

THE GETAWAY GAZETTE

Vol. 1. No. 6.

First of all apologies for the delay in getting this newsletter out, but we waited until we had final confirmation of U.K. tour dates, which we only received today. We are afraid that European and other tour dates are not yet finalised.

And now the good news, the whole good news – and nothing but the good news. That's what this edition of the Gazette is solely about, and wholly devoted to. As we promised, this is the newsletter which has ALL the facts about Chris' eagerly awaited new album, Into The Light. And, as you'll discover as soon as it's released on May 30th, the wait has certainly been worth it. No doubt you've already heard Chris' first single from it; Fire on the Water. To back up the album, we're delighted to announce that Chris will be embarking on a European tour this year, and we reproduce below the details of dates as they stood at the time of going to press:

12 September	St. Austell	Cornwall Coliseum
14 September	Birmingham	NEC
15 September	Edinburgh	Playhouse
17 September	Newcastle	City Hall
21 September	Liverpool	Empire
22 September	Manchester	Appolo
27 September	Wembley	Arena
28 September	Wembley	Arena
1 October	Belfast	Kings Hall
2 October	Belfast	Kings Hall
3 October	Belfast	Kings Hall
17 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court
18 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court
19 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court
21 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court
22 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court
23 November	Dublin	RDS Stadium Simmonds Court

And now, without further ado, we'll hand over to Chris himself for an in-depth and completely frank appraisal of Into The Light. He feels quite strongly that you, the fans, fully deserve and will appreciate the exclusive explanation of his methods and music which follows. Such is the importance and interest of Chris' comments that we have suspended all regular Gazette features until the next newsletter – in an attempt to bring you, in its entirety, our conversation with Chris. We spoke to him in the studio on April 23 – when he was actually still mixing the final touches to the album. You can't get much more up to date than that! With Chris' hectic recording schedule in mind, you'll no doubt understand and forgive us for any slight delay you may have experienced in receiving this Gazette

INTO THE LIGHT – THE FACTS

"I actually started writing for this album just after the European outdoor tour we did last year. It meant beginning in July, which was pretty tough, I don't like to closet myself indoors during the summer time. I started really getting down to the grind stone in September, and there was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing about producers and studios, and whether we should go for a September '86 release or an earlier release. Originally, I wanted to go for the later date – so I could spend some time with my family – but I was talked into the earlier one, because it made good sense. We got down to recording the middle of January this year. It's good time to record during winter – because you can't really do anything else! Having already played a lot of my new songs and half-ideas to my band in Canada last year, I brought them over to England for the album. We spent a week rehearsing – to record four tracks – and it sort of worked, and sort of didn't."

"The studio environment is, I think, so different from the live one – and nobody was really that satisfied. But out of our original session in Canada had come a lot of ideas and a lot of tracks which otherwise would never have seen the light of day. During the recording of the album we referred back to the demo tape we made on countless occasions. So the in-put of the band was enormous – but things still weren't somehow right. So I then brought in four of the key British session players – and they didn't work out either! What happened was that whole songs got dragged away from my grasp and turned into something else. I was at the mercy of a drummer or a bass player – and they really weren't into it as strongly as I. I would have accepted it five years ago, but now I've just got too experienced about that kind of thing and I refused to go along with it. I'd say the first two weeks of recording were a complete waste of time. It was an unhappy experience, and I never want to go through that again

PROBLEMS, PROBLEMS

"With The Getaway and Man On The Line, I'd used a system of starting tracks that I wanted to avoid this time – but, in the event, it turned out to be the best method. So we started completely from scratch and now we had total and absolute control over every single note that went on to tape; every drum beat, every cymbal smash – everything. We weren't at the whim of, say, a drummer – who maybe wasn't feeling too good and speeded up at the wrong place. I wanted total control over the music for this album. All the session musicians we used were, in some way or another, pushed to be more creative than they have been on other people's records – and some of them were not up to it. However, the players who have ended up on this album really added an immense amount. Generally speaking, we had to weed out the people who were into working on a project like this from those who were not. When you hear the record you'll see that it's not really like anything that's currently around; it seems more thoughtful, deep and textured. We spent five weeks working at The Manor, in Oxfordshire, and then we came to London and when we got there,

things really began to take shape. 'Into The Light' is the longest album I've ever made musically, and time-wise – and I would say I've never worked so hard in my life! I've worked minimum 12-hour days every day for 3½ months – and any day that I had off, I flew home to Dublin to be with my family. At this point, talking to you, I'm more exhausted than I think I ever have been after making a record but I also feel fantastic! I had to handle the pressure of being away from home, especially since we just got a new house and it's being done up by builders, and to only be there once every couple of weeks for two days has been a real drag. However, 'Into The Light' is a most appropriate title for this record – what with having been in the dark of the studio all this time – and I think you'll find that the record is pretty explosive!"

MEET THE PRODUCER

"He's Paul Hardiman and he's one of the breed of producers I'm interested in; someone who knows his stuff really well, is extremely skilled as an engineer but hasn't had an enormous amount of success. I went through a lot of producers – some of them very famous – who didn't really seem that interested. I mean, I was just another artist to produce. I regard myself as being the co-producer of this album, very much so, although I won't put my name as a credit. My involvement with Into the Light has been much more than with any record I've ever made. Like it or not, my taste is very much to the fore in every single note – because it's gone through me as a filter. Paul added an extra view, he was somebody to say 'You're wrong' – or to tell me why something was right. I do need somebody like that to work with, because I don't trust my judgement all the time and I don't mind being told that I'm wrong – so long as I have a chance to have a listen to figure it out for myself. The extra work it took me to produce this album is another reason why I'm so knackered!"

HOW DO YOU THINK 'INTO THE LIGHT' COMPARES WITH YOUR PREVIOUS ALBUMS? "It's hard to say. It's going to be the most successful album I've made to date – without a doubt – but I don't know yet if it's the best. My favourites currently are the Spanish Train album, At The End Of A Perfect Day and The Getaway. I think this one will slide in very easily with that top three. I wouldn't like to say it's the best – because that's really a judgement for the individual. But there are some tracks on Into The Light which I think are the best things I've ever done. So maybe I should just talk you through them"

SIDE ONE

LAST NIGHT: "A song which everybody knows from the Summer tour of '85 – but which they'll now be hearing completely differently! The way we did it on stage was very much like a Bruce Springsteen thing, with saxophones wailing off the top. I got a little bored with that, to tell the truth. It seemed to be the obvious way of doing it, and one thing we found with this album is that we've recorded something the obvious way – lived with it for a while and then changed it. I think I've re-recorded every single song at least once on this album, and one particular song got recorded three or four times. So, that's another problem – that's what we've been going through. In the old days I'd let it pass, I'd say 'Aah – doesn't matter. I'm happy with that'. But I've really forced myself this time, especially when I've been up against the wall, to come in suddenly and say 'We're going to have to re-record this song'. It's a terrible thing to have to do because you know you're putting yourself under more pressure and another five or six days of time are thrown out of the window. In any case! Last Night is exactly the same song, but it's recorded in a different way. I think it's much more atmospheric and captures the mood I was after. The picture I had in my head was of the end of the Spanish Civil War, in a little fishing village. There's a lot of excitement because the boys are coming home after the fighting. There's a wild party; the Mayor gives a speech, and so on. It's very filmic, as usual with me. I'm the observer in this song."

"I see the standard things like the village square and the local whore in her front room – waiting for the boys to come home. I walk through the village, away from all the noise, and find myself up by the church. Standing there in the churchyard is a soldier and a woman in black – who's either the wife or the mother of a boy – and these two are looking at a photograph. It's obviously of somebody who was killed in the war, and that's when the reality of it hits me, or the observer; OK, that's all very well celebrating – but you forget the other side of it. That's what certainly struck me after recent wars; how disgusting it was to see all the wild celebrations and then seeing the horribly crippled, maimed and dead people coming back as well. You know, it's the acceptable face of war – the glory afterwards. That's the point of this song. It's a gentle look at it, but it's me as the observer. I know it used to go down really well in concert and this version – though it's slightly different now – is, I think, as good, if not better."

FIRE ON THE WATER: "It's about that moment in a crowded room when two people who really shouldn't be are attracted to each other. They just can't help it. There's not much of a story involved in this one, it's more of a mood and an emotion. It involves, say, two married people or two attached people being at a party. Their hands brush against each other, and they know they shouldn't get involved – but they're drawn together irresistibly. He's kind of musing about how he'd like to take her away to an old castle in the middle of nowhere and then they would discover each other's deepest secrets away from the rest of the world. It's a ballad with a real nice kind of slinky mood."

THE BALLROOM OF ROMANCE: "It's quite a humorous track, with a driving sax part on it. It's really just one of those ballrooms ... it started off as "Dance Hall In Beirut", – but nobody liked that very much! So I changed it. It's about a place where, every Saturday night, the same people go hoping for the girl of their dreams to show up. One night, as the same old local casanova is getting drunk, this stunning girl walks in. She's alone and, of course, all the local lads rush over and attempt to charm her. They all say 'I'm ready for you!' Again, it's from an observer's point of view; but one guy stands apart from the crowd, it could be me or you, but he's the guy that's cool, that's staying away from it all. Right in the middle of all this, the girl walks over to him – she selects him – and says "Come with me, I'm going to the beach". They jump into a BMW and roar off under the stars to the beach and make love as the sea pounds in. There's no great moral to it, it's just about being in the right place at the right time. And there's a slight switch to it at the end; the young man at the door becomes me, the singer. It's just a bit of fun, actually"

THE LADY IN RED: "What I've tried to do here is encapsulate a moment. It's about something which has happened to everybody, especially in a relationship with somebody; you get used to them. This is very much my story, this is about my wife, Diane. I wrote a lot of lyrics around an experience I had, being out with her one night, when I hadn't really noticed how great she looked. You know when you're out with your girlfriend, or whatever, and suddenly all these blokes are zero-ing in on her and trying to pick her up. You're getting a little jealous! In the song, at the end of the night everybody has gone home and there's this couple dancing on the floor, cheek to cheek. He's saying 'I've never seen you looking so lovely as you did tonight'. Oh, it's ... the girls are really going to like this! It's just about how you haven't noticed how she looks for a long time, and suddenly you're standing across the room and you think 'My God, who is she?' You realise she's with you, and she looks amazing. This song is very much about what you've been together with someone all the time and you're getting maybe a little bit bored with one another's company over a period of days. You just go out and she's made an effort – she looks fantastic. It's about that moment when you're across the room and she turns and smiles at you. There's a crowd of people around her and she's the star of the night."

SAY GOODBYE TO IT ALL: "Now I've done something very cunning here This is why this record is very much for the fans who love my music. I haven't really broken out and said I'm going to forge new paths in a deliberate way – it's possible that I've done it – but it's never been calculated. The point is this; at the beginning of this song I've got the end of another one that you'll be familiar with from 1982 – Borderline. This is Borderline Part Two, this is what happened next. So those people who knew that song ... as he left her at the borderline and the war was just breaking out between the two countries, this is what followed"

"It's a story loosely based – very loosely based – on Ernest Hemmingway's 'A Farewell To Arms'. There are parallels in some respects. It starts off 'Took a boat over Lake Geneva, it was raining all night long'. It's set against a background of a European war. Now it isn't a past war and it isn't necessarily a future war – it's just a war. Switzerland is mentioned, and people will be surprised about that because it's always a neutral country – but I'm suggesting that this is where the refugees have come from. He's a refugee from the war, they've been split up and he hasn't seen her for maybe four or five years. Along with a whole bunch of other people, he manages to make it across the lake, avoiding the enemy. They're taken to a nurses station behind the lines of the country they are fleeing to, He's observed all the wounded children and all the people who have suffered during the war and he wakes up one morning and, to his amazement, he sees his love standing right there. After years of searching she's actually found him. They decide to just leave the whole thing and say goodbye to it all. They set off for the West Coast of France and walk along the beaches of Normandy. Now there's another little thing here, where I mention Omaha, Juno and Gold, the beaches D-Day in June, 1944, were landed upon. He gets a job, in a little old hotel, and she's pregnant and hoping to have a daughter. Say Goodbye To It All means that they've made the choice; they're not going to have anything to do with the war they've been caught up in – they're going to make the choice for life, and family."

SIDE TWO

THE SPIRIT OF WAR: "I wanted to write an up-lifting song, a song that made us feel that we're not all bad. I mean, I try to tape the times – and everybody is pretty bloody gloomy, and there's the threat of war all the time."

"I began to think 'Well, we're not all that terrible after all – we're a pretty amazing species, when you think about it. So this is really a celebration of the fact that mankind isn't all that bad. When I was writing the lyrics of this song, it was during that period that the space shuttle exploded. I make a reference to that with 'We may reach for the stars and fall from the sky – but in the darkest hour the spirit of man comes to life', because everybody said 'Alright we've lost these people – but we must fight back, we must go up again'. It's that spirit I'm celebrating. You see, one thing we humans have brought to this planet is the desire to have a dream, it's the one thing we have above all other species. We can dream and carry out our dreams if we really work hard. I hope people will find that very elevating".

FATAL HESITATION: "It's a whimsical song about a guy who lives in a holiday resort. I had a few places in mind; Brighton in England, Cannes in the South of France, Bray in Ireland. I get a very palm tree feeling about this. Anyway, this guy is quite the lad – a bit of a romeo in a gentle kind of way. And he says 'There's nothing quite like an out of season holiday town in the rain, when the tourists go and the cold winds blow – and my girl is on a plane home'. The time is November, it's raining and everybody has gone home. The girl that he's loved for all summer has gone, too – and he's just realised that he should have made his move. But it's too late ... 'Fatal hesitation made me miss the show'. He's not that upset about it, though, but as he's walking along the beach he thinks he sees her in the distance. He runs up to her and, of course, it's another woman. He knew it was unreasonable, because his love was a thousand miles away, but he just hoped it would be her. It's not a sad song, it's actually up-lifting. He says 'Aaaah - damn it: I'll just get on my boat and sail away'. Then, right at the end he adds 'Well, I think I miss you just a little bit, anyway

ONE WORD (STRAIGHT TO THE HEART): "This song started off as a raw rock 'n' roll number, – and I just got absolutely sick of it! So we re-recorded it four times and wound up with this one, which I like a lot. It's very cruising, a very 'driving-through-the-night' kind of song – and that's exactly what this guy is doing. He's going back to his girl. It's almost like Fatal Hesitation Part Two; he decides to drive back to her and he wants to say that one word straight to the heart; 'Yes – you are the one for me'. There are all sorts of images during the night as he drives from town to town; the headlights blazing as he sees the dawn coming up over the bay – and he's nearly there.

FOR ROSANNA: "Clearly, this is for my daughter. It's just the voice and the piano. Originally, I thought of having quite a few things on it, but everybody who heard it was so moved by it that they all said 'God, don't touch it – it's just perfect'. I tried real hard to figure out exactly the way I felt about her. The verse goes: 'This is for Rosanna, sweet girl of mine. A song for the baby who changed my life. I'll never forget when I saw you first – I thought that my heart would burst with the love that I have'. It continues: 'I cannot believe all the things that I feel when I hold you next to me. It's the love that I have'. I watch her growing and I'm amazed at the way you change all according to the plan'.

It's incredible to see your child grow up and there's this plan that just takes over, you've got nothing to do with it. It's fantastic to see it happening. Then I reflect that, when she's older, she'll go away but 'Never forget that I'm always there like a shadow by your side'. There's a little reference to Diane in 'Oh My Love, you have your mother's eyes. When I see you laugh, you have your mother's smile'. I think this is really going to choke a lot of people who have kids and, hopefully, people who don't have them will get an idea of what it's like; of the amazing strong emotions that you get when you have your child in your arms. It's the one thing I was attempting to explain. This is the first record I've made since I became a Dad, so there are a few references to kids during it. The song was a release and a therapy – but it's only a part of the way I feel. I would have liked to have made a ten-minute song just to say everything I wanted to! When I did this song, I ran back into the studio to listen to it and I was in tears at the end of it because I'd actually managed to grab the emotion I was attempting to convey. It hit me right between the eyes. It was a moving moment. I also had a strong feeling that this is the best gift I've ever given Rosanna. You know how parents and kids are – they don't get on very well when the kids are teenagers – but at least I'll know that, in a quiet moment, she might go away when she's older and, if she's had a row with her dad and her mother, she might listen to this song. It's just like a present for her – it's forever. I felt really good about that, felt really strongly that I'd done something which all parents would like to do, but which most people can't actually say. It wasn't an easy song to write, or easy to crystallize just how I felt.

THE LEADER. THE VISION. WHAT ABOUT ME? It's actually three songs, and one of my long specials! Quite simply, what happened was that I was in a hotel in France. We'd just flown in from Gatwick on a couple of small aeroplanes last summer for a tour, and were in this empty hotel having lunch. As I've probably told you before, I'm very affected by visual images – and quite often photographs and pictures – and I looked up and there was this picture done in an almost pre-Medieval, birth of man style of art. It depicted a group of warriors holding spears, and wearing furs and bear skins. They were standing in a semi-circle, with their backs towards me, and on a beach where the sea had gone out a long way. There were little pools of water, and up in the sky the sun was behind the clouds – but you could definitely see it reflecting off the water and the dark clouds. They were all looking up expectantly and waiting for something to happen. I thought it was a fantastic picture, and I stared at it for ages. Then, suddenly, I got the impression that what those warriors were doing was waiting for their leader to come back – and that's where the song began. I've taken that kind of pre-historic feel from it and filled it full of images. For example I've mentioned Stonehenge; 'A circle of stones on the head of a hill – tonight is where it will be'. This group of people wait for their leader to come ... I've deliberately tried to make Biblical references, but as you go through the song you'll notice that it's actually got nothing to do with Biblical times – and everything to do with what's happening today. I think that people who know me and know my lyrics will absolutely have a treat here, because of all the different allusions. From the Book of Revelations, comes the pale horse of death and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. And the singer is standing in this desolate place waiting for something to happen because he's received a message, 'Tonight is the night'.

"Suddenly, this incredible movie explodes in front of his eyes with the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, hundreds and thousands of men fighting hand to hand, thunder rolling in – and he sees his country, his own land, is the battlefield. He hears the sounds of victory and sees 'the rivers ran red with the blood of his enemies'. He sees fire from the sky, he sees paradise, he sees the leader – who is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last – and this incredible explosive vision is right in front of him. It's really exciting – we've thrown the kitchen sink in! At the end of the piece, the thunder rolls away and we're left with the wind and the silence. It runs into a third song, What About Me?, which goes 'I'm left in the night, trembling with fear. I have seen the future – and the future is here. Our leader will bring victory, but our land is in flames. And as the final sounds of battle disappear I had to say 'What about me, and you – and the ones that we love?' What this is really about is today's leaders; Reagan, Thatcher, Gorbachov, Gadaffi – anybody like that who claims to be the leader who will bring peace. What they are, people like that, are the ones who say 'We'll win the battle'. What this humble man in the song sees is his own land totally destroyed in the fight – and the leader comes along and says 'OK, I can look after things'. There's this absolute, searing cry at the end of the piece – when you hear it, you'll feel the emotion. It's to do with 'Why? – why? So we've got a strong leader, but why does our country have to be destroyed?' So it's very much about what's going on today but, again, I tend to enjoy putting things into old settings. People can make the parallels in their own minds. And, finally, this extraordinary emotion is silenced and we come right back down to just the wind and this lone figure standing on a hill. There, that's the album"

SWEET RELIEF

Hardly surprisingly, Chris now feels a tremendous sense of relief at having completed what can only be described as a true, heart-felt labour of love; "Into The Light": "This very minute, yes – that's what it's like. I know it's a good record and I look forward now to a few weeks where I don't really have to occupy my mind with anything. It is, for me, the most joyful period. But the thing to really emphasise is that I have made this record for people like me, for people like the fans and for people who enjoy this kind of music. I always believed in breaking new ground musically speaking – and this album is going forward and going back – but I try very hard to keep those people who come to my concerts and who enjoy my records uppermost in my mind. I think "Into The Light" is going to bust open to people all over the world who have never heard of Chris de Burgh. Making this album has most definitely been worth the effort, and even talking about it like this to you has brought the whole thing alive again for me. I hope you all enjoy it – and I look forward to seeing you at my concerts later on this year. Thanks again for your valued support, and my very best wishes".

Chris

There's no way to follow that act, so we'll simply say goodbye for now, keep up that support – and don't forget, send any letters, ideas or criticisms relating to The Gazette to Mike at The New Chris de Burgh Club, PO Box 276, London E2 7BW.