

# THE GETAWAY GAZETTE



"What has happened in the past few months has been tremendously gratifying for me, and for a lot of other people – especially people in the music industry who have been going on about me for years and saying 'My God, why doesn't he have a hit?'. But more valuable and inspiring than anything has been the support of those who have come to my concerts, bought my records, written me letters of encouragement or taken an interest in what I do. I'm as delighted for them as I am for myself about what is going on now in my career. Without them, none of this could have happened – and I say 'thank you'."

Those words perfectly sum up and put into perspective what recent events have meant to Chris. Since the release of *Into the Light* – which is rapidly developing into his most successful collection of songs ever – Chris has at last emerged as an internationally respected performer with hit records to his credit throughout the world. *The Lady In Red* has so far reached number one in Ireland, Malta, Israel, Norway and England, on top of being a major success in many other countries in Europe. Currently, there is a very strong reaction to the song in America, where it has just been released. By the time you read this, you will either have already seen Chris on his current European tour, or be about to do so. We spoke to him at the beginning of September – when he was rehearsing for the concerts – and hope that what follows will give an insight into the preparation and effort which has gone into the shows. In the next newsletter Chris will be talking about how the tour went – and remembering some of its stand-out moments in his own inimitable manner – but we'll kick off this edition of the Gazette by Chris filling in the gaps in his life since he last spoke to you in April .....

### GOING PLACES

"I moved house at the beginning of July, and there was an awful lot of work still to be done – which meant having builders doing their jobs around us. In fact, I actually moved just to hurry them up, because they'd already taken four months longer than they should have done. Moving in, I thought, was the only way of kicking them along! By that time, of course, the album had been out – and done very well – but it was the summer period where, in Europe, things go very quiet. You can pretty well guarantee that nothing will happen in July or August. So I was looking forward to spending some time at my new house in Ireland, getting the place in order and hopefully taking a short holiday before I started out touring and rehearsing. But it was not to be! *The Lady In Red* put paid to that. I knew it was going to be a single, and I also had a feeling that it stood a very good chance. It just had something about it. I actually thought it would be a better winter-time song, but what happened was that *Fire On The Water* came out, as a prelude to the album, and it got a lot of play but wasn't really much of a big hit. Then the album came out, and that did very well, so people stopped playing *Fire On The Water* completely. What happened, in Ireland to begin with, was that all the DJs began playing *The Lady In Red*.

"The problem was that it was not available as a single. I suddenly realised that unless somebody got it out on 45, then by the time it finally did come out as a single it would have been played off the air; nobody would have been interested. We were caught in the horns of a dilemma by the fact that it was getting so much air-play, and I said 'Look, we're going to have to come with a second single – and it's going to have to be *The Lady In Red*, because that's what's getting played so much. So we were kind of forced into a corner there, but it was a nice corner to be in! Within two weeks of the song coming out in Ireland it was number one – where it stayed for eight weeks. The album was at the top for about the same length of time there, too. In England, the single went into the chart at 76, just two days after being released – which is very high indeed. It didn't even have a full week of sales, just a weekend. The next week it went up to 40, the following up to 10, then up to 2 – and finally all the way to number one. It was really exciting, obviously.

### THE FAME GAME

"On the one hand I was trying to juggle this new house business – and then on the other hand there was this explosion of the media, particularly in England. Believe me, you had to be under the spotlight to appreciate the heat. Thank God I live in Ireland – because I wouldn't have been able to handle it quite so easily otherwise. In Ireland, as it was, a lot of newspapers were requesting family pictures – and it seems as though I actually turned down similar requests from just about every major newspaper in England. They were all looking for photographs of this singer with his wife and daughter – and all prepared to fly over photographers to get them. I refused every one of them. What I did instead was to get my brother-in-law, David Morley, to take some pictures of the family which I then released on a very strictly limited basis to the Press. So I had control of that, but the media attention was just ... stunning. And the garbage they write about you just for a story is something else. It would have been harder for me to cope with – and no doubt more upsetting – had I been living in England and buying those papers regularly. As it was, I was only hearing about what was being printed second-hand. But the tie-up with Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson was also quite extraordinary – and you can't buy that kind of publicity! I had no idea that they had taken *The Lady In Red* on board the royal yacht *Britannia* with them for their honeymoon, but, apparently, it's true. They said themselves that the song was one of their favourites – and I did know from the past that Prince Andrew was a fan. A sailor on HMS *Brazen* wrote me a letter once saying that he'd been in Andrew's cabin one day and seen a whole pile of C de B tapes".

### PURE AND SIMPLE

During the peak of *The Lady In Red's* popularity in England, Chris performed the song live – as opposed to miming – on one of Britain's most important music shows. Rarely do singers or bands choose to take the risk on television. Chris explains why he did: "The fact is, there are so many people in the music business who think that all they have to do is what they do in the recording studio. But we're performers; I'm a singer and I should be able to stand up at any point, day or night, and sing a song. That's exactly why I did it on *Top Of The Pops* and, in fact, it was also a case of me hammering a point home – because so many people won't and can't do it. It's like me saying 'Yes, I'm a carpenter' when you can't even whack a nail into a piece of wood. The last time I appeared on that programme was the biggest risk of all, because I decided to do it live at the piano. I wanted it to be a really magical moment, and I did several runs through in the afternoon to get it right. There was just complete silence in the studio as I sang it. I did that because by then it had become a very well known song, and doing it differently I thought even emphasised again that live music should be performed, where possible, by people who claim to be performers. It wasn't just for me that I was doing it, but for a lot of others who believe the same thing. The way it was performed would probably lend itself perfectly to the format of a concert, I'm aware of that, but I think the way we're going to be doing it on tour will be like

the record. However, if the right opportunity arose in concert in future years, then I would probably do it just with piano. The reason I enjoy singing it like that is because that's the way I write a song – on one instrument. If you can carry the song on just the one instrument, then you've got a good song''.

## MEMORIES OF MADNESS

''It has been a crazy time for me, I'll tell you. I have never worked so hard! My head was spinning for weeks and weeks. I'd get up in the morning and spend hours talking to builders, plumbers, painters and decorators – and then nip off to do a TV show in Belgium or somewhere. In one week alone I went to Copenhagen and southern Norway – and then three days later I took a jet to Cologne from Dublin and back. I went to London, Brussels and then to Amsterdam, all in that one seven-day period. It was shattering. As for my wife, Diane, and my daughter Rosanna, they were away from it all and they didn't feel the particular heat that I felt. Diane was complaining! She was saying 'I'm not getting a feel of this number one at all'. I told her 'Well, you're better off without it, believe me'. But there were endless requests for her picture, endless requests for her to do interviews – everyone wanted to meet and talk to the Lady In Red. But we refused every one of them again, because I don't believe that you should accept all publicity. You've got to retain some personal value. Rosanna couldn't work out what all the fuss was about, but she saw her Daddy on Top Of The Pops and said 'Oooh - Dada!' She can even sing a couple of verses of The Lady In Red. She's great''

## INTO THE LIGHT – THE TOUR

''We rehearsed for two weeks in Ireland, and the band spent two weeks in Toronto before that putting the show together. We then spent a further week in Cornwall, England, doing full production. Now, when people start saying to me that this is going to be the most hi-tech tour of mine so far and so on – it gives me the shakes.''

''The reason why is that I've deliberately told people – and this will come out on the tour – that this is the most personal and intimate show as well as being the most dramatic. So I think that the word which covers all of that is ... dynamic. Dynamic suggests that you can go from zero to ten in the same show. I felt that my last shows on the Man On The Line Tour were a bit slam-bang in parts, and this one is going to be powerful in parts – but I also want people to remember who I am personally. So this time it has to involve a more personal approach, more direct contact with the audience. It's just the way I want it to be. These shows are going to be very dramatic; we're using a computerised light show that no-one has ever used before, we've had our own stage built – and it all looks great. However, technology tends to be like science; it tends to distance you from the person that you're trying to talk to. I'm going to be doing everything I can to bridge that gap.

''Of course, I have missed playing in and performing live, but I'm not coming into this tour completely cold. Earlier this year I did the Self-Aid concert in Ireland, I did that solo in front of 30,000 people. Subsequent to that I also did another concert in Cork, Ireland, before the same amount of people and solo again. That one was organised by a major company which was sponsoring free concerts. They'd asked me to do one about five months ago – and they'd offered me a lot of money. For half an hour they were offering £20,000. So I said 'Of course I'll do it – but the £20,000 I'm going to use how I want'. I did the show and that money went straight to the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin where they went ahead and bought some vital equipment. They used that money to buy foetal and after-birth monitor units for babies – especially those born prematurely. Those machines can save their lives and prevent handicaps. It's bizarre, isn't it; I did half an hour on stage and suddenly the hospital has got that new equipment. I feel great about that. And as for going on tour again – I've been ready for this tour, although it has been a while. I enjoy being in front of an audience. It's a special feeling. There's also a slight difference in this tour – because it will be the first tour that I've done which will give me an opportunity to get home on a regular basis. That, again, is very much part of the fact that I always put my family first. The longest we will be apart from each other will be for about a week. When the tour ends on December 20 I'm hoping to do a spot of recuperation – although we are talking about playing in Australia, which would be a first for me. We'll have to wait and see''.

## SUDDENLY ...STARDOM!

''The funny thing about all this is that I became an 'overnight star' in England having sold a million albums there already! My tour was 95 per cent sold out there before The Lady In Red was even a hit. So I draw my conclusions from that – which is that it's not me that hasn't had the hits, it's the system where you have a hit single and it suddenly gives you profile that's lacking. That's wrong. Absolutely. There's a lot of people who, like me, do not go straight for the throat as far as singles are concerned. They much prefer making a subtler kind of album and doing successful tours – yet they don't get the profile and the recognition. It's basically, in England at least, that there's a silent majority out there – a huge one – who when they hear something, they buy it. The statistics of it all I find phenomenal; about 680,000 copies of The Lady In Red were sold in England, and the album has sold well over 400,000 there – and that is only due to the fact that, this time, I got some good air-play on the radio. So, as far as I'm concerned, there is something pretty wrong with the system. I like to think that if we went back to stuff like Lonely Sky, Don't Pay The Ferryman or High On Emotion now, then they would all be hits. Once you have made that breakthrough and opened that door it can happen that way. But to get that door open ... God, it's a tough one''.

## NEWS UP-DATE

In previous editions of the Gazette we have occasionally mentioned two subjects which many of you have written in to seek further information about: the book being compiled about Chris' life and career, and the possibility of him one day making a live album. Here's the latest on both situations: ''The book is coming on, although we did have a few problems with it – notably that the guy's word processor crashed. He thought he had lost his entire manuscript and it took him about four weeks to get it all back together again. So, it's still coming along – albeit a bit slowly. However, we're hoping to have it out certainly before Christmas. As for the live album, well, we are thinking along the lines of releasing one as my next album. I find live albums a bit on the cheap side, actually – mainly because you're not really presenting anything new. Also, unless it's a stunning live performance, then I do think it's a bit of a cheat, a bit of a rip-off for the audiences – unless they want to have it as a memory of the show. In that case, I believe that live albums should be a lot cheaper than studio-recorded albums. That's my feeling, and sometimes you get live albums going out at the same price – which is wrong. But now, with compact disc, we ought to be able to get a great live sound, so I'm certainly considering recording a live set''.

## WAX LYRICAL

For the benefit of any newcomers to the Gazette, Wax Lyrical is a regular feature in it which members of the club use to draw explanations from Chris about any of the songs he has written. So, don't hesitate to write in with any queries you might have about his recorded work – whether it be simply what inspired him to write a lyric, or what particular lines might refer to. Chris is only too happy to oblige – dragging details from the very depths of his mind in many cases – and here are some of the latest problems he has been able to solve.

**LIVING ON THE ISLAND:** "This was written after I went to Crete. It's about the pace of life; it was just like a haven there. I tried to get in all the images about the sea front, the quay-side, the hustle and bustle – and the old man staring out to sea and dreaming. I tried to encapsulate in the song all of the pleasant memories I had of what was a very special holiday I took years ago".

**SHIP TO SHORE:** "I'm asked whether the beeps at the beginning of the song actually mean anything, well ... yes - they do! But what do they mean? The beeps are spelling out Ship To Shore in Morse Code. It's a good point to have raised, I think – because I could have put on any old Morse Code – but I was convinced that someone, somewhere was going to listen to it and pick me up on it. I was right!"

**CRYING AND LAUGHING:** "This is kind of 'east meets west', and about a girl – let's say from America – who falls in love with this fella. She meets this guy and she's married, but having a rough time. She's in bed with her lover and her husband calls one night from America, asking how she is. And her lover is saying to her 'Look, we had a lovely time – but don't go home crying, just crying. Think of the good moments as well'. It's really about the last moments that this couple share together as they drive to the airport".

## PEN PALS

At the beginning of the year it was suggested that a pen pal section be started so that fellow C de B enthusiasts could write to each other. By all accounts, the idea has been a great success – and we've even heard that two correspondents are now considering marriage as a result! We can't possibly publish every address, but here are some to be going on with ...

Gabriele Guterman, Rollenhagenstr. 7, 8000 München 83 West Germany

Ralf Bürschgens, Pastor-Jakobs-Str. 19, D-5138 Heinsberg 9, West Germany.

Melle Rouzeau Sandrine, 53 Avenue Jean Hermoz, 91 320 Wissous, France.

Janet Graham, 22 Drumard Drive, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT28 2HY

Alexa Kirsch, 16 Rue Clair-Chene, L-4061 Esch/Alzette, Luxembourg.

Marianne Grandjean, Case Postale 365, CH-1630, Bulle, Switzerland.

Joanne Swannell, 96 Kenilworth Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth, Herts, England.

Debbie Reichart, 2957 LaVista Drive, Columbus, Ohio 43204, U.S.A.

Maria Davey, 8 Fisherwick Gardens, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT43 7FA

Claudia Bach, Bahnhofstr. 37, D-7254, Hemmingen, Germany.

Sharon Threadgill, 1602 Brook Hollow Drive, Bryan, Texas 77802, U.S.A.

Douglas Gibson, 485 Maple Avenue, Marietta, Ga 30064, U.S.A.

Heike Laue, Landgrafenstr. 4, 6300 Giessen, West Germany.

... and the customary words of advice to any future pen pals; please write your name and address clearly in BLOCK LETTERS. If I can't read your writing, then I won't be passing your details on! ...

## UNTIL THE NEXT TIME ...

That's about it for this edition of the Gazette, except to answer the many enquiries we've received asking what Chris likes to do to relax when he's away from the music business: "I like to take exercise; squash, golf, swimming, jogging. I also enjoy cooking and indulging in the odd glass of wine! "My idea of a good holiday is staying at home and seeing my friends in my leisure time – which I have to say is in very short supply these days! Many people ask if I have any hobbies, well the truth is that there aren't enough hours in the day for me to pursue a hobby at the moment. I go like a blur from the beginning of each day to the end. Having Rosanna around us all the time means that my attentions are devoted to her a lot. I'm just the kind of guy who seems to be really busy always. I don't sit about – I haven't got the time!" So now you know ...

Finally, many newer members of the club have written in asking for information about Chris' earlier life and the formative days of his career. These details have already been covered in previous editions of the Gazette, and clearly we do not intend to be repetitive – if only for the sake of those who know the details. However, back copies of the Gazette are available for sale – at a small price – and details of the cost can be found on the club's merchandising order form. We have recently introduced an exclusive club T-shirt into this range; it bears Chris' signature – as seen on the club key holder – written bold and large in burgundy on white. Chris DOES get to see mail to the club but, as you can imagine, he is not in a position to respond to each and every letter. That is the point of this newsletter; it affords him the facility to communicate on a personal level with his followers – en masse. Unfortunately, it would also prove impossible for us at the club to respond to every letter personally; so, again, we try to incorporate as much information into the Gazette as we can. Indeed, your letters to the club play a vital part in enabling us to do this; feedback from you is crucial if we are to give you what YOU want. With that in mind, if you have any questions about Chris or his music, and suggestions, ideas or criticisms about the newsletter, then please write to me, Mike, at The New Chris de Burgh Club, PO Box 276, London E2 7BW. When it comes to meeting up with Chris for each interview, your contributions always prove invaluable, and Chris appreciates them too. Keep them coming – the good and the bad.

A special mention must be made of *KATHRYN HAYWARD* of Upminster in Essex. It was she who drew the excellent portrait of Chris which has pride of place on the current cover. Many thanks to her for the time and effort she obviously put in – and, to everyone else, please continue to send in any art work you have of Chris or his songs for use in future editions.

In the meantime: "From myself and everyone at the club, a happy Christmas and a prosperous and peaceful New Year to you all", – Chris.

(Don't forget, the next newsletter is due in January 1987).