## sarah newsletter number 11 april 1995 free!

When I drew back the curtains this morning there was, as well as the usual loud hurrah from the crowd of good townsfolk assembled in the street below, a wonderful rainbow arching right across the city; a whole half-wheel, each colour sharp, it rose shimmering from the hills above Long Ashton, soared high up over the white stucco terraces of Clifton, then swooped back down to earth again just beyond the bottle-bank in the car-park at ASDA.

What a way to start the day!!!

So - why am I telling you this??? Well to remind you what a wonderful bloody place the world can be!!! And especially that part of it known as Bristol. And I choose to do this today in particular because - cue trumpets - SOUND CITY 1995 is upon us... and we want you all to come and visit.

# BLUEBOY SECRET SHINE

#### Monday April 17th (Easter Monday) The Malaap 140-142 Cheltenham Road, Bristol

OK: Sound City, for those of you whose brains are total ducks' backs when it comes to being hosed-down by the fizzy waters of pop culture, is the week in which Radio 1, a London-based radio-station, descends upon us poor country bumpkins in a great swagger of cosmopolitan panache, and attempts to rescue us from our silly provincial ways by parading before us a alittering procession of such chic metropolitan talents as Menswear and The Bluetones (both of whom have kindly promised to play their songs extra-slowly to make it easier for us), organising various instructive seminars and workshops, and possibly even offering some of the more button-eyed of our youngfolk jobs in the stables.

After which, everyone will shoot off back to the Big City to catch up on what parties they've missed and carry on playing records released on London-based labels that they've been told about by London-based journalists and London-based press-agents - e.g. Menswear and The Bluetones, who have but one (undistributed) 7" out between them so you'd think they'd be rather further down the pecking order than, say, all of our bands, and therefore out on the fringe rather than £8.50 main attractions. But no, not so, because It Has Been Decided that they are going to be famous pop-stars. And of course the people who Have Decided this are the same people who control the means (press, radio) to make them pop-stars; and who will tell us in a years' time (when Menswear are Number One) that they predicted it all. so aren't they clever.

And if you think that's a little cynical, that's because I'm a little cynic; and because it's now 3 hours later, it's pouring w.th rain and - actually, it's hail, not rain, and I'm not even sure "pouring" is the right word, because I'm not sure things can pour sideways - the wind's so strong that most of the wet stuff is actually shooting across horizontally without ever hitting the ground - and an assortment of unlikely objects keep swirling past the window and distracting me - plastic bags, roof-tiles, clumps of polythene sheeting - oh look, there goes the cat... grab hold of something, Jessica, you silly animal. Nope. Over the rainbow with her. Oh Too late. dear. I'm not sure she'll like Kansas. I've heard it's very lo-fi.

So... what I'm saying is that although things often start out looking peachy, don't forget that every peach has a stone. Which if you plant it will grow into another peach tree but that's a different point, so ignore it. For example: although Sound City kicks off with the SARAH SHOWCASE, by the time we get to Wednesday things have already degenerated into Teenage Fanclub. So there. Point proven, I snap my briefcase shut with a smug click and leave by a back entrance. Taxi! Oh heavens, I don't know - I know I should just be pleased that Bristol is suddenly No.1 Hip City and that for once people are making a fuss about a "Scene" that's actually worth making a fuss about (Massive Attack and Tricky - I'm afraid my jury's spending the night at a 3 star motel just off the Keynsham by-pass as far as Portishead are concerned), compared to, say, Madchester which gave us, hmmm, Inspiral Carpets, Northside and... The Mock Turtles.

But anyway; as you see, we, SARAH RECORDS - the worrying lump in the punk-rock custard. the fingernail in the indie sausage, the Strange Man At The Foot Of The Bed Of Pop toss our shiny sixpence into the Sound City pudding on Easter Monday at The Malaap Club on Cheltenham Road, between the bike shop and the pet emporium and dog-grooming centre, just on the edge of St.Pauls, recently voted yet again Bristol's top area for drugs and prostitution - although, that said, I've just been reading in the local paper that BEDMINSTER (which is where we live) is the new up-coming red-light district, with no less than THREE new massageparlours opening up on West Street alone. AND we're getting a drive-thru McDonalds on the corner of Sheene Road. This is fab - soon I won't even have to walk into town to have a great night out. Yes, these are exciting times indeed to be young and living in south Bristol ... you can sense it in the warm night air ... an electricity ... the heady scents of sex and danger... imagine a cross between Twenties Berlin and Fifties Tangier, only with more charity shops... even ASDA has entered into the general debauched Rabelaisian spirit of it all and begun holding "Singles Nights" so that now, every Thursday, all those lonely passionate souls who'd long-ago grown resigned to the wedding-less wilderness of Wilts. or who'd constantly failed to pull in Pill or achieve sexual congress in Congresbury, or who'd been too long left to their own devices in Devizes or hadn't shared a bath in Bath or a shower in Stroud for years, always finding themselves being told to Watchet - are driving down in droves to wander the aisles with symbolically empty trollevs in search of that special someone who's prepared to make them that Special Offer ... even Tesco's have leapt smudged and breathless onto the sexual bandwagon (having put their pound coin in first) - if there's no-one ahead of you in the queue with whom to engage in produce-related intercourse, they'll take another cashier off.

Er... back to the music... Monday is also Supergrass, Menswear and EMF - but that's at the University Union which is a horrible building with a hole through the middle - like a Polo - yes please - thank you - so, um, you wouldn't want to go there. Then on Tuesday there's Gene and Elastica and The Orb - and a Planet Records night at The Louisiana with MOVIETONE, CRESCENT and maybe FLYING SAUCER ATTACK; and on Wednesday, SECRET SHINE are supporting The Jesus and Mary Chain (are they still going? WHERE are they still going?) at Trinity Hall - a 20 minute slot between 7pm and 7.20, to be recorded and broadcast on The Evening Session the week after.

There's more; if you've always wondered what we sound like in real life, John Peel's promised us a (his words) "crappy interview" on his Saturday show, so we'll make sure we hold him to that. Any hint of professionalism and we'll pull off our false beards and leave.

Actually, we might be on the radio twice, because on Easter Sunday Radio 1 are doing an hour long introduction to it all in which a range of local celebrities will expound their views on trip-hop, the Bristol Scene and, in our case, the pros and cons of re-routing the number 52 through Knowle West to avoid the speed bumps in Throgmorton Road.

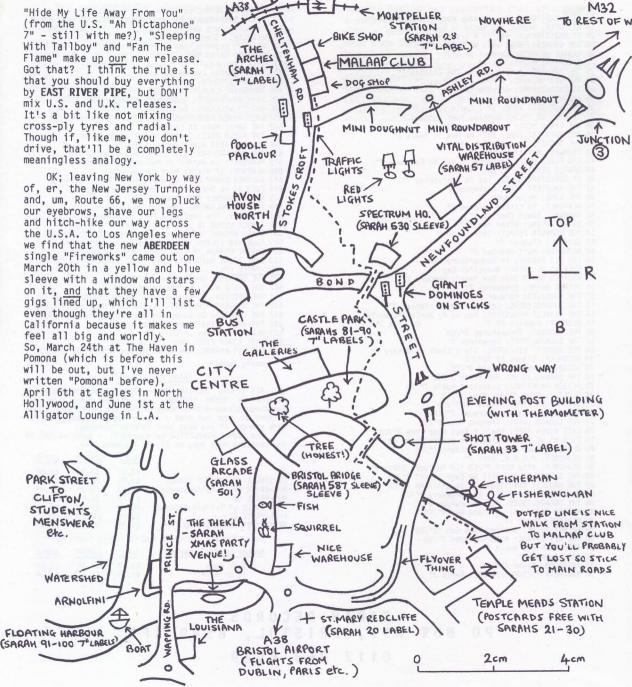
I think that's it, except to say that on your right you'll find an attractive map showing you how to get there and, by turning it upside down, how to get back.

Now: let's metaphorically don eye-patches, silk neck-scarves and dubloons\*, storm the gangplank of Emily the harbour-ferry, seize the tiller and, with cutlasses gleaming between our outstretched teeth and a cabin-boy secreted in the apple-barrel for emergencies. set sail down the Avon, out into the Bristol Channel, turn left, avoid Cardiff and go steaming across the Atlantic to New York where we find EAST RIVER PIPE running along the waterfront to greet us waving the master-tapes for a BRAND NEW EAST RIVER PIPE LP, which we there and then decide to release in mid-May. It'll be a 7 song 10"/CD, but (pay attention now) FOUR of the songs will also be appearing on the U.S. version of "Poor Fricky", which is out on Merge on May 8th. Basically, the American "Fricky" drops "Make It Real" and "Million Trillion" and adds 4 new songs, "Here We Go", "Marty", "When The Ground Walks Away" and "Powerful Man"... and these four plus

\* dubloons - baggy calf-length trousers popular with pirates. Often worn with hose, to impress the ladies.

"Hide My Life Away From You" (from the U.S. "Ah Dictaphone" 7" - still with me?), "Sleeping With Tallboy" and "Fan The Flame" make up our new release. Got that? I think the rule is that you should buy everything by EAST RIVER PIPE, but DON'T mix U.S. and U.K. releases. It's a bit like not mixing cross-ply tyres and radial. Though if, like me, you don't drive, that'll be a completely meaningless analogy.

OK; leaving New York by way of, er, the New Jersey Turnpike and, um, Route 66, we now pluck our eyebrows, shave our legs and hitch-hike our way across the U.S.A. to Los Angeles where we find that the new ABERDEEN single "Fireworks" came out on March 20th in a yellow and blue sleeve with a window and stars on it, and that they have a few gigs lined up, which I'll list even though they're all in California because it makes me feel all big and worldly. So. March 24th at The Haven in Pomona (which is before this will be out, but I've never written "Pomona" before), April 6th at Eagles in North Hollywood, and June 1st at the Alligator Lounge in L.A.



That done, we then sneak on board the next plane out of LAX (having bribed the stewardess with promises of gun-control and free health care for all within a year) and arrive back at Gatwick to find that the debut EP from SHELLEY, "Reproduction is Pollution", is also now out, in a black and blue sleeve with Tim on it. This is a strict one-off, by the way, as Tim and Dickon are now busy with the reorganised ORLANDO, who now incorporate horns and strings and things in a MY LIFE STORY-ish way ... while SHELLEY's guitarist Steve now has his own band in Oxford called JUDE who. judging by this morning's demo tape, are well worth cocking an ear to; but I'm afraid you're too late with the "Jude - they sound a bit obscure" joke because I've just done it.

Predictably, the new BLUEBOY EP is taking longer than expected due to a whole plethora of reasons which for brevity we'll just call Keith - they're now recording it at the end of April, so - out in June/July. Be patient, my children, or we will lose our tempers and post poorly-earthed electrical appliances VOU disguised as bath-salts. And anyway, you can console yourselves in the meantime with a live BLUEBOY EP that's coming out with a French fanzine... Recorded last year in Toulouse, it features "Air France", "Sea Horses" and "Chelsea Guitar", and you can get more info by writing to Aquavinyl Records, 12 Rue Jean Giono, 33520 Bruges, France; or by accosting a member of the band in a dark alleyway and threatening to "spill the beans" - paranoia is a wonderful thing. You could even have some beans with you - for that added surreal touch.

Other BLUEBOY news: they apologise for being so slow in answering mail, and say that, to help speed things along in future, they're going to start doing a regular Blueboy Bulletin. I try not to think what this will consist of, but apparently an SAE to Blueboy. PO Box 359, Reading, RG3 2YX will get you one. Um... there was more BLUEBOY news but, having scribbled it all down on the phone last night, I now find I can't read my writing ... the first bit says: "Keith is still open to offers" - but I've no idea what this refers to... though presumably if you have any offers, the above address will again apply mark your envelope "Keith Offers" something. I've also written "68 chocolate" -I think the chocolate refers to a dream Keith had about a paperchase through the streets of Bristol in which he was being pursued by THE SWEETEST ACHE and I was throwing chocolate at him. Don't look at me like that - it was his dream. He's an Artist. I'm just a Typist. Not sure what the 68 means - maybe he just wasn't feeling quite up to it. And sorry if writing SWEETEST ACHE in bold there made you think there was some SWEETEST ACHE news, by the way - because there isn't. SWEETEST ACHE. RICHEY MANIC. God I'm a tease.

Incidentally, at the risk of being called insensitive, I've spent many a happy afternoon at Aust Services, because you get a wonderful view of the Severn Bridge from the big picture windows in the main cafeteria, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least if Richey, being of a similar poetic bent, did the same. I used to cycle up there with a book. I say this just in case nobody's bothered going up to look, on the offchance he might still be there, with a large tea and a Belgian bun, wondering where his car's gone, and how he'll get home.

Those possible BLUEBOY concerts in Spain we mentioned last time are still pencilled in, by the way - though still with nothing blacker than a 2H. and even that's got a rubber on the end. However the other Spanish thing we spoke of - the 3 day festival in a cycle-stadium on the Mediterranean at Benicassiu starring HEAVENLY - does, amazingly, look like it might actually happen and, if it does, it'll be on August 6th, probably with Portishead and Moose don't snigger, Moose are HUGE on the Continent. Not sure who's headlining possibly all three bands will play it pretty close during soundcheck, and then one of them will suddenly make a break for the top spot. Sorry, I know that's pretty pathetic, but you try thinking of a joke about cycle-stadiums.

BOYRACER, on the other hand, are off to France, with HOOD, playing Lyon on April 25th, Marseille (26th), Grenoble (27th) and Paris (28th). Then in JUNE they're doing a cour of "The South" with MUSE: Southampton Joiner's Arms (27th), Exeter Cavern (28th), Plymouth Cooperage (29th) and Bristol Louisiana (30th); so, if you live in The South, watch out for the BOYRACER tour-bus, and give them a waveit's the big double-deck Eurocruiser with the tinted windows and go-faster stripes; and, on the pavement-side, a serving hatch and a large picture of a baked potato. Whatever rewards International Popstardom may bring, Stewart says he is determined not to forget his roots. Though of course they're tubers, not roots.

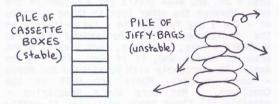
Incidentally - there's a coach travelling from Exeter to the Plymouth gig via various intervening towns; if anyone's interested, ring Philip on 01626 770436. This is true.

RID

The new **BOYRACER** LP ("We Are Made Of The Same Wood") is out on Slumberland/Turntable Friend in May, by the way, on CD or 10" green vinyl, and the first 1000 vinyl have a free flexi of their version of OMD's "Electricity", which apparently is "very different". I think they mean "alternative". Incidentally: Limited Edition Boo Hiss Capitalist Scum Call Yourself Punk Rock Sellout. Thank you.

Curiously, I just took a call from someone sending us a demo who used to play in the same orchestra as Stewart. Stewart doesn't like people knowing he used to be in an orchestra, you know, it doesn't fit in with his wild man of lo-fi punk image. So keep it quiet, huh?

Incidentally, we've been feeling a bit guilty about what we said about throwing all those demos away... we did try to return ones where people sent return packaging but - it's not so easy, because we have to store tapes and packaging separately, otherwise they fall over, meaning we have to try to match them up



again afterwards, and often what's written on the tapes doesn't correspond to what's on the envelope and sometimes people don't write ANYTHING on the tape, leaving us trying to cross-reference the make of cassette with the bassist's address and... in the end we just throw up our hands in despair and chuck them in a bin-liner - the tapes, not our hands. We've had complaints about that sort of thing ever since we tried to get rid of THE SWEETEST ACHE. Oops, sorry, did it again.

Back to **HEAVENLY**; we told you that their next recording would be on an AIDS charity LP, and I'd been assuming we'd now be giving you more details. Sadly, I actually seem to know less about it now than I did then. Oh well. For a start, it turns out it's an EP, not an LP - or the third in a series of EPs, to be precise. But we don't know when it's out. Or what formats it'll be on. Or who else is on it. Or how widely available it will be in the U.K. Or why we're all here. Or whether there really is a God. Or indeed even what the song itself is called, because they can't decide... HOWEVER: in an effort to quell the quivering masses, Amelia has suggested that we could run a competition to see if any of you can come up with a good title. For which I suppose you need some background so: the song is (I quote, though I could just as easily have guessed) "about a sickly boy who won't leave you alone after a party". And the ground was soft and the weather overcast. So - what should they call it, huh, huh? And if you want to enclose a small bribe for the judges, please feel free. Of course, they'll probably just end up calling it Elastica...

Amelia's also been doing some work with Nick Heyward (pah - call that work?), whom older readers might remember as the cute and boyish lead singer of Haircut 100 who then went on to become a serious solo artiste and record "Blue Hat for a Blue Day". She was just doing backing-vocals - not a risqué luuurve-duet à la Barry White and that woman with the performing chest whose name escapes me, though that would've perhaps been more interesting - and it's from a forthcoming Nick Heyward LP, but we don't know when that's out either. We know fuck all about fuck all, to be honest. Apparently he's very nice. Nick Heyward. So's Amelia. Heck, we all are it's why you keep rubbing up against us.

And on April 6th **HEAVENLY** play in London at The Albany (by Great Portland Street tube), with SMALL FACTORY & THE PHANTOM PREGNANCIES. This replaces the cancelled gig at the Russell Arms on March 10th which a few of you got told about accidentally due to a faulty bevel-gear in the windmills of my mind. Sorry.

Um... IVY's next release ("How Do You Know It's For Real") is out on Noisebox on April 24th, as a 2 track red vinyl 7" or a 4 track CD - distribution is Backs/RTM, or it's £2.50 (7") or £4 (CD) (including p&p) from Noisebox, Fishmarket, Mountergate, Norwich NR1 1PZ. ALSO, the American IVY release a single on the 18th and an album on May 1st, both of which should be stickered NYC to avoid confusion...

And also out on April 24th is the new HARVEST MINISTERS LP on Setanta; it's called "A Feeling Mission" and, having now heard it, I think we can safely recommend it to anyone who liked "Little Dark Mansion"... it's bigger and lusher sounding, and has a nice photo of singer Will on the cover - unless the Setanta marketing department decide to pull out all the stops, in which case it will have a nice photo of Feduyan Collins - but, other than that, it's not really any different to ours, apart from having different songs on. Shut up.

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95 NORTHERN PICTURE LIBRARY: Last September's Farewell Kiss 7"/CD (CD includes BOYRACER: Pure Hatred 96 7"/CD SARAH 94) 97 ABERDEEN: Fireworks 7"/CD 98 SHELLEY: Reproduction is Pollution 7"/CD \*99 BLUEBOY: Dirty Mags 7"/EP MID-PRICE LPS 401 THE ORCHIDS: Lyceum 10" LP 403 ST.CHRISTOPHER: Bacharach 10" LP 404 BRIGHTER: Laurel 10" LP/MC 405 EAST RIVER PIPE: Goodbye California 10" LP/CD 406 HARVEY WILLIAMS: Rebellion 10" LP/CD \*407 EAST RIVER PIPE: Untitled 10" LP/CD 602 THE WAKE: Make It Loud LP/MC 606 THE FIELD MICE: Coastal compilation LP/MC 608 THE SWEETEST ACHE: Jaguar LP/CD/MC 609 THE SEA URCHINS: Stardust compilation LP/CD 610 HEAVENLY: Le Jardin de Heavenly LP/CD/MC 612 BLUEBOY: If Wishes Were Horses LP/CD 613 ANOTHER SUNNY DAY: London Weekend compilation LP 614 EVEN AS WE SPEAK: Feral Pop Frenzy LP/CD 615 SECRET SHINE: Untouched LP/CD 619 THE SUGARGLIDERS: compilation LP/CD 623 HEAVENLY: The Decline & Fall of Heavenly LP/CD 376 TEMPLE CLOUD 16 song compilation LP (15-28) 501 GLASS ARCADE 16 song compilation LP/CD/MC (29-40) 583 FOUNTAIN ISLAND 16 song compilation LP/CD (41-53) 628 ENGINE COMMON 16 song compilation LP/CD (54-69) 530 GAOL FERRY BRIDGE 16 song compilation LP/CD (71-85) FULL-PRICE LPS 605 THE ORCHIDS: Unholy Soul LP/CD/MC 607 THE FIELD MICE: For Keeps LP/CD/MC 611 THE ORCHIDS: Epicurean compilation LP/CD/MC 616 THE HARVEST MINISTERS: Little Dark Mansion LP/CD/MC 617 THE ORCHIDS: Striving For The Lazy Perfection LP/CD 618 THE WAKE: Tidal Wave Of Hype LP/CD 620 BLUEBOY: Unisex LP/CD 621 EAST RIVER PIPE: Poor Fricky LP/CD 622 THE HIT PARADE: The Sound Of The Hit Parade LP/CD

\* - coming soon!

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