

Rosemary Lane

the pentangle magazine

John Renbourn:
Of Tunes and Troubadours

Tour dates in the
UK and US

Guitar Tablature:
classic Bert and a new arrangement by John

Letters and Reviews

Issue No 11 Winter 1996/7

Editorial...

A Happy New Year to all!

And there are those amongst you perhaps who thought *Rosemary Lane* would never see the new year in! Just now and again the thought had crossed my mind as well! But the truth is we've just had a few little problems along the way. Ok, so what happened to the October Autumn edition? Hm, do you really want to know? You do? Right, well here goes. First thing is that I had hoped to interview John Renbourn over the summer months but as it turned out this proved to be impossible as John shuttled backwards and forwards between Scotland and everywhere else, including a couple of trips to Italy. Good news, though, is that we did finally get together in early November at Wizz Jones' house and the fruits of that conversation can be enjoyed in this issue after all! Second, in mid-summer Bert Jansch and his manager Alan King parted company leaving a fair few matters up in the air and for a while the lines of communication went dead. Third, Colin Harper (hi there!) sent me a package of *RA* correspondence that kept me busy for many days and then to cap it all Alan King (thanks again!) finally posted to me his list of extra subscribers to the magazine with the result that I then had to back-track and mail out many additional copies of Issues 9 and 10! It just so happened also that I started a very demanding new job at the same time as all this was going, so by early October I really couldn't see how I was going to get this issue out. But here it is! So let's run through a few of the items in this long-awaited new year issue.

First off there's the interview with John - we touched on a fair range of subjects. He talked about the release at last of the *Lost Sessions* tapes and the new album for Shanachie and, though the latter's not yet much further down the road in terms of finished recordings, John was able to fill me in on a lot more of the background. He also told me about a demon guitar-player called Lubo Mysterowicz - does anyone out there know this

guy? And for those of you interested in John's guitar style - which must be most of you! - John talked about his approach to playing the instrument and what he thinks has since happened to the "baroque" style that emerged in the 1960's. I could hardly leave that subject without asking what became of the mooted John & Bert 2 project and John duly gave me his account of that too as well as a few tantalising, tentative remarks about his forthcoming tour with Archie Fisher. Inevitably, after catching up on the contemporary scene, our focus slid back over the years and John chatted in a fascinating way about his view of the path he and others have travelled as the musical influences have crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic. All fascinating stuff and a complementary vision to the one depicted in the *Acoustic Routes* documentary.

Over the year I've received numerous queries about published guitar tablature and I promised to pick up this strand in this issue by starting to look at John's books, which are now many in total, though some, of course, no longer available. However, many of the pieces published earlier are still to be found in alternative volumes, so it's time to try and sort all this out. Or at least have a go!

The tablature this time round features a new arrangement of a Willie Clancy tune by John Renbourn that will be featured on the forthcoming album and another of Bert's classic songs from the past - *One To A Hundred*, one of my personal favourites. Plus, of course, all our regular fare: your letters, gig lists, reviews of Bert, Jacqui and John's recent appearances and recordings and the ongoing Pentangle discography.... So enjoy. Who knows what the new year will bring?

Ed



Contents

Rosemary Jane

Winter 1996/7 Issue No 11

	Page		Page
Editorial	2	Concert Review:	
Contents/Next Month	3	Bert & John at The Jolly Gardeners	21
Letters	4-6	Guitar Tablature 1 -	
Tuning Up - News	7-8	<i>An Phis Fhlinch</i> arr. John Renbourn	24-27
Tour Dates - Bert and Jacqui's Pentangle	9	Guitar Tablature 2 -	
Tour Dates - John & Archie Fisher	10	<i>One To A Hundred</i> by Bert Jansch	28-29
<i>Of Tunes and Troubadours</i> -	11-12,14-15	Album Reviews:	
(John Renbourn interview) & 18-19,22-23	& 30-31	Album News: A Frenzy of Re-Issues!	32
John's Tablature - the lost tunes	13	Discography: Late Pentangle - 1992-95	33
<i>Sir John Alot...</i> re-appraised	16-17	Subscription Information	34
Concert Review:		Information:	
John & Jacqui at the Purcell Room	20	Transatlantic Re-Issues on Castle	35
		<i>Lost Sessions / Bert Jansch @ 12 Bar</i>	BC

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

Top item next time round will be news of Bert's latest album. He'll be touring the UK in April so you'll get the chance to hear some of the new songs then....Now it's a while ago since I popped a teasing question about the most recorded song from the combined Pentangle repertoire. Many thanks to all those who wrote in. I reckon Lars Fromholt from Denmark came closest - congratulations! - with 5 recordings of *The Trees They Do Grow High/Bonny Boy* - on *Sweet Child*, *Sir John Alot...*, *The John Renbourn Group Live in America*, *Think of Tomorrow* and *Pentangle Live 1994*. In fact I make it 6 in all as the song also appears as *The Trees They Do Grow High* on Pentangle's *Anniversary* CD. It just pips *Reynardine* with 5 recordings and almost a dozen other tracks with 4 a piece!



And after the Circus.....?



Your Letters...

From: Kazuyoshi Shiraishi, Japan.

By the way, you know, John and Jacqui with Wizz Jones had concerts in Tokyo last month. Brilliant performances, indeed. We could meet good old friends - original Pentangle numbers such as Wedding Dress, Will the Circle Be Unbroken, Watch The Stars and many more. And the highlight was Turn Your Money Green by the trio. It was just a dream for me that John and Jacqui and Wizz played as a golden trio. And this October Bert will take to the stage with Steve Tilston and Maggie Boyle in Tokyo. Anyway please continue your great works of Rosemary Lane for us Pentangle fans in the world...

[Great to hear from you out in Japan. Ed]

From: Phil Openshaw, London.

...I must also thank you for publishing the letter in RL. I received two letters from ladies in Twickenham who, though they didn't know each other, live a mere three streets or so apart. All very handy for gig-going. Thanks to you once again...

[And many thanks to you, Phil, for that copy of the Jackson C Frank album. Now I know at last why it caused such a stir! I must say it's nice to think of RL bringing readers together... *If music be...*]

From: John Macleod, Edinburgh

Re: Issue 9 I think you've got a good balance of stuff - and yes I think Bert's album is his best since the early 1970's, though I haven't heard all of the later ones. I suppose a general run through all the albums (group and solo) would be useful for people like me who have a fair bit of the stuff but not all - however I realise your subscribers may have everything already and that this may only be of interest to few!

I picked up a Castle re-issue of Sweet Child recently I believe Castle now have the Transatlantic catalogue - have they re-issued any other Pentangle/solos masters? Or are any due? I missed issues 7 and 8 of RL so I'm probably a bit behind with what's out just now... All the best.

[Thanks for the letter, John. Yes, Castle and Wooden Hill have re-issued the Transatlantic albums on a grand scale: see page 32.]

From: Michael King, Gloucestershire

I have very much enjoyed the 12 Bar Club bootleg - especially the instrumental Bett's Dance which is a very vivid mental picture for me of a forest and sunlit stream - a beautiful Celtic melody. How about some guitar tablature for Bett's Dance?

[I'll do my best (maybe for the next issue?),



but this one really lies in Bert's hands...]

Peter Hill, Exeter.

Many thanks for the sending Issue 10 of RL which I have thoroughly enjoyed. I particularly like the guitar tablature. Keep up the good work. Please could you send me details of the back copies...

[I've had quite a few queries about back-copies. I am afraid that I cannot supply back-copies of Colin's original issues 1-8 (actually seven magazines with one double issue). That's really a matter for Colin himself. Issue 9 and 10 are available for any new readers who have not got them yet. Price £3. Tablature hunters should note that Issues 1-8 did not contain any, so don't fret! Ed]

From: John Gibson, School House, Leighton Park, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 7DD.

It is 20 years since I last managed to see solo Bert live on stage. It was at the empire in Sunderland around the spring of 1975 and I do not remember much about it other than Bert stood to play with his guitar strung around his neck and was supported by a small band of the Rare Conundrum type. The songs were of that vintage as well.

Much more impressive was the concert. Bert was supported by Decameron, at the Dunelm Ballroom, Durham, on the 8th November 1974 because I still have the tape I made that night. It was not a great night for Bert: some audience members were looking for a disco if I remember correctly, but it is an interesting listen after all those years. The set order is: Build Another Band (fragment), I Got A Feeling, One for Jo, Travelling Man, The Blacksmith, Lady Nothing, Stone Monkey, Fresh As A Sweet Sunday Morning, Angie, Dance Lady Dance, In The Bleak Mid-Winter,

When I Get Home, Chambertin, Blues Medley (Key to the Highway, Come Back Baby). I am happy to swap a copy for anything interesting if swappers can put up with my odd comments, here and there, throughout the recording.

I still have early Bert on vinyl! Magic stuff, a real Blue Album but pride of place is Jack Orion, always my favourite. The only one missing, through to Heartbreak, is Birthday Blues - I never got that one for some reason (though I have it on CD). I also have all The Pentangle except Sweet Child which I now have on CD including Solomon's Seal which I remember buying hot off the press! I wonder if anyone is able to remember Transatlantic Sampler LP's. TRA SAM 2 starting with Travelling Song or the two Contemporary Guitar Samplers?

I have also got a copy of the famous Jackson C Frank LP. I remember picking it up on Durham Market for about £1 around 1973. There are some great songs on it and it has always been a surprise that only Blues Run The Game has become famous. How many people remember that Paul Simon produced it?

[Fascinating memories, John. Not least of all because I have never, never seen Bert play, sing or even talk to an audience on his feet! Has anyone else witnessed this standing phenomenon? I do recall the *Contemporary Guitar Samplers* (and have tapes of them), but I had not realised Bert had arranged *In The Bleak Mid-Winter* in such distant times past. When I heard him play it last Christmas, the thought flashed through my mind then that it is so perfectly suited to his voice and imagination that I wondered he had not performed it before... Well, obviously Bert got there long, long ago! Like you I also value the *Jack Orion* album, though I cannot boast a true blue *Bert Jansch*, having bought the CD not so long ago. Ed]



Rosemary Lane

From: Alan Macdonald, Derbyshire.

On Monday I attended the Renbourn, McShee concert at the Flower Pot pub in Derby. The previous day I also attended a gig given by the Mandolin All Stars at a pub in Upton near Newark. Both of these concerts should have given me great pleasure and indeed they did, but it must be said that artists of this calibre should choose their venues carefully.

The Mandolin All Stars played their hearts out in surroundings which did absolutely nothing for them with regular pub visitors enjoying themselves on the other side of a curtain while we tried in vain to hear and enjoy what we had paid (sweetly) to hear and enjoy! It is amazing how pervasive laughter and the clinking of glasses can be! The Renbourn, McShee event, on the other hand, was staged in function rooms away from all distractions and was the devastating event that I had hoped it would be!

The concert at the Flower Pot included many old Pentangle tunes that since I never got to see Pentangle mark one I was delighted to hear. Having said that I have seen both performers many times in the last 25 years, but have never heard the like of this concert. Jacqui McShee performed with both subtlety and vigour when the time demanded it and with absolute clarity throughout. Her voice control is, for me always good, but on this night it was out of this world! Renbourn was also in his element, fluent, polished, adventurous and imaginative! I suppose when two performers have worked together as much as these two have, then they ought to have artistic mutual understanding.....but these two have it be the bucket load! Five encores (the last of which was Willy O Winsbury.....(If Jacqui can remember the words, said JR) surely demonstrates the quality of the entertainment, and how well it was received.

To revert to my previous point I wish that performers of noted stature could always be sure that the

surroundings in which they are going to play are going to adequate for the requirements of their music and that of their audience!

Yours....

Alan King

I'm sure readers of *Rosemary Lane* would not want to let the departure of Alan King as Bert's manager pass without comment. Whatever finally may have been the differences between Alan and Bert that led to the end of their professional relationship, anyone who has taken an interest in Bert's music and career over the years could hardly fail to note that it was Alan who managed and administered Bert's renaissance in the 1990's. And it was under Alan's management that Bert produced his most highly-acclaimed album for 20 years and through Alan that Bert established a London base at the 12-Bar from which yet another memorable recording emerged in the fulness of time. Followers of Bert's music have every cause to be grateful to Alan for the supportive work that he took on and, whilst no doubt the full story will never be told, there's no reason to doubt that Alan deserves recognition for facilitating Bert's musical achievements of the last few years.

Readers of *Rosemary Lane* will also want to know that I now have a list of subscribers who responded to Alan's initial advertisement for the magazine back in January 1996. As far as I know I have now contacted all these people by sending out copies of *Rosemary Lane*. A complication remains, however: as of the time of writing, I've still received no subscription fees at all for those people who responded to Alan King. I am still trying to sort this out, but as you'll guess: in view of the change of management, it's no easy task. If you are one of those people, I would advise you to send a new subscription to me (details on page 34) so that, if and when I do recover the lost subscription money, I can refund it to you accordingly.



Tuning Up

Latest news, gigs, recordings and gossip

Anyhow aside from my personal struggles to meet publication deadlines, it's been an eventful few months of Pentangling with John at the forefront of the activity. The 1970's *Lost Sessions* album, of course, finally got released by Demon in August accompanied by John's own sleeve-notes on the event. And in the meantime Castle's Transatlantic re-issue programme also got under way with the pairing of John's early albums - *John Renbourn* and *Another Monday* - as well as the original Pentangle recordings, *Basket of Light* and *Sweet Child*. Just before this Stefan Grossman's Workshop also released a *Rare Performances* video of John's work spanning his entire career from a London basement gig in the mid-60's through solos and duets all around the world - Sweden, Italy, Canada - with the latest slots dating from 1995. *The Lady & The Unicorn* and *The Hermit* have also now been twinned for re-issue by Castle, whilst Wooden Hill have put out *Sir John Alot...* this time accompanied by extensive sleeve-notes and historical reflections. On the performance front, many of you no doubt went to hear John and Jacqui on their latest tour. I saw them in London at the Purcell Room in September, but as far as I can judge the real action seems to have taken place elsewhere: thanks to Alan Macdonald for sending in a review of what was it seems an extraordinary night in Derby! This is included on the letters pages.

The break from Alan King with at least the usual

degree of angst and acrimony means that things have been a bit quieter for Bert, but he is now back in action and being managed from Scotland by Andrew Hunter. Bert has performed recently in a number of venues around the capital - the 12-Bar again, the Half Moon, of course, and also at what is - to me at least - a new venue at The Jolly Gardeners in Isleworth. I mention this as both John and Bert played there within the space of a month and so this may be a spot to watch.

As we go into the new year there's a lot to look forward to. Whilst John's album for Shanachie winds its leisurely way through the meandering paths of the Scottish and Irish music-scapes, Bert is hard at work on finalising the songs for his follow-up album to the much-acclaimed *When The Circus Comes To Town*. Working from home he has put together a blues-based album with a handful of more traditionally-sounding numbers - but all original material. Musicians have yet to be chosen for the recording session, but he is working to a May deadline and so no doubt we can expect to see the new album in the shops over the summer. He wants to tour with Mark Ramsden - many of you will have seen him guesting spots for Bert over the last 12 months or so, not least at the 12-Bar - and so the search is on for a keyboard/bass player to make up a trio to go on the road. In the meantime he will be touring Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Germany across February and March with a tour of the UK in the offing for April.



John Renbourn Rare Performances 1965-1995

Produced under the aegis of Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop this tape includes 26 numbers by John over 30 years: in Italy, Sweden, Canada, UK, US, Spain and Northern Ireland. It includes solo and group performances:

I Know My Rider (1965)	Goodbye Porkpie Hat (1982)
Travelling Song (1968)	'Round Midnight (1988)
Let No Man Steal Your Thyme (1968)	Abide With Me/Great Dreams of Heaven (1990)
In Time (1971)	Sweet Potato (1992)
Blues in A (1974)	Lord Franklin (1993)
Roslyn (1974)	Little Miles (1993)
Trotto/English Dance (1977)	Young Man Who Wouldn't Sow Corn (1995)
Whitehouse Blues (1977)	Lament For Owen Roe O'Neill/ Fair Flower of Northumberland (1981)
Pavane/Tourdion (1981)	Mist Covered Mountains of Home (1995)
Candyman (1982)	The Wedding /Cherry (1995)

Some of these tracks have appeared previously on *John Renbourn in Concert* and *The John Renbourn Group*, but there is also much that is new and taken together the whole project represents an extraordinary record of John's collaborations and changes of focus over the years...

John Renbourn Rare Performances 1965-1995



John's concert footage from 1965 through to 1995 £16.95 available from Stefan Grossman's Guitar Workshop, PO Box 8898, London SW15 3ZB, UK.

Perhaps the most startling news is that Jacqui is also going out on the road with her band, but this time round it's to be called Jacqui McShee's Pentangle. Not surprisingly, perhaps, this caused some heart-searching in Jacqui's camp, but needlessly so. No-one else is playing the Pentangle material at present and Bert gives it his whole-hearted blessing: "It's great. She shouldn't feel apologetic about it - she should just go out and do it!" And, after all, thirty years on it's Jacqui who's been left to deliver the Pentangle repertoire. Quite what it will mean in terms of the alternative direction in which the five-some were developing remains to be seen - and if you have not seen them yet, there are a half-dozen tour dates included in this issue. Jacqui says they've been

working on reviving a few old numbers as well as forging ahead with new material.



Now Jacqui McShee's Pentangle - see tour dates and insert

Bert Jansch

in

Switzerland, Germany, Denmark & Norway



20/2/97	SWITZERLAND	ZURICH
21/2/97	SWITZERLAND	SCHMITTEN
22/2/97		TO BE CONFIRMED
23/2/97	GERMANY	STUTGART
24-26/2/97		TO BE CONFIRMED
27/2/97	GERMANY	PFAFFENHOFEN
28/2/97		TO BE CONFIRMED
1/3/97	GERMANY	PASSAU
2/3/97	GERMANY	TO BE CONFIRMED
4/3/97	DENMARK	TO BE CONFIRMED
5/3/97	DENMARK	COPENHAGEN
6/3/97	DENMARK	TO BE CONFIRMED
7/3/97	DENMARK	HAELKER
8/3/97	DENMARK	TO BE CONFIRMED
9/3/97	DENMARK	AALBORG
10-15/3/97	NORWAY	TO BE CONFIRMED
3-20/4/97	UK	



Jacquie McShee's Pentangle

Jacquie McShee Gerry Conway Spencer Cousins Alan Thomson Jerry Underwood

23/1/97	Civic Theatre	Oswaldtwistle, Accrington	01264 380293
24/1/97	Huntingdon Hall	Worcester	01905 611427
26/1/97	The Stables	Wavendon, Milton Keynes	01908 583928
27/1/97	Nettlebed Folk Club	Nr Henley, Oxon	01628 36620
11-12/4/97	Ronnie Scott's	Birmingham	
13/4/97	Folkfest UK*	Minehead	

*also featuring Fairport Convention & Lindisfarne





John Renbourn Tours of US, Spain and UK

US Tour with Archie Fisher

6/2/97	Piermont Ny	Turning Point	John Mc Avoy	
8/2/97	Philadelphia Pa	Tin Angel	Larry Goldfarb	(215) 928-0770
9/2/97	Minneapolis Mn	Cedar Cultural Center	Bill Kubecko	(612) 338-2674
12/2/97	Carrboro NC	Carrboro Arts Centre		
13/2/97	Bethlehem PA	Godfrey Daniels	Dave Fry	(610) 867-2390
15/2/97	Portsmouth Ri	Common Fence Point	Ed Nary	(401) 683-3243
16/2/97	Bath Me	Chocolate Church	Mark Mcneil	(207) 442-8455
17/2/97	Blue Hill Me	Left Bank Cafe	Arnold Greenberg	(207) 374-2886
19/2/97	Santa Cruz Ca	Kuumba Jazz Center	Bob Breheny	(408) 847-6982
20/2/97	Berkeley Ca	Freight & Salvage	Steve Baker	(510) 548-1761
21/2/97	Sebastopol Ca	Sebastopol Community C	Cloud Moss	(707) 829-7067
22/2/97	Santa Monica	McCabes		
23/2/97	Mt Vernon Wa	Lincoln Theater	Peter Heffelfinger	(360) 336-2858
27/2/97 & 28/2/97		To Be Announced		

Spain Tour with Archie Fisher

To Be Announced

1/3/97 & 2/3/97

UK Tour with Archie Fisher/Isaac Guillory

8/3/97	London	Purcell Room	with Archie Fisher
15/3/97	Newcastle	The Buddle TBC	with Archie Fisher
16/3/97	Leyburn	Elite Cinema	with Archie Fisher
18/3/97	Sunderland	The Ropery TBC	with Archie Fisher
19/3/97	York	The Arts Centre	with Archie Fisher
20/3/97	Bristol	QEH Theatre	with Archie Fisher
21/3/97	Winchester	Tower Arts Centre	with Archie Fisher
27/3/97	Cambridge	Man in the Moon	with Archie Fisher
29/3/97	Witney	Corn Exchange	with Archie Fisher
6/4/97	Boxhill	Hand in Hand	Solo
11/4/97	Derby	Assembly Rooms	with Isaac Guillory
12/4/97	Farnham	The Pit	Solo
14/4/97	London	Prince of Orange, G/wich	Solo
22/5/97	Leek	The Swan	with Isaac Guillory
30/5/97	Kings Lynn	Arts Centre	with Isaac Guillory
31/5/97	Loddiswell	Hazelwood House	Solo
5/6/97	Glasgow	Press Club	Solo
13/6/97	Leicester	Guildhall	Solo
19/6/97	Newcastle	Live Theatre	with Isaac Guillory
20/6/97	Lancing	Adur Festival	Solo



John Renbourn: Of Tunes and Troubadours

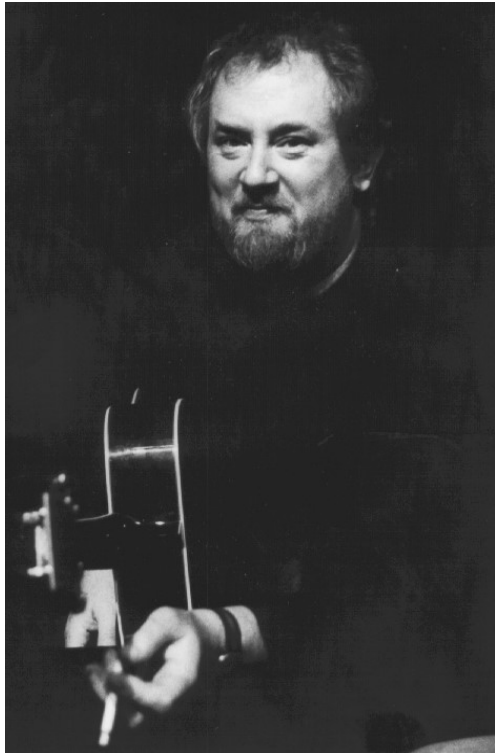
It was a late autumn afternoon in South London when I finally caught up with John one Sunday between two London gigs. I found him in great good humour, extremely well and very relaxed after over-nighting at Wizz Jones' and no doubt having made a night of it too... I started off by asking John to update me on his latest recordings and from there John ranged freely and effortlessly across time and musics....

Last time we talked you told me a bit about the new album. Has that got any further down the road?

Well, it's quite a saga. The money's being put up by Richard Nevins from Shanachie whom I really like - he has a tremendous interest in the music and so on. But the general idea is that there must be no pressure on the artist - but you know when there is no pressure on the artist things happen slowly, slower than normal! I've already been to Ireland way back to start the project off and since then I've been back and done a few tracks - just my guitar parts - in Scotland and I'm due to go back to Dublin when the tour finishes in mid-November to pick up the pieces. So far we haven't actually finished anything properly. There's tracks unfinished that still need over-dubs. So it's getting there but we're about a third of the way through I would think.

So it's going to be late next year....

Well we were hoping to try and sort it out. If I can get some stuff done quickly locally, finish off the guitar parts then I can go back with the finished DAT's by the end of the year which would be a great idea. But things are a little slow in Ireland.



"I've gone into it with my own fixed idea of what I wanted to achieve and I don't think this is quite what everyone else expected...."

It's not just me...

Yes, in fact Colin rang me up to say: "What does he mean he's having trouble finding a guitarist? I could recommend at least six guitarists!"

Yes, I don't know how that leaked out because everyone's being telling me they're ready and willing to do it.. It's not been a problem finding players, cause there's lots of fabulous players. It's been OK, but some of the arrangements are hard and I've gone into it with my own fixed idea of what I wanted to achieve and I don't



Rosemary Lane

think this is quite what everyone else expected. Mostly they're set arrangements - with areas for improvising and so on - but they are arrangements and need sight-reading ability which is not really in the mainstream of traditional players and it's taken a while because of that...a bit of time because generally things do take a bit of time sometimes in Ireland but it is working. It's more complex than I'd really figured out...

Where did the concept come from? When you outlined it before you said it was going to be Irish musicians playing a mixture of Irish and English music...

Well, basically the idea came from sitting around and drinking with Liam Clancy from the Clancy Brothers one night you know. It was a great occasion for me. I met him in a club and we all went off and drank till the small hours in the back of a big hotel and towards the end of it I meant Finbar Furey and quite a few other people. I was with a guy called John Cahill who organises some concerts for me you know I must have been saying what a fantastic bunch of players they all were and he said: "Well some of them think pretty highly of you! You could have your pick if you ever wanted to come to Ireland. I'm sure it wouldn't be difficult to organise some sessions with some of these guys you really like." Something that had never really occurred to me before. So he was in America and talked to Richard Nevins and Richard Nevins really liked the idea and more or less said to him: you find a really good studio and organise the musicians and Shanachie will get behind it. So basically I was on tour practically non-stop until I had to go over to Ireland with a bundle of charts all written out full of black dots on pieces of paper and then realised that although they're fabulous players it takes a bit of time for this stuff to sink in.. you know.. By then I'd formed the idea that these were players that I really wanted to work with. The whole idea seemed wonderful: Shanachie is a fabulous company, but then I realised what I certainly did not want to do was attempt to make a record in Ireland of Irish music with me trying to play traditional Irish music which would be ludicrous. And I'd rather try to have a kind fusion - although it's a dangerous idea - and use some aspects of traditional Irish music, but not completely, and some aspects of the more English-sounding music and then put them

together. OK? So the music seemed almost half and half traditional Irish and traditional English. But the Irish music is being approached in an English kind of way and the English music is being labyrinthised and played in a more decorative Irish style and some pieces even superimpose these two things or even juxtapose them. And it's been something which seemed pretty obvious to me, but is very much not obvious when you try to explain to somebody who comes from either of those standpoints. It's got to be either one or the other, and to get someone to play something that in fact sounds like a contrast musically at the same time as something else that's going on - that sort of Dartington conceptual stuff causes problems.

I was a bit baffled by it as well because you've done some stunning arrangements of Celtic music in the past. I wondered why you've gone for the mixture of Irish and English. Does that mean you see the arrangements you've done in the past as strictly English arrangements of Celtic music?

Yeah usually they're usually pretty one-dimensional. Although playing harp music on the steel string guitar is not really 100% the thing. Most of the arrangements have been kind of close to the original, I think, but this is not supposed to be like this. It's supposed to be a juxtaposition of ideas...

So this will be quite different from your past arrangements...

Most of them will be fuller and there's pieces where I'm using orchestral players who of course can sight read perfectly and get the whole thing done painlessly in minutes...

You put all this together first on paper. Is that the way you normally do things now?

Well yeah.. That the way I've been doing it for quite a while. As a result I've stockpiled a whole lot of ideas and this record has given me the opportunity to unleash some of them, so they're seeing the light of day from my great pile of manuscripts. And moments

[contd on page 14]



John's Tablature

- the lost tunes

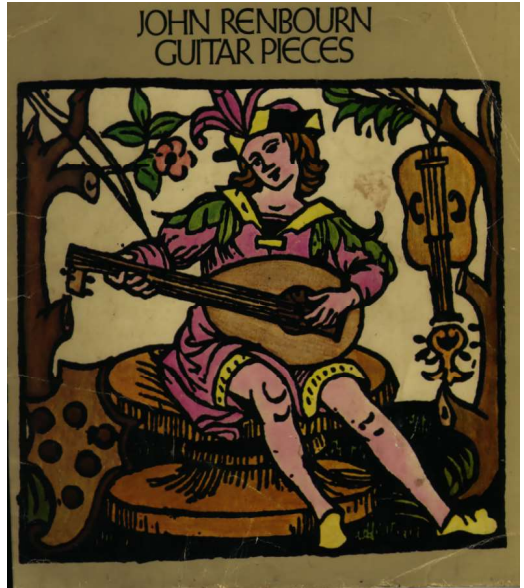
John's first book of published music was simply entitled *John Renbourn Guitar Pieces*. It was published by Oak Publications in 1972 and was written in standard music notation only. Most of the tunes, however, have been re-published and are available in one of the following books as detailed below:

JRMRM: *Mel Bay's Complete Anthology of Medieval and Renaissance Music* by John Renbourn

BFG: *British Fingerpicking Guitar* in Stefan Grossman's *Guitar Workshop* series for Mel Bay

JRFBF: *John Renbourn: Folk, Blues and Beyond* - John's instructional video for Stefan Grossman's Workshop

So the down side at present is that 6 of John's early compositions once published are no longer available - the two pattern-picked *Debbie Anne* and *A Day at the Seaside*, the blues *Another Monday*; and the 3



John's first published book of guitar pieces, 1972

intricate pieces *Lady Goes To Church*, *The Lady and the Unicorn* and *The Princess and the Puddings* that John describes as having started life as a television commercial soundtrack.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Re-published in</u>	<u>Album</u>	<u>Side</u>	<u>Track</u>
<i>Alman</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	5a
<i>Another Monday</i>	-	<i>Another Monday</i>	A	1
<i>Bransle De Bourgogne</i> (Claude Gervaise)	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	4b
<i>Bransle Gay</i> (Claude Gervaise)	JRMRM/BFG	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	4a
<i>Day At The Seaside</i>	-	<i>Another Monday</i>	B	5
<i>Debbie Anne</i>	-	<i>Another Monday</i>	B	3
<i>Earle of Salisbury</i> , The (William Byrd)	JRMRM	<i>Sir John Alot...</i>	A	1
<i>Irish Ho-Hoane</i>	JRMRM	Unrecorded		0
<i>Judy</i>	JRFBF	<i>John Renbourn</i>	A	1
<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	-	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	B	1
<i>Lady Goes To Church</i>	-	<i>Sir John Alot...</i>	A	3
<i>Lady Nothynges Toye Puffe</i>	BFG	<i>Another Monday</i>	A	2
<i>Lamento di Tristan</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	2a
<i>My Dear Boy</i>	JRJT	<i>Sir John Alot...</i>	B	3
<i>Princess and the Puddings</i> , The	-	<i>Hermit</i> , The	A	3
<i>Rotta</i> , La	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	2b
<i>Saltarello</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	1b
<i>Trotto</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	A	1a
<i>Westron Wynde</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	B	2b
<i>Westron Wynde Part 2</i>	JRMRM	<i>Lady and the Unicorn</i> , The	B	2b



[contd from page 12]

have been wonderful for me because you don't... I mean I've occasionally worked with a music computer which has given me some idea of how the arrangement going to sound but usually it's all in my head and when it comes of out the studio speakers and it's as I want it to be it's marvellous but it's not always that maybe that isn't right. It's quite a thing for me!



Sunday morning on Wizz Jones' sofa

Yes, when you spoke to Colin 18 months ago you said something like because you were experimenting for more instruments you were pushing the limitations of the guitar so this is part of that expression too...

Yeah, most of the time I'm sitting and fooling around with arrangements or another. I've got a lot of things on the go most of the time, but the guitar is usually just one strand in the general texture and the rest of it is in lots of other parts. In fact the Voice Squad have been singing some songs of mine which have moving parts. And one of them took me aside and said: "Jesus, what must it be like living in your head!" It won't all be big arrangements, but there will be some with a lot of parts...

That being the case does that mean you will be touring with a band of musicians when it comes out?

Well they were getting fairly excited and saying it was the new Riverdance and idiot things like that! It would be nice but even getting the players in the studio has been complicated enough because you know they are very busy and it's been a question of nabbing them when we can get them kind of thing...

It's a while since you were touring in a band... about ten years. Is that something you miss out on the road or is it too complicated to manage?

"I've stockpiled a whole lot of ideas and this record has given me the opportunity to unleash some of them, so they're seeing the light of day from my great pile of manuscripts. And moments have been wonderful for me because... usually it's all in my head and when it comes of out the studio speakers and it's as I want it to be it's marvellous..."

Well, not really. I mean it's fabulous to play with other musicians. I've always enjoyed paying in the bands that I have been in a lot. The organisational side is far more complicated when you have a lot of people working with you....

I ask because when I was talking to Bert he was very relieved not to have that burden of being part of a band and he was enjoying going solo again...

Yeah well it's all very tricky. It depends how permanent it is. If people can come out and do it occasionally it's nice. With this type of music ... with the Ship of Fools and Group stuff we all lived in the same area and we all came together without a lot of pressure and we all wanted to go out and it worked. I don't think I've ever been in a position where I've had to hire musicians specially for a tour and organise that kind of thing.

Is there a story to be told about *Lost Sessions* or is it all in the sleeve-notes?



Well the sleeve notes tell it all. Sure. Yeah. Well it was amazing that the tapes surfaced and the quality seemed OK to me. It sounded fine. I remember playing those songs and I thought the musicians played really nicely.

It was loose but it was a relief to hear it again: it didn't sound as bad as it could have done! No it's out there and it's available.

I've been asked since whether the music for it will be re-published...

Well I think probably that the book that came out way back that won't be re-published. But I was thinking that with all this wonderful technology I'd re-assemble some of these old things myself and put something together myself. Apparently you just scan them in and they scan out again.. If people ever want material you know I'm sure I could dig it out from the attic; it's just that I'm very slow at doing that sort of thing - then I can never find it and it's always in a pile somewhere. But the books, like the records, generally need someone to give you a prod to do it. It's generally easier if you hand it all over to a company - Mel Bay's being doing some books of mine and they've been doing a great job and they're available, but people still ask me for a lot of different pieces and I feel if I've got them there I ought to be able to photocopy them and send them out but I'd like to do it in a more sensible way... It was nice to hear about Pierre Le Bras... That was amazing. I know him vaguely but from way back

Right, he's gone a bit underground. Everyone who's been in touch with him has been trying to find out what he's been up to.

[for news of Pierre, see page 31. Ed]

I went to a stunning concert a few weeks ago on the South Bank with John McLoughlin, Paco de Lucia and Al Di Meola..

Yeah I saw a poster for it when I was up there, so they've been re-formed.

I wonder who you might be listening to these days....

OK. Well I listen to an awful wide range of stuff. In fact I'd be only just managed to get back remnants of my old record collection, so it's been a great deja vu for me - Doc Watson and the Nashville Bluegrass Band, Etta Baker and all sorts of things I have not heard for years. But I suppose on the more adventurous guitar front I met a guy recently in Germany called Lubo Mysterowicz and he's absolutely fabulous and he comes from Yugoslavia and now lives in Zurich and the stuff that he's playing is fabulous: it's like a fusion of Keith Jarrett and Eastern European music and he improvises and like John McLoughlin's his technique is staggering and he's just astounding. Sooner or later it had to happen that there would be a guy who would embody modern jazz harmony and modern classical concept in fingerstyle and he's doing it: it's like a step beyond all the new age guys and even Pierre [Bensusan] - it's beyond that and his concept well it's fantastic really...

"I met a guy recently in Germany called Lubo Mysterowicz and he's absolutely fabulous..."

Are there recordings of that guy?

There's only one recording and it's so far out: I was talking to him about music, drinking wine and jokingly saying that he was passé now because he was not playing sub-sonic music; but he said I frequently play sub-sonic music but only if it relates to the main chakras of the Hindu philosophy. So sure enough we have a record of chakra sub-sonic music! He made his own guitar that can reproduce micro-tones so you can actually move the neck fractionally, so it's very difficult to play for me anyway and to hold it in tune,

[contd on page 18]





"a memorable cover design based around a brass-rubbing of Sir Roger Trumpington"

John Renbourn has never been an easy artist to pigeonhole. His very first record, *John Renbourn* (1965) was the standard folk-blues sound of the time, well played but hardly exceptional. The style had filtered through from records of American players like Big Bill Broonzy and Brownie McGhee, and was channelled down to a legion of young disciples, of which Renbourn was one, by the earliest greats of English acoustic playing Wizz Jones and Davy Graham. If John's first record had its limitations - particularly in the wake of an astonishingly original first album from another young Transatlantic signing Bert Jansch - *Another Monday* (1966) was to set him firmly on a course of musical exploration that consistently defied the boundaries of the day, and would continue to influence guitarists for years to come. Of these explorations, *Sir John Alot* is perhaps the greatest. Later albums may, like *The Hermit* (1973), have refined his techniques or, like *The Lady And the Unicorn* (1970), pursued more fully a single aspect of his musical interests, but this one had a unique sense of humour and a thrilling abandonment that was rare in later work.

The quest for perfection, however, was always prominent in Renbourn's thinking. Whereas the appeal and artistry of Bert Jansch was rooted in a wild, intuitive quality that walked a fine line between brilliance and bafflement, Renbourn's genius lay in a more considered, technical direction that relied on imagination and scholarship in equal measure. With such differing

Sir John Alot Of Merrie Englande's Musk Thynges And Ye Greene Knyghte

Wooden Hill Records

strengths, Jansch and Renbourn complemented each other within the context of their band, The Pentangle. Formed early in 1967, the group was very much the product of Renbourn's imagination, and built on the ideas that had been explored on the *Bert And John* (1966) album and on the musical possibilities of bringing in Terry Cox and Danny Thompson, a jazz rhythm section he'd met on a TV show, and vocalist Jacqui McShee, who had featured on *Another Monday*.

The group evolved for over a year as a part-time activity before Bert and John's label boss Nathan Joseph was persuaded to get involved. Even then he wasn't convinced that the record buying public would prefer the novel fusions of the group to the more established music of its featured guitarists. To some extent he was right: both Renbourn and Jansch had developed, by 1968, considerable reputations and while critical interest in the band was ravenous, it was only following the success of their third album *Basket Of Light* in 1969 that the first two - *The Pentangle* (1968) and *Sweet Child* (1968) - started selling in significant quantities. It was in this context that *Sir John Alot* first appeared, and seemed at the time to be confirming Joseph's doubts.

With a title inspired, like the very name of The Pentangle itself, by Arthurian legend, *Sir John Alot Of Merrie Englande's Musk Thynges And Ye Greene Knyghte*, to give it - just this once - its full title, continued the esoteric theme with a memorable cover design based around a brass rubbing (apparently the oldest surviving in Britain) of Sir Roger Trumpington, from Trumpington Church near Cambridge where The Pentangle would later perform a televised



concert. The album was recorded around January 1968, the first Pentangle record was recorded the following month. Probably on the insistence of Pentangle manager Jo Lustig, the priorities were reversed when it came to release dates. Renbourn's album, scheduled for April, was held back until the much-hyped group record had hit the shelves. In the event, both appeared more or less back to back in May and, whether taken together or separately, testified to the immense musical advancements in Renbourn's vision. While the Renbourn album featured Pentangle percussionist Terry Cox on several numbers - some of which would later appear in the group's live repertoire - and one tune, *The Trees They Do Grow High*, that would appear in vocal arrangement on the next group album, it was very much a solo project and approached quite differently to The Pentangle.

Available recording information illustrates the differences immediately. Virtually everything on *The Pentangle* was completed in under two takes, like the majority of Jansch's solo recordings, while the material on Sir *John Alot* was much more in keeping with that quest for perfection. *Forty Eight*, for instance, went to no less than 13 takes of which take seven was used, *Transfusion* and *The Earle Of Salisbury* were completed in five with, in both cases, the fifth being the one. The work paid off, though, with the then influential *Melody Maker* selecting the album as its folk LP of the month - a month that had seen mixed reaction to *The Pentangle*, and a lot of heated talk about whether it constituted jazz or folk. The same question was applied, a little more courteously, to Renbourn's album.

To Renbourn himself, though, it was all just music. His interviews of the period are littered with questions about musical genres and the answers were all of the same ilk: "*This is getting a bit heavy, isn't it?*" he told one enquirer in 1970. "*I just do it because I enjoy it.*" Self-deprecation was another way out: "*I've never played medieval music properly*" he told the *Melody Maker* a couple of years later. "*Everything I've done on the guitar is home-made, a hodge-podge style.*" There was some truth in this certainly many of John's recordings, in whatever idiom, betray at least a faint

echo of the folk/blues style he grew up with, although there was also a very keen learning process going on. This culminated in John taking a degree in music from Dartington College in the 1980s, but the process had begun at school with rudimentary lessons in classical guitar and a music teacher who introduced Renbourn to medieval composer Guillaume de Machaut. "*It was only a lot later on*" he said, in 1972, "*when I started to hear folk tunes that were in modal scales that I remembered some of this medieval music that had been played in school.*"

Taking a further influence from the small-group jazz composers popular during the '60s - Chico Hamilton, Charlie Mingus, Charles Lloyd and so on - Renbourn developed a linear approach to these modal tunes. It was an approach he also took on his own instrumental pieces, while crediting Davy Graham's massively influential 1962 recording *Anji* as the classic example of this way of playing tunes on guitar - lines instead of chord patterns. It was an approach that also formed the backbone of the Pentangle sound and, whether folk or 1377 or something else entirely, it was to prove massively successful.

John would play down any suggestion that his contribution to the revival of interest in 'early music' - more fully championed by Davy Monroe in the late '60s - was an important one, but it cannot be underestimated. Monroe himself guested, uncredited, on Sir *John Alot* and the album appeared to very warm reception and widespread interest at a time when few genuine early music recordings were on the market. John himself would take his interest in the genre still further with his next album *The Lady And The Unicorn*, before moving forward in continuously evolving directions. Nathan Joseph, who produced this album, sums up the man and his music perfectly:

"*John was a brilliant musician*" he says, "*very articulate and always a pleasure to work with, and when he started playing what would be called folk-baroque, he sold better than Bert... I think back on all my associations with John with pride and pleasure, because he wasn't an easy artist to promote. After all, who wants to know about a guitarist who starts off singing very derivative blues and then goes on to being what amounts to a half-bred classical act?*" Obviously, as it turned



Rosemary Lane

[contd from page 15]

but Lubo can hold it in tune and play all the little notes in between the semi-tones - it really is another world. But I still like listening to Bob Staples and the Staple Singers..

What do you think of as being the key components of your approach to the guitar?

Well, I don't see it as coming to the guitar from the guitarist's point of view which is probably a strength. I'm not too keen on guitar players who simply play the guitar. My fascination comes from the characteristics of the music. I'm still as interested in the traditional British music and American music that I heard when I first started thinking about having an instrument which turned out to be a guitar and it's the quality of the music that comes through. If you can achieve that on the guitar then you're playing I think...

Yeah, I remember reading somewhere that you never planned to be a guitarist it was kind of incidental that the guitar turned out to be the instrument with which you interpreted the music...

That's right: it was because I only had a fiver and I got a guitar from a guy and I tried to play some. It was co-incidental cause I just happened to be around at the time when Davey Graham was playing so I met Davey and heard him playing: that was a revelation as far as not simply the techniques but his concepts; he was fabulous, way ahead of his time. And then I met Bert shortly after that and Bert was doing some wonderful things...



John and Bert: casting all too brief a spell

And that brings me to the question I'm inevitably bombarded with. Two or three years ago it was rumoured there might be a second Bert and John product somewhere along the line...

Yeah, we got back together again briefly. I had not seen him for a long time and I went round to the place he was living in Hammersmith.... We sat around and tried to play a few tunes. Back in the old days we were just sharing so many different pads and criss-

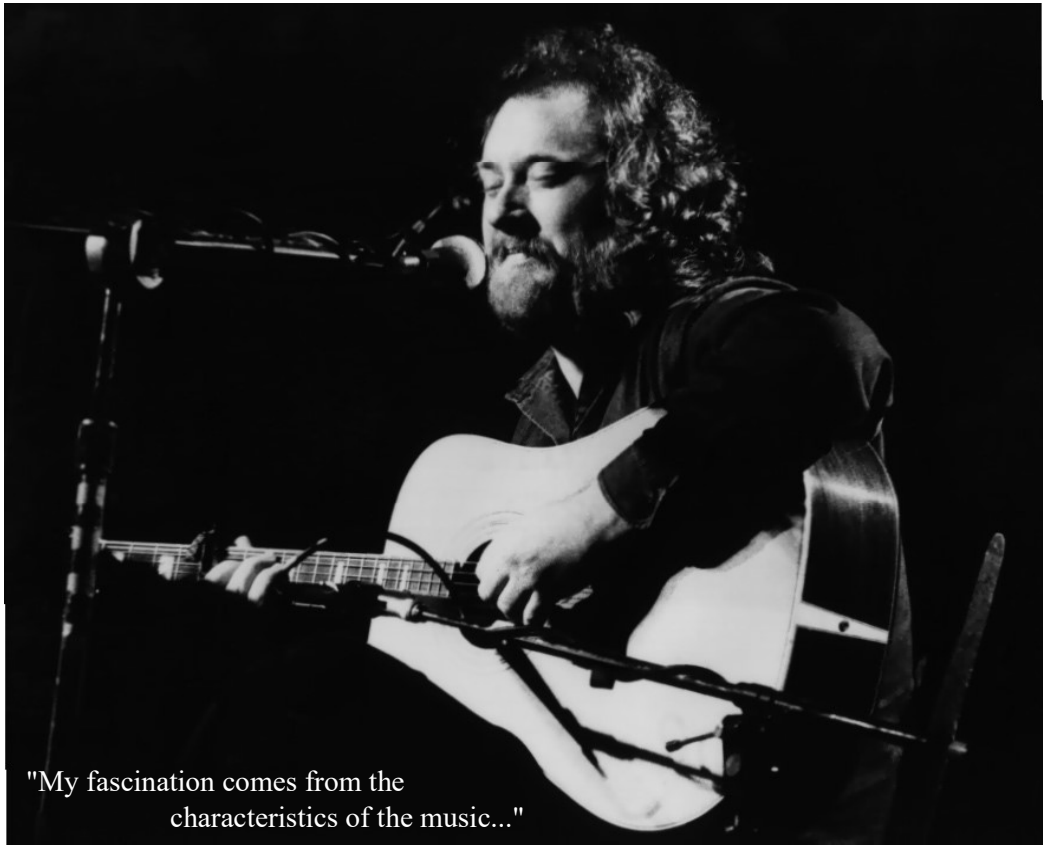


crossing paths all the time it was incredibly easy: the music just came together by default. But when we sat down consciously to do it, it was completely another world..

And Bert had been through a very rough period with his health... And it was quite funny in a way because Bert had got himself a music computer which I hadn't any concept of. He was ahead of me. He said, "Look, this machine will do this that and the other." In fact he said "If you get a machine like this we won't even have to rehearse: it can all be done on floppy disk!.." So we did work at it for a while, but it did not seem to have the impetus that it had originally I'm afraid, you know...

So that just faded as a musical concept...

It really wasn't sparking very nicely. It was far too conscious. That's not to say that Bert wasn't writing fabulous things and playing great, but it was a little too organised. It was organised for us because we had an American tour and it was more or less manipulated. We were thrown together: We did a few dates travelling round: it was just at the time that Bert was making his film... He was pretty busy



"My fascination comes from the characteristics of the music..."

doing that stuff as well and we never really hit a way of working together. It was difficult. We put together ideas and then got back together again: there were gaps between working on the material and getting back together. It seemed a bit artificial.... That's what I felt anyway.

is wonderful....

He certainly seems to be... You updated me on books... the Mediaeval book, the preface for Pierre... Anything since?

[contd on page 22]

So it's not been ruled out as a concept but it did not work out at that time?

Yeah. Bert was lovely, but I felt he was still struggling a little bit with his health. It was difficult on tour with him and he did have a lot of problems that he never spoke about it, but I think he was in pain a lot of the time... awful really in some aspects. Just getting the pain together was almost like an after-thought. But I hear he is in great shape now which



John on tour with Ralph McTell and Stefan Grossman

Concert Review

John & Jacqui at the Purcell Room

26/9/96

John and Jacqui had to battle a bit against the prestigious but rather distant vibes of the South Bank's Purcell Room. They were both in good form and John in particular punctuated the flawless delivery of their material with a series of jovial quips. *Can't Keep From Crying*, he told us, he had learned not from the deep south but from one "Riviera" Mick Rodgers(!) in the 1960's. The sets were very similar to previous recent tours (witness reviews from Spain and Japan also): Jacqui's solo *When I Was In My Prime* still just had the edge on *Cruel Mother* which she said she learned from the singing of Lizzie Higgins (no relation!) John's successively beautiful and then sprightly *South Wind* and *Blarney Pilgrim* medley earned much applause, whilst *Sweet Potato* stirred a mixture of admiration and disbelief as John's thumb pounded the bass strings at extraordinary speed whilst his left-hand leapt up and down the fretboard teasing out all those melodic variations that go

to make up this showcase number. My favourite and rousing collaborations on the night, though, were Mississippi Fred MacDowell's *Kokomo Blues* and the closing *Turn Your Money Green* which both John and Jacqui seemed to give themselves whole-heartedly to on an evening when, however well they performed, somehow the venue just did not seem able to do them justice.



Jacqui: still in her prime



Watch The Stars at the Purcell Room

John & Jacqui's

First Set

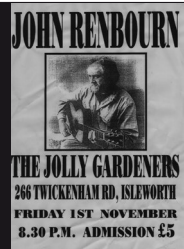
The Trees They Do
Grow High
Watch The Stars
Can't Keep From
Crying
My Johnny Was A
Shoemaker
Great Dreams From
Heaven
Cruel Mother
Sweet Potato
Plains of Waterloo

Second Set

Wedding Song
A Maid on the Shore
From Sandwood Down
To Kyle
When I Was In My
Prime
Lindsay
South Wind/Blarney
Pilgrim
Kokomo Blues
Cruel Sister
Turn Your Money Green

Concert Reviews

Bert & John (1/11/96 & 6/12/96) at the Jolly Gardeners



Two gigs in the space of a month at this pleasant new venue in the London Road, Isleworth. John's came first and was a memorable night on which he was joined by his earliest of singing partners from Los Angeles, Doris Henderson, who fondly delivered two gutsy blues renderings of *Careless Love* and *30 Days in Jail*. Does anyone out there know that John actually recorded two albums with Doris before his solo debut, *John Renbourn*? They were *There You Go* for EMI and *Watch the Stars* for Fontana, dating from 1963 and 1964. It was also nice to hear rags represented again in John's instrumentals, this time *Cannonball Rag*, and in fact John covered a lot of musical ground with *Little Miles* doing service for the jazzier components of his work and a trio of opening numbers paying homage to the 1960's. The ever popular tunes from the repertoire of Willie Clancy - *South Wind/Blarney Pilgrim* - were very well-received as was the triple finale of *Bunyan's Hymn*, *I Saw Three Ships* and *English Dance* before the always delightful and lilting *Lindsay* from the Archie Fisher camp.



John plays the blues with Doris Henderson

Bert's night was equally successful. Sporting a black leather jacket and jumper and carrying his old Yamaha spruce to which he seems to have returned these days after an extended flirtation with a black electro-acoustic from the same stable, he was very relaxed as he picked his way through nigh on thirty songs and instrumentals. The second set was notable for the inclusion of some fresh material, a new song entitled *Toy Balloon* that poignantly combined Bert's time-honoured images of wind and short-lived innocence in an affecting style, sentiment kept at bay by the sparse and irregular staccato delivery. A new and as yet untitled blues number also found its way in and issued forth effortlessly in Bert's idiosyncratic blues pattern-punishing manner. Wizz Jones was amongst the audience and Bert was keen to draw attention to a new album by Davey Graham as well as a performance by Janie Romer at the 12-Bar.



new songs from Bert

John's

First Set

Judy
Angie
Candyman
Watch The Stars
Lazy Farmer
Canonball Rag
Lord Franklin
South Wind/
Blarney Pilgrim

Second Set

Great Dreams From Heaven
The Snows
Sweet Potato
Little Miles
Careless Love (with Doris)
30 Days in Jail (with Doris)
Bunyan's Hymn
I Saw Three Ships
English Dance
Lindsay

Bert's

First Set

Come Back Baby
Walk Quietly By
Blackwaterside
Just A Dream
Blues Run the
Game
Kingfisher
Lily of the West
Rosemary Lane
Beautiful Country
Weeping Willow
Second Set
Corinna Corinna
Summer Heat

Fresh As A Sweet Sunday

Morning
No-One Around
When The Circus Comes To
Town
Bert's Dance
Morning Brings Peace of Mind
Curragh of Kildare
blues (new)
Running From Home
Angie
Toy Balloon (new)
Back Home
Step Back
Broken Heart Blues
Strolling down the Highway



Ralph asked me to write a few words for him: Blue Skies and Black Heroes.

The next step is for the dig out more of these arrangements and try to finish that record. Next year my year starts off with a tour of America with Archie Fisher... Then I think we're probably going to go to Japan and we'll follow that up with a tour of England.

What shape will that take?

Well actually I see it as my chance to play with the master on the Border ballads and all the Celtic songs that he's the best at. He really is the best. Quite how Archie sees it I'm not sure; I'm not sure if he wants to concentrate on that sort of materials.

What has he been doing recently?

Well I think he's been very quiet as far as recorded output is concerned but he's been very busy working for BBC Scotland as a presenter for travelling folk, so he's totally tuned in to everything that's going on in the folk world. Since I got my records and tapes back I played a few and it was just stunning to hear how great he is... I always thought he was fantastic, but he really knocked me sideways... So I've got to put in a bit of work on this stuff and hoan up on the ballads...

So you won't be touring after November...

That's my time to finish the finish record. but I think Archie and myself will do some stuff in January just to limber up a bit...

You mentioned Dartington earlier - what sort of relationship do have there now?

No, when I shifted away from the area I stopped teaching there but I was teaching there on the official roster for quite a while. Before that I did a three-year study on the degree course but very few people emerge and survive without having to go back to Dartington from time to time to be re-charged up... It's so terrific and so broad in its outlook. People were coming over from

"Then I teamed up with Jacqui McShee who knew a lot of these traditional songs."



America to study with me, so it was very flattering... They were just as good as me or better so I learned quite a lot just sitting around with my students, so it was good for me!

* * * * *

[In the latter part of the interview John talked about the evolution of his music and its origins...
Ed]

We're talking about Davey Graham and Shirley Collins as being the breakthrough and you know Davey's guitar arrangement of traditional songs that had not really been done before and Martin Cathy working at the same time in the same area consciously approaching the accompaniment of these songs on the guitar for the first time really. Then I teamed up with Jacqui McShee who knew a lot of these traditional songs.

An exciting new area that had not been colonised at the time when you could move in.

It was a dangerous area to get into and it is still one which is very sensitive because there were a lot of people who felt that the songs should not be accompanied anyway and if they were to be accompanied certainly not on the heinous guitar. And in a way there is a strong point that if you don't set the songs they have a wonderful elusive quality to them, but on the other hand what happens is that if you do

"Davey, Bert and Martin had three quite separate approaches to looking at this material and they all came out with separate solutions, as it were, but they've all blended more or less into a guitar style."

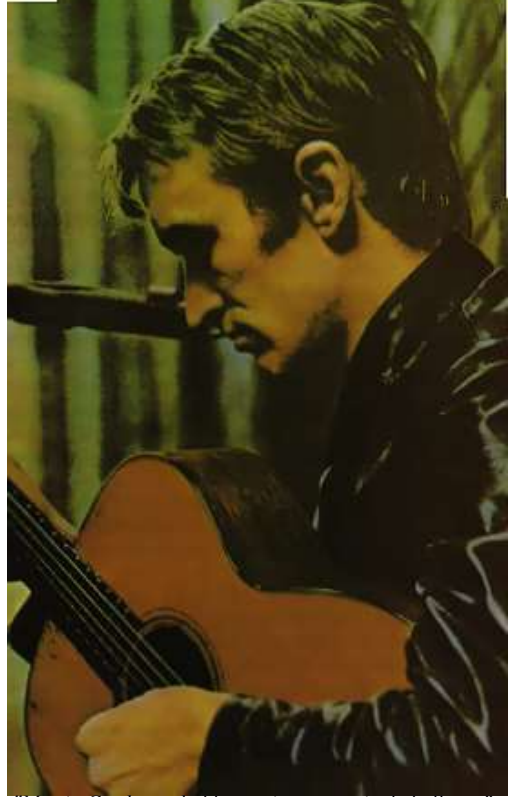
approach these modal tunes that aren't in a strict, regulated time that you come up with something very interesting on the guitar by default. And I think it was through that that a lot of the interesting pieces called "folk baroque" came about because people had bits of accompaniment that were no longer set finger-picking patterns. And it's been interesting to see how that stuff that came often from revivalist singers with a much more open mind like Ann Briggs for example who was friendly with Bert. He learnt a lot of stuff directly from Ann who in turn learnt them from Bert Lloyd. And Bert's arrangements of those pieces on the Jack Orion album were very much based on the way she used to sing, based on traditional vocal decoration, but it opened up a new area for the guitar. I've a feeling that Martin Carthy probably saw it as a musical challenge, something that had to be achieved one way or another.

a fusion...

Bert, I think, almost fell into it because he had a great feeling for it. It was interesting to me to see that Davey, Bert and Martin had three quite separate approaches to looking at this material and they all came out with separate solutions, as it were, but they've all blended more or less into a guitar style.

Along with yours....

Well yeah, I was in there as well and it's something that still fascinates me. I found it really interesting that American players like Alex De Grassi who got tagged "New Age" who recorded with Wyndham Hill and to some extent Pierre have taken that aspect of



"Martin Carthy probably saw it as a musical challenge"

the guitar rather than its links to traditional music and extended that. So I think that the New Age guitar has come out of the folk revivalists or folk baroque as it was so complicated by comparison with the old forms of accompaniment which were very simple so as not to interfere with the flow of the song. It's been a great fabulous thing really.

So how does that connect with where we are now? Your own recordings have been through a multitude of influences since then - the Elizabethan settings, quasi-classical stuff

All these things lead you to different areas...

You feel as though you can trace a thread all the way through?

[contd on page 30]

An Phis Fhlinch by Willie Clancy arranged by John Renbourn

Open D Tuning: DADF#AD

An Phis Fhlinch is a tune that John is recording for his forthcoming album of Irish music. The piece is made up in sections as follows: A, B, B, C, C, D, D, B2.

Section A

♩.=104

D

Editor's Note

John's elegantly crafted manuscript version in standard notation and tablature posed no small challenge when it came to transcribing it into something acceptable to standard software and fitting it sensibly onto sheets of A5 paper! I've done my best to retain as much of the essential information as possible by indicating the rhythmic pattern which - as John says - is basically organised in three groups of three (9/8) per measure. The unspecified notes which fall outside of the designated rhythmic markers are the grace notes to which John refers as giving the music its variations. As I can't yet refer you to John's forthcoming recorded arrangement of *An Phis Fhlinch*, if anyone is hopelessly baffled by the tablature or wants to play it on a trombone, then I'd be happy to send a photocopy of John's original manuscript version provided you send a stamped-addressed envelope or appropriate international coupon.

Section B
Section C

Rosemary Jane

Section D

Section B2

Note on Guitar Tablature

This is standard guitar tablature where each line represents a string of the guitar in descending order. The strings may be variously tuned.

H= Harmonic

— = Slide

Bend - the fret of the note to which the string must be bent is indicated in brackets after the actually fretted note.

Notes on *An Phis Fhlinch* by John Renbourn

This arrangement of *An Phis Fhlinch* is from the playing of the great uilleann piper Willie Clancy. He came from County Clare on the west coast of Ireland - an area steeped in traditional music - and is reported to have taken up the pipes after hearing Johnny Doran back in the 1930's. Nowadays there is a summer festival held in his honour in his hometown of Miltown Malbay - popularly known as Willie Week. I was lucky enough to hear him around the early 1970's playing after hours in the back room of one of the many pubs and it's something I'll never forget.

Bill Leader recorded Clancy along with a number of other fine traditional players, including Seamus Tansey and Festy Conlan, in the late 1960's - and some of the music was included in the Topic LP *The Breeze from Erin*. This arrangement is about as close as I can get to the one on the album. I'm not sure if *The Breeze of Erin* is still available - but if it's not it's certainly worth looking out for. I know that other collections of Clancy's music are currently on release on both Topic and Green Linnet.

An Phis Fhlinch, which A L Lloyd thought better of translating in the sleeve notes, is a dance tune - the traditional slip-jig. The tune appeared in a number of printed editions around the 1800's. But although the piece must certainly be well-known among pipers I haven't heard too many attempting it recently. Possibly Clancy put so strong a stamp of his own personality on certain tunes that they have subsequently remained as his domain. However I did recently hear a fine recording of Planxty and I'd guess

that the piper would have been Liam O'Flynn, but I'm not certain.

Anyway, the version on *Breeze of Erin* really rolls along. I've marked the tempo as ♩=104 which is fairly conservative. A lot of the impetus comes from the ways in which the melody is approached - particularly the various rhythmic stresses that result from the array of "ornamentation" that is a feature of the pipes. Rhythmically the slip-jig is in essence three groups of three, conventionally notated as 9/8. But there can be a variety of sub-divisions that shape a phrase and a lot of the kick in Clancy's playing comes from his use of grace-notes the crans and rolls - some of which transfer amenably onto the guitar while others simply warp the tiny mind.

I found that the old open-D tuning comes close to suiting the piece. It may seem an odd choice as most folk players associate the tuning with blues and country music. In fact it goes way back, coming from the European salon tradition of the gut strung guitar and crossing over to America to become the mainstay of the parlour guitar repertoire in 1800's which carries over into folk/blues steel string playing and on into this century. For *An Phis Fhlinch* it gives you the possibility of catching the melody and executing the important grace notes while maintaining a drone. The drone is mostly supplied by the low D, which can be left to ring but sounds good to me broken up and damped folk style. The melody should sit fairly comfortably in the tuning - but look out for those grace notes and if in doubt refer back to Clancy.

John Renbourn



One to A Hundred

written &
arranged by Bert Jansch

Tablature

courtesy of Pierre Le Bras

Standard Tuning

0 2			
3	2	3	2
2	0	0	0
0	2	0	2
	0	0	2
			0

Out in the sun playing at the ball In the world of a child With no cares at all

0 2			
3	2	3	2
2	0	0	0
0	2	0	2
	0	0	2
			0

My friend said let's play hide and seek Close your eyes and promise That you'll never peek

			0 2 0	0
0	3	3 2	3	3
0	2	0 0	2	2
0	0	2 2	0	
		0 0		3
3	3	2		

Close your eyes Count to a hun-dred (guitar break)

0 2 0	0 8	0 2 0	0
3		3	3
2	7	2	2
0	7	0	
	8		3

		0 2 0	0
3	2	3	3
0	0	2	2
0	2	0	
2	0	0	3

(Chorus) Why don't you come and play?



0 2 0	0	7	12H
3	3	7	12H
2	2	7	12H
0	3	9	12H
	7	0	7H

Come play hide-and-seek In the depths of the quarry-woods

7	12H	7	12H
7	12H	7	12H
7	12H	7	12H
9	12H	9	12H
7	7H	7	12H
0	0	0	0

You'll never find me there Come catch me if you can

3	3	2	2	2
5	5	0	0	0
		0	0	0
		0		
0	3			

Catch me if you can.....

Out in the sun playing at the ball
In the world of a child with no cares at all
My friend said let's play hide-and-seek
Close your eyes and promise
That you'll never peek
Close your eyes count to a hundred

One to a hundred I counted slow
But I never did find where my friend did go
Mum said she heard the other day
Your friend has gone
So far away
Close your eyes count to a hundred

Soon comes the morning with the rising sun
Playing at the ball I'd just begun
Pat-a-cake pat-a-cake have no fear
Sang a voice I knew
Ringing in my ears
Close your eyes count to a hundred

(chorus)

Why don't you come and play
Come play hide-and-seek
In the depths of the quarry-woods
You'll never find me there
Come catch me if you can
Catch me if you can

She'll ask me when I get home
What have you done today my son?
I was playing at the ball on the corner street
With my friend I was out
Playing hide-and-seek
Close your eyes count to a hundred.

Bert's recorded version of this song can be found on side A of the *Rare Conundrum* album (1977)



Without doubt you can. Once you start thinking about how to accompany: all you have is a skeletal line of a song and you see that it is not in a major or minor scale but in one of the old church modes (possibly!) and then you see that if you set this to a chordal accompaniment you will destroy the flow of the melody and the feel. But if you set it with moving lines as if there were two or three voices going with the melody then you achieve something that seems to be in character and contains the rhythmic flow of the piece and does not destroy the feeling of the piece. Then you realise this is exactly what they were doing in Elizabethan times and before, often with the very same pieces that have now become folk songs. And of course you can see how William Byrd approached it and you realise he really has some good ideas and these things lead you into the actual keyboard pieces and then beyond that into the concept of part-writing that goes way back to the 1200's...you realise there was a period in the 1300's which was strictly within a modal framework writing for large groups so that has always fascinated me how you can pursue an identity but with counterpoint. That's the same thing that attracts me to the Muddy Waters Blues Band until the lines converge. It's the same with the Alan Lomax recording of the prison songs - it's called Murderers' Home - like groups of prisoners singing like a real amorphous mass of voices singing. It's really moving and it's so powerful... It can also be achieved by a string quartet if you have someone playing the various lines.

Putting pieces together through three moving lines...

Yeah, very often. It's not something you find naturally in the Irish tradition, although The Chieftains have done arrangements almost like classical form arrangements. I find that these tunes always suggest to me counterpoint harmonies and it sounds fabulous to me. It can make things very complicated. I've still got to figure out the arrangements where I've been overly-complicated. I mean there's a Willie Clancy pipe-tune that I want to record: it's a 9/8 piece and it's really great and I've always wanted to record it. The temptation is to take it and see what happens if you break it down and see what you can do with all the decorations and the pipe

ornaments and then write parts to complement those, so what you're doing is adding a second and third moving line to something that's already complicated. It may be a great mess, but it may not: it may be fabulous! It's a wonderful idea and the other thing is for the English pieces that do move - like the church pieces - in 4-part harmony is to simplify it and use the filigree approach of Irish decoration which is just a lot of ornamentation so the lines are more florid but far more labyrinthine musically. See what happens if that's done to very strict 4-part British church style.. It's a nice idea to see what happens if you achieve these things and whether or not you still get a strong sense of identity

You were talking about the people who came together at the origins of the folk baroque movement. I was listening to a tape the other day where John James was saying what a shame it is that no-one has come along to the clubs and done to your generation of players what you did to the previous generation - that is stun everyone by taking a completely different approach. Are you aware of younger players in Britain who are taking up this development you've been talking about?

My feeling is that it kind of stepped away from the folk movement and it no longer was part of what the folk movement was about. The folk movement was far more about political song-writing and song-writing with a social meaning and basically the instrumental side of things need not be very involved. That's been the backbone of the folksong and folk club movement.

So you would not expect it to come from there...

I think on the guitar front it got about as complicated as anyone could stand. Certainly my own things began to get ridiculous. But I think the guitar part did continue because it went into Alex de Grassi, Michael Hedges and Will Ackerman and it went back to America which was quite a fabulous idea because originally it came from America and everyone was trying to play the steel-string guitar like Big Bill Broonzy for real and then it went through a process of change through Davey, Martin and so on, so



it became a British style and then the Californian guys who smoked a bit of dope got hold of it and changed it into a kind of New Age cosmic thing and I really like that. I really love Alex De Grassi's playing although they got slammed heavily when it first came out because people thought that New Age music was elevator music and so on it got a bit of a panning when it became fashionable. I find a lot of beautiful qualities in his playing so for me it was a real honour to feel that this stuff had gone over to America again, so it's difficult...

That's what you see as the latest offshoot...

Certainly from the acoustic guitar point-of-view which is what we're are talking about.. And as far as the arranging side of the folk tunes with a blend of Medieval music I don't know that you know my stuff had any real impact on that because that stuff has become more and more specialised. There have been some real black sheep in the medieval music lark: a man called Thomas Binkley for example who made some astounding arrangements of the early troubadour music that were very naughty: he uses all sorts of things that have never been proved to be right or wrong. That's been exciting, that's been adventurous. You know to a certain extent a lot of the great bands that have come up - Capercaillie, for example, have been people who have been quite at ease not only with traditional music but early dance music with part harmonies. There have been an awful lot. Another thing about travelling is that you meet a lot of music that's coming out of the east. The direction of the media is always from the west, but you don't realise how much great music is actually being played in the eastern block. You don't normally hear about this unless you're travelling and meeting the players. Lubo is a shining example of someone who's got, in my opinion, every known influence and is turning it on its ear - it's inhuman! But it happens to me all the time. When I was in Rome just a couple of days ago I heard a band from Madagascar that were simply killing: they were playing like three separate lines rhythmically on a bunch of instruments. I came away absolutely stunned: I got a guitar out immediately and re-tuned it to what I thought the guitar player was doing and began working out my Madagascan style!

And you know you pick up a lot of things...

So you still like to try out new tunings?

Yeah, this guy was using a low C and G: he could play in C but could do fabulous African bass riffs on the low strings. He had a classical guitar but with a pick-up in it, so that it sounded like a fretless bass. And the extended rhythmic feel was fabulous and I liked it because it was strata'd: each guy had his little kind of groove and you don't move too far out of your patch. Then things get layered and layered and layered. It's a great idea: it's what Guillaume De Maschaut was doing in the 1300's but he did not have the groove....Or maybe he did and the interpretations are wrong....

John Renbourn was interviewed at Wizz Jones' home (Sunday, 3/11/96)

News of Pierre!

Just before Christmas I was delighted to receive a letter from Pierre Le Bras who had mystified everyone by suddenly dropping out of contact. Pierre wrote to explain why and here is an extract from his letter:

"...Since I first got letters from Rosemary Lane readers I just drowned under tons of music and I have not figured out a way to keep things under control. For a couple of years I've tried really hard to keep in touch with everyone that wrote me and also to satisfy their demands but it was just getting to be too much. I guess I over did it and all of a sudden things became unreal. I was spending all my free time writing long letters and learning new songs and tunes and writing tabs for an ever-increasing number of people. I was losing track of who I was writing to, mixing up everything and so I thought it was time to give it a break. I just hope I did not disappoint people with too many unkept promises. Please tell all the readers Pierre is still alive and well, just taking a break before bouncing back!" Great to hear from you and I can add that Pierre has also been busy playing acoustic guitar in a band, so let's wish him well in that latest venture.

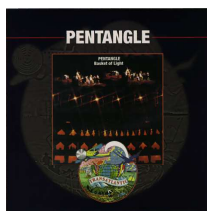


Album News

A Frenzy Of Re-Issues!

Since the summer issue of Rosemary Lane the rate of re-issues has reached a feverish pitch!

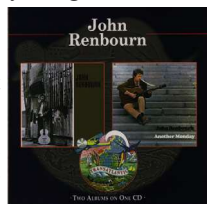
At that time the word was that Castle Records were about to work their way through the Transatlantic catalogue of Pentangle as well as Bert and John's



Basket of Light

early recordings. This they duly did, releasing *Sweet Child* (ESMCD354) and *Basket of Light* (ESMCD406) on separate CD's, John Renbourn twinned with *Another Monday* (ESMCD408) - the first time these have been

available complete for a very long time - and Bert Jansch doubled up with *It Don't Bother Me* (ESMCD407). But that was just the start! Since then Wooden Hill have got in on the act and have put out Bert's *Rosemary Lane* (together with extensive and fascinating sleeve-notes), John's *Sir John*



John Renbourn & Another Monday

Alot... (see the article on pages 16-17), and the band's first album, *The Pentangle* (Wooden Hill CD7). All these were straight re-issues of the original track-listings.



Bert Jansch & It Don't Bother Me

Not so, however, their re-issue of *Bert & John* which,

unlike the 1992 Shanachie Bert and John compilation *After The Dance*, not only incorporates all the original material from the vinyl pressing (so does include the songs *The Time Has Come* and *Soho*), but also sports six additional tracks from diverse sources. These are *The Wagoner's Lad*

from Bert's *Jack Orion*; John's *Lucky 13* from Bert's *It Don't Bother Me*; *In This Game* and *Dissatisfied Blues* which were two tracks that originally appeared on Bert's 1972 sampler *Box of Love* (but were more recently included on Demon's re-issue of *It Don't Bother Me*); and finally, in an entirely unique touch, two edited tracks of *Hole in the Coal* and *Bells* which first featured way back on the *Contemporary Guitar Sampler: Vol 2* album. And on top of all this Park Records have put out a CD version of *So Early in the Spring*. So if there are any holes in your collection, now's the time to snap up the missing discs. For anyone who wants a broader slice of Bert or John's musical development, then the Snapper label (under the guidance of Doug Dudgeon, formerly of Castle Records) are about to issue two massive compilations on CD for under £10 a piece. Bert's will contain no less than 38 tracks, including recordings with Pentangle and John's will feature the first CD release of tracks from *Faro Annie* as well as many other samples of his work both solo and with bands. These should be in the shops within two months or so. Rumour even has it that Snapper may be prepared to chase the unreleased recordings of Bert and John that are known to exist from the 1960's. There is no movement, however, from Virgin on the now long-awaited re-issue of Bert's two Charisma albums - *LA Turnaround* and *Santa Barbara Honeymoon* - on CD. Whilst we are waiting for action there, though, followers of early Bert may like to know that Ann Briggs' previously unreleased third album (1973) is about to come out on Fledgling Records via Topic.

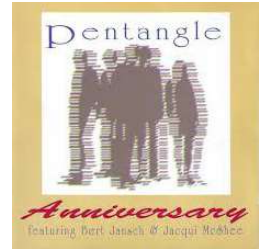
Pentangle Discography 1992-1995

1992 ANNIVERSARY

- 1 Play The Game
- 2 Reynardine
- 3 Dragonfly
- 4 Share A Dream
- 5 So Early in the Spring
- 6 Can't Hide Love
- 7 Mother Earth
- 8 Colour My Paintbook
- 9 Ever Yes, Ever No
- 10 Bonny Portmore

HYCD 200 123

- 11 Trees They Grow So High
- 12 Willie O'Winsbury
- 13 Sally Free and Easy
- 14 Tell Me What Is True Love
- 15 I've Got A Feeling
- 16 Come Sing Me A Happy Song
- 17 She Moved Through The Fair
- 18 Straight Ahead
- 19 I Won't Ask You Anymore



*Features all combinations
of the band 1985-1990*



1993 ONE MORE ROAD PERM CD 11

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Travelling Solo | 7 Hey, Hey Soldier |
| 2 Oxford City | 8 Willy of Winsbury |
| 3 Endless Sky | 9 Somali |
| 4 Lily of the West | 10 Manuel |
| 5 One More Road | 11 Are You Going To Scarborough Fair? |
| 6 High Germany | |

Bert Jansch/Jacqui McShee/Peter Kirtley/ Nigel Portman-Smith/ Gerry Conway

1995 PENTANGLE LIVE 1994 HYCD 200 152

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Bramble Briar | 7 Travelling Solo |
| 2 Sally Free and Easy | 8 Bonny Boy, The |
| 3 Kingfisher | 9 Chasing Love |
| 4 Come Back Baby | 10 Cruel Sister |
| 5 When I Was I My Prime | 11 Yarrow |
| 6 Meat on the Bone | 12 Reynardine |

Bert Jansch/Jacqui McShee/Peter Kirtley/ Nigel Portman-Smith/ Gerry Conway



1995 PENTANGLE LIVE AT THE BBC

- 1 Cuckoo Song
- 2 Hunting Song
- 3 Light Flight
- 4 People On The Highway
- 5 No Love Is Sorrow
- 6 Cherry Tree Carol
- 7 Jump Baby Jump

BOJCD013

- 8 Lady of Carlisle
- 9 Train Song
- 10 Hunting Song
- 11 Light Flight
- 12 In Time
- 13 House Carpenter
- 14 I've Got A Feeling

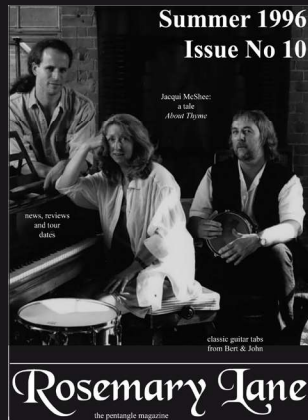
Bert Jansch/John Renbourn/Jacqui McShee/Danny Thompson/Terry Cox



SUBSCRIPTIONS to Rosemary Lane



If you've come across a copy of *Rosemary Lane* and like what you see, you can take out a subscription - see the rates below. In the next issue there will be news of Bert Jansch's new album, an update on John's, latest tour dates, more classic guitar tablature, letters, reviews and discographies. Back copies of Issues 9 and 10 which include features on Bert Jansch and Jacqui McShee are available on request - £3.



If you'd like to subscribe to the magazine, then here's what you should do. Write to:

John Higgins, 17 Deerhurst Road, Streatham, London SW16 2AN.

Rosemary Lane is a quarterly event and the subscription rates are as follows:

UK: £2.50 for 1 issue; £8 for 4 issues. Back copies £3.

EUROPE/IRELAND: £3.00 for 1 issue; £10 for 4 issues.

USA/CANADA: \$6 for 1 issue; \$22 for 4 issues.

JAPAN: £4.00 for 1 issue; £12 for 4 issues.

Payment can only be accepted by the following methods:

1. UK currency or UK cheques* (Sterling)
2. Eurocheques* and International Money Orders in Sterling
3. For US/CANADA only, US dollars are fine but please no checks!

*Cheques payable to John Higgins please.

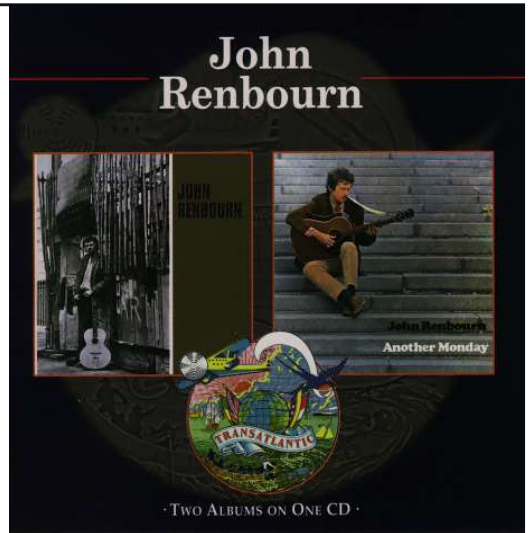


John Renbourn:

John Renbourn (1966) & *Another Monday* (1966)

"This collection combines my first two solo albums for the little independent record company, Transatlantic. The recordings weren't totally solo - I had the support of Bert Jansch and Jacqui McShee on a few tracks... I would have been twenty-one at the time and had been sitting around London playing my guitar..."

Castle Communications ESMCD408



Bert Jansch:

Bert Jansch (1965) & *It Don't Bother Me* (1965)

"When Bert Jansch's first LP appeared in 1965 it was one of those records that found its way into every bedsitter in the land. Hugely influential... the LP was one of Transatlantic label's most long-lived releases..."

Laurence Aston



Pentangle:

Basket of Light (1969)

"In the autumn of 1969, Pentangle's third LP became one of Transatlantic's all-time best sellers. Both the album and the celebrated single Light Flight went into the Top 40, the LP reaching the number five position.... all five members of the group contribute outstanding performances...."

Laurence Aston

Castle Communications ESMCD406



John Renbourn: Lost Sessions

"It turned out to be quite a gathering. Roy Babbington showed up with his electric string bass, Terry Cox played kit drums, Keshav Sathetablas, Jacqui McShee dropped in and sang some nice la-la's, Claire Denise played cello, Lea Nicholson brought his concertina, Gordon Huntley spun out seamless choruses of pedal steel, Sue Draheim played country fiddle and my old partner Tony Roberts contributed flute and recorder parts. I even got the chance to plug in a nice old Strat..."

Edsel Records EDCD 490



Bert Jansch: live @ the 12 Bar

includes:

Summer Heat
Curragh of Kildare
Walk Quietly By
Come Back Baby
Blackwaterside
Fresh As A Sweet Sunday Morning
Morning Brings Peace of Mind
The Lily of the West
Kingfisher
Trouble in Mind
Just a Dream
Blues Run the Game
Let Me Sing
Strolling Down the Highway
A Woman Like You
Instrumental (Bett's Dance)

Jansch Records BJCD 002