

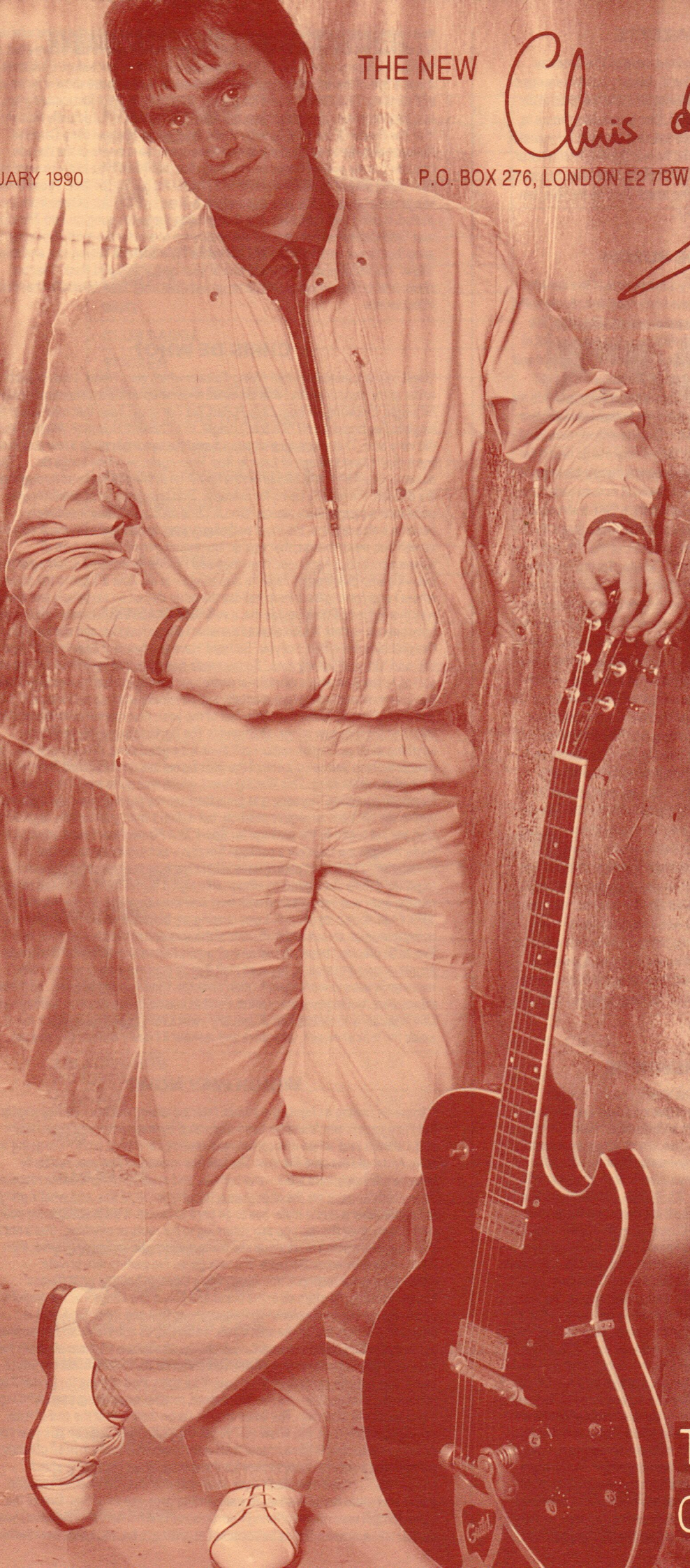
THE NEW

*Chris de Burgh*

CLUB

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P.O. BOX 276, LONDON E2 7BW



THE GETAWAY  
GAZETTE



## THE GETAWAY GAZETTE

A belated Happy New Year, and welcome to a belated issue of The Getaway Gazette. As you will be aware, this edition was due in January but for reasons of health and holiday (more of which later) Chris was unable to speak with us at the kind of length a full-blown newsletter requires until after he returned home to Dublin at the end of January. However, and as you are about to read for yourself, when he did record the conversation which follows, he was fighting fit and full of optimism and new challenges for the future. He felt that the best place to kick off this first Getaway Gazette of the 90's was by taking a look back on the '80s; ten years which saw him burn from a spark to a flame . . .

### THE DECADE OF DE BURGH

"I won't do it year by year, but I would like to do a quick review of the decade. Obviously, it was a terrific one for me. It elevated me from a position of only being known in a small number of countries to my current situation. When the '80s began, I was popular in places like Canada, South Africa . . . I'm running out of options here already! . . . oh, Ireland, and I was relatively known in England and Scandinavia. I was also beginning to get well known in Germany and South America, but I'd say it wasn't really until half-way through – or even towards the latter end of – the decade that it really kicked in. We'll get to that later! *Eastern Wind* was released in 1980, and after I'd recorded it in Canada with my own band I felt suddenly that I was groping in the dark; I didn't know where to go next. That record didn't do very much. I thought it was a good record, there's some good things on it, but it just did nothing for me and I found myself at a crossroads. Then, at exactly the right time for me, *Best Moves* came up for me in 1981. It was an idea from the Canadian record company which wanted a greatest hits package. By that time, *Spanish Train and Other Stories* had become a classic of the '70s and it had done 3½ times platinum; it was a massive record in Canada. So, the Canadians wanted a combination record – just to show people there was other music in me. *Best Moves* was picked up in most countries in the world and, to my amazement, it did extremely well in the UK and in several other places. In West Germany, for example, it was my first Top Ten entry in the charts. That success excited me so much. It made me realise that there was actually genuinely people out there who wanted to hear my music, and that gave me a terrific surge of writing – which I then wrote in to *The Getaway* in 1982. I think if you compare *Eastern Wind* and *The Getaway* it's two completely different people. *The Getaway* had tremendous energy, confidence and conviction. I was also working with Rupert Hine as producer on that record, and on the subsequent *Man On The Line* album, and working with him was the first time I'd had the chance to really work with a musician who understood where I was coming from as a songwriter. *Don't Pay The Ferryman* was probably one of the outstanding tracks from the *The Getaway*; it was a Top 40 American hit and Top 40 in the UK. It wasn't much higher than Top 40 in the UK, mind you! But, nevertheless . . . *The Getaway* was also my first Number One in West Germany, and it suddenly became apparent that this was going to be an enormous territory for me. Even to this day, it has remained so. As we get to the end of the decade, we'll see why. *Man On The Line* was released in 1984 and spawned *High On Emotion*. That single was a Number One in many European countries – including in my own country, Ireland. I believe it was also Number One in Canada. When that album was released it was nine weeks at Number One in West Germany and, in Switzerland, it became the first album in the history of the Swiss charts to come straight in at Number One. So, both of those records did extremely well.

### THE ROAD TO SOMEWHERE

"At around this time I started touring and I became a very popular concert attraction in playing indoor stadiums and venues of that kind. I think, by then, we were playing venues like the Hammersmith Odeon and the Albert Hall in London. After *Man On The Line* what happened next? Oh, yes; my children were born in the decade and that was very significant for me, obviously. Anyway, after *Man On The Line* we had *Into The Light*, didn't we? Every two years is basically what 'sit's been as far as my releasing albums is concerned; '82, '84, '86 . . . Now there's also a tradition, funnily enough, in making records which suggests that the second record you make with the same producer doesn't have quite the same punch as the first. Nobody is quite sure why, but it is a fact. For example, *The Getaway* compared to *Man On The Line* is much brighter, more brash and confident. I'd say *Man On The Line* is probably darker. Now, *Into The Light* was my first album with Paul Hardiman as producer – and that album had the same real gung-ho, 'let's go for it' feel about it whereas, I would say, *Flying Colours* was a bit more laidback and, possibly . . . predictable. Anyway, *Into The Light* spawned *Lady In Red*; that was the massive song off that album. Initially, I'd say that was 'just' a hit single which went round the world, and it was a Number One in lots of countries – including America and England. More than that, though, it opened my market up to a completely new generation of listeners – many of whom wanted to hear me as a balladeer and a singer of love songs only. I'm sure some of those people were probably pretty astonished to have a listen to the rest of the album and discover that I'm not a Neil Diamond sing-alike; there's a lot of depth and interest in the writing and in the lyrics. It's not just 'You, me, where are we going – why have we gone here?'. You know, stuff like *The Leader* on that album had an awful lot more to it than that. In the UK, *Into The Light* didn't rocket me any higher, but it did make me become a household name. Just looking back from where I am now to that period, to 1986, when that song was such a hit – we're now nearly four years on –

that record hasn't diminished. In fact, it's grown in stature – to the point where it is a classic. It's one of the handful of standards, I would say, to have come out of the last ten years. I did a Top Of The Pops show in Britain just before Christmas – it was a 'hits of the decade' thing – and I remember watching the show afterwards and thinking 'God, the songs are just awful!' A lot of them were just instantly hits, and they were very nice at the time, but there's no legs on 'em. I actually thought that *The Power Of Love* by Jennifer Rush, the George Michael song *Careless Whisper* and, dare I say it, *Lady In Red* were the three winners of the decade. I couldn't really put my finger on anything else that I would be likely to want to hear being played by a piano player in a restaurant during the '90s. Those three songs were probably the only ones which will survive the test of time from the period. Having said that, I actually thought that the better song on *Into The Light* was *Fatal Hesitation*. For me, that's probably my choice for the most atmospheric song that I have written in the last ten years. I just adore it. I listen to it and think 'Wow!' Sometimes you'll listen to one of your own songs and think 'That's a clever line' or 'I'm very pleased I came up with that one!' *Fatal Hesitation* has that effect on me.

### CHRIS DE WHO?

"Next, moving ahead, we had *Flying Colours* which also, I think, I was probably under some pressure with. I was expected to come up with a subsequent massive hit single, following on from *Lady In Red*. But I've never been that mad about hit singles; I've found it a bit of a scary jungle, to be honest. However, *Missing You* did very well. That was a nice hit record, and it was a hit in quite a few countries, but it didn't have the legs of *Lady In Red*. Then again, very few songs do . . . The album did very well, too, and so did the tour. A lot of things happened throughout the decade; the royalty tie-in, for example. That brought a lot of publicity at a point where people were saying 'Who is Chris de Burgh?', and it suddenly became a nice tag line; the royal seal of approval. It did have a backlash side to it as well but, nevertheless, that was an interesting period for me. A lot of subsequent things happened from that, and I suddenly became a darling of the over-40s who didn't really listen to pop songs – at all. Now it's got to the point where I was coming back from holiday the other day on an aeroplane and there was this old lady sitting beside me, a very well-spoken English lady – she must have been in her late 70s. She asked me what I did, so I told her and she said 'No, I've probably never heard of you.' So I said 'Have you heard of *Lady In Red*?' And she said 'Oh, yes! Lovely tune.' So my music has gone that far. Which brings us, sort of, to last year where we did that entire tour. During the last four weeks of that tour I remember thinking how mentally and physically washed out I was, and that permeated into virtually the entire rest of the year; that mental exhaustion. We then had the two new songs. *Diamond In The Dark* came out, but didn't do anything at all on English radio. I still think it's a good song, though, and a lot of people write in and say it's one of their favourites on the record. Before that we had the other song, *This Waiting Heart*, which was quite a big hit in some European countries. The song was great fun from my point of view, and it did very well in the UK from an airplay position, but it didn't chart particularly high. After that, we put together the package for *Spark To A Flame*. Now I must admit, it's a tricky thing to put together a package like that – as I explained in the last newsletter – but a lot of people have said to me how well the whole album runs together. It feels like a genuine album, although it is previously released songs mostly, and I was very pleased with how well the album did. So, by the end of 1989, I had done a lot of work. I was chasing my backside up and down Europe doing television shows and stuff – and at the very end of the decade, New Year's Eve, to be precise, I began to realise that, again, I was at a crossroads. And it was an interesting crossroads, because I felt that I'd come to a point where I didn't necessarily have to work again if I didn't want to. I had a young family . . . all these things were mulling over in my mind. For that reason, going away on holiday – as I did in the early to middle part of January – was a very important thing for me. It made me look at myself, take stock and wonder if I really wanted to carry on . . .

### WHICH WAY NOW?

"I know my managers freaked out when I started talking like this – as they should. But I'm a person who's always been motivated by inspiration and inner desire and, I always said, when it becomes really tedious and hard work – I'm going to stop. And it *did* become like that. The last few months of last year suddenly became like *really* hard work – and tedious, and disappointing in some respects. So my holiday gave me the opportunity to consider all of this, and what's going to happen now is that it really has to go back to basics. It's not going to be your over-blown, over the top pop star returning to his roots or anything; that's not it at all. But if I am going to continue and make more music and more albums, then it will really only be on the basis of a new guise. I'm getting into private performances for example. You know, when I was on holiday, or at friends' houses recently, I'd often sit at the piano and play a few songs – at the end of a drunken evening, particularly! I'd frequently do that and think 'God, that is interesting. It puts me on the spot again.' I also did, as you know, an appearance at the Ryder Cup golf tournament – which was 40 minutes of sheer pleasure for me – and I gave a performance on the Isle of Man for the Birthright charity which, again, was equally enjoyable. Mind you, it's a scary kind of thing to; to stand up in front of a lot of people – maybe 500 of them, most of whom have been drinking – and hold their attention. But when they're up on their feet at the end of it all, yelling for more, then you know you've got them. Anyway, later on this year I'm doing a private concert for a school that I went to which is badly in need of funds; we're doing a show to raise money for the school. What I'm talking about basically is . . . I need new challenges. With that in mind, I pick up my acoustic guitar a lot more than I used to, to start getting back into all of that. One of the major things I seem to be suffering from these days is I'm not enjoying what I hear on the radio any more. It may be because I'm getting to be, you know, over the hill.



I'm sure a lot of people will read that and say 'Boring old so and so – this guy is definitely missing out.' I don't know, maybe I am – but what I do know is that I'm not enjoying what I hear on the radio. Also, I'm beginning to get very interested in, for example, theatrical production music – like *Cats* or *My Fair Lady*. Music that talks and tells a story in such a way that when it grabs your ear you realise it's about something. You're not quite sure what, so it grabs your attention and you're interested to find out. I'm also interested in religious music, particularly folk-religious music, from South America and Eastern Europe, along with folk music from both of those places. In fact, just this morning I wrote out a list of stuff that I wanted to get hold of. Again, film music intrigues me – as does anything that is more than just this enclosed pop music stuff. You see, the singles chart is an arena now which is still, to my intense regret, very much the route to stardom. Or holding on to your stardom. I still think that's appalling, particularly with sales of singles just dramatically slashed – and album sales dramatically rising: I realise that, thankfully, my situation is not so closely aligned to singles success – my albums do well – but I still want success, you see. That's the point, and I've got to the point now where I will not spend two years of my life doing something just for symbolic reasons. I cannot do that. Again, this is a choice I've made – nobody is forcing it upon me. I'm not going to put myself out by separating myself from my young family and spending a *hell* of a long time away from home – not if it's just for the sake of appearances or just to try and prove something. For example, I could make a record with the London Symphony Orchestra that would sound terrific – but would sell nothing. And, to be honest, I just can't do that.

## THE MUSIC GOES ROUND

"I'm not talking about sales here, but in terms of justification for doing something, and I really couldn't do that. I like to work very hard, but I would only work very hard if the return was correct. That's not being mercenary, but you have to have some comeback for your hard work in terms of realisation that what you've done is the right thing to do. So it's an interesting crossroads I'm at – and especially so when you've been at the top of your profession, as it were, in a lot of countries, and people expect so much of you. I feel like a diversionary tactic here – as long as it's a smart move as well. For this to happen now with my career as it stands – and at the end of a decade, when most of us are thinking in terms of new horizons and new challenges anyway – is very good timing. In fact, they say that the record business goes in nine-year cycles – and if I look back at *my* nine-year cycle, then I'm dead on. Nine years ago is when *Best Moves* came out, and nine years hence is when *Spark To A Flame* has come. As you know, the next thing now is the live album, which is already recorded, I'm looking forward to that because I had a look at the video of the Dublin concert here at home the other day, and I thought 'This is good . . .' It made me think; I felt like grandpa in his armchair looking back on something I did years and years ago. I thought 'Can I still do that?' It struck me as really very, very good – and I was very proud of it. I've had some good feedback on that video, too. They showed it across Canada recently on the Home Box Office channel – and they were apparently jumping up and down about it. I thought that was fantastic. The video has been shown in lots of places, it's sold very well and lots of people like it, so I thought 'Well, that's another interesting point to have come to.' I say that because I can release the live album – which will probably be in the summer – and, again, it gives me time to breathe and think. Because, being realistic, there's no way I can match an album like *Spark To A Flame* because that's just . . . that's the best of the best. You can't come out with an album anywhere near that, but it is my absolute desire – in the next decade – to write another, only one if necessary, classic record. Like *Lady In Red*. I would die to do that. It would give me such a thrill – just like *Lady In Red* did the other day when I was sitting having breakfast with John Cleese and Michael Winner on a beach in Barbados during my holiday. We heard this guy on the piano behind me – playing *Lady In Red*, along with *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes* and all the other great songs. I was really chuffed. It amused me even more because he got several of the chords wrong! So Michael Winner said 'Go on – over you go; put him right.' So I got up and wandered over and said to the guy 'What song is that?' And he said 'Oh – *Lady In Red*.' And I said 'Do you know who wrote it?' He said ' . . . no.' I said 'Well . . . I did.' He went 'Noooo!' So I sat down and played the song, everybody was having breakfast as well, and I showed him the right chords – but, the poor fellow, he gave up and left after that! It was an amusing incident. It certainly wouldn't have happened ten years ago . . .

## BACK AND FORTH

"As I said, a decade ago I was in some kind of despair – because I didn't quite know what to do next. I'd given it my best shot with stuff like *Crusader* and *At The End Of A Perfect Day* and *Spanish Train* – which I thought was a good record – and, then, with *Eastern Wind*. Again, I thought that was a good record at the time, yet I wasn't really getting anywhere. I was sort of two steps forward, one step back. What's my outlook now? Well, the same thing could happen again if I'm not careful enough about it. I could bob along on a nice tide of goodwill and people coming up to me and patting me on the back. I could cruise along on a tide of being well-loved – but it's not good enough, you know? I have to do something to satisfy myself. That said, I would not do something as alarmingly different as I think Terence Trent D'Arby just did, though. I think he made a blunder with his new album. He may be able to get out of it, but the shame about that fellow is that he's extraordinarily talented – and that first album of his was very, very good. But to be so . . . I don't know if the correct word is arrogant, and to actually think so little of your general public as to put out a *completely* different second album is a real gamble. What you do with the second album is to solidify the first – then you become experimental. So I think he made a mistake there and it's quite clear that he's actually slipped down the ladder because of it – and it's even harder to get back up again. So I won't be doing that. I wouldn't let myself make that mistake, you see. And one of the choices I have now is actually not to make any more

records for a long time – the record company wouldn't enjoy hearing me saying this! – and just enjoy the fact that I've worked extremely hard for 15 years, got nowhere for ten and went very well for five. And enjoy the fact that I've got young children who I enjoy being with. Also, I've got all sorts of interests now – like the radio station or my wine collection. I enjoy playing golf, swimming, being with the kiddies, seeing my friends. I'm interested in aeroplanes. You know, my interests are very diverse – and most of them have got nothing to do with music. But, funnily enough, the other day – while my daughter was doing her homework – I pulled out a guitar and I started singing one of my old tunes, and it gave me the shivers doing it, actually. I thought 'This guy doesn't sound bad at all.' The point being that you can't – it's not right to – suddenly stop. I'm just going to plot my next move with *extreme* care. I'm not quite sure yet what my next move will be, but I'm beginning to get a fair idea. I think it's going to be acoustic guitars and nice arrangements – and simplicity. I know that at this kind of point in my career, having released a record and toured with it, I'm normally already talking about new songs – but I want my sensitivity to return. That's basically what the problem is. I feel I've been hammered in the treadmill of touring and success and television for the last three-and-a-half years – and you lose your sensitivity and objectivity. I think I can say I'm a good songwriter now and that I won't write any bad songs any more – because you just stop them before they go anywhere. The problem is, when you write just *good* songs a lot of people say 'Oh, that's a good song . . .' Well, I'm not interested in writing good songs. I just want to write great songs now. I know on an album you can get, if you're lucky, say, three great songs – or two – so I don't want to whack out the same old stuff. Which I could do. I could make an album in six months, you know. It wouldn't be a problem – not with what I've already got going in my head, and this and that – but it won't satisfy me. And I've *got* to do something that will satisfy me, something filmic, as I said. See, this is where I came in, curiously enough; right at the start of my career I came in thinking filmic. Thinking stuff going on in the mind while you listen and watch the music. That's where I've got to grow back to again. You know, the plant has grown, it's full-blown – and now it's got to regenerate itself . . .

## OUT OF THE DARK – INTO THE LIGHT

"So, what I'm going to do is to play music a lot more to myself, just out of curiosity, and get familiar with the guitar again. In the past, when I was writing like that, I did it as a job – and it was awful, really. Going into a studio and writing as a job. And it didn't feel right. I know that, although some of the stuff on *Flying Colours* is as good as I would like it to be, some of it is a bit of a job. Do you know what I'm saying? I had to follow up. Well, now I'm not following *anything* until the live album is through the door. My current situation, with *Spark To A Flame* out now and the live album still to come, has given me the time I need to get back in the right frame of mind. It's given me enormous time to re-think and, as I said, it couldn't have come at a better time.

Does it seem as though the past decade has passed quickly? No, it doesn't feel that way. I don't think it has gone quickly. It's gone in measured steps – and I can taste the blood in my mouth and the sweat and realise what went into it to bring me where I am today. I think where I go from here is definitely back, in many respects. I *look* back. I mentioned that I listened to a track the other day from an earlier album, and I'm wanting to become reacquainted with myself on an artistic level – rather than on a 'successful artist' level. There's a supreme difference between the two. Considering last year, it also got to the point where, particularly in the live arena, I found myself saying 'How many more times do I have to do this?' To expose myself physically, mentally – and most important of all – spiritually, to people who really want me – and who are kind of pleading for more. It got to the stage where I was in the classic syndrome of going back to my hotel room and going to bed alone and thinking 'God, I've entertained 12,000 people – and here I am; away from my family. I know my friends are still downstairs in the bar, but . . .' It's very hard to come to terms with yourself on that basis. You know, I give – I give *so* much – and yet you cannot measure the give *back* in terms of money. It's completely irrelevant, it's not even part of the picture. When you give yourself artistically, what you need back is not the money – but that smile of satisfaction to yourself; knowing that, artistically, you've made the right decision. But if you're not giving your all artistically because you're so exhausted, then you don't get the response either of saying to yourself 'Well congratulations – you did a good job.' So, that's pretty much how I feel at the moment. I don't think it's a desperate situation, and I've never wondered for a second whether I'm going to get writer's block – because I know I won't – but it's not even really about that. It's the *opposite* of writer's block. I just feel as if I've gone out for ages and ages and I'm just kind of walking back in the rain on my own on a dark night. My overcoat is absolutely soaked and I've got my bag in my hand, and I see the light in the distance and think 'God I can't *wait* to get home . . . When I get there, I drop my bag, take off my wet clothes – and just lock the door and don't go out for as long as I feel like. That's the best way I can describe the way I'm feeling right now although, as I say, I have turned the corner. It's not depression or despair *at all* – it's just me saying 'I need some time to think about the next move.'"

And there you have it; a more honest, heart-felt or passionate appraisal of a personal position you're unlikely ever to read from the mouth of a major worldwide star. It puts Chris' feelings on the past decade into perfect perspective – but it didn't end there. He still insisted on flicking through the pages of his diary to back-track on the ground he's covered in between editions of the newsletter . . .

## HERE THERE AND EVERYWHERE . . .

"Oh, I know one of the things I did; I went to the Republic of Ireland's soccer matches in which they qualified for the World Cup. All except the Maltese game. That was terrific fun; I'm a mad soccer fan. In fact, after the match against Germany in Dublin – which was a warm up – I went through to see both teams in the dressing room. It was interesting seeing all the Irish lads saying (adopts Irish



accent) 'Oh, hello, Christy!', while all the German fellows kind of stared at me because, you know, I'm so well known over there. It was kind of funny. I also got a bit more involved in a small way in horse racing, as I previously mentioned. It's just joint ownership; a few legs here and there, and it gives me a bit of fun. I've always been interested in race horses. Then I went to Munich, that would have been in October, and spent some time at the BMW golf open. After that, I went to Paris several times... did a Radio One thing at Milton Keynes – where I performed a couple of songs... Paris again!... then we did the Terry Wogan Show and a lot of television in England... off to Dortmund, where I was given a major award for being the male artist of the decade. That was nice! The award was given on a huge TV show which went out. Then I did the Royal Variety Show back in Britain, which a lot of people saw. Again, that was a nice show to do. I met so many interesting and nice people. I thought Freddie Starr was extremely funny, bit of a looney, but he's a lovely fellow. What else? Birmingham... Denmark... makes me feel sick just looking! Ah; Munich again. This was just before Christmas and I went there to collect what's called a Bambi Award. Now, I didn't realise this was such a prestigious thing until I got there – and then people were ringing up from Austria and Switzerland saying congratulations on your Bambi! And I said 'why...?' It turns out to be the most prestigious award you can get in Germany, and it's not just about music. It covers politicians, sportsmen... I think it's handed out to 10 or 12 people of West German national-international importance. I was very proud to accept one – it's a beautiful award – and, once more, there was a major TV show during which they were presented. It's like getting an Oscar or a Grammy. That was thrilling. Christmas itself was very family; I had the usual 18 or 20 people come round to my house on Christmas Day! It was the usual mayhem. I've also been going to a lot of my wine club meetings, and I've played a lot of golf – trying to get a bit better at it – and playing in golf charity events and stuff. How did I celebrate New Year's Eve? Well, we were going to go out to a friend's house but, the problem is, you can't get a baby-sitter easily at that time of the year. So, we were going to go out, and the children were going to fall asleep – hopefully! – and then we were going to drive home. However, you may recall there was a lot of illness going round at that time of year – there was that terrible flu, which we all escaped – but there was also this bizarre one, which showed itself in sudden nausea and terrible aches and pains. And, in fact, the children got it just before New Year's Eve – and the little boy was very sick – so we couldn't go out. So we spent it, just Diane and I together. We opened a bottle of champagne at midnight – and went to bed! That was it and, actually, it felt really quite nice. I'm getting totally freaked out by drunk-drivers these days, anyway, so I just won't do it now. Besides, I've discovered this amazing stuff called Aqua Libra. It's a very healthy, very refreshing drink and it's much nicer than Perrier or sparkling waters. It's lovely. I can highly recommend it. I also take Regina royal jelly on a regular basis because it gives me energy, particularly when I'm on tour. It doesn't make me feel any more alarmingly different, but looking back on last year when I was on tour – and I was taking it every day – I realise that I didn't get sick much at all. The only time I got sick was right after New Year; that's right, on the 3rd of January. I remember it well. It was Diane's birthday on the 2nd, and we went out to a restaurant with friends for a big Chinese banquet that I'd arranged for the occasion. But she had to leave half-way through because she suddenly got hit by this bug. I got hit by the same bug about six hours later and I spent the entire next day in bed – which is very unlike me. I wasn't throwing up or anything, but I felt dreadful – and then the following day I was out of it. I felt awful and, generally speaking, I very, very rarely get sick. When I do get sick I have a very positive attitude towards my body. I actually think about all the areas where I'm feeling pain, and I just send currents of information and help and electricity to try and make the body heal itself – and I think it works. Unfortunately, the day the fan club called me to try to arrange the interview for what *should* have been the January issue of the Getaway Gazette was exactly when I was trying to heal myself and feeling dreadful!

## SAYING GOODBYE TO IT ALL

"Immediately after my illness, just days after, I went to Barbados for a couple of weeks holiday. It was brilliant; absolutely beautiful place, lovely people – can't wait to go back. I met a lot of people there, too – like Michael Winner and John Cleese, who I mentioned earlier. I had dinner with John Cleese on a couple of occasions and he's a wonderful person – as are his daughter and lady friend. I hung out a lot with Mel Smith, too. He fell in love to *Lady in Red*, you know, and everywhere he went, there was this song. And, God love the guy, I played the song one night at a friend's house after dinner, he was there with a bunch of other people, and he and his wife were really getting misty. They were dancing together, and I was playing on the piano, and afterwards they came up to me. They both had tears in their eyes, and they said 'Thanks'. It was a lovely moment. I also saw a lot of Robert and Susan Sangster – who are friends of mine from over here in Dublin, anyway – and a lot of Irish people that I knew from over here. In fact, my being out in Barbados coincided with the quiet season in racing – and they call Barbados 'Newmarket-on-Sea' because there's so many racing people over there at that time of year. I know a lot of those people anyway, and we had a ball. We had a lovely holiday. So I came back totally refreshed, feeling like a new man – and ready to face the next year."

## PEN PALS

Speaking of far off places, here's the latest list of club members wishing to correspond with like-minded Chris de Burgh followers – wherever they may be... Andrew Williams, Lowood, 51 Copperkins Lane, Amersham, Bucks., HP65 8RA, England. (Aged 16).

Steven Williamson, 146 Portland Road, Hucknall, Nottingham, NG15 7SA, England.

Kevin Molloy, 82 Arncliffe Drive, Heelands, Milton Keynes, Bucks., MK13 7PT, England.

Carol O'Sullivan, Droumalohert, Glencar, Co. Kerry, Eire. (Aged 15).

Fiona Furlong, Tomies, Beaufort, Killarney, Co. Kerry, Ireland.

Barbara Fluri, Inkwilerstr. 18, 4553 Subingen, Switzerland. (Aged 16).

Julia Kistner, Klosterstrasse 5, 3509 Spangenberg, West Germany. (Aged 19).

Claudia Graf, Kloserstrasse 13, 5300 Bonn 1, West Germany. (Aged 24).

Sheila H. Moss, 10 Walsingham Close, Willingdon, Eastbourne, Sussex, BN22 0UD, England. (Aged 50).

Elke Porath, Op de Loh 8, 2000 Braak, West Germany. (Aged 18).

Guido Aach, Balsterstrasse 90, 4600 Dortmund 12, West Germany.

Fiona Dixon, "Greystones", Anngrove, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork, Ireland. (Aged 15).

E. Doggett, Crowpark, Trim. Co. Meath, Ireland. (Aged 18).

Julia Krasner, Ferry Brae, By Beauly, Inverness-shire, Scotland. (Aged 15).

Tanja Bress, Damm St Vecken 21, 2359 Henstedt-Ulzburg, West Germany.

Bernadette Smith, 42 Aberconway Crescent, Rossington, Doncaster, DN11 0JL, England.

Yvonne Hoessler, Von-Werth-Str. 14, 4053, Juechen 2, West Germany. (Aged 14).

Kevin Klimowski, 3816 3rd Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50313, U.S.A. (Aged 26).

Christine O'Mara, 51 Janes Brook Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 6NT, England. (Aged 28).

Heather Bullock, 15300 Charlotte Avenue, San Jose, California 95124, U.S.A. (Aged 19).

Lisa Deschamps, R.R. #3, Ashton, Ontario, KOA 1B0, Canada. (Aged 28).

Mandy Smart, 2 Bader Way, Skegness, Lincs., PE25 2PW. (Aged 25).

Vesselina Al. Kolcheva, 82 Kosta Zlatarev Str., block "Mars", et. 15, ap. 71, 5800 Pleven, Bulgaria. (Aged 17).

If you would like your details added to future lists on pen pals, then please send your name, address and age (if you wish) to the club address but, please, make sure you print the information clearly and in BLOCK LETTERS.

## WAX LYRICAL AND PERSON TO PERSON

Due to the length and importance of Chris' quotes concerning the decade just gone and the years ahead, there is unfortunately not enough space in this edition to bring you the regular features mentioned above. However, when we spoke to Chris recently, he did answer a whole pile of your queries – which we're sitting on until the next newsletter. For the new members among you who are wondering what we're talking about, allow us to explain. Person to Person is your chance to put Chris on the spot and ask him the questions which have been intriguing you about his music, life and career. Wax Lyrical is your opportunity to get Chris to explain any of the lyrics of his songs, or what inspired him to write them in the first place. If you have questions for either section then, again, send them to the club address – and be sure to include your name and address since we like to print the identity of the people who wish to know!

## UNTIL THE NEXT TIME

Once again, that about wraps things up – except for one last special message from Chris to club members, explaining how he feels about your support over the years.

"Well, they're a lifeline, really. It's very, very important to have nice people like that out there. I mean, they're genuinely interested in what I'm thinking and what I feel like. Because, more often than not – and with this business I was talking to you about of playing concerts and then feeling completely washed out – to know that there is this tremendous strength behind me of the fans sustaining me in times of trouble is... priceless. We all have these points where we worry about what we're doing and whether we're going in the right direction. And when I read what a lot of the fans say about me, it's terrific; it's such a buzz – and not just an ego buzz. People write the loveliest things. I got a huge card with a big Garfield on the front when I got back from holiday, and it was from a girl who just said 'You're the most important thing in my life. Thank you for helping me.' Stuff like that... it's not something you discard and laugh at. It's terribly important to me to know that when I write – even if it comes down to nobody buying my records, nobody being interested. Because I just know that there's still a hard core of people who *will* be interested, and know my history. I'm not a person who has been through mental torture to get my music on to record, fortunately, but nevertheless, I am sensitive to the issues and sensitive to where I am and who I am – and need the support I get from the fans. It's very important to me, not only in concert situations but, also, I think maybe more so when it comes to putting out albums. Because you sweat and you grind and put out a record and, do you know, the feedback is just minimal. That's what annoys me about it in some ways, because sometimes the only way you can read about, or find out about, what people think about your records is when you read some review. Generally speaking, of course, reviewers are not to be taken seriously. Even if it's a good review, they get the records for free, these fellows, and they're just doing a job. Much more important to me is somebody stopping me in the street and saying 'Chris – loved the new album. Loved that song on such and such.' You know, when I was in Barbados all sorts of people came up to me – and a lot of them were middle aged and elderly people – who'd been given my album for Christmas, and they picked out various songs they loved. Particularly *Much More Than This*, which is a special favourite of mine. It's great to have that – and I just hope it never ends. Thank you..."

And on that note, all that remains to be said is the usual; please send any Pen Pal addresses, Person To Person queries or questions for Wax Lyrical – along with any ideas or criticisms about the club or newsletter – to me, Mike, at: The New Chris de Burgh Club, P.O. Box 276, London, E2 7BW. So, until the next time, take care – and be *nice* in the '90s...