

JURKMAIL

“I’m not resigning, I’ll still be on the throne three days after I’m dead.”

The Iron Baron

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It's A Thankless Job, But Thanks Anyway

Stonewall Takes A Break



For the past eleven years, we have relied on Stonewall to do a lot. Often with little or no recognition. This year, Stonewall is taking a well deserved break from one of the most difficult and thankless jobs you can undertake, the arrangements for space at the War.

After many years of being located in what was considered the prime space at the War, the ground was literally pulled out from under us.

This was of course no fault of anyone, especially Stonewall. We are appreciative of the blood

(Stonewall does nothing without somebody bleeding), sweat and tears he has shed to make sure Revelwood had a great place to camp.

However, in the recent spirit of change, he is stepping aside and letting someone else pick up the Boris Banner.

This year, arrangements for the Revelwood encampment are being made by Deryk Macleod. He reports that we will be in the same general locale as last year and is negotiating for the specific site. There is a long standing tradition for Revelwood to be near the nude swimming hole. After all, that is where the naked albino fiddle players hang out.

Deryk has also announced that there will be a real attempt to keep the aesthetics of the camp a high priority. Although we will probably miss the convenience of a trash pile in the fire pit, we won't miss the constant buzzing of the 42 million flies.

If you are certain you are going to the War and are hoping to camp at Revelwood, make sure you contact Deryk immediately. Use the Green Pages or e-mail at deryk_macleod@hotmail.com.



The Desert Island Playlist



Back in the good old days (no, not those halcyon days of typhoid, body lice, and lack of proper flatware that so many Revelwooders inexplicably embrace, but the good old days of about a quarter of a century ago), when the General, I.B. and I were spinning stacks' o' wax at our Alma Mater's radio station, one of our pastimes was compiling our personal "Desert Island Playlists" – you know – "if you were stranded on a desert island with only ten records, what would they be?" Probably an idle musing that many of us have indulged in at one time or another.

Never mind that if you actually *were* stranded, having your favorite tunes to mellow out with would probably be way down on your list of priorities – somewhere behind shelter, food, and lack of proper flatware. But, those herbally-enhanced reveries that yielded up those ponderings generally allowed us to make certain assumptions that, shall we say, skirted reality somewhat. And it was *fun* coming up with our lists. It still is. (Read on for the chance to share *your* list with the rest of the world via the Revelwood web site.)

I was reminded of this exercise in fantasy a few months back, when, in the midst of a CD shopping spree (on cdnow.com – a very dangerous site for an audiophile with a Visa card in good standing and a half hour to kill!), I came across a CD version of the #1 entry on every list I ever compiled, my absolute favorite recording of all time, *In the Land of Grey and Pink* by Caravan [Dream, 1971].

Caravan was at the vanguard of the late 60s-early 70s' Canterbury progressive scene populated by such bands as Soft Machine, Camel, Matching Mole, National Health and Hatfield of the North (all of which at one time featured members of Caravan, in fact). Formed in Canterbury in 1968 by Pye Hastings, Richard Coughlan, and the unrelated Richard Sinclair and David Sinclair, Caravan released two albums before *Grey and Pink* – their eponymous first LP, and *If I Could Do It All Over Again, I'd Do It All Over You* – before achieving a smattering of overdue commercial success with *In the Land of Grey and Pink*. The hooky, quirky, downright fun short songs on the record – the title track, *Golf Girl*, and *Love to Love You (and Pigs Might Fly)* – all got some FM airplay in their day (you'd probably remember one of 'em if you heard it again), as did side two of the record, the almost rock-operatic medley *Nine Feet Underground*, but the one tune that was rarely heard outside the airwaves of WGLS in Glassboro, *Winter Wine*, has remained my absolute favorite song for over 28 years; I consider it the finest song ever recorded.



Winter Wine takes the listener on a dream trip to an old English tavern, rather reminiscent of the Pipe & Pint, with dancing maids ("dull red light illuminates the breasts of poor young girls, dancing, prancing, provoking"), and drink that muddles your senses ("tea puts all the color in your dreams"), then onward to a "paradise for the taking," ending finally with a return to reality ("You're better off not dreaming of the things to come. Dreams are always ending far too soon"). This is a seven-minute journey that, although I've taken thousands of times, always leaves me refreshed and uplifted at the end, owing in large part to the song's sublime instrumental craftsmanship. It features Hastings on acoustic guitar, Coughlan on drums, Richard Sinclair on a bass line that dances through the song, working a brilliant complement to David Sinclair performing some of the best keyboard work ever done, on Hammond B3 organ and on Caravan/Sinclair's signature instrument, the Mellotron.

Now, this memory may also be herbally-enhanced, but I seem to remember that this short-lived musical phenomenon (the Mellotron) was a freakish mutated cross between an Emenee organ and an eight-track player, which produced sounds via individual endless loops of tape, one per key, with other instruments recorded on

them – so, a keyboard player could play guitar, trombone, flute, whatever. Dave Sinclair was a master, and coaxed a unique and amazing series of soaring keyboard solos from his Mellotron. I understand they broke down with alarming frequency, and quickly fell out of favor once synthesizers were able to do more than the GameBoy-cum-air-raid-siren crap sound that Keith Emerson popularized. But I digress.

Caravan produced a slew of subsequent albums. Immediately following *Grey and Pink* was *Waterloo Lily*, with Steve Miller (not *the* Steve Miller) on keyboards, when Richard Sinclair departed to join Hatfield and the North and David Sinclair left to form the short-lived Matching Mole, which was the Anglicized pronunciation of the French form of the name of Sinclair's first band, Soft Machine – *Machine Molle* in French – but again I digress. *Waterloo Lily* was, sad to say, something of a letdown.

Their fifth album, *For Girls Who Grow Plump in the Night*, featured David Sinclair's return with a passion (and a real synthesizer), and the addition of Geoff Richardson on violin and viola, which gelled the Caravan sound for the remainder of the 70s, through albums like *Cunning Stunts* and *Blind Dog at St. Dunstan's*. They toured relentlessly throughout that period, and though I saw them several times, they never performed anything from *Grey and Pink*, much to my disappointment. Caravan continues to tour and record to this day, with a lineup featuring Hastings, Coughlan, Richardson, David Sinclair, and a cadre of revolving side musicians. Their most recent releases include a studio set (*All Over You*) in 1996 and a live release (*Canterbury Comes To London/Live From The Astoria*) in 1997.

After lo these many years, a lot of my former record collection, including many of those that once occupied the Desert Island Playlist, are rotting away, down there in the landfill with the Earth Shoes and the mood rings, but *In the Land of Grey and Pink*, three vinyl copies and finally an indestructible CD version later, still tops my list. I really wanted to use this installment of the column to review more of my Desert Island Playlist (like Brian Protheroe's *Pinball*, or Valerie Carter's *Wild Child*, or The Good Rats' *Tasty*, or ...), but as usual, my ambition has exceeded my actual inch allotment (story of my life!), so I'm going to have to utilize another avenue – online publishing! At the time of this writing, I am working on a major overhaul of www.revelwood.org, and I plan to add a section where I can spout this nonsense at will. As I said in the initial installment of *Rodney Reviews*, I don't fancy myself a reviewer, really, I just appreciate any opportunity to foist my tastes and opinions on other people, regardless of their validity! So look for *Rodney Reviews Online*, and the rest of my Desert Island Playlist on a web site near you.

If you'd like to share *your* Desert Island Playlist with the world (or at least with our strange little corner of it), please send it to me via e-mail (rodney@revelwood.org) or to the snail mail address on the back cover, and I'll post it in the upcoming *Rodney Reviews* section of the Revelwood web site.

... 'til next time,

BR



SCHLAGER FEST II

Heathcliff, Melita and the Cutting Crew enjoyed a beautiful day of thrusting and parrying at the Schlager Fest II Tournament. Nigel of Castle West won, but it is wondered why he chose to attend incognito. Dressed as a simple peasant, his title of Marquis was mysteriously concealed by this non-flamboyant garb. Is there treachery afoot? Whispers in the shadows? Stay tuned.

High Language - The Cartouche

by Q

The cartouche, simply put, is a way to identify a person or organization by circling the Revelwood initials. Often, the initials are combined in an artistic fashion, creating a personal glyph.

Let's use Stonewall as an example. No, not a target, I said an example. First, I would decide what letters I want to use to represent his name. I choose "S" and "W" because I want to. [Remember that High Language is a free language. Don't be afraid to have it your way.] Having selected the letters, I combine them in a clever fashion. This combination works well on several levels. First, the combination is not a specific High Language letter. Therefore, it is not going to be mistaken for someone else who has the letters "S" and "W" in their name, such as Silly Wizard.

Also, legally, there is no evidence that I used anyone's name. Therefore, I can't be held liable.

Interestingly, it is and ironic twist of fate that the ancient pharos of Egypt actually stole this idea from us. All because the IB got into a pissing contest with the evil Queph Lord.

Now maybe this happened because our Baron was suffering from audio dystrophy and was in a bad mood anyway. And sure we all acknowledge the possibility that it was an *evil* Queph Lord because his father named him Pith Dribblelip. But most of us agree that it all started because The Baron is too pompous for his own good sometimes. But I'll still let you the reader, decide for yourself.

It all began late one night in The Barn.

Stonewall, the IB and I are siting quietly minding our own business when suddenly out of nowhere we hear a very loud "POP" and there standing in front of us is an Egyptian.

Before any of us could say a thing, eight more

"POPs" happen in quick order. Now The Barn is getting crowded (thank God it was its usual mess or there may have been 20 of them in there). Instantly, we notice that one of the Egyptians is dressed differently from the others. Most noticeable was his lack of a sharp pointy spear. That is not to say he wasn't impressive looking by himself all done up in dark, no I mean really dark blue. So dark as to be almost but not quite black.

He also had on a ridiculous pointy hat and he carried a somber looking sniffy stick. Suddenly, his eyes grew wide and he spoke.

"You're not Seth." He said in a disappointed tone.

"Oh my!" I said. [I know you wanted me to say something much more profound but I am striving to tell the story exactly as it happened and I happened to say "Oh my."]

Like a well-rehearsed chorus line, the guards all rolled their eyes. Stonewall shifted slightly in his seat and the IB lit a smoke. The once menacing, but now confused figure spoke again.

"Ah... One of you wouldn't happen to be Ramses would you? He said.

Simultaneously Stonewall and I push our chairs back about a foot and point to the IB.

The IB takes a long drag on the cigarette, lets the smoke seep out of his nostrils like a slow motion waterfall, finally looks up and through a cloud of blue haze and whispers like Brando, "Who's asking."

With the last syllable, the IB blows a smoke ring that drifts like a smart bomb towards the Egyptian's nose. From the right, one of the guards jumps forward and shouts, "Speak only when

spoken to, you dog!”

“Geez Phred, back off...” says the Egyptian guy, putting his palms up in the air with frustration “I did ask him something.”

“Oh. Right. Sorry sir.” The guard says as he steps back into line. “Just practicing.”

The Egyptian shakes his head while looking down. Then he raises his head and looks at us. “Right then.” He says with a renewed air of purpose. “My name is Pith Dribblelip and I’m here to beseech Lord Seth to help his faithful servant, me, take over this land and its peoples.”

I mumble the name “Pith Dribblelip?” Stonewall grabs his abdomen, doubles up in silent laughter and falls off the chair. The IB never takes his eyes off of Pith Dribblelip. He takes another drag on the cigarette, this time longer than the first, and through a similar blue haze speaks. “Pith Libbledrip? Never heard of ya.”

“NO!!! I said Pith Dribblelip!” The Egyptian shouts in a bellowing voice. “I am... The Queph Lord!” Stonewall lets out a howl of earsplitting laughter, crashing along The Barn floor, knocking over pedestal ashtrays, unlit ancient kerosene heaters and a table full of leftover tortilla chips.

I realize that I too am only a breath away from losing my control. I can’t wait to hear what the IB is going to say next. Expectantly, I lean in close to the IB, hoping it is a good one. The IB leans back in his chair, flicks his ashes in the spot where the ashtray had been a moment before Stonewall sent it flying and says back to the Egyptian. “Dribblelips eh? Well, we got plenty of those around here. What makes you so special?”

The Egyptian erupts again. “I’ll show you what makes me so special!” He raises his staff and suddenly beams of purple and green lights spew forth, surrounding the IB.

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH...

Citizen of the Month

This issue’s Citizen of the Month is none other than Majik of the Mistyhighlands. Majik has been in Revelwood for some time now and is a regular at most events, parties, excursions, parties, meetings, parties and of course parties. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding with the local constabulary regarding the treatment of thieves, Majik is enjoying the attentions of our Kingdom’s dungeoneers. This explains his inexplicable absence from the last two parties.

Majik is a poet, a storyteller and most of all, a magician (DUH). His legendary slight-of-hand tricks and his ability to befuddle the most observant audience earned him the title of The Iron Baron’s Court Magician. That befuddle part comes in handy with the women too.



A lover of fine spirits, Majik is famous for volunteering to taste any and all libations, sometimes even before the owner gets a chance. Some claim this too is magic. I just think he’s thirsty.

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Hennesy, Robbo & Q strike the historically accurate medieval “More Beer Please” pose just outside of the infamous Chalk Man Alehouse.



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