have enough interest in the band to undertake that. I hope it is spirited and everybody has a good time. And I hope no one is offended that we are not involved in it.

To me, it is strictly a fan thing. I know they would love to have the band involved in some way. We just feel embarrassed. It is just hard to deal with, the adulation and all that.

Last year, when they had it, they asked if we could donate some things for an auction. Ged and I were working very hard during that period. We were figuring out, should we go down? When should we do it?

Before you know it, we got caught up in work, and we felt very guilty about it afterwards. This year, it is around the time we are on the road, unfortunately. But maybe we can do something for it, somehow.

Q: Rush used to be pretty active in making videos, but that end of the business has changed. Do you plan to do any videos for the album?

A: There is no plan to do a video right now. I was never crazy about them. I don't think anybody wants to see a bunch of 43-year-old guys jumping around pretending to play a song.

There are ways of doing it. Tool is a great example of doing it, as dark as they are. I suppose we could do some kind of art video to music, but we don't see the point. Our name has a certain connotation. It goes to MTV and is immediately sent back. We have had good support from Much over the years.

We have a lot of footage from the last tour, and we will probably have some from this tour. Maybe we will do a nice package, a DVD package, of a show. No plans, because we are so busy in the production of the tour, but it is all there. We know it is all there, and we will get around to it.

Q: What about a live album from this tour?

A: Don't even talk about that anymore. The last one (1998's "Different Stages") was the best one. It has the best packaging of the stuff from Hammersmith Odeon. We included that so you get 20 years. You can see the rawness of those days and the maturity and confidence of the more recent days. We are proud of it, but it is an enormous headache to do a live record.

Q: Weeks before it was due for release, "Vapor Trails" somehow leaked out on the Internet. How does that make you feel?

A: We spent 14 months working so hard on this record. We spent a lot of money making this record. We spent a lot of money on the packaging, making it the best record we could. A lot of time and energy went into it.

To have it on the Internet and download a crappy file is heartbreaking for us. Unfortunately, that is the way it is now. True Rush fans will go get the record, because they want to have that connection, and the lyrics.

We don't hire someone to do these things. We do it. We work with great people, but our involvement is total, in every aspect of everything we do. It is an extension of us. It is really important that that is connected in your hands.

It is a sad state of affairs that it is like that. Some people ... I see the advantages of that, a great forum for people who want to share music with people. But to say music is free is not true. Music costs millions of dollars, to make this record or a Korn record. There is a lot of money involved. If you say record companies are greedy or uncaring, you keep doing stuff like this, downloading files and taking money out of the system, it is affecting bands that don't get a chance anymore, to sign a deal.

It is affecting the band that gets a one-record deal, instead of a five-record deal. So they can learn their trade on the first two albums and hopefully that third or fourth album is the one. That doesn't happen anymore.

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