

BOOMCHICKAWAHWAH!

A SLIM HASTILY
THROWN TOGETHER FANZINE
PRODUCED FOR CORFLU XXX

From Graham Charnock

Email: graham@cartiledgeworld.co.uk

Spring is here and people are producing fanzines. Nic Farey has just produced one whilst in the throes of foreclosure. Arnie produces one almost every week sometimes without ever realizing it, and certainly without realizing it will never be read by half the people he sends it to, except for Robert Lichtman who is locked into an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder which means he must reply to every issue (Don't worry, Robert, the FAAn award is a shoo-in). Even my wife has just produced one. Not Roy Kettle though. I want you to remember that.

Someone, well Gary Mattingly actually, recently told me that the current brand of FAAn awards was first introduced at something called Autoclave. Not even a Corflu. Who would have thought it. Back in the day he was against them, thinking that an award for excellence in fanzines and fan activity was not only unnecessary but pernicious, in that it would encourage people only to produce fanzines with an eye to reward and acclaim. It's a good point or a good fear, and only an historical dissection will prove how founded the fear was. I don't feel either qualified or inclined to do that. We could look at every fanzine (to take one category) which has won a FAAn award and try to decide whether it held its own in the broad sweep of fanzine production or was just driven by a desire to win on the part of the editor, but what would be the point of that, except to embitter certain people subject to finger-pointing. But I would single out Victor Gonzalez, and Milt Stevens whose last offering was frankly derisory. (I'm joking of course, Milt sat down with me at Sunnyvale and went through every paragraph of the fanzine as I held it before me and pretended to read it. It was a good fanzine. Only joking of course).

I can say categorically I have never produced any fanzine with the view to winning any award or reward, and I'm sure Milt never has too, but have continued to do so regardless, and you may say that the fact that none of them ever has, has reaffirmed my belief in this policy (as well as the idiocy of my readers). Faced with the likes of Banana Wings, Trap Door, Chunga and other award winning fanzines many would simply be tempted to go away and forget all about it. I know I have several times. Roy Kettle went away without even thinking about it, but that's another issue. And yet I constantly seem to come back ready to have my peers spit down my throat, just so long as I have something out there worth even spitting at.

There's another category award in the FAAns I am less than sanguine about, which is Best Fan Writer, and here is where you might expect a full bile projection.

The closest I came was a nomination at Austin. But just when I was marshalling my forces and resources and getting ready for another attempt at the crown, what should happen but that Roy Kettle, after some years in the wilderness, retired from public service and desired to fire up his fannish juices and start writing again, when he was at least safe from the scorn of his political task-masters.

I was almost even responsible for a bit of this in encouraging him, drunkenly one night in a pub, but it was of course the kiss of doom as far as any of my own aspirations were concerned. There had I been slugging out a series of articles for Chunga, producing five issues of Bye Bye Johnny, and even squeezing myself into the final SF Five Yearly (which I consider my ultimate achievement in fan-writing), when Roy decided to hit the newsstands with a plethora of good, incisive, and depressingly witty articles, almost as if he had been storing them up for decades just to make me seem foolish.

It hurts me to say this but Roy is the funniest, most witty, writer and raconteur in the known universe. That hurts me almost as much as the pain in my chest.

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ROY KETTLE OBE, BEING FUNNY WITH DOG

HOW NOT TO MEND A BROKEN GUITAR AND HOW NOT TO FAST

I started complaining to Pat (my wife if you don't know) about pains in the chest some time ago. I wasn't terribly worried because I knew they had a specific cause. It was the pain of being rejected in favour of better fan-writers like Roy Kettle. No, it was because I'd bought a guitar on ebay, as I am sometimes wont to do.

I collect guitars. I have twelve or so of them; it's kind of hard to keep track of how many sometimes.

Here's a link to my collection:

<http://www.cartiledgeworld.co.uk/guitars.html>

This guitar was called 'The Michigan', made in the US, probably immediately post war, but I know nothing else about the make or the model. Not too much information on the web. It has a fairly crudely arched top, and is lacking a floating scratch-plate, which hints at its credential as a *jazz* type guitar, but otherwise everything looks original.



I bought it as a restoration project since it was advertised on ebay as having a serious fracture of the neck at the heel joint.

As well as the neck heel the fingerboard had split where it joined the body. I put a bolt through the heel and a fillet of wood to fill the fracture and it seems to be holding up okay. Don't worry if you can't keep up with these technical terms; not very many people can. The action is pretty high but it has a nice woody tone so I will probably use it for slide guitar with a dropped open tuning so as not to put too much pressure on the neck.

I started working on it and at one stage found myself bracing the body of the guitar against my chest whilst I tried to bend the neck to open the fracture. *Spang!* went something in my rib-cage, as if Sonny Liston had caught me with a body punch. After that things got really painful when coughing and breathing so I had to take serious downloads of ibuprofen to cope with it. But at least I was fairly sure of what was wrong and that it was not life-threatening.

Anyway Pat insisted I went to the doctor about the chest pain fearing it might be the slowest ever developing case of heart attack recorded.

Doctors are not my favourite people, and I am particularly antagonistic towards this one, since she refused to sign off a travel insurance claim (which centered around our proposed trip to Corflu Zed) on the grounds that she believed I had an underlying chronic condition: ie alcoholism. This was true but I couldn't see how it would jeopardize an insurance claim, when it was actually pneumonia (a non chronic condition) that had stopped me flying. I wonder how many alcoholics fly every year without any problems.

Anyway the doctor heard my story and said it could take five or six weeks to heal.

Meanwhile in the surgery the question of diabetes came up. There has been an on-going struggle on the part of my doctor to diagnose whether I have diabetes or chronic liver failure or both, or neither.

First of all when she looked at my notes she seemed surprised that *someone* had put a diagnosis of diabetes on my file, Wonder who did that then, considering she is supposedly a doctor and I am supposedly a patient?

Then she seemed surprised that although years ago I had seen both a diabetes nurse and a dietician, and her partner, for a second opinion, I hadn't been put on any medication for it. What am I supposed to do, she's supposed to be the doctor, although dip-shit also starts with a 'd' and seems more apposite to my mind.

The good news though was that apparently I had lost half an inch in height and 2 kilos in weight since 2009. God knows how many litres of semen have also passed under the bridge since then.

And so to blood tests one fine bitter winter morning.

Our clinic has a 'take a ticket, wait for your number' system. My ticket was number 47. The next patient number on display was No. 50. I'd been to this clinic before and thus assumed there were 96 people ahead of me.

On previous occasions I'd noticed how the number called clicked over at 99 to a new run of tickets. I waited for about fifteen minutes before there was any change in the number called, to 51. I checked the ticket machine and it was now issuing tickets in the upper fifties to people just arriving, who would obviously get in before me if my waiting logic was not correct.

I questioned it with two women behind the reception desk. One just said she didn't work there and didn't understand me anyway. The other asked why I hadn't just gone in when my number had come up. I tried to explain to her that when my number had come up on the display, obviously sometime earlier, I hadn't even been there and had probably just been leaving home, and ticket 47 obviously hadn't yet been taken when the number had come up, because it had been there waiting for me to take it, when next patient 50 was already showing on their display.

Just go in, she said, waving me away dismissively, as if I was an idiot. Boy, was I grumpy.

The attitude of the *staff* was what really irked me, like they'd never had this problem before (difficult to believe), or they really didn't care either way since I just appeared to be someone difficult with a problem who couldn't express it in terms they'd understand, but it was their machines causing the problem. There's a big sign up outlining their and NHS's zero-tolerance policy towards insulting behaviour, but when you are just trying to find out information and they turn on the *You crazy man. We not talk to you* mode it's a bit sickening (literally) and could be provocative if I wasn't such a nice charming individual. I'm sorry, I expect staff behind desks at NHS funded medical centres to be expected to cope with this very basic kind of situation. Maybe I should write a letter of complaint. But you probably all know I'm a mild mannered soul not given to complaining.

When I finally did get in to see the technician he took my ticket and asked me why I hadn't come in earlier when my number had been called.

Any scathingly witty riposte was beyond me at that point so I stayed silent. He asked me if I had been fasting, and I replied, yes, for twenty-four hours (I had been ill and not felt like eating). "That's too long!" he admonished me. How can you fast for too long? Well apparently you can because it screws up your blood in terms of what they want to test it for. Who would have thought?

Of course my blood test came back with the result : "Failed, must try harder ," and at the time of writing I'm trying to steel myself up for another one, without much enthusiasm, I must say.

Phil Palmer is an old friend of mine. He produced a good fanzine many many years ago called CHOCOLATES OF LUST, and even Ted White has been heard to remark that he is/was a fine looking boy. He lives in New Zealand now, but as I speak is in the UK to attend Eastercon and I am trying to fix up some meeting between us and his other friends here. Phil is gay and had a Maori partner in New Zealand who was cruelly murdered. I think Phil got a lot of support from the local Maori community and extended family there but it was still a nasty thing to happen. I gather Phil is settled now with another partner. His re-emergence here reminded me of an occasion when I was severely depressed with writer's block and Phil gave me the best advice ever, which was simply: "just stop thinking and write something, anything."

Here's what I wrote as the result of that. No great shakes as Art but it did what was required. Thanks Phil.

SHIRT STORY

I spent the evening with my friend Phil Palmer. That's what I'll tell the police if they come looking for me, or him for that matter. I won't tell them that he's down the bottom of a very deep well, because they just wouldn't understand. They'd think it was a real well and that I'd murdered him, when in fact it's just a gravity well, and he could pop out safely anywhere anytime. That's if Einstein was correct about gravity bending time and bringing us back to where we started from. Or, I might just have murdered him if the gravity well connected to a dark hole, and I was in a particularly vindictive frame of mind. If that was the case I'd prefer to think of it as recycling in the eternal Buddhist sense, but I think the police would take a different point of view.

Let's rewind a little.

It was Saturday night in Haringey. Phil and I had met up at the Suffolk Punch, on its regular Wednesday gay disco

evening. We'd put away a few beers, and after tiring of watching Tara Brabazon's drag act, had then gone back to Phil's place. Phil is gay which is why I like to hang out with him. I'm not gay, (and not even especially happy) which means there's no sexual imperative operating on our relationship. It makes things between us genuinely comfortable. We can discuss anything and everything knowing that neither of us wants to end up in bed with each other, and even if we do, which we sometimes do, they'll be no hanky panky, just extreme drunken snoring.

So I went over to his place to talk about my problems and to let him talk about his.

That was the way our relationship worked.

He offered to suck me off but I assured him it was purely a writing thing. A writing - block thing. Every time I tried to address myself to writing anything creative my fingers froze above the keyboard, before coming down on it with such gibberish as *ghjsl towyflh hwge*.

You just need to relax, he said. Think about something inconsequential, and write a story about it.

The movie was over and so was the pizza (hot meat feast with extra anchovies, since you ask).

Phil relaxed on the sofa, picked open the first few buttons of his shirt and tweaked his nipples. I wasn't so drunk as not to realize he was making some kind of existential point, and while I respected him for it, I couldn't quite make it out where it was going, except perhaps down a dark alley with a dark pool at the end of it into which I might eventually sink in a comatose and insensate state.

I can't work that way, I said. I need a basic idea at least.

He pulled off his shirt and threw it me. I remember how the light glinted off his abs and deltoids.

There's an idea if you're ready for it, sweetheart, he said.

The fact that I was not gay had never prevented him from using slightly risqué lingo.

I held the shirt to my face and revelled in the odour of decaying persimmons. (In fact it was Calvin Klein's 'Naked Tangerine', but what was I to know?).

Phil's nipples, revealed by his shirtlessness, were very pert, but I put them, or at least the sight of them, or at least the memory of the sight of them, behind me, more or less where my anus was.

It was then that the gravity hole opened up beneath us, or at least him. The result of the gravity hole opening up under Phil was something like him being sucked into a very small toilet, and disappearing very quickly. *Whhhhaaay*, was all he had time to say, which considering he was trained as a computer technician and systems analyst's was pretty sad. (I managed to avoid it by jumping onto the rim of the virtual toilet and pulling up my pants, very quickly).

Afterwards we, and the Department for Paranormal Activities, sought an answer, as any rational man or government agency would. Apparently it turned out the Haringey authorities, in an attempt to hasten road works in the area, had employed the services of Eugene Twilley, from the local Temporal Displacement Office, which on the whole dealt with the SLPP, or Small Localized Phenomenon Problem, or at least with denying that it even existed.

Eugene had messed with a prototype small temporal hole-curdling device invented by Roland Schmitzer in 1921, and later developed by Roger Smith in 1961. This was specifically designed to widen road widths (hey, that's the way things happen), and Twilley after a brief encounter with Phil for casual recreational sex had planted a prototype in Phil's apartment, in an act of sheer criminal vindictiveness. It was all an accident waiting to happen. That's what I told the police and thank god they believed me.

So now all I have to remember of Phil is his shirt, which isn't even my size.

Thanks Phil. I know you've gone but I know you'll be back one day, which is why I've had your shirt dry cleaned.

TALES OF OLD DAN STEFFAN

Where was Dan Steffan when I needed him? Where was he when I was producing fanzines and lusting for good artwork. Well, the truth was he was out there but despite both of us having fairly long careers in fandom we never really intersected until Pat & I and family first went on our first Seattle to SF road trip a few years ago and stopped off in Portland. Dan was on an e-list I subscribe to, but had never been very prolific on it, but he seemed a friendly soul so we arranged to meet up. It is one of the wonders of my little corner of fandom that people can do this with relative strangers and feel a bond that removes any initial sense of clumsy formality. We arrived in Portland on Labour Day, and Dan & Lynn came over to our hotel at the drop of a proverbial hat. Not much was open but we found a restaurant next door and had a good Thai meal. Afterwards we retired to a hotel bar and drank into the night (or it seemed like it) discussing music and other connections. It was a good night. Afterwards I asked my sons what they had thought of this manic apparition and his partner and their opinion was that "they're cool". Never was said a truer word, or two words.

PAUL WILLIAMS (MAY 19, 1948 - MARCH 27, 2013)

TWO SHORT APPRECIATIONS

Paul Williams by Lenny Bailes

Paul published his first fanzine, "Within," when he was fourteen years old. Paul was, for some of us, that very best possible "inner fourteen year-old" s-f fan given external reality. I don't want to bore you with still more praise that won't be meaningful to you, except that he was a boy who exemplified, for me, Van Morrison's couplet "And your dreams come true, if you want them to." (V.M., "Everyone.") Paul stood for all of us who wished to be the child coming to San Francisco wearing a flower in our hair. Paul applied the fan-honored discipline of mimeo ink and stencils, picking up the craft of Ted White in his East Coast associations and giving that craft new meaning in the hippie revolution, Out West. Consider that in his early fantasies about Paul Mu'ad Dib of Dune, and the relationship of those fantasies to rock n roll, Williams was not so unlike the young men who read "The Time of the Hawklords" and were carried away with it to become the band, "Hawkwind."

Maybe not. Maybe we readers of "Outlaw Blues" were wankers who lacked the ability to sort the differences between our hippie fantasies of The Byrds and The Beatles, and the real world, outside. I'm aware that you know infinitely more about Hawkwind than I do; and there I've gone and made a reference to that old fucker, TEW, who I should possibly refrain from mentioning if I'm trying to evoke sympathy with your own inner fourteen-year old boy -- but whose history is inextricable with the 14-year-old "neofan prodigy" who became Paul Williams, an early young dude carrying the news in San Francisco, also sailing the boat with John Lennon, asking everyone to "Give Peace a Chance." I've been speaking of the young Paul Williams who was, for me, the stuff of fannish legend. (I didn't meet him, I think, until 1967.) He was another (the youngest!) of those U.S. East Coast fanzine publishers who shaped my ideas through his participation in

s-f fandom. And then he went beyond that. Like Greg Shaw, his compatriot, he reflected in his rock journalism the songs we shared as a common affirmation of the reality of alternative lifestyles in the years of Humphrey-Johnson, going to college, Vietnam, and the U.S. Draft.

The older Paul Williams, the literary scholar of Philip K. Dick and Ted Sturgeon (and the constant biographer-celebrator of Bob Dylan) was someone I got to know a bit in the 1990s. Yes, it's true, we all (I) romanticized PK Dick. We overlooked his blindness, his immaturity, and his having gone 'round the bend. Because there was something in PKD's drug-tinged fantasies that struck common chords in us. We danced around the pathology and the cruelty in Dick's life and work. A similar "distortion field" might be said to apply toward Paul Williams' obsession with Dylan and the way it reflected the obsessions of other hard-core Dylan fans. I considered myself to be a huge Dylan fan, but I personally thought Paul had gone a little bit round the bend with his dedication and obsession in tracking the man.

If the same hard core crew (I'm connected to it) were to examine our attitudes and reactions to the work of Theodore Sturgeon, we might find some similar patterns. "More than human, can we be."

If I might be allowed to switch between wearing my J. Garcia custom aviator frames to a darker-rimmed pair of glasses, here we are (for values of "we" belonging to 21st Century science fiction fandom) in 2001 at Potlatch 10, a California literary s-f convention -- with Paul Williams attending as special guest who had been charged with serving as the editor of the multi-volume Collected Works of Sturgeon. I did think he had been appointed literary executor of Ted Sturgeons' estate, but in fact he was **only** literary executor for P.K. Dick's estate.

Nevertheless, we all put on our darker-rimmed "mature" reading glasses for that convention and spent the weekend discussing common myths and

harder truths" about Sturgeon's work. FWIW, I compiled notes on the discussions that are still up on the Potlatch website:

<http://potlatch-sf.org/potlatch10/pot10pro.htm>

Paul speaks for himself there, if anyone is still interested in reading, as a literary scholar who is also our fellow Theodore Sturgeon fan.

The wild-eyed fourteen year old boy is still in there, at that point, but he's hiding a bit in the twinkle-eyed, smiling older sage.

"More than human can we be!"

Can we?

Paul Williams by Dan Steffan



I first met Paul Williams in 1973. I was visiting New York City for the holidays and late one afternoon John D. Berry and I walked through Manhattan's shiny winter streets to Paul's office on West Broadway in the Village. (Until we found our way there, John didn't even know there *was* a West Broadway in the Village.) Paul was trying to start a new magazine called *Rallying Point*, which he hoped would become his next successful publishing venture. John and I both pitched him some ideas for the new magazine. I offered him a comic strip that centered around a very dumb idea about the consequences of trying to live on a spaceship that had no toilets. As I recall, it was intended as a satire of the

then ongoing Watergate affair. (What can I say, I was 20 years old...) Unfortunately, it was all for naught and the magazine never published another issue and the world was spared my adolescent jokes about plumbers in space.

After that I got into the habit of visiting Paul at his apartment whenever I was in the city, often in the company of the late Lou Stathis. Paul was living with his first wife, Sachiko -- who had been a Japanese pop star when he met her -- and their two sons, Kenta and Taiyo, who were still very small and very cute -- as only little Asian-American children can be. I remember that we all sat on the floor and talked while the kids played nearby. It was very bohemian and yet still quite cosmopolitan.

The last time we visited him there, he was getting ready to move to the West Coast. He had piled boxes of books that he was getting rid of in one of the flat's half empty rooms and encouraged us to pick through them and take what we wanted -- I still have a book of early Patti Smith poetry that I got from him that day.

The next time I saw him was at Discon, the 1974 worldcon in Washington, D.C., where he joined our gang of mischievous fanboys as we explored the depths of the Sheraton Hotel's vast network of basements and sub-basements -- where we eventually ended up eight floors *below the lobby* in an abandoned bomb shelter with a dirt floor. He was also a part of that weekend's big drug adventure, which started out as a group Mescaline trip and ended as an infamous bummer when the chemicals we'd all taken turned out to be PCP. It was one of those traumatic experiences that can bond people together forever.

After that, Paul would occasionally come to Washington on a promotional book tour or to visit a lover or two that he had in the city. At some point he'd find his way out to Ted White's house in Falls Church and we'd all end up going out to dinner, often at The Paramount, a legendary gay steakhouse where middle aged Southern women waited on tables full of boys like they were family. Paul had the gift of gab and could talk to anybody about almost anything, but he was also a great listener, which served him well as a writer. His books, some of which were fictionalized

memoirs, were always full of the kind of details about life that could come only from being a keen observer of the world and the people around him.

Once, when I was down on my luck, he gave me some cash to help me out of a bind -- even though he wasn't exactly flush himself -- but insisted that I pay him back by sending him a piece of original art, instead of money. It was an act of unexpected generosity at a time when I thought myself to be at the end of my rope and I've never forgotten it. It was a lesson which still inspires me to this day. When I sent him the picture I'd done for him he wrote back and told me that the West Coast needed as much Steffan artwork as it could get and he was glad to be the first on his block. I took that as a great encouragement at a time when I was getting very little support from the outside world.

At some point in the '80s, after Lynn and I had gotten together, Paul became one of our regular house guests whenever he was on the East Coast doing literary business and visiting friends. We shared an enthusiasm for PKD and Brian Wilson (among others), which eventually led to him providing me with one of Dick's unpublished novel proposals for publication in my magazine, *SF Eye*. Another time, during one of his visits, Paul told me an amazing story about how he once found himself lying on a recording studio floor singing stoned harmonies with Brian Wilson during a Beach Boys recording session -- his article in *Outlaw Blues* is still important reading on the subject. A few weeks later a tape cassette arrived in the mail from him, it was a dub of a tape of some of the original SMiLE sessions that Brian Wilson had given him. I've still got that, too.

At the 1995 Corflu in Vegas, my wife Lynn spent the weekend sneaking up behind him to take pictures of the back of his head. When he finally asked her what in the world she was doing, she told him that he had the most famous *back of the head* of anybody she'd ever known and that she was determined to

memorialize it for herself. This was, of course, a reference to Paul's appearance in the film of John and Yoko's 1969 Bed-In for Peace in Montreal, where Paul -- seen from behind and only from behind -- literally sat at the Lennon's feet, his long hair and thin body swaying back and forth to the jangling rhythms of "Give Peace A Chance." Needless to say, he was amused.

It was later that same year that Paul had the horrible bike accident that would later lead him into a life of dementia and physical disability. (I highly recommend his article about it all, "Ask Me About My Head Injury," published in *Trap Door 16*.) Before his decline, he'd continued to stay with us on his trips back East and I was always amazed by the apparent totality of his recovery. His quick wit and charming personality appeared to be unchanged. If anything, he seemed to be better than ever. But I'd seen behavior like that before and it worried me.

In retrospect, he acted a lot like Lou Stathis had acted in 1997, after he had his first surgery to remove a giant tumour that had parasitically attached itself to his brain, like a malevolent pancake. He seemed almost hyper articulate afterwards. Better than ever. Paul's brain, like Lou's, was running at high speed in an effort to fool his own body into believing everything was okay. Better than okay, even. People in his position seem like they've been tuned up, if you will. Extra competent and super focused. It is an amazing thing to witness.

But, as I learned from Lou's case, this was just a game that their traumatically damaged brains were playing to overcompensate for their frailties. But eventually they run out of steam and then the decline begins. In Lou's case it lasted only a few months. Paul was luckier and took about 10 years before the damage finally beat him down. But when it did, it beat him down real good. Mercifully, Lou was gone in 10 months, Paul and those who loved him would have to suffer for years.

After that it was only through the patience of his loving wife and government assisted care (*Barely!*) that he survived for as long as he did. He was institutionalized in 2008, and his once considerable vitality and wit abandoned him as the years of “care” took their toll, leaving him a Gollum-like shadow of his former self.

Once he became seriously ill I was too much of a coward to try to keep in contact with him. It was too sad to consider so vital a friend slipping into dementia. The awful burden it had to be for his wife Cindy and his son Alexander broke my heart and I felt it was better to maintain my distance, especially since I could contribute nothing to the funding of his care. I felt so impotent and useless to do anything, so I did nothing. It is a regret that burns when I think about it now. He deserved better and I owed him better.

Like many others I followed Paul's decline on Cindy's BELOVED STRANGER blog, where she detailed Paul's illness with patience and a spirit that seemed far too big for just one woman. The pictures she posted there were heart breaking. The commentary was unflinchingly honest and realistic, while still wistfully trying to continue to find her lover's gentle soul hidden deep within his tortured body. Cindy is one strong woman, let me tell you -- and a pretty talented one, to boot. I suspect that her music will always have a little of Paul in it and that she, in return, will continue to share the lessons she learned at his side. The talents he saw in her have become his legacy and every time she picks up a guitar and leans into a microphone he will be there, just behind her, singing stoned harmonies that only she can hear.

I will genuinely miss his energy, his charisma, and his goofily handsome face. He could talk about anything and nothing and do it better than anybody I've ever known. He had the kind of focus that could push him through 4 books about Bob Dylan and still have the time to write an article for a fanzine when the mood struck him. He was a guy who dove into life with both feet and I consider myself fortunate to be able to say that he was my friend.

Goodbye, Paul.

-- Dan Steffan

An environmental message for musicians from Her Majesty's Government

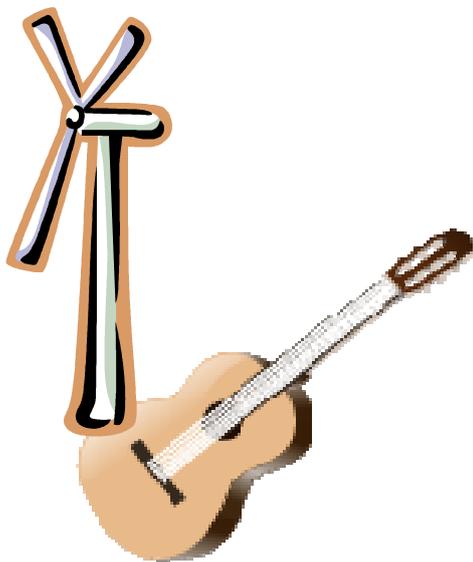
In an innovative use of joined-up Government, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's **Music And Dance unit** (MAD) and the Department of the Environment and Rural Affairs' **British Office for New Knowledge in Ecological Recovery Systems** (BONKERS) were asked by the Prime Minister to green-up some aspects of our cultural heritage which are beneficial but not essential during the current economic tsunami and global warming catastrophe. Our joint proposals aimed at ensuring that new, traditional and classical music can meet the Government's performance targets for combating climate change have now been approved by the Cabinet and we are pleased to present the first of them here.

Our starting point was to rid music of actual and symbolic negativity on a broad range of environmental issues and, where possible, to stimulate positive action and good role models.

Changing the Blues to the Greens was an obvious first step as was stopping the use of the music of Giuseppe Verdi in all Government television advertising. Banning performers and composers from using a range of names which might encourage careless thinking about our increasingly scarce resources and unhealthy and uneconomic lifestyles was another: Leadbelly would become Recycled PVC Belly, for example, and others would be changed to Polyunsaturated Fats Waller, Nat “King” Solarpower, Sustainably Managed Woody Herman, Joe Well-Insulated from Heat Loss, Chuck Nothing Away Berry, Bio Diddley, Swinging Green Jeans, Eco-Mouse,

Vegan Substitute Cream, the Electric Low Energy Light Orchestra, Hot Fairtrade Chocolate, The Artificial-Chemical Free Brothers, Slim Boy Slim, Green Day *and* Night, Slightly Damp Slightly Damp Slightly Damp, Garbage Carefully Recycled and so on.

We also looked at ways of powering instruments. Electric guitars are no longer sustainable unless powered from a renewable source. Our researchers have developed two exciting new *eco-axes*, as we think they will be called, so you don't have to "fret" about the environment while playing. The Gibson Lifestyle Wind-turbinator:



and the Fender Solar Reverberator (approved by Sting):



They take very few months to get used to and are excellent for open air festivals on sunny or windy days, which is particularly fortunate as we intend to ban licences for indoor music because rooms, arenas and marquees might need to be heated or cooled.

The materials for manufacturing guitars will in future have be taken from the following list:

- reconstituted disposable nappies from families with one child or more;
- recycled benefit cheats (i.e. people on welfare);
- crushed Irn Bru and Tennants Extra Strong Lager cans (of no further use to benefit cheats);
- pulped copies of Mike Hammer novels (because we just don't like Mike Hammer).

Strings can be made from the dried intestines of roadkill (though any swans or sturgeon which have been run over must be returned in person to Her Majesty The Queen) or woven nostril hair from anyone over 50. However, permits are available for the use of second-hand 75 Ohm underwater coaxial cable as long as the Kevlar coating has been disposed of in accordance with EU Regulations. In an emergency no band will be banned from using a rubber band or a strip torn from a bandana.

Further announcements will be made as we develop more policies aimed at people who just want to have fun instead of helping save bankers the world. In the meantime, we are desperately looking for ideas that will keep **us** in power, even if no-one else can get any.

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Based on an official government report obtained by Roy Kettle

A POINT OF VIEW BY PAT CHARNOCK

Graham Charnock has this strange idea that if you ask someone to produce a page full of words for your fanzine, they can do it at the drop of a hat. Or a beanie. Or a strange black and white knitted thing from a stall in a York market.

It's just not that easy for some of us. It's not that I'm unwilling. I'm very aware that I owe him something in return for the layout of my fanzine, and if I don't pay the debt soon, he's going to send round the men with big sticks. It was a good bit of layout, and I'm just hoping that one page of inane drivel is going to be enough.

I can't write to order, you see, I have to find the Way In. Sometimes it'll come to me in bed at night. I'll wake up with an uncomfortable feeling that something is amiss, that all is not right. And events usually prove that all is definitely not right, and if I don't pee soon there's going to be a disaster. Once that's out of the way, I'll reach for the paper and pencil I keep at the bedside, and make a note. Then I'll reach for my book, and read myself back to sleep.

The next challenge comes when I get up in the morning, and try to make sense of the note. *Bgjfun fncisunl fdot gucnk*. Hmm. Somehow I don't think that's going to fill a side of A4.

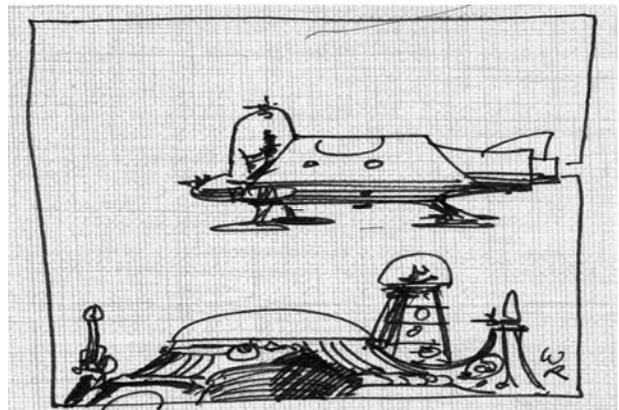
So what else can I write about? Our current bloody cat hasn't got an imaginative thought in his head. All he wants to do is eat, sleep and fight. He does a good line in crazed movements though.

Have you ever watched a cat going crazy? I don't know if there's an accepted phrase

for it, but here in the Charnox household we call it mad fucking.) He's more likely to do it when it's a bit windy and he's just been fed. He'll (most of our cats have been male) dart about the garden, sideways, frontways, anyway the wind blows him, chasing leaves, bits of fluff, grass, his ears pinned back, his fur wild, out for a good time. When we've had two cats, they'll go in for a bit of play fighting, darting sideways at each other, running away, not in the least bit threatening, but enjoying the fun of it.

OK, that was worth a paragraph, but it's not going to stretch to a page. I can't do the fannish thing and write about alcohol, because I don't do it any more. If I try sipping a glass of cider, I'll erupt in an unseemly fit of coughing such as will move Rob Hansen to laughter. I even lost interest in food at one time, because I had to restrict my diet and give up spices. Luckily, I've been able to reintroduce them in moderation, and my cooking has become a bit more adventurous. Unfortunately, Graham has now decided he doesn't like curry any more. So I've decided to make the most of babysitting nights, and I indulge in a curry while listening out for the screams of my young granddaughter.

But tonight I had a lovely meal of beef brisket, cooked for three hours in the oven with red wine, stock, herbs, carrots and onions. The roast potatoes were done to a turn, seasoned well and scattered with thyme.



(Illo by Rotsler)