

think we'd have much in common. As the night went on this guy saw how quiet I was and we started talking about music. It turned out he'd been at the Skids gig and remembered my wee moment! He said he'd always wanted to shake my hand, then another guy said he'd been there too. Next thing, all these students were buying me drinks – the best ice-breaker ever...

Punk had arrived late in Glasgow, but made up for it by giving the city a very special memory. During Sham 69's farewell tour they were joined on stage by ex-Pistols Paul Cook and Steve Jones. The resulting Sham/Pistols recording is a legendary collectable. Dave Parsons, Jimmy Pursey and Dave Traganna were planning to leave Sham 69 and join Cook and Jones in a fully-fledged musical project, but the Pistols quit early on, allegedly saying that working with the Shams was worse than working with John Lydon.

DAVE PARSONS, Sham 69: We all took the train up from London – it was one of our farewell gigs and for sheer atmosphere we had to do the Apollo. You can imagine what it must have looked like, us lot and half the Pistols lying around drinking beer. I think we had the whole carriage to ourselves – understandably.

We did quite a long set for us, going through all the albums and then bringing Steve and Paul on. I think we did 'Pretty Vacant', 'White Riot', 'If the Kids Are United' and 'What Have We Got'. That gig was probably my all-time favourite, the one we'll never forget. The place was packed, the sound was great and the audience were... just something else. You very rarely get a gig where everything is just right and all in harmony. It was one of those sublime magical moments, when through some weird sort of alchemy everyone – the band, the audience, the music, the building – all became one.

It's also the only place and time we've ever been chased down the street by a gang of girls... and they weren't fans.

Maximus announced another scheme to maximise the use of the building, by running free rock shows showcasing local talent – on Saturday mornings. That most raucous of timeslots was offered in the belief the Scottish industry was at an all-time high. Manager Bob Saville told the *Daily Record*: 'We want to utilise the theatre throughout the week instead of having it lying empty when there isn't a show on. It will also help keep some kids off the streets. Record companies and promoters are more interested in Scottish rock bands than ever before and they're keen on the plan. With the shows being free the audience size will depend totally on the drawing power of the acts.' On Saturday mornings. Saturday *mornings*.

As summer became autumn the buzzword in the business was 'digital', a revolutionary new recording technique that was to revolutionise the studio industry. Tubeway Army hit with 'Are "Friends" Electric'; the Boomtown Rats didn't like Mondays, Cliff didn't talk any more and then Gary Numan (aka Tubeway Army) hit with 'Cars'. Ex-Wingsman Jimmy McCulloch died aged 26 of undetermined causes, and Chuck Berry went to jail for tax evasion.



Paul McCartney and Wings and the Campbeltown Pipe Band

In the Purple Palace, Ian Dury and the Blockheads was followed by a multiscarfed Nils Lofgren and then Gary Numan's first theatre-sized show. Then came Sky, Chic and the Buzzcocks with Joy Division, legendary for the drinking session that followed in the Central Hotel. They were followed onto the stage by Sister Sledge, the Stranglers, the Boomtown Rats, Whitesnake, Camel, Steve Hackett, Lene Lovich and AC/DC with Def Leppard supporting – and Sheffield's finest received a standing ovation on both nights.

JIM BRADY: The day the Blockheads were playing I went up the lane and found the fire escape open. There was a drumkit sitting there so I started playing along with the band, only to be told by a perfectly reasonably and extremely lenient bouncer to stop – which, of course, I did. About four years later I found out the story had gone around my school, then my office job, and finally came back as: I'd played drums with the Blockheads at the Apollo!

ALLISTER GOURLAY: I got free tickets for the Gary Numan / Tubeway Army gig from a promoter who worked with my band. Numan was supported by OMD – just the two of them with a bass and keyboard, and a huge reel-to-reel tape deck, and nothing else! Numan had two keyboard players set in a vertical rack of fluorescent tubes and had remote-controlled pyramid lights about two foot tall that roamed around the stage. They broke down during the set, right enough, but we all thought, man – he is so cool and insular!

PETER DARROCH: The circle was great for Neil Young or Joni Mitchell, but for the rock gigs it needed to be the stalls. We had a ruse for getting in cheap: we let a guy with a stalls ticket go in front then we all pushed in behind him. It meant we could buy cheap upper circle tickets and spend the rest on drink!

The Whitesnake gig was the only one I ever got ejected from for the ruse. It was a great night – we all sang along and even when a song wasn't so good we thought, 'At least three of Deep Purple are here.' The biggest cheers were for Paicey whacking the drums and Jon Lord leaning the Hammond over.

But there was a bouncer, the really big one with the beard like Van Morrison's on 'Tupelo Honey,' and he was on to us. I lasted most of the night but I finally got caught on the way back from the toilets. He gave me a bit of a whack and a push against the wall. I had a great bruise on my shoulder the next day.

I found myself abandoned in Renfield Street, feeling sorry for myself. But round in the lane I found a group of people who'd suffered a similar fate and we hung around by the tour bus. The crew opened up and let us onto the bus. I even got a beer – no, not a warm can of Tennent's with Carly or Linda on the side: something unknown in 1970s Glasgow: a cold can of Schlitz. This was living!

'Ain't No Love' wafter through the night and then next thing, the band were on the bus with us. I had an envelope in my pocket – I was in the habit of sending letters in those days, as you did. Coverdale, Paicey and Lord all signed it. I don't think the others were too impressed when I declined their signatures and sped off to Central for my train!

I'd love to say I still had the envelope, but you guessed it... I sold it for a fiver in the QM the next day.

JOE ELLIOTT, Def Leppard: Ah – the Glasgow Apollo... After reading about the legendary SAHB Christmas shows, and all the reports from journos from the big smoke going on about how mental it was, we were really looking forward to playing there. We were probably looking forward to the Apollo more than Hammersmith – after all, we'd already done Hammersmith with Sammy Hagar. It had to be better doing Glasgow with AC/DC! And Glasgow was virgin territory for us.

I remember going up to the balcony to watch their opening number, 'Livewire'. As soon as they started the place went nuts! I didn't know it was built to handle the violent rocking – as soon as it started I got out of there! It was the most frightening and exhilarating moment of my life up till then. I'll never forget it.

STUART TAIT: My mate Michael and I, aged sixteen, got tickets for Row G for AC/DC. Little did we know that was the front row next to their huge floor-standing PA system. It's still my favourite Apollo gig – but boy, was it loud! We had our French O Level oral exam the next day. Sitting at the back of the class all we could hear was ringing in our ears, which I'm sure sounded like, 'Angus! Angus!' Needless to say we both failed miserably. I never liked French anyway.

The year drew to a close with appearances from the Moody Blues, Steve Hillage, the Skids,

ABBA's second Glasgow show, which was the second-last show of their last big tour (when Frida wore a Scotland top), Hawkwind, Motorhead with Saxon (when Biff Byford ran onto the stage, threw an axe across it, cut a power cable and shut down the show to much laughter from the Motorheadbangers), Cliff Richard, Dr Feelgood, Queen, Joe Jackson, the Damned, the Jam, Leonard Cohen and the Police.

Sting and co had a number one with 'Walking On The Moon', followed by Pink Floyd's 'Another Brick in the Wall' – and December wound up with Lindisfarne supported by Chas'n'Dave with Chris Rea opening, Paul McCartney & Wings, the Specials and a televised Hogmanay show from Blondie.

ALAN YOUNG: Freddie was a one-off... And where else would you have a camp guy in leathers throwing Moët over butch rockers in the middle of a Glasgow winter, getting a cheer as he invites everyone to his hotel room for a 'champagne breakfast'?

TOM RUSSELL: Chris Rea was one of the first signings on Magnet Records. The label rep, Matt, came into my record shop and asked if I wanted to come and see this new guy. But he was supporting Lindisfarne, a band I always liked, so I agreed to go along. I met him later in the Burns Howff and he came in with this big guy. He said, 'This is Chris,' and I said, 'How are you doing?' and we started chatting. At ten to six we had a pint and a chaser. At ten past six, same again, half past six, same again. Chris said, 'I'm on stage at twenty past seven – but I suppose I'll just have one more.' So it gets to quarter past seven and he's steaming, and he says, 'I'd better get up and do my show.' We told him, 'Aye, it's just up the hill there – we'll join you in a wee while. One more...'

So when we got there, there were about 40 people in. Chris was very good, even though he was steaming – but at the end of the set, he took his guitar off and jumped off the stage! Matt and I were just open-mouthed as we saw him disappear into the orchestra pit. It looked like he went down on his ankle. Matt went backstage so make sure he was okay but I stayed to watch Lindisfarne and then went up the road. I'd forgotten all about it.

About six or seven years later, when Chris had made it, Radio Clyde sent me to London to interview him. I'd followed his career but we hadn't met since that night in the Apollo. They took me into the hotel room for the interview and the big guy took one look at me and went: 'You, ya bastard!' I said, 'I'm surprised you remember.' He said, 'Remember? Every winter, as soon as it gets cold, my ankle kills me!'

IAIN BAIRD: Thanks to the Apollo I had a number one single in the US. Okay, Paul McCartney, Wings and the other 2,999 people in the audience might have helped a bit... Wings recorded 'Coming Up' during the show on December 17, and you can hear the Glasgow choir chanting, 'Paul McCartney', football-terrace style, at the end. During the song there was a charge to the front – I was in the stalls so I joined in. We were all clapping and bouncing to this song that hadn't been released yet. 'Mull of Kintyre' went

Frank Zappa's
curious show

down a storm, of course – especially when the pipe band marched onto the stage.

I remember people laughing when McCartney asked the boxes, ‘How you doing up in the ashtrays?’ But he seemed overwhelmed by the constant chanting of, ‘Paul McCartney, Paul McCartney’ – you knew it wasn’t the usual stage patter when he grabbed a mike as he was leaving the stage and said, ‘As usual, you were the best!’ Even if you don’t like the music, you should listen to a bootleg of this show – it’s worth it just to hear the Apollo in full voice.

PETER STEWART: My Beatle-hating pal and I were in the foyer getting tickets for some show or other, and the entire Campbeltown Pipe Band were standing waiting in their full dress-up. They kept looking at their watches and every time a taxi pulled up they would say, ‘Here he’s now,’ and pick up their kit only to groan and put it back down again when it wasn’t ‘him’ – and I knew who ‘he’ would be! Beatle-hater kept saying, ‘Come on, let’s go.’ After stalling as long as I could – and to my great regret – I stupidly gave in and left. It was obviously the night the CPB walked in during ‘Mull of Kintyre’ – which I only found out about on the website.

BOB WILSON: I saw the Specials at the Apollo in 1979 and 1980. The first time, Terry Hall and Neville Staple decided to sit at the edge of the stage with their legs dangling over the side. You’ve guessed it – the bears decided it was time that they got closer to their audience and hauled them off the stage. All credit to them – they kept singing!

DANNY HENDRY, head bouncer: When Wings were playing the police called me up in the middle of the night and asked me to open the doors because the queue was all the way down the street. I got there about six in the morning. There was a wee guy at the front, ‘Aye, about time you got here...’ So I put him to the back of the queue! I think he finally got in near the end of the show.

There were always a few tickets kept by for guests and the like. Sometimes people would offer big money for them at the door, on nights like McCartney. When ABBA played the tickets were about four quid but I was offered forty and fifty quid. There was no need to do that to people – I just sold them for face value. I know some of my boys were taking money to let people in some nights, but with so many doors in the place there was only so much you could do.

I was invited to McCartney’s leaving party at the Albany Hotel and it turned out to be a great night. He was a good man. Another time I was in the Grosvenor Hotel when Bowie was playing and he was staying there. He came over and asked if he could join us, and had a few drinks with us. He was a nice guy too.

You hear all the stories about the bouncers, but most of them are just stories. We needed to be there – if you’ve got three and a half thousand Glaswegians in one room there’s going to be one or two bams.