

THE NEW

Chris de Burgh

CLUB

P.O. BOX 276 LONDON E2 7BW

JUNE 1990

C de B LIVE DATES:
EXCLUSIVE TICKETS OFFER
FOR CLUB MEMBERS INSIDE!



THE GETAWAY

GAZETTE

THE GETAWAY GAZETTE

Hello and welcome to a rather special edition of the Getaway Gazette. As most of you will be fully aware by now, Chris recently announced two open-air concerts – at Alton Towers on September 7 and 8, 1990. Although the shows were officially announced on May 22, with tickets going on sale on May 25, we have been working with Chris, his management and his promoter for some time to devise a way of offering club members preferential access to tickets for both shows. Our plans finally came to fruition on May 18, meaning we had to hold back publication to the last possible moment; clearly, there was no way we could have printed the newsletter overnight – and even if we had managed to, you would only have had two days extra notice on anyone else. As it was, the club was requested not to spill any beans before the dates were publicly announced.

But never mind all that, I hear you scream – what are the special arrangements? They are as follows. For the UK shows *only* (there are also some European dates – more of which in a moment), we have arranged for 1,000 tickets *pershow* to be put aside on exclusive reserve for club members until *June 29*. The tickets, priced £18 inclusive of booking fee, will go on sale to the general public if any remain after that deadline. To make a claim for yours, simply write – enclosing your payment *and* a stamped, self-addressed envelope – to: **Andrew Miller Concerts Limited, PO. 141, London SW6 3JB**. Tickets will be limited to a *maximum* of *four* per application. To identify yourself as a club member, and to be seen as such at the box office, you *must* mark your envelope *clearly* on the outside with the words: **FAN CLUB MEMBER**. The amount of tickets set aside is more than enough to provide one each for every fan club member in the UK – and for many in Europe. If you have already applied independently of our arrangements, the choice of what to do is yours – but no refunds can be provided if you end up with two sets of tickets. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that although the club has had a small part in arranging the reserve facility, we have no say or dealings whatsoever in its administration – and, therefore, can make *no guarantees*.

BENEATH THE STARS

Now, a bit more information about the venue itself. Alton Towers is situated equi-distant between Derby and Stoke-on-Trent and provides a spectacular concert location; on a lakeside and with 20,000 festival seats tiered upon a grassy bowl. Tickets to the shows will be sent inside a special wallet containing details of how to reach the venue using all forms of transport. In addition, there will be information about a telephone number to call for a list of local accommodation for those wishing to make a weekend of it.

As mentioned earlier, Chris will also be playing some shows in West Germany and Switzerland and these, at the time of going to press, were as follows: August 18 – Berlin; 19 – Leipzig; 25 – Hamburg; 26 – Hockenheim; September 1 – Zurich. Furthermore, Chris will be the special guest of Fleetwood Mac for their concert in Utrecht on August 23. **PLEASE NOTE:** The above information concerning the European dates (*not* the Alton Towers shows) was correct when printed – but is subject to possible change, so refer to the media and check for more up to date details. Due to the fan club, and the bulk of its membership, being based in the UK, it has proved impossible for us to organise any special arrangements for tickets to Chris' European shows – particularly since they were not absolutely confirmed at the time of going to press. We regret that this has had to be the case.

BACK ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Chris' Flying Colours tour finally ground to a halt, after nine months of shows around the world, in July, 1989 – so why tour again now? We put the question to him . . .

"Was it itchy feet? No, not for me personally. I'm not one of these people that hungers for applause – it's important for people to know that. I don't have any ego problem there, or feel I have to be loved every minute of the day and get up each morning to live the life of a rock star all the time. It's completely different here. I don't *need* the applause, I don't *need* to strut my stuff, as it were. But I do think about other people. I don't want this to sound cheesy, but I do consider the boys in the band because I have a responsibility to them due to the fact that they've been with me for more than 12 years now. There's also nothing to beat a good open-air date; there's a lot of fun in them for everyone. Also, the pressure at those shows isn't as solid as a real gruelling indoor tour. So, the reason for the dates is really that it just felt like a lot of fun – a chance to play live again in front of what I imagine will be very appreciative audiences – particularly in the UK, where I haven't performed in concert since 1988. Again, it sounds a little corny maybe, but these shows are also a way of saying thanks to everybody. You know; here I am, I'm still alive, still feeling good – and I hope I'm getting better and better, like vintage wine. And it's a good point at which to say 'Right, now comes the live album – now we start work on a new studio album.' We've been putting the live album together over the past few months, I've been listening to tape after tape over the last few weeks, and it sounds absolutely amazing. We've just about decided which songs will be included, but it really is just the stuff that comes across the best. It's a lot of the faves; stuff like Spanish Train, Patricia The Stripper, Lady in Red, Last Night, High On Emotion . . . and they all sound great. I know that a lot of people cheat on live albums, but one thing you cannot cheat on is the audience singing along – you can't fake that – and the audience sounds amazing. You *can* fake all sorts of stuff, like the audience

response, the applause, and a lot of people do. They go in and re-record just about everything. We're just tidying up where there is an obvious bass guitar mistake, for example, or a drum mistake – or even a singing mistake! We do a tiny little patching job there but, broadly speaking, it's 99 per cent exactly as it went on tape originally. The album was recorded across the seven Dublin shows we did at the end of December, 1988 – although there may be odd spots, particularly some of the solo stuff, which we recorded across just about every other show on the tour. We used DAT, digital audio tape, to record some of the solo stuff. When is it released? It comes out, I believe, in early September – to coincide with the live dates themselves. As I say, these shows are an important way of charging up my batteries and having some fun. I'm glad I was offered the dates, actually, because I agreed immediately. What we're hoping to do is to do some rehearsals here in Ireland during August, and then pick up on the shows proper.

EASTERN WIND

"What we'll probably do then is go to West Germany, where the first dates are, and limber up before the big shows by maybe dropping into some small clubs around the country – maybe three dates – and do some shows for just a few hundred people. That would be a lot of fun; it should get the show ironed out and the lights and so on, before doing the big shows. Also, we are actively talking about playing the Eastern Bloc – in Prague and Hungary, and maybe even Russia itself. I was in the Russian Embassy recently, and a Russian journalist there told me that I was very popular in Russia. He said I was well known and loved, which was nice to know. As for the Alton Towers shows, that really is a fantastic setting. I was there before a couple of years ago for the Royal It's A Knockout tournament – but this time I'm headlining! The last open-air show I did in England was way back in 1985, June 16, to be precise, at the Crystal Palace Bowl. We did actually look at that venue again this time, but it was a very hard one for me because of the lack of contact with the audience. I would imagine it was spectacular for the audience, but having a lake between me and the front row . . . that's very hard. You have to really project. So, when the opportunity for these live shows came up, I wanted to make sure it would be at a location which would suit both angles; from my point of view and from the point of view of the audience. Also, apart from the shows we've talked about, we may be doing more elsewhere – but I wouldn't like to be more specific, just in case they don't happen."

WORLDWIDE

While discussing the possibility of playing in countries in which he has never performed before, Chris owns up to a healthy wanderlust and yearning to visit new frontiers – but then the conversation threw up a quite staggering statistic . . .

"Of course I'd like to go to new places but I do have to temper that with the knowledge that I would never stay away from my children and my wife for any length of time. Lots of people don't mind going away from their family for three weeks, or whatever, but I've been travelling so much for so many years that it's just great to wake up in *my* bed as frequently as I've been able to recently. I mean, this is another thing people have to understand; I've been on tour for a *long* time. My first tour started in the autumn of 1974, and I have been doing tours regularly since then. That's a tremendous amount of time away from home – I wouldn't even like to hazard a guess at the number of flights I've made or hotels I've stayed in but it's . . . *thousands*. And the number of days away is also thousands. It's *years*! Over the past 15 years, I would imagine that six years, maybe, have been spent solid away from home – including the two or three months it takes to make albums. It's years, you're absolutely right (I had suggested it might have been), and that's why I've recently been enjoying not having to go anywhere for any length of time. You know, I've done three major world tours, tours which have lasted for at least 10 to 12 months each – so that's three years right there. I've done nine albums at a minimum of a couple of months each . . . that's another two years, for argument's sake. On top of that, you've got the other, lesser tours and bits and pieces. So, actually, I think it's getting on for seven years away from home; maybe half of the last 15 years could have been spent either in the studio away from home or else actually on the road. Do you know, I've never actually put it into perspective like that before. It's the first time I've thought about it." *It's frightening, isn't it?* "It is. I don't want to think about it anymore! . . ."

NO PROBLEMS

Following his candid and heart-felt comments in the last newsletter – about his state of mind and future career – Chris received many letters from members concerned about his well being. Appreciated though this concern was, Chris wanted to point out – clearly – that all is very well indeed . . .

"We should talk about the response to the last newsletter, definitely, because I remember my mood at the time was very up, very solid. I was very much in control of, as it were, my desires and destiny – but I was feeling very thoughtful. I seem to remember mentioning that a recent holiday had put a lot of things into perspective for me – particularly the fact that I'd been working very hard, banging my head against the wall, it seemed to me, some of the time. But that holiday really refreshed me, and I came back feeling terrific. However, it seems that a lot of people failed to understand that properly. I was getting letters from a lot of people, and flowers, saying 'Cheer up, Chris.' People were sending cards saying 'Things could be worse.' Well,

I was completely baffled by this! I'd been sent a fax of the newsletter to read through prior to it being published and it read fine to me, but after all these comments I asked for the finished product to be sent to me again. Having seen it again, I understand now – in a way – what those people were talking about. The newsletter was very meaty, but it was very thoughtful – that's just the way I think out loud – but I wasn't depressed at all. In fact, I really haven't felt much better; I still had a bit of a suntan and I was fit and healthy. I was being reflective, not only about the past – but about the future, and I never meant anybody to get the impression that I was down about it. Because I wasn't. However, right after we recorded that interview I remember thinking to myself that what I was really trying to get across was . . . rather than saying that I'm not going to write any more songs, what I meant to say – and maybe I did say it (he did!) – was that I'm not going to write songs for the sake of writing songs. You see, it's very easy for me to do that, but I always like the allusion of allowing people to think that what you do is easy. One of the things about the music business is that you don't have to have any qualifications whatsoever to join – I can't read or write music but it didn't make any difference to me in terms of getting into this 'club'. I just had to work extremely hard for a long number of years to actually achieve success. It's like somebody who makes furniture, let's say. Anybody can whack together a chair, OK?, but to make a piece of Chippendale, a beautiful piece of furniture, requires *endless* years of skill, application, judgement and working out where you've made mistakes in the past. Well, I really felt like I was in that position as well; I could whack out a chair, no problem – I mean, I could write songs about anything – but I didn't want to do that. I've always felt that the really good songs are the ones that well up from the heart and the unconscious. They come so naturally, they're not forced, and if I can get maybe four song like that on an album of ten songs – songs that are really super-special to me – then I know that I'm really winning. *That's* what I was talking about in the last newsletter; I really wanted to be in a position of just cooling down a bit – not whacking out more furniture just for the sake of it. I really wanted to be in a position, by pulling away from the game for a while, of being able to think really hard about encouraging the really important songs to come out. Having said that, I can imagine how people were concerned enough to write to me because, I must say, I'm the kind of person who . . . I *do* take it all seriously but . . . I'm just an ordinary bloke. But I do feel that it's absolutely fantastic to have people caring that much about me, my health and my state of mind that they would be concerned that my wellspring of ability, of talent, should dry up. The concern is really overwhelming – so thanks for that concern, but everything is under control. Please send me lots of good thoughts and positive vibes to really write some superb songs for the next album . . ."

OUT AND ABOUT

Right, now that's all cleared up, let's fill in some of the details of Chris' recent travels . . .

"It's been a pretty quiet time, but on February 16 I received an award at the IRMA Awards in Dublin. Now, this is a nice awards show because it's actually the public voting and, for the fifth year in succession – in fact, since the inauguration of these awards – I received the Best Irish Male Artist Award. It was an interesting day for me because I was also given my Master of Arts degree at Trinity College, Dublin. A bunch of us got together and decided the time was right! I have a Bachelor of Arts degree but, due to an ancient charter from Trinity College – I believe dating back to the 18th Century, or possibly earlier – for a sum of money to be paid, anybody with a BA can then automatically be transferred to have an MA. I don't know why this is, but it's true! So, we had a conferral of, I would say, about 600 people. Everything was conducted in Latin for about two hours – and I didn't know what the hell was going on until I recognised my name! I then got an MA, which was great – particularly as I got the chance to see old friends who I hadn't seen for a while.

The next day was an auction at the Rotunda Hospital, the maternity hospital, to raise some much-needed funds in aid of cot death research. There was a car up for auction and I made a donation by matching the bid pound for pound. That was nice, but I had to leave early because I was going to Dubai the following day. I went off and performed a solo concert in a tent in the desert! There were about 700 people in Sheikh Mohammed's tent, he's one of the rulers of Dubai, and I really enjoyed it. It was connected to a golf tournament over there and they flew me and my drummer, Jeff, out – I took him along because we're both mad about golf. I had a great time and also played in the pro-am tournament with Christy O'Connor Jnr. We came fourth which was nice, but that gig was definitely one of the weirdest I've ever done. I'd never been to the Gulf states before and, sadly, didn't get much of a chance to have a look around and see what was there – I was too tuned in to the golf tournament! – but it's a very interesting place. I was very impressed by it, actually. A couple of weeks after that, I went to Munich, to a party for one of my promoters. He was having a 50th birthday celebration. I saw a lot of old friends there and then, the following day, I went up to Copenhagen and did a television show – on which I received another award. This is the year of the awards, I can tell you! Where do I keep my awards? On top of my piano where, I'm pleased to say, there is now very little room left. So, what else have I been up to . . . Oh, I went to see my parents in the south of Ireland. They live in the castle pictured on the sleeve of my *Far Beyond These Castle Walls* album, and it's a beautiful spot. I went there for my daughter's half-term holiday, and also over Easter. A little while after that I played in a celebrity football match just before the Ireland versus Wales

international here in Dublin. That was great, although I was only on the pitch for a couple of minutes because I'd pulled a leg muscle, so I couldn't run around too much. Which position was I momentarily in? Ahhh . . . I was just on the field! I got a few touches, and that was it.

WORK, REST AND PLAY

"In March I went to Amsterdam and got – another award! It was called an Edison Award and, apparently, it's a very prestigious thing to get in Holland. I was given one for the *Flying Colours LP* as one of the best albums of the previous year. Pavarotti; I went to see Pavarotti. I'm not particularly an opera fan, but I certainly admire him. I think he's a fantastic singer, and it was a superb night. The guy is amazing. To me, opera is impossible to follow, but I was there to hear a great genius at work – whom I might not hear live, certainly not in Dublin, for a long time. Hubie had his second birthday on March 29, which was a lovely affair, and Rosanna had her sixth birthday on April 17. We had 20 children to her birthday party at the weekend . . . excuse me, Rosanna is correcting me here. (To Rosanna: Plus you, it was 20). I've also been writing songs; I find it very hard *not* to write songs. Every time I fool around on the piano or play a little guitar, bits come out – and it's interesting because I'm not under pressure at the moment. (Flips through the pages of his diary). Here's something; in April I went to Le Touquet in France as I'd been invited to be a participant in a pro-celebrity golf tournament. That was actually filmed for a Channel Four production which will be televised in Britain later in the year. Now, I have to emphasise, I'm keen on golf – but I'm not very good! At the time, my handicap was 18. I played with Ronan Rafferty, who was last year's leader of the European order of merit, and against us was another pair; Sam Torrance and Ted Dexter, who was one of the selectors for the MCC. Ted Dexter is very good and I was definitely the poor boy on the block, I can tell you. And the readers of this who do play golf can perhaps understand what it was like not only to be playing with professionals like that and be high handicap, but also to have cameras pointing at you. It was *terrifying!* I played like an absolute idiot most of the time. I began to relax and get a little more confident as we went on, however, and I did manage to do some good shots. I sank a very long putt to win one of the holes for my team, and holed another important putt at another – so I didn't completely make a klutz of myself. But it was darn terrifying. I hope I don't have to do that again . . . it's funny, though; because I spoke to Dennis Taylor, the former world snooker champion, and you'd think a guy like that would be able to hit anything – but he said he'd had a frightful round because he was so nervous. It's when you know you're good at something that you don't mind cameras looking at you, but when you know you're not particularly good at it . . . that's different. After that, I went to Monte Carlo – to get another music award! This one was for services to the music industry. It worries me when I get something like that; it sounds like I've got grey hair and I'm all washed up. Next they'll be giving me a gold watch! Anyway, after that – at the end of May – I played a benefit concert at a school I went to as a young lad. The name of the place is Aravon, it's an excellent school, and a lot of my friends have children there. All the money collected went to the school and, indeed, it was nice to be in a position of being able to help. What else? I just keep seeing the words 'pro-am' written in my diary! . . .

GETTING INTO SHAPE

"So that's been about it but, apart from anything else, I've just been using my time to be with my children. Hubie is just learning how to talk now, although he's been chatting since he was a year old, and that's a very special time for parents. I know it sounds like I haven't really been doing very much but . . . I've just been taking it easy. I go swimming just about every morning – I do at least 800 yards in a pool near home – so I'm getting fit and healthy and, yeah, I'm enjoying myself. Damn it!, you know. And it's never been my motive just to make a pile of money. In fact, somebody wrote me a letter recently accusing me and getting chased off that I'd taken some time off. It said 'It's all very well now that you've made your money to sit back and do nothing – what about us who want to see more of you?' Well, that's not the point at all. That's a bit rude, to be honest. I'm taking time off because of my family, because of the fact that I have been going *absolutely* non-stop at this for years and years – and I'm just re-grouping, you know; thinking about the next move. I feel, certainly, that there's a lot more years in me yet and a lot more music. The new songs I've been writing I like a lot, and I was concerned that I might get into a rut. It was inevitable that if I'd just carried on after *Flying Colours* then I would have just turned out a rather indifferent kind of a record – and I want to turn out a really special next album. I know I spoke in the past about the next album being a return to simplicity and, yes, I would say that the songs I've been working on fall in line with that. I like personal songs and I like the idea of the big screen song, you know, the wide drama. One of the new songs I like was spurred by looking at old photographs and reflecting on how photographs are an instant recollection of what happened at a particular time – but then the moment is gone. (Starts laughing). My *wife* has just come down the children's slide. Would you believe that? She's a kid like the rest of us. But, I digress! We found some old photographs of this house that we're in, taken at the turn of the century. And it was just like a scene from this evening as we're talking. There were children playing in the garden; having fun and with big, three-wheeled bicycles. It was lovely to see them, but also very sad – because you know all those people are now deceased and they've moved on. I think that's why I've discovered . . . I

haven't discovered... why I'm aware of just how precious these moments are. So, that's one of the songs which should appear on the next album but, as I mentioned before, that album is not really a possibility until some time next year. But I'm going to start really getting seriously into the writing of it after the summer, after the tour, although I'll have a few songs up my sleeve before that. Will I play any of them at the concerts coming up? It's an intention and a desire, but whether it comes off... I don't know. It's not really about an attempt to premiere new material in these shows; it's more of a celebration, that's what it really is; a bit of fun for all concerned."

PEN PALS

Clarissa Djie, Haselweg 39, 7536 Ispringen, West Germany. (Aged 16).
Tsvetanka Jotkova, 82 Kosta Zlatarev Str. Bl. Mars, Ap. 73, Et. 15, Pleven 5800, Bulgaria.
James Lantsbery, 269 Anchor Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs., ST3 5DN, England. (Aged 11).
Mrs Lyn Rawlings, 45 Winifred Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 7TD, England. (Aged 37).
Sally Myers, Frimley Nurseries, 15 Frimley Drive, Bradford, BD5 9EP, England. (Aged 22).
Andrea Hieke, Gluckstr. 4d, 2000 Hamburg 76, West Germany. (Aged 19).
Janice Malone, c/o Evelyn Terrace, Kilwinning, Ayrshire, Scotland. (Aged 34).
Janet Lee, 23 Gardner Avenue, Bootle, Merseyside, L20 6EE, England. (Aged 18).
Veronika Liebe-Harkort, Ross House, Mount Nugent, Co. Cavan, Eire. (Aged 14).
Julie Wren, 18 Fraser Road, Canning Vale, Western Australia, 6155. (Aged 24).
Linda Moss, 120 Collingwood Road, Chorley, Lancs., PR7 2QE, England. (Aged 15).
Mrs Christine McGowan, 309 Kingshill Avenue, Hayes, Middx, UB4 8BS, England. (Aged 38).

Remember, if you would like your details included in future lists of C de B friendly pen pals, then please write your details clearly and in BLOCK CAPITALS – specifying your age if you wish – and send them in to the club P.O. Box address printed below.

WAX LYRICAL

Flicking through back issues of the Getaway Gazette recently, I discovered – to my horror – that it's actually been two years since we last printed this section. In the past, it has been sacrificed to make way for other text (due to our limited space) but it's definitely time to resume normal service – especially since many new members won't have a clue what Wax Lyrical actually is. For their information, it's your chance to ask Chris about the meaning or inspiration for any of his songs or music – be that a verse, a single line or the whole thing. His answers usually go something like this...

THE SIMPLE TRUTH: "Funnily enough, every time I listen to this now each verse applies to something. The fourth verse, for example, is about Gorbachov and Reagan, the second verse is about young Bob (Geldof) over in Ethiopia, the third is probably about the Northern Ireland situation – although it could have been Korea, or any civil war situation – and the opening verse is about any strife that involves breaking up people's homes and families."

WHERE PEACEFUL WATERS FLOW: "That song wasn't really about being inspired, and I can't remember any actual moment of inspiration, but it's a melange of things. I would say one of them would be me having this record called Missa Creola, a Creole mass from South America. It's beautiful, very 'people', kind of religious music. I like that kind of music – I don't like high church music. I like the sort of songs that everybody sings together. So, that had something to do with it, which can be heard in the chorus with the choir singing along. Also, there's a song that used to be sung on Remembrance Sunday which also influenced me. I can't actually recall the name of the hymn, but it used to move me every time I heard it – and the word 'restless' was in there, which I thought was nice. I didn't say 'I'm going to take this word out of the hymn and stick it in my song', it was only after I'd written the song that I realised that's why I'd written it. This frequently happens. It's not a deliberate thing of 'I'm going to take this and that, stick it all together and see what I come up with.' After you've written a song you sometimes think 'Oh, that's where I got the idea from.'"

I'M GOING HOME: "I'd been down in the country to see a girlfriend – this is years and years ago now – and I remember thinking that I had to leave her, I had to go home, but that I would always think about her when I was going back to the city. It's just about the sadness of finding something or someone that you really like and knowing that you have to leave but, nevertheless, you'd had a great time and, possibly, that time might reappear."

WATCHING THE WORLD: "This was just a bit of fun; watching the world go by. Oh, I remember it very well. I was in this guy's house, a friend of mine – again, this was years and years ago – and we were just whacking away on guitars, my friend had just discovered how to play slide guitar, and the song simply emerged from that jam session. 'Pass me the bottle, pass me the wine...' We were obviously having a few drinks!"

I WILL: "I remember this one. I was in Dublin at a friend's flat, again, and I think I had a row with my current lady – who happens to be my first wife; Diane! This was during the early, very early, courting days. I remember looking around the books in this flat, and one of them was about an island. I

just looked at the title of the book, actually, and when I sat down the song came straight out. From there, it developed into something. So it wasn't really a song written as a result of a row, but as a result of escape, of fulfilment. It's always been a big favourite of mine, and I love the line 'To press my hands deep into Mother Earth.' That's quite an interesting line about returning to Mother Earth, and planting seeds in the ground that would then grow. Yeah, I've always loved that tune..."

So, that's Wax Lyrical – and if you have any frustrating questions or queries about any of Chris' material, simply send them in to the club address, and he'll do his best to provide an answer.

PERSON TO PERSON

Again, this is an opportunity for members to ask Chris... anything! Here are some of the latest enquirers.

What is Chris' opinion on the opening of the Berlin Wall? (Carl Heniemann, Crewe, England). **CHRIS:** "Oh, I'm absolutely thrilled about it. In fact I remember the night it happened. I was in tears because I know Berlin so well, and Germany, and I know the feelings of the people there – the young and the old alike. So I felt it was happening in a country very dear to me. Also, I was looking at my own country, Ireland, thinking it was about time people started shaking hands across the border there."

In the song This Waiting Heart, what does the chant 'O Leon Wellahiya' mean? (U. Hohmann, Frankfurt, West Germany and Francis Leneghan, York, England). **CHRIS:** "I just kind of made it up. I wanted it to sound like a Maori boat chanting song, you know; what they would be grunting away as they pulled the oars. These guys were actually rowing in my mind, that's where O Leon comes from – but it doesn't actually mean anything. As for 'Wellahiya', I'll tell you where that came from. One of the first words my little baby son learned to say was... 'Hiya!' He used to go around saying 'Hiya!, hiya!' to people. So I thought 'Wellahiya' would be nice to stick in."

You always mention your success in places like Germany, Ireland and Canada – but what about Holland? (Carla van Gils, Gouda, Holland) **CHRIS:** "Actually, that is a very good comment. I have been popular out in Holland for a number of years. It's been a slow build, like everywhere else, but one of the highlights of the last tour was our concert at the Ahoy Stadium in Rotterdam over there. We were amazed by the reaction from the audience. It was a spectacular show from every point of view, and really made me realise that I did have followers out there. Again, getting the Edison award in Holland, which I spoke of earlier, really underlined that I am successful over there, and do have a lot of Dutch fans. So, yes, I would agree with this lady; maybe I don't mention Holland enough but that's generally speaking, because I don't go to Holland very often – except maybe to do TV. Also, we're limited to the amount of concerts we can do there because it is such a small country. Funnily enough, though, there's a place over there called Vollendam – which is a tiny little village – that's a real stronghold of support for me. Virtually the entire village jumps on to three or four buses to come and see me when I do a show in Holland. I always thank the people who have come to see me, but it's become a standing gesture every time I play in Holland to thank the people of Vollendam especially."

UNTIL THE NEXT TIME...

And here we are again; all too soon at the end of another newsletter. Before signing off, however, Chris has a few final, deeply felt words for anyone who has ever written to him...

"I'm getting some regular correspondents here and, basically, I would like to say thank you to all the fans that write. Also to those who send gifts for the children on their birthdays and think about sending cards to them and to me. It's like having lots and lots of people out there that you've never met, but who care about you. Unfortunately, it's very hard to reply to them all – and I'd like to emphasise this because it's a very important point. I get so much mail asking for personal replies and autographs and, well... I really haven't got time. I tell you, I've got a stack of things that I just wish I could do something about. I could spend, literally, the next three weeks all day answering all the mail that I've had – and I haven't got the time for that, which is a pity. I'm not saying please don't write anymore – because it's great to hear from people – but it's very difficult for me to personally reply to everything. So I really want to get this point across and say... thanks. Thanks for everything that people send; all the letters, all the gifts, all the beautiful knitwear that they do for my children. I'm a pretty organised person, but sometimes I go white when I look at the pile of stuff that I have to answer. And when it's between five and ten items a day – on top of everything else I have to do – well, nobody in the world could handle that. I haven't got a secretary, and I don't plan to get one. So... it would be nice if I could reply but, unfortunately, it just isn't possible. I hope you will all understand that."

No doubt you do so, until the next time, please remember to 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. Please note that the next edition of the Gazette is likely to be in October and not September – in order to give me time to speak to Chris after his forthcoming live shows. Speaking of which; happy hunting for tickets to them – and hope to see you all at one or other of the concerts.

Take care, and have a good time...

PS: Could Sandra Darwisch please contact me – I haven't forgotten about your plans to organise a meeting for C de B fans in your area. You were not in each time I called to get the details...