

THE NEW *Chris de Burgh* CLUB

P.O. BOX 102, STANMORE, MIDDLESEX, HA7 2PY

MARCH 2004



THE GETAWAY

GAZETTE

Hello and welcome once again to another edition of The Getaway Gazette which, quite unbelievably, is our first since...February, 2004!

Yes, indeed, what you are now holding is the promised **'The Road To Freedom'** album special, in keeping with this fan club's time-honoured tradition of devoting an entire magazine to the making of each new album of original material by Chris. As you will already be aware, **'The Road To Freedom'**, is released in Europe on **March 8**, and in the UK on **March 15**.

If you are receiving this newsletter during March, 2004, it should be accompanied by one or both of the following:

**1): All members** have also been sent a special leaflet outlining where and how to buy a copy of **'The Road To Freedom'**, bearing in mind that it is an independent release – for Chris's own Ferryman Productions label – and, as such, is not an album that is as widely available to purchase as his previous records. With this in mind, do please read the enclosed leaflet carefully!

**2): Some members** have also been sent an application form to renew their membership to the fan club and, in every single case, this *should* have accompanied the previous, February, 2004, issue of the Gazette. However, and in the circumstances of the huge delay between that newsletter and the previous one – especially taking into account that we knew another Gazette would so quickly follow the February issue – we took the view that it was not right or fair to invite people to renew their club membership at that time. In short; we sent you one extra, free newsletter (the last one) more than you were due. We hope you will appreciate this gesture, and trust you will understand that it was made – once again – with humble apologies for the long delay between newsletters. We also very much hope that you will decide to renew your membership to the club!

All of that established, let's move straight across now to the man himself, and to all of the information and background he has to share about the making of the new album and the individual songs featured on it...

**'The Road To Freedom'** is a very evocative title. It could be interpreted in several ways – and I am wondering whether one of them has anything at all to do with the fact that the album is your first made outside of a major record company, or am I reading too much into it?

**CHRIS:** "No, no. You're on the right track. You ask

somebody – anybody – what do you understand by freedom? - and they will probably say something like 'Well, it's to do with being able to have free expression, to physically move around where you want and when you want. To have no restrictions.' It's a very wide and broad word in the sense of its meaning and definition. For people who are in prison, freedom is release from incarceration. When you hear the President of the United States speaking about freedom, it's really about freedom of choice, freedom to say what you want – within the social constrictions of the way we live. You don't have the freedom to go and steal somebody else's property or to go and kill them. But, within normal social and civilised values, freedom is an aspiration that just about every country in the world wants. To me, it's difficult to explain what freedom is, but I often feel that the best way to describe what it is is by suggesting what freedom isn't. And when you talk about what freedom *isn't* – like what people in Eastern Europe had before the collapse of the Soviet Union...they did *not* have freedom. When they finally had it, then they could express what it is to have it. It means not being followed all the time by Secret Police. It means not having to queue for hours on end to buy a loaf of bread. It means being able to send your children to schools. It means being able to go and earn a decent living in an area where you want. By referring to what freedom isn't and to the claustrophobia of not having freedom, it often sheds great light on what freedom actually is. That's why it's a very broad thing. So, for me, **'The Road To Freedom'** – the actual title track – it's not referring to anything specific. But, as you say, it is also another movement of mine where, for nearly 30 years now, I had been with the same record label – and this is my first release on a new record label, Ferryman Productions. I'm so excited by that because it means that I now have the freedom to do what I want with this record. I'm not talking in terms of artistic interest here, incidentally, because I've never, really ever, been approached by record companies and told 'You must record in this way or that way.' They have *always* left me alone and I thank them for that, because it meant that I could have my own artistic expression, which is not what a lot of these young performers these days – who are actually packaged and told what to do - are able to enjoy. I have this tremendous freedom now to do what I want – and always have, artistically – but, with my own product, my own records, I can do what I want. I do not – and neither does my manager, Kenny, for that matter - have to refer to an echelon of music business people, who will either show no interest or a bit of interest, or side-step the issue. It's quite often a nightmare dealing with record companies. In fact, there was a funny moment when

I had just finished recording some songs for the new album with the orchestra and one of the orchestra leaders said 'That's gorgeous, what we've just done. I wonder what they'll think about it at the record company?' And I said 'Yes, I wonder...', and then I suddenly caught myself: 'Wait a second; we're the record company!' So, that's what it means. It's a freedom, I suppose, of marketing ideas. If I want to sell CDs of this new album by the side of the road, I can do that – because they are mine to sell."

**Going into this album, knowing that it was to be totally your own thing, is that why, perhaps, you felt that a solo record was the way to go? You might just as easily have opted to go for a full-blown big rock album with a band, as you have in the past. Was there any reason why, at this particular time, you chose to do the kind of record, in terms of solo performance and featuring an orchestra, that you have done?**

**CHRIS:** "Well, I think it's important to stress that only three songs on the album feature an orchestra, and they were done live. It's also important for me to stress that a *huge* number of the other songs were done live, simultaneously, with another performer – either a guitar player or a keyboard player – and then we added to the record and we built up the songs. So, in that respect, it's definitely not a solo record. Now, the key thing for me was the knowledge that I was able to write songs that I would *perform* solo. Whether or not they sounded like what was on the record was immaterial to me. The fact is, the ideas were there and each song, I can perform live – solo. There were no constrictions or restraints that involved me thinking 'Oh, my God, I'd better put a band track in here, so that we have a good old thumper of a song.' By removing, mentally, a band tour from the writing process freed me completely to write specifically for me to perform, on my own. As I didn't have to write songs while considering the part to be played in them by a band performance, it meant a really complete change of direction. So I was able to take a lot of time personally developing each song which, in the past, was not really an option if you had to bring a band in."

**The album presents a very up-beat, positive and hopeful over-view of the world...**

**CHRIS:** "I've written all of the songs from the standpoint of who I am today. I haven't pretended I'm 30 years younger. These songs will, I believe, appeal across the board but they're written from what I'm thinking about today and what my imagination is perceiving. I promised that this would be a record for the fans and some of them, once they start getting into it, may think that it is, in some ways, a little

maudlin and sad and morose. However, that couldn't be further from the mark - and it certainly doesn't reflect my natural optimistic view of life - it's just that I'm actually, probably more so than for a long time, really digging deep and having a look at problems. There's a lot of depth, in my opinion, to my own feelings, my own beliefs and things that touch me and move me and make me emotional in these new songs."

**OK. Can you talk us through the songs, one by one?**

**CHRIS:** "With pleasure. Here they are..."

***When Winter Comes:*** "This is the first time I've ever put a track that is completely instrumental on a record. It's very evocative, and very 18th Century, which leads then into the title track..."

***The Road To Freedom:*** "A lot of people who have come to the more recent live shows have already heard me performing it, and it's almost immediately become a favourite. Certainly, people have told me via the website that they loved it. It's an extremely powerful song and is very much about a feeling of being in the West of Ireland, or the West of Scotland, in the 17th Century. Times are very hard and a father is grieving for his son, who may not be dead but who has definitely gone off to fight for freedom. The father wants his son back again, and he says 'Freedom doesn't change anything. I've lived a long life and I've seen that nothing really happens because of it. Does it make my crops grow? Does it bring the rain and the sun?' He is much more concerned about his crops and losing his son than he is about this slightly nebulous word, freedom. That's his point of view. I did three tracks with orchestra, including this one, and I was absolutely thrilled again to be performing live with an orchestra. It's such a buzz."

***Snow Is Falling:*** "Hauntingly beautiful, with an Eastern European feel. Lyrically, it's to do with loved ones lost – quite literally so. Again, this is a song I've already performed a lot in concert. You'll only have to mention the title of this one and, I'm sure, people will remember it from my recent live shows. Once again, I performed and recorded this with an orchestra."

***The Words "I Love You":*** "Starts off looking at a child-parent relationship and how, so often, particularly with sons and fathers, when they to talk the knives come out before they have begun. I'm saying 'Well, that was me', but I've actually learned to say 'I love you'. That's actually a fact that happened to me; I got through all of that *drama* with my Dad by swallowing my pride and saying 'Dad, I love you.' And it meant the world to both of us. The song actually goes

deeper and broader than that by saying if people around the world had more tolerance to each other's religions and beliefs by saying the words 'I love you' it would make for a different world. And I'm saying that the one that I believe in is the one who died upon the cross. So, it's a deep look at religious and social tolerance around the world, as well as a personal look at father-son relationships."

**Songbird:** "A moving tribute to Eva Cassidy. It's my way of saying that this girl had an absolutely stunning voice."

**Five Past Dreams:** "For me, because I write in such a visual way – and I always saw *'The Lady In Red'* as being an incident that happened one night – I often wonder what happened next, later that night, into the dawn. This song is the second part. Ever since I recorded *'The Lady In Red'*, I had such a strong picture in my mind of what happened preceding the party that these two people went to, and during the party. This song concerns the bit that happened after the party and, no, it's not all about the sexual connotations! *'Five Past Dreams'* is about after everybody has gone home after the party. The guy singing it is actually pretty drunk. He admits that he's had too much to drink, but he doesn't want to let the moment go; he's having too much fun. The both of them are. It's coming up to dawn, the dawn is rising and the city lights are shining out in the distance. There's just the two of them and the song is about what happened. As I say, it's the second part of *'The Lady In Red'*. There are some fairly interesting musical and lyrical references to that song, too..."

**Here For You:** "Written from the standpoint of a parent. It's the scene at the airport when the child who has grown up to their late teens, early 20s, is leaving for a couple of years to go to Australia or America; somewhere far, far away. All the friends are there and there's lots of tears and great excitement from the child, the youngster, but also apprehension as well. The father is saying 'The time has come. I know you have to fly unaided but I'm here for you wherever you are and whatever you do.' That's a thoughtful one and, again, it's performed live with an orchestra. There's a very positive feeling coming off it – and Rosanna sings on it. Long before she became interest in Miss Ireland or Miss World, incidentally. I decided that I wanted her on it, because the song is really about her growing up. Basically, with her being the eldest, this sort of situation was going to happen with her first. She sings a bit on the end, which is going to be of great interest to those interested in such stuff! Incidentally, the eye on the cover of the album also belongs to my daughter."

**What You Mean To Me:** "A fun, Spanish-style song – with Spanish lyrics in it, which I wrote. It's a co-write with Phil Palmer, the guitar player who has been playing on my records since 1982. It's a fun look at memories and a couple revisiting a place where they went when they were young lovers. This was their favourite place, and they're revisiting it. In a way, it almost links to *'Five Past Dreams'*."

**Rose Of England:** "This is about the bittersweet life of Queen Elizabeth – and it has already become one of my personal favourites. It's the story of Elizabeth the First, and the fact that she had to put duty before love. Although she was in love before she acceded to the throne after her sister Mary died, she was unable to marry the man she loved because it wasn't the political marriage that everybody, all her advisors, were telling her to have. So, in fact, she married nobody. She married England and became the Virgin Queen. The words behind the song are 'Rose of England, sweet and fair, shining with the sun. Rose of England, have a care – for where the thorn is, there the blood will run.' It's the paradox of what a rose actually is; a rose is a gorgeous flower, but if you hold it wrong, it will prick your hand and the blood will flow. That's also the paradox of her life; it was in some ways so blessed, so beautiful, but there was also a lot of sadness and grief underneath it."

**The Journey:** "This one is about saying to someone who is passing into the next life 'Go with love upon your journey'. And all the things that this person has meant to them."

**Read My Name:** "We all have a chance to leave a mark in life and make something of ourselves. There's no point drifting through life and nothing happening. Every child that has been born, we have a chance in life to make a statement, to make a difference, to take part. And at the end of it all, to say 'I have been here, I have done something – read my name.' It's an exhortation, exhorting people to do something. It's a very up and...wild, almost like Gypsy Kings-style song.

"And that's the album..."

**You've mentioned all eleven songs which appear on the album, but I know you actually recorded 15 songs. What happened to the other four?**

**CHRIS:** "They're still around and, in fact, one of them, *Kiss Me From A Distance*, actually appears as a bonus track on my recently released first single from the album, *The Words "I Love You"*.

(\*\* Editor's Note: See the end of this newsletter for more information about this, assuming you are not

already aware of it.) As for the other songs, one of them is called *Little Angel*, which I wrote as a direct lament, if you like, following the murder of the two young girls in Soham, England. I actually performed the song in Toronto, during my Canadian tour in 2003. I sang it then in the memory of Polly Jones, a young Ontarian girl who had also been snatched from the streets and murdered. I remember it very well, because everybody was weeping. I was weeping. People often say 'Well, why do you write songs like that?' It's because to *allow* people to cry...helps. It's an irony, but it's true; it's a way of releasing your emotional, pent-up feelings. You touch a nerve. I think that's what good songs do or good pieces of poetry or, indeed, good paintings. They touch a nerve and they allow you to be more in tune with your own humanity. That's very important because in this wild, stressful life we live it's essential to get back to your real self, and your own spirituality."

**That, of course, is one of your very special talents; your ability to connect with people...**

**CHRIS:** "Well, I'm certain that this new material of mine will do that. For example, another one of the songs I wrote, which did not make it on to the album, is called *Once Upon A Time* and it's the child's viewpoint of the break-up of a marriage. Now this is not something that I would choose to go at and look at, but the song emerged and I went with it. What's it like for the 40% of people whose marriages break up? What's it like for the children? I know that, quite often, mothers and fathers say 'Oh, no, we've got to stay together for the kids'. Well, quite often, that's *not* the right thing to do. And for the children, who do not understand, necessarily, it's a *devastating* thing. So I've written this song, and I remember playing it to people – just around the family table and stuff – and the tears were just flowing. It was that thing of just touching the heart of somebody. I noticed that...it's almost like if you scratch the surface of anybody, just emotionally, then the tears aren't very far away – just because we are living in a sad life, irrespective of what is going on in these times. I think life in itself is, in my view, probably melancholy interspersed with moments of happiness. That's why I feel that if you can make people happy, then it's just the best thing you can do – even just for a short time. Which is why I believe I've got one of the best jobs in the world."

**Why did you decide not to put 'Little Angel' or 'Once Upon A Time' on the album?**

**CHRIS:** "Simply because, in the final analysis and when I was compiling the record, I did not feel that either of those songs made sense for, or sat with, the album as a whole. So far as an overall view of the album is concerned, people have referred to it as a

'back to the roots' record and, well, it's not back to the roots for me. I never really felt that I had any roots inasmuch as I was never a folk singer, for example. I was always more interested in the story songs that then grew into something much bigger, into epic proportions, on record. With this new album, one of the key elements about it is the fact that I will be performing it solo, when I go on the road to tour. That meant that I moved away from the more up-tempo rhythmic songs – although there are a couple – into much more thoughtful, deep, emotional, spiritual songs. I don't think I've put as many of those kind of songs – described by the words I have just used about them – on to a record of mine ever before, mainly because if I'm going to tour a new record with a band, you just can't have those kind of songs on an album to perform. On the other hand, if I'm going to be touring solo, I can really do what I want. There's a lot of depth, in my opinion, of my own feelings, my own beliefs and things that touch me and move me and make me emotional in these new songs. They're thoughtful. They actually look at things that happen in people's lives, in the human condition. So that's really the overall view; it's a very organic record. There's virtually no drums on it, although there's plenty of percussion there – just not the standard sort of rock sound. It's *completely* different from *'Timing Is Everything'*."

## PEN PALS

Given the ridiculously short time between newsletters, we actually don't have any new names and address for you! However, if you would like to be included in a future list of Pen Pals, then please write your name and address **CLEARLY** and in **BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS** – specifying your age only if you wish – and send them in to the fan club P.O. Box. Be aware, though, that if we can't understand your writing, we obviously won't be able to pass your information on. Finally, just a brief note to point out that Pen Pals is an international service. We'd like to put as many people from as many different countries as possible in touch with one another as we can – and don't forget that you already have one major shared interest; a love of Chris de Burgh and his music. So, get writing!...

## PERSON TO PERSON

For the benefit of any newer club members, we should explain that 'Person To Person' is *your* chance to interview Chris by sending your questions for him in to the fan club. Unfortunately, having

established that, space prevents us from printing any answers from Chris in this particular issue. However, if you have a question for Chris – whether concerning his music, career or personal life, and regardless of how trivial the enquiry – then send it along to the fan club P.O. Box address, marking your letter **'PERSON TO PERSON'**. Remember that the purpose of this feature is for you, as a fan club member, to ask Chris for answers to *your* questions, no matter how weird, wonderful or just plain nosey they might be – so USE IT! Assuming enough of you send questions in, we'll print a selection of answers in the next magazine.

## UNTIL THE NEXT TIME...

That wraps up another edition of the Gazette, which we very much hope you enjoyed. The next newsletter will be with you later in the year, hopefully at some point during the summer. If possible, we would like to publish some more 'Person To Person' answers in it – so, please, do send some questions for us to ask Chris!

Meanwhile, don't forget to call The C de B Hotline to keep in touch with what Chris is up to between newsletters – especially at this very busy period in his career, concentrated as it is around the release of *'The Road To Freedom'*. Remember that the telephone number to call was changed some time ago to:

**090 63 63 33 40**

NB: Calls cost **60p** a minute at all times. Please ask permission of the person paying the phone bill before making a call. This service can only be accessed if you are living in the UK.

Also note that the system we use for the Hotline allows us to up-date the phonenumber remotely, via an automated 'prompt' system, whereas previously messages could only be changed if a human being (remember them?) was available to actually record a message using a reel to reel tape recorder (remember *them?*). In all other respects, The C de B Hotline remains exactly as before and, as such, is only up-dated when required – with each message always announcing the date of recording in the first few seconds of the call, to allow you to hang up immediately if you have already heard it. Listen out

for any messages from Chris.

So, until the next time, don't forget to send any comments, criticisms, Pen Pal addresses or Person To Person questions to me, Mike, at the fan club address:

**THE NEW CHRIS DE BURGH CLUB  
P.O. BOX 102, STANMORE,  
MIDDLESEX, HA7 2PY, ENGLAND**

As always, and until the next time, *many thanks for your continued support and legendary patience.*

**\*\* The Words "I Love You"** is the first single to be released from *'The Road To Freedom'* album. Backed with *'Rose Of England'*, the CD package is completed by the inclusion of a third song, *'Kiss Me From A Distance'* – which is **not** featured on the album.

The CD single has only been manufactured in a **limited edition** quantity, so it is certain to become an instant, sought-after collectors' item.

*The Words "I Love You"* is available for sale **exclusively** via two outlets only, worldwide; via the Internet at [www.cdeb.net](http://www.cdeb.net), or via Chris de Burgh Mail Order, at **P.O. Box 50, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 2US, England**. Obviously, you can go on-line at any time to order it, but if you do not have access to the Internet and would like to buy a copy, then simply write to the P.O. Box address given – and we'll send you an order form immediately.

**PS: If you are on-line, or have access to the Internet via any means, do check out Chris's OFFICIAL website at: [www.cdeb.com](http://www.cdeb.com) and, also, make sure you visit Chris's newest OFFICIAL site at: [www.cdeb.net](http://www.cdeb.net) – this latter site being an extremely important one for both Chris and his supporters. Opened during November, 2003, [cdeb.net](http://www.cdeb.net) is the home of Chris's only on-line store, and is the place to go to buy merchandise and records...**

*The Road To Freedom* European and UK Tour, 2004, will take in more than 40 shows, commencing in Germany, during May, and ending in England, during October. Details of all of the European shows can be found at [www.cdeb.net](http://www.cdeb.net) – where tickets can also be purchased. To buy tickets for the 15-date UK Tour, either go to [www.ticketline.co.uk](http://www.ticketline.co.uk) or call the National Credit Card Hotline in the UK on

**0870 444 5556**