

# CAMARADERIE



THE OFFICIAL IAN McNABB MAGAZINE 2



Hello all you good, good people. I've missed seeing you all this year, hope you've missed me too.

What've I been up to? Well, I have to admit, not a great deal. I did a little acoustic stint at Easter in Greenwich village in N.Y.C. and a couple of weeks later went to see Neil Young play in Boston and at Madison Square Garden, just to see how the release of "... The Emotional Party" had affected his songwriting.

I went back to the USA in May to go to the jazz festival in New Orleans (fantastic), and then on to L.A. for a meeting with my new U.S. publisher (thought I said I hadn't done a great deal?). Apart from that I've been enjoying relaxing at home, writing the odd new tune, and watching the Sunset Beach omnibus every Saturday afternoon. Oh, I also did a little spot at a Hillsborough benefit in Liverpool.

I've been trying to put my plans in order for the next L.P. which is going to be a back to pop/rock affair and will probably be called "Attitunes." It will feature lots of songs (a lot of them in the 'power pop' idiom), maybe even as many as twenty, As you can imagine, seeing as I've only released one album in the past three years, the backlog of material is becoming vast. Daunting even. This album will be worth the wait I promise you. I hope to start recording it in the Autumn.

I'm sorry I won't be touring again this year (30-plus dates wasn't enough for some of you I hear), but I don't want to play again until I have the new album ready, and when I DO play I will be playing with a full band. More details when I work it all out!

Not much else to add at this point, don't forget I love you all and I think about what you're all up to when you're not watching me! See you all in '00!

Bye for now,  
Ian.

P.S. Many of you have asked what I'll be doing for the millennium. I will be going to bed at 12.30am.



## INTRODUCTION

Phew! After seeing 25 of Ian's Emotional Party shows, I have finally got round to writing Issue 2 of Camaraderie. I would like to begin by saying a big thank you to everyone who has written to me since I took over the magazine. Many people have kept in touch and lots of you came over to say hello during the tour. The Camaraderie spirit is certainly growing stronger.

The tour was very well received and the album reached number 20 in the Indie charts. It also gained a four-star review from Q magazine. Ian appeared on several radio shows and played exclusive live versions of his new tracks. I particularly enjoyed the Radio Mersey interviews (see separate article) which charted Ian's Icicle Works and solo careers in two hour-long broadcasts last November.

After the gruelling British tour, Ian released the Little Princess EP and even managed a mini-tour to promote it. He then jetted off to New York to complete the second leg of a Liverpool / New York bands exchange. In May he played a short set in Liverpool for a Hillsborough benefit gig before performing a DJ session at London's Borderline a few days later. Details of these events are given in this magazine.

At the time of writing, Ian has penned several new tracks and recorded some of them in demo form. It seems unlikely that 1999 will see any further releases as Ian thinks that everyone is too obsessed with "Music For The Millennium". Hopefully we may see some shows around Christmas time. For all the latest news please visit Ian's official web-site at it's new address of [ianmcnabb.com](http://ianmcnabb.com). It contains many reviews from the last tour plus notes from Ian about some of his new tracks.

As usual, I have a plea to all McNabb fans out there! I am interested in acquiring radio interviews and sessions from the last tour as well as magazine / newspaper articles. I am also looking for recordings of the gigs at Dublin, Belfast, Coventry and New York. Can anyone help me out ?

I would like to thank Gaynor Andrews and Gerry Gardner for all their photographs. You've probably seen them both clicking away at all the Midlands shows ! Thanks also to Roy, Mokka and Pete Wylie for their co-operation when interviewed and to Anthony Strutt for asking most of the questions. Issue 1 of Camaraderie is still available at £3 including p+p. I also have all 8 issues of McNabb Rag - written by Paul Warry - for sale at £2 each inc. p+p.

My address is :-



## ASK IAN

Several readers have written to me with questions for Ian. Rather than send out individual replies I decided to print Ian's responses for other readers to enjoy. Here is a selection of them. Please send any questions to the address on Page 2.

Q: Where did you spend Xmas day ?

A: At home in Liverpool with me dear old mum.

Q: Do you get many songs sent to you by fans ? If so, would you ever consider recording one given that your music is written from an intensely personal point of view ?

A: I do sometimes get tapes of songs from fans. I listen to them all, but I very much doubt if I would record any of them, as I have such a large backlog of my own stuff to get out.

Q: When you die, who gets your guitars ?

A: This is not something that I've considered at my tender age, but I guess if I outlive my mother I'll donate them to the rock'n'roll hall of infamy.

Q: If you hadn't discovered that music was the meaning of life, what profession do you think you would have ended up in ?

A: I always wanted to be a fighter pilot but I was terrible at maths and sciences. I still can't add up. I guess some kind of writing would have to do. I'd make a good record reviewer/feature writer and I still maintain I have a book in me. I guess it'll end up being my memoirs... it'll be a great book, I promise to write it one day.

Q: What was the best advice you were ever given ?

A: 1) never listen to The Who before you go to bed.

2) if an audience is getting rowdy during an acoustic set, play quieter, not louder. this makes the noisier element sound even louder, which in turn will cause good, quiet members of the audience to rise to your defence and tell them to shut the \*\*\*\* up.

Q: Why did the Rapids single get withdrawn ?

A: God...I can't remember. I guess I came up with something better...was it 'When it all comes down'?

Q: What was the story behind the Melting Bear project ?

A: I think I was going through my "I could be a solo artist you know" even at that stage. I'd considered leaving the band as early as '85. the 'Melting Bear' project was a way of venting this energy. I did covers. Can't remember why. Maybe I was frightened of depriving TIW of the best chance.



**Q:** What kind of success would you like to achieve (if any) ? ie selling more records, pulling in more people to gigs, being nominated for awards, being invited more onto radio and TV shows

**A:** All of 'em. who wants to be an unknown legend?

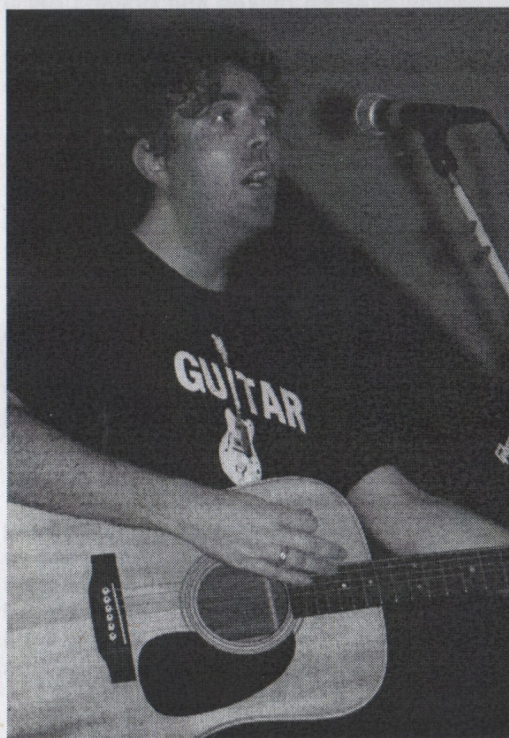
**Q:** Do you think that if you did achieve some or all of these that there would be a deterrental impact on your life / work/ vision / following ?

**A:** Why should there be? If I became more successful I would put out more records, tour more often, and possibly take more chances. All the things that success brings. I've been doing this so long now that I don't think a change in the weather would affect my songwriting in any way. I'm very limited in what I can achieve with the size of my audience...I'm not complaining! I love you all!

**Q:** Who were / are your main influences in driving you to write the songs you do (need not be musical) ? I particularly noticed some nice Marc Bolan touches - the "scream" at the end of "You only get what you deserve" and the "no no no" and "oh yeah" of "I'm a genius"

**A:** My influences are well documented elsewhere. I'm just into songs. The 'New Radicals' single blew me away this summer...stuff like that convinces me that the charts can still be a cool place to be. Maybe I'll try to get back into them next year!

Questions from Allan Openshaw, Trina Heath and Duncan Wyatt.





## Talk A Wylie With Me

We asked Pete Wylie if he had any Ian McNabb stories

I've got too many! I value him as a friend too much to really tell you everything. He's been great with me. We haven't seen each other a lot during the last year because we're hardly ever around in the same place. He's the guy who helped me the most after my accident. I always got on well with him beforehand when we did stuff together but after my accident he was great with me. He got me some gigs with him and introduced me to Crazy Horse. In Manchester we were playing with Crazy Horse and we did the soundcheck then went straight on stage. We didn't have much room as the stage was very small. After the gig we went backstage and the guys from Crazy Horse came up to me and said I had some great songs. I thought they had just wandered in and not taken much notice of what I was playing so when they said that I was a little suspicious. Then they quoted Disneyland Forever and another new song. They'd actually listened and they liked the newer songs more than the old ones so I was really chuffed and they were cool. After Ian's show we were backstage hanging out and I was standing on a couch in the dressing room. Ian was standing to my left and Billy Talbot was to my right. Billy said something to me and I got really enthusiastic about it. I caught my foot on something and accidentally butted Billy! I just saw McNabb saying "Oh my God". I said I was really sorry and Billy said it was OK but he never spoke again for about half an hour. So I knew I'd ruined Ian's night by butting a Crazy Horse guy.

I don't mean this to sound as awful as it might sound but when I have setbacks Ian is somebody I think about. He makes records likes he makes and doesn't get a crack of the whip or he doesn't fit in with people. He makes beautiful records and is an incredibly talented guy and he doesn't get a crack of the whip so why should I be any different to him? We were mixing my new album and Ian and John Bryce came down to see us. We were only rough mixing but Ian and Bryce thought it was incredible and kept asking to hear more tracks. We just kept going and Ian was really enthusiastic about it.

I recently found some notes I'd written about an idea I'd had in the 80's. I wanted me and Ian to do a band called either The Hoodlums or The Hooligans and it would be me and him playing all our favourite rock 'n' roll songs – black leather, noise guitars, bass drums, me and him. It's still something I'd love to do at some point. He's great at turning it on, standing on a fuzzbox and rocking and I'd love to do it with him. I think our voices work together as well - just from singing Needle And The Damage Done and other odd things. Besides, Pat (Ian's Mam) has finally forgiven me for being a Scouser which is another good thing ! Every time I go and see Ian she gives me a hard time then ends up talking to me for hours. I think I'm in her quite good books.

Ian's a good one - there was talk of the Icicle Works maybe doing something together again. Ian and Chris Layhe played a jam together about a year ago in Liverpool (see separate article). It was an exchange night between bands from New York and Liverpool. I was meant to play but I missed it. Ian and Chris played together at the end of the night and apparently it was wonderful. I don't know if it'll go any further than that as Chris Sharrock is "Robbie'd up". I'd love to nick Chris Sharrock - we always wanted him for our band. He's a lovely lad!



## BIRMINGHAM EVENING MAIL INTERVIEW

As mentioned elsewhere in the magazine, Paul Cole of the Birmingham Evening Mail publicised each Midlands McNabb appearance heavily. He kindly allowed me to reproduce the following interview from the Mail which was printed just prior to Ian's triumphant Christmas show at Birmingham's Ronnie Scott's.

Ian McNabb is a busy man these days. The former Icicle Works frontman is surrounded by a welter of paperwork. There are gigs to book, flyers to print, letters to answer and bills to pay. The Scouse star who once played sell-out stadia with the illustrious Ices has gone back to the basics, both in the music on his latest album and in the business. He has become something of a one-man band.

When he appears at Ronnie Scott's in Birmingham's Broad Street this Sunday, it will have been - quite literally - all his own work. All his own money, too, yet it doesn't tempt him to play safe. "I've become a cottage industry", he grins. "I am my own record company, my own promoter and my own public relations person. Oh, and yes, I sing and play the guitar for a living, too! It's all my own money in it since my last record label was eaten up by Island, and I found myself out on my own. So yes, it can be hard work and tough at times, but it is also very liberating. I am very much my own man. It's up to me which songs I record, which songs I perform, and which gigs I play. And d'you know, after all these years, it's really something I very much enjoy."

Certainly the new album, lengthily titled "A Party Political Broadcast On Behalf Of The Emotional Party", sees McNabb in melancholy mood - but its soaring melodies, backed by the barest semi-plugged accompaniment, are among his best work. They are songs he wrote largely after his solo stint at Ronnie Scott's earlier this year - many of them while he was here in Birmingham.

"I had been wallowing in lethargy" he says ruefully "I'd had to deal with my record company going bust, and I had a lot of legal problems to deal with. It wasn't conducive to writing new songs, let alone finding inspiration. Then I had a call asking me if I'd play at Ronnie Scott's. To be honest, my initial thought was that it wasn't really my type of venue - but I forced myself into action. I'm glad that I did because my week in Birmingham worked wonders. By the time I'd played my last night, I'd written five new songs - and they form the foundation of the new album. I found I had the hunger back. It was a new challenge to make an album that was so stripped down, but I wanted to recreate the feeling I'd had in Brum. There's nowhere to hide when you make an album like this - you stand or fall on the quality of your work."

Reaction from the critics and fans alike has been favourable. When McNabb played The Varsity in Wolverhampton back in October, a capacity crowd sang their hearts out for two hours, offering a chorus for songs old and new.

"I started playing songs they'd shout out", he says. "One of two of them from the early days, I'd forgotten the lyrics to - but they just sang them all for me. It was a strange experience to hear my own songs being performed by the crowd."

On the night, he reeled out just about every Icicle Works hallmark you could name, most of the highlights from his solo career so far, included half a dozen new songs from the new album, and finished with a rocky revisit to Child Inside A



Father from the Mercury-nominated *Head Like A Rock* album. When McNabb appears at Ronnie's on Sunday expect the unexpected. Although songs from the new album and the glorious Icicle Works back catalogue should make the set, nothing is ever certain.

"I decide the set list just before I go on stage", he explains. "And then I might change it as I go along. It all depends on the atmosphere and on me. As I said, there is a great freedom in that. I played a gig at Leeds the other week, and I forgot to play any off the new album. That's not likely to happen this weekend, but you never know!"

Another broad smile breaks across McNabb's face and there's mischief in his eyes. It comes as something of a revelation from someone who can both write sublimely sad songs, and who can be wrongly regarded as a distant, cold figure.

"Listen", he says, "I find it very difficult to be serious. My new songs, especially, may be very personal and on the quiet side - but you can't be a miserable sod for an hour and a half and ask people to enjoy what I do. You've got to laugh haven't you ...?"

## IAN MCNABB – MUSIC TO DIE FOR ?

Whilst tuning in to watch *Never Mind The Buzzcocks* one evening, I caught the tail-end of the preceding programme. Dawn French was starring in "Murder Most Horrid" and was playing a character who had a grudge against an aerobics instructor. Before the instructor began her class, French poisoned her liquid refreshment.

The session began with the instructor performing an exercise and the class duly copying her actions. After she had taken a sip of the fatal concoction, she began to die dramatically with arms and legs flailing everywhere. The class – thinking this was a new exercise – religiously copied her every move and all ended up sprawled out on the floor. The tune they were all dying to was none other than the Icicle Works favourite *Evangeline*! Could there be a McNabb fan at the BBC ? (Especially as *Little Girl Lost* was played on the Old Vic jukebox on UK Gold recently)

## GREAT MINDS ARE LOOKING FOR THE ANSWERS

I thought it was about time for another McNabb quiz. There are only two questions in the quiz but both are quite tricky. I have at least five answers for question one and at least four answers for question two.

- 1) How many Icicle Works tracks mention the word *Reverie* ?
- 2) How many Icicle Works / Ian McNabb tracks contain the title of another Icicle Works / McNabb song in its lyrics ?

For example if there was a song called "Midnight" then one answer would be *Evangeline* due to the line "It was sometime after midnight ..."

Clue : at least two of the answers are singles







## MOKKA

Anyone who has witnessed an Ian McNabb show in last few years will no doubt have seen his long-time friend Mokka. He has assisted Ian in many different ways from selling t-shirts to his current rôle of keyboard player. Not content with backing vocals and keyboard playing, Mokka released his first single "Where the cold wind blows" in October 1996. The four-track affair featured Ian McNabb on guitar and harmonica, Roy Corkill on bass and Daniel Strittmatter on drums. I have several copies for sale - please write to me for details. He is currently recording and producing his second single - as yet untitled.

Christopher Mark Hutchinson was born on a cold October evening in Ulverston, just south of Coniston Water. He started writing songs influenced heavily by childhood, the pleasures of solitude and tranquility, first loves and failed romances; it is nostalgic music, personally formative throughout ultimately very happy times.

His move to Liverpool, although seen as a strange move by old friends at home and new ones in Liverpool, was ultimately the only way to realise his songs. The reasons became apparent when this "den" of musical talent allowed him the facility to record and produce his songs in a way that never forgot his childhood roots, as well as celebrating the limitless potential that a city like Liverpool has to offer.

Having made a few friends of the same ilk, he began initially recording a vast library of home produced demos, as well as playing "by choice" in a couple of more established bands. He was a member of Black for a number of years and also in Grown Up Strange who supported the Icicle Works on several occasions. It was with this feeling of "belonging" in mind that he decided to record one of his tracks for a single.

I caught up with Mokka prior to the Ronnie Scott's Christmas show.

R: Thanks for doing the interview. The first question I've got to ask you is where did you get your nickname Mokka from ?

M: My Dad called me it as a young lad. But he can't remember why. It's a bit of a sad story that, I'm afraid. Basically, I said to my Dad "so where did you get Mokka from?" My Dad just said "I called you it as a young lad but I can't remember why." Sorry !

R: Ian often mentions that you're his longest serving friend. How long have you actually known him ?

M: Since 1985 when I was in Grown Up Strange. We supported the Icicles on tour. We just carried on going out drinking after that.

R: Did you used to be an Icicle Works fan ?

M: Oh yeah. I had the first album as soon as it came out. I was a fan, yeah. I didn't jump up and down at the front.

R: You do now though don't you ! I understand from the Whitehaven concert that



you are from around Cumbria. What made you move to Liverpool ?

M: To join a band

R: So Cumbria isn't the metropolis of music ?

M: It's a great place to grow up in if you're into climbing trees and stuff like that. I used to play in bands up there and we had a great time. We'd play the village hall and everyone would jump around but I wanted to try and do something a bit more. I still love the Lakes and I still like to go back there. I want to go with a bit of success behind me not with my tail between my legs. My Mam and Dad still live up there and I'll be up there this Christmas.

R: I think you've done a lot of jobs for Ian. What else have you done apart from playing keyboards and selling t-shirts? I know you played the guitar last night (Mokka and Roy took centre stage at Derby Guildhall Theatre during the encore for a rousing version of Neil Young's Too Far Gone) – is that the first time you've done that?

M: Yeah. I think I'll be doing the guitar on some more stuff when we get the band together. But that is to be confirmed. I used to go to all the gigs as Ian's mate and Geoff Muir used to get p-----d off with this. Then Ian basically said "you come to every gig, why not sell the t-shirts?" I said alright and I started going to the gigs and getting paid for it as well – so it was fantastic. When Stan (Ian's former keyboard player Nick Warren) left, Ian asked if I wanted to do the keyboards. I had some great times doing the shirts. You can get away with a lot more than when you're playing keyboards. You get a lot more 'phone numbers for a start!

R: What do you do the rest of the time when you're not working with Ian?

M: I do my own stuff. I'm putting a single out in February/March.

R: Will that be your second single ?

M: Yes. This new one is a good song. Me and Roy have been working on it for the last couple of weeks reprogramming it. That's basically what we do. Me and Roy get it so it's almost finished then go into Parr Street or a decent studio and slap it down in a couple of days. Then stick it out.

R: So is the single written from your own perspective? I found it quite haunting.

M: No, I just write what I like.

R: So might there be an album in the pipeline do you think ?

M: Singles – that's where it's at. I'll just keep chucking singles out. They pick up an airplay here and there. Every now and then we get people coming back through the internet saying "I've played this and I like it". I'll keep putting more and more stuff out. Eventually it will get further and further and hopefully something might happen. I just think if I can try and stick a single out every year – a decent song with three or four tracks on it – then hopefully pick up a few fans on each single. Hopefully, eventually, I'll get somewhere. Then I'll go back to the Lakes and get my fishing rod back out!



R: Have you got any plans to play your own songs live ?

M: No. I did some gigs once. Ian had to play guitar for me and Roy was in the band.

R: Was that with Grown Up Strange ?

M: Yes. But I've never played my own stuff live. I remember when I was in Black I thought it was brilliant. Then Colin stuck a microphone in front of me and said "do all the backing vocals" and it ruined it. For me the biggest buzz is standing in the corner playing. As soon as people say "sing this bit, sing that bit" it kills it. I get off more on playing on stage doing my own thing rather than standing up at the front and doing the other person's set.

R: It was strange seeing you at the front last night. It was good – was it just an impromptu thing ?

M: Ian was given a Neil Young tape by someone and it's got Too Far Gone on it. We were just singing it in the dressing room and he started playing it in A. I said "it's not in A – it's in G". Me and Roy were singing it and next thing Ian says "right we're doing it". We rehearsed it five minutes and went on and did it. It's only three chords.

R: You've already mentioned the new band – you hope to be in it I take it ?

M: Yes, Ian's talking about recording with a full band. I don't play on the records though. I just hang around making teas !

R: Weren't you on Merseybeast ?

M: No.

R: I thought you might have been on "stone my soul" on backing vocals

M: Ian just plays it all himself. What he's thinking about doing on his quieter stuff is using him on the guitar and me on the keyboards and then when he wants a double guitar sound I'll just pick up a guitar. It saves getting another person in. As Ian says when he does have two guitars going in a song he doesn't need keyboards in it anyway. So it will be a case of picking up a guitar to do one song and then do keyboards on the next.

R: Any idea who might be in the band ?

M: It'll just be me, Roy, Danny and Ian I think. I'm not too sure. At the moment he wants to keep it a punchy four—piece

R: I thought the Afterlife were getting really good

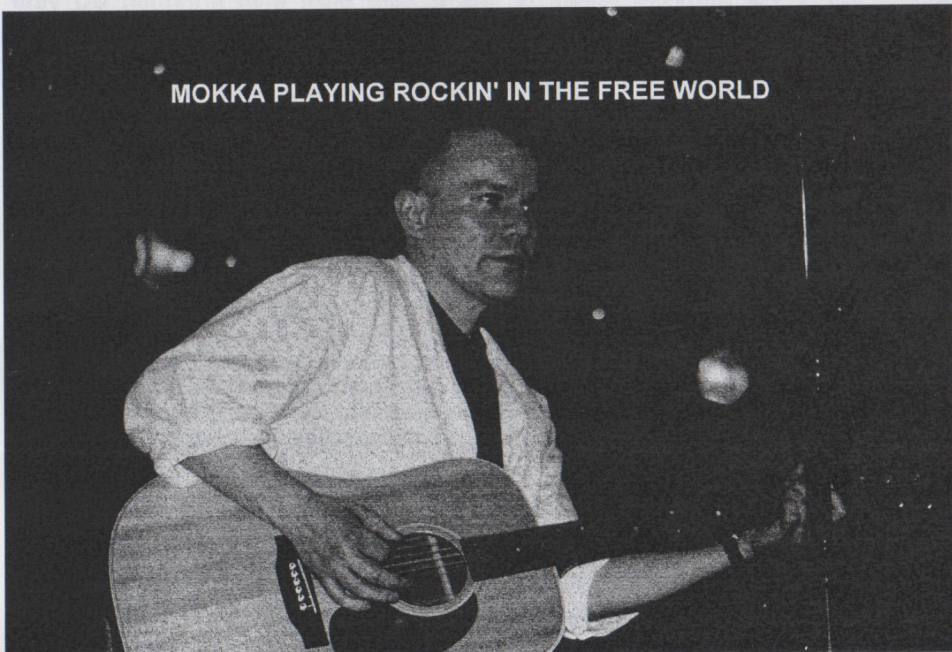
M: I think it's as good – if not better – with Roy and Swissy (Daniel Strittmatter). We've done it before with the Gak Mummies thing. As a four-piece rock'n'roll unit it'll sound fantastic when it gets going. He doesn't need any more than four. If he's going to have keyboards then fine – if not I'll slip a guitar on. But when he's getting five or six people on stage it just complicates the issue



**R: What is your favourite Icicle Works track and your favourite solo track by Ian ?**

**M: It's funny actually because just before the tour he gave me a second copy of Defeat. I did have it on vinyl but someone nicked it as usual. I always thought that was my favourite. I always liked When You Were Mine – remember that one ? I always thought that was great. So I tend to sort of remember things sounding better than they actually do. My favourite solo track is probably Prepared To Dream. I like those skating- along big songs – epics. Fully blown numbers.**

**R: I think that's it really. Thank you.**



**MOKKA PLAYING ROCKIN' IN THE FREE WORLD**

### **I READ IT IN BOOKS**

I recently discovered two McNabb-related items. The first was whilst in Cambridge for Ian's show at the Junction. I visited the information centre and spotted a leaflet entitled "Rock'n'roll map of England". It featured all the major towns and cities in the country and gave a list of artists from that area. I looked straightaway at Liverpool and was pleasantly surprised to find a mention for the Icicle Works alongside such illustrious names as the Beatles and Gerry And The Pacemakers.

The second item was found in a book I received for Christmas entitled "1000 Best Ever Albums". Ian's Truth And Beauty album was fittingly included and described as follows :- "Merseyside singer-songwriter Ian McNabb split his band the Icicle Works after they failed to crack the big time. This, his first solo album, which took three post-band years to emerge, was an undeniably impressive collection of timeless, guitar-based songs including the single Great Dreams Of Heaven. Though it charmed critics, sales disappointed Epic, the major label he had signed the Icicles to just before their split, so he found more congenial indie-label surroundings to regain his momentum with the subsequent Head Like A Rock and Merseybeast, the former a blaring, band-based effort inspired by Neil Young and using his musicians."



## A REUNION I COULD MASTER ?

At the end of 1998 Ian played on stage with both Squeeze and former Icicle Works member Chris Layhe. I asked him about these collaborations.

R: I understand you played a few tracks with Squeeze at the Royal Court. Can you tell me anything about this. What songs were played, etc.

I: Yes, I did get up with Squeeze, Glen Tillbrook rang me repeatedly the day of the gig, and even forced me to go to the soundcheck for a rehearsal!!!! In this order, we played; "Evangeline" "Take me I'm yours" and "Let me roll it" (off Wings "Band on the run" album) It went over quite big I reckon!

R: Also, I believe you played at the Lomax with Chris Layhe. Any further info about this ?

I: Yeah, that was dead weird. He just turned up out of the blue which was pretty strange anyway, seeing as I wasn't billed, and had only agreed to do a few numbers as a favour to someone. Typical Chris Layhe, of course he doesn't turn up to one of my sold-out triumphant hometown shows, he comes to the one where he figures he won't have to witness anything he might not like to see. The only time Chris Sharrock ever came to a McNabb show was on the "These are the days" tour (two gigs) when I played to about 300 people in a freezing cold Royal Court... it's almost like they phone ahead to make sure it's not going to be a great gig before they put their coats on! Anyway I called him up (he'd brought his bass!!!) and we played "Evangeline", "Hollow horse", "Love is..." and "Goin' back" I know this is probably pissing you off to think you missed this supposed 'legendary' one-off performance, but take it from me, I didn't think it was up to much. Chris was jumping around (like he used to) and he managed to pull his lead out about four times (like he used to). Hardly any people in the half-full Lomax knew what was going on, so the response wasn't exactly tumultuous – in fact most people who were there didn't know who I was! It was a local band night, and once the local bands had done their thing everybody f-----d off to the bar!

To add insult to injury, after we came off Chris tried to convince me for the remainder of the night (and by persistent 'phone calls for a further week) that it was time for us to work together again! Cheeky bastard. It's not like I've missed his input over the last ten f-----g years is it?! Anyway, don't hold your breath for any kind of reunion - I'm sure Chris Sharrock is going to hand his cards in to Robbie Williams to participate in this momentous event. Not.

## The football gets her going on a Saturday

Understanding JAMES

Fire INCEide my COLE

CADAMATERIE

KWARME genius

RIEDLE tening

OWEN good eye

AIWRIGHT with me

Everybody wants to play the FOWLER

HUGHES STONE my SCHOLES

BABBy don't burn

Power of SONG



## IAN MCNABB CD RELEASES UPDATE

Two rare McNabb releases came out in quick succession of each other. The magazine Mojo was promoting several new albums in it's regular "Got these yet?" feature and Ian's Emotional Party album was selected for recommended listening. A 22 track double CD was sent out free to independent record shops and included Ian's track Sex With Someone You Love.

Beggars Banquet - the former label of the Icicle Works - released a special promo-only CD featuring acts from their group of labels covering the entire Rolling Stones album from which they took their name. Ian was joined by Mike Scott and Anthony Thistlethwaite for the moving finale Salt Of The Earth. The CD came packaged in a superb 12" gatefold sleeve and was made available at a party which celebrated 21 years since Beggars' first release. On hearing the track, I didn't think it sounded like Ian at all ! Ian tells me that the Stones are his favourite band at the moment.

The Salt Of The Earth track was one of only two songs recorded for the Emotional Party album which didn't end up on the final release. The other was a superb re-working of the old Icicle Works favourite Out Of Season. This track has been a popular live favourite since it's reintroduction into Ian's shows in 1996 after a nine year absence. The new version is in the same vein to the one played at the 1998/99 shows and gained a welcome release on the Little Princess EP in January. Along with an edited title track, the EP contained demos of Loveless Age and Beautiful Old Mystery. The version of Loveless Age was taken from the October 96 demos - as reviewed in Cameraderie issue 1. Due to it's number of tracks, the EP was ineligible for chart inclusion and was only available through the T'n'T society and at the 5 concerts which promoted it's release.

Some very rare Ian McNabb releases have recently been brought to my attention. Fans in the South of England are probably aware of the radio show Rock Over London. The hour-long broadcast features sessions and interviews from special guest artists as well as album tracks, competitions, etc. Ian appeared on nine of these shows which were broadcast between 1992 and 1995. He introduced some tracks and gave short interviews as well as playing the following live acoustic songs :-

Hollow Horse,  
Great Dreams Of Heaven,  
Little Girl Lost,  
I'm Game,  
Unknown Legend,  
Caroline No,  
Great Dreams Of Heaven (different version),  
These Are The Days,  
You Must Be Prepared To Dream,  
Fire Inside My Soul.

The commercial radio station presses each show onto CD for distribution overseas to the USA as well as inland to other English radio stations. This means that there are nine rare McNabb CDs out there! Each one contains only five to fifteen minutes of McNabb-related material and asking prices of upto £20 each are somewhat high! Do any readers possess any of these recordings? Please write in and let me know.



## THE EMOTIONAL PARTY TOUR

Ian's biggest ever solo tour started in October 1998 and finished at the end of February 1999. He was accompanied on stage by Roy Corkill on bass guitar and Chris 'Mokka' Hutchinson on keyboards. As promised in Camaraderie, Ian played several 'out of the way' places as well as more recognised venues. I was fortunate enough to be involved in selling the merchandise for the first 5 British shows. I was still involved with the rest of the shows although not as heavily.

The format of the shows was the same as at the Ronnie Scotts shows earlier in the year. Ian played mainly tracks from the new album in the first set - this was usually around 45 minutes in duration. The second set was at least 90 minutes and featured more familiar McNabb and Icicle Works numbers as well as cover versions and amusing stories.

Unfortunately there were early teething problems as the tour reached British shores. Roy and Mokka missed the ferry to Stranraer for the Glasgow show and only just made it in time for a quick soundcheck before a delayed start. There should have been a piano but a mix-up ensured that Ian's songs were all guitar-based for the Scottish show. Ian also developed an illness during the first few shows which resulted in the cancellation of the Beverley show due to his loss of voice.

The first few shows were 'sit down' affairs in theatres in 'out of the way' places like Whitehaven and South Shields. Ian broke the news to me at South Shields that the Middlesbrough (my home town) show was not going to take place. The Whitehaven show opened up with a stunning piano version of Still Got The Fever and featured a brand new song Hollywood Tears (also played on the piano). Ian explained that the song was written at a friend's house. The friend just happened to live next door to Sharon Stone ! (see later for details).

Everything settled down as the tour reached Leeds. The much-played Duchess of York provided a great atmosphere. Ian didn't play any tracks from the new album until 'Sex with someone you love' got an airing in the encore. This was the only track from the album that he played. Ian also spent several minutes telling stories about Crazy Horse and Noel Gallagher. At the Ashton show the following night Ian mentioned that people had said he had done too much talking and hadn't played any new songs. He soon put matters to right by playing a first set comprised entirely of tracks from the new album. He then opened the second set by playing 8 cover versions in a row! The following night at Wolverhampton saw first solo plays of Seven Horses and Rapids. We were even treated to a line or two from All The Daughters! This show was also the first of several Midlands shows to be reviewed in the Birmingham Mail by Paul Cole. I would like to thank Paul for these reviews and for his quest to publicise Ian.

Cambridge was the scene for Ian's 38th birthday. There was a great atmosphere and Ian kept telling the audience he loved us. There was a welcome rare performance of Motorcycle Rider. Ian rounded the show off with four cover versions and a rousing version of Birds Fly complete with the usual medley. Ian left the stage saying that music is everything.

Sheffield had been moved back a couple of days and not as many people as expected turned up. They missed a superb first set which was almost a greatest hits performance. Ian included rare plays of Melanie Still Hurts and Neil Young's Don't Cry No Tears. Several people missed this first set due to the prompt start of all the shows on the tour. The second set included stories about Ian's first meeting with Neil Young. Ian seemingly spent longer talking to Neil's father rather than to the man himself. He also told us about the Icicle



Works' Top Of The Pops appearance. As the stories were in full flow Ian told me to turn my tape over and then proceeded to tell me off for taping all his shows! The show at York the following night saw Ian playing the new album from start to finish as the first set. The second set finished off with Ian doing a Freddie Mercury "de-o" sing-a-long before launching into Crazy Little Thing Called Love. At the end he said the famous Mercury line "you buggers sing it better than me".

The tour took in a few more theatres as it wound it's way towards Ian's hometown. New Brighton was the 'local' venue and was a very nice theatre. Ian's performance was the last night of a 'guitar week' at the venue and had a superb atmosphere and sound. There was even an appearance on stage from a member of the audience offering to tell jokes at the end of the show ! Ian played only 4 songs from the new album but played 9 Icicle Works tracks. The format of the show at Chester a couple of weeks later was exactly the opposite. The whole of the new album was played as the first set and no Icicle Works songs at all were played. This is only the second time in Ian's solo career that he hasn't played any Icicle Works songs. (The other time was the opening show of the Truth And Beauty tour at Dublin Tivoli when the entire set was the Truth And Beauty album from start to finish.)

The 1998 part of the tour rounded off with two Midlands shows. The first was at Derby Guildhall Theatre. This show featured the live debut of If We Believe What Love Can Do and ended with a cover of Neil Young's "Too Far Gone". For this song Ian was joined on centre-stage by Mokka and Roy. (See interview with Mokka for further details). After the show, Ian was trying to cajole the rest of the gang to go on the dodgems outside the venue with him. Sadly for Ian there were no takers! The Birmingham Ronnie Scott's show the following night was superb and rated by many long-time fans as the best ever. The atmosphere was entirely different from the 6 shows there earlier in the year (see Camaraderie issue one for details). The venue was a complete sell-out and several people were even allowed to stand at the back. Ian played alongside a plastic snowman throughout the show and everyone was full of the Christmas spirit. The encores proved to be the highlight of the show. Ian resurrected Tin Can and got several members of the audience to assist him by holding up large cards with the words of the song on them. He announced it as the worst song he had ever written. The final song was You Stone My Soul and it went on for ages. The audience was on its feet as everyone chanted the McNabb anthem.

1999 had 4 new shows plus the rescheduled Beverley show. The first two shows were at Manchester and London and Ian was joined on stage by Danny Thompson on double bass. Danny played on several tracks on the Emotional Party album and was well received by the audience. Roy was taking a back-seat for these two shows. At the end of the London show Ian made the profound statement "Next time somebody tells you there's no singer-songwriters - where's the new Bob Dylan, where's the new Van Morrison, where's the new Neil Young - just go out and tell them that that they are all here to be found. It's just that the music business turned into the fashion business". Ian had promised a few new songs for this mini tour which was promoting the Little Princess EP. He played "What She Wanted" at London and "Why Are The Beautiful So Sad" at Beverley. Both songs were also played at the next Ronnie Scott's show as the opening two numbers - Ian was keeping to his format of opening up a show with a new song as explained in Camaraderie issue one.

The final show of all was at Bilston in the West Midlands. Another new song I Wish I Was In California (from the 1996 October demos) began the show at this recently opened venue. The party mood of the night reached a peak as Ian was joined on centre stage by Roy and Mokka for a drum machine backed version of Neil Young's Rockin' In The Free World. He finished off by giving thanks to everyone involved in the tour and to those of us who had travelled around the country watching all the shows.



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(Fairfield)

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McNabb just gets better with the passing years. Here the nearest thing we have to a young Van or Neil gets all mellow and replicates his acoustic live act on record. It's the usual story-telling, self-deprecating wit and masterful song writing and, in 'Bloom' and 'The Man Who Can Make A Woman Laugh', contains two of the finest songs ever written. Doesn't seem to self as many records as Billie, but at least Ian appears to have finished puberty.

**album of the month**

**Ian McNabb**

**A Party Political Broadcast On  
Behalf Of The Emotional Party**  
(Fairfield)

Four albums into his solo career and now on his own label, it's looking as though the ex-Icicle Worker will never be the major figure that his talent deserves. No matter his constant fans will find as much wonder in this low key acoustic outing as in his previous 'bigger' (read bigger budget) albums. The peaceful settings are redolent of his excellent one-man shows, the storytelling nature of the songs as impressive as ever and the assistance of ex-Waterboys Mike Scott and Anthony Thistlethwaite and living bass legend Danny Thompson show the regard that the man is held in by his peers. A wonderful album that grows with every listen.

**Ian McNabb**

**A Party Political  
Broadcast On Behalf Of  
The Emotional Party**

FAIRFIELD FAIR CD1

**Stripped down, acoustic and  
muso, but still sung in  
reassuringly lugubrious Scouse.**

Written and recorded immediately after a rousing six-night residency at Birmingham Ronnie Scott's, Ian McNabb's latest venture is the kind of record that seasoned musicians make when they want to get back

to the very heart of their craft. Hence, long-winded title aside, the former Icicle Work here creates an elegiac paean to subtlety, employing the very minimum of studio trickery in favour of similarly earthy contributions from like-minded peers such as ex-Waterboys Mike Scott and Anthony Thistlethwaite. Resolutely free of potential his singles, it nevertheless confirms McNabb as a master songwriter whose grip on pathos - see The Man Who Can Make A Woman Laugh - remains as tight as ever. ★★★★★





## EMOTIONAL PARTY BITS AND PIECES

An eagerly anticipated release was that of Ian's lyric book. It was made available for the Emotional Party tour and was packaged in a very similar fashion to the album itself. So much so that when I manned the merchandising stall some fans were confused between the two, due to the lyric book's CD size and shape.

Ian chose 30 songs ranging from early Icicle Works releases right up to the most recent solo album tracks. Each song was accompanied by descriptive sleeve notes (or sometimes a one line comment) from Ian.

The following extra verse was printed for A Little Bit Of Magic, which Ian described as "not the best song on Merseybeast, but it's easily the best track" :- "I'm lookin' for a little bit of magic, 'cos I'm the same as everybody else, when you get home from work and turn a light on, don't you wonder, how long does it take".

I enjoyed reading Ian explain why his lyrics never appear in his CD booklets. He wrote "by not including the lyrics on any of my albums, it would necessitate the need by you, my beloved fans, to ultimately, one day, feel the need to purchase an item akin to the one you are currently holding in your sweaty McNabb-worshipping grasp!" In a similar vein, Ian said in his sleeve notes for A Guy Like Me, "I enjoy my creature comforts as much as the next guy, but it's very important to remember that money is not the reason why you're here. Anyway, thanks for coming, and make sure you visit the merchandise stall on the way out." This sentiment was later echoed at the Bristol concert (see separate article).

Ian's rather pessimistic comments about the future in his sleeve notes for Loveless Age were later to provoke a debate on live radio with DJ Johnnie Walker when he reiterated them after playing a live version of the track on Radio 2. Ian was appearing on the Saturday afternoon show which took place the day after the BBC's annual Children In Need appeal. Walker, who had opened a bottle of wine during the show, criticised Ian for being so negative when millions of pounds had just been raised by the general public. Ian retorted by saying that such acts were few and far between and that we should only be celebrating the millenium because of the fact that we are still here on earth. Walker chose to disagree, seeing the year 2000 as a new beginning and as a time where everyone stood an equal chance. Ian's reply was to say that he didn't expect anyone to take any notice of his song Loveless Age anyway and that this live performance of the song would be the only airplay it would receive. (Ian even e-mailed and faxed his old mate Bob Harris asking him to play some of his new songs !). He stressed that if Noel Gallagher had written the song that more people would take note of it's content. After playing Liverpool Girl, Ian said that it was the first time he had been bought a drink whilst on air and Walker apologised for winding Ian up.

A more informative interview was that carried out by Liverpool DJ Spencer Leigh for his regular show "On The Mersey Beat". The first part of the interview concentrated on Ian's time with the Icicle Works. It was neatly interspersed with record segments and also feature Ian playing several acoustic songs live in the studio. The second part concentrated on Ian's solo career and followed the same format. He even told the "Love Is A Wonderful Colour leaves story" as featured in Camaraderie Issue 1 !



## SONGS PLAYED ON EMOTIONAL PARTY TOUR

79 Tracks were played. They included first ever solo plays of the Icicle Works tracks Seven Horses and Rapids. New cover versions were :- Little Wing, Don't Cry No Tears, Back Door Man, Crawling King Snake, Crazy Little Thing Called Love, Shakin' All Over, Black Sabbath, Whole Lotta Love and Too Far Gone. Unreleased tracks played were What You Wanted, (I Wish I Was In) California, Why Are The Beautiful So Sad and Hollywood Tears. The Emotional Party album was played from start to finish at York and Chester as the first of Ian's customary two sets.

Songs Marked \* Are Incomplete Versions

27 Times  
Fire Inside My Soul

26 Times  
Understanding Jane

25 Times  
Evangeline

24 Times  
Camaraderie  
Hollow Horse  
Little Princess

23 Times  
Liverpool Girl

22 Times  
Still Got The Fever

21 Times  
You Stone My Soul  
When It All Comes Down  
Love Is A Wonderful Colour

20 Times  
Sex With Someone You Love

19 Times  
Great Dreams Of Heaven  
Loveless Age

18 Times  
Merseybeast  
The Man Who Can Make A Woman Laugh

17 Times  
Bloom

16 Times  
Permanent Damage

15 Times  
I'm A Genius

14 Times  
Out Of Season

13 Times  
One True Love

12 Times  
Child Inside A Father



10 Times  
Birds Fly  
Hollywood Tears  
I'm Game  
Love's Young Dream  
What She Did To My Mind

8 Times  
A Guy Like Me And A  
    Girl Like You -  
Light My Fire \*

5 Times  
Back Door Man \*  
Beautiful Old Mystery  
Stood Before Saint Peter

3 Times  
Who Do You Love  
Little Wing \*  
Stand By Me  
Girls Are Birds  
Goin' Back  
Heart Of Gold  
I Don't Want To Talk  
    About It

1 Time  
Too Far Gone  
Tin Can  
For What It's Worth  
Young Man Blues  
Don't Cry No Tears \*  
Crawling King Snake \*  
Shakin' All Over \*  
Mister Tambourine Man \*  
Whole Lotta Love  
Seven Horses  
As A Life Goes By  
Motorcycle Rider

9 Times  
That's Why I Believe  
Too Close To The Sun

7 Times  
You Must Be Prepared To Dream  
A Little Bit Of Magic  
Absolutely Wrong  
Potency  
Starry Blue Eyed Wonder

4 Times  
You Only Get What You Deserve  
Little Girl Lost

2 Times  
Why Are The Beautiful So Sad ?  
These Are The Days  
Substitute  
Cortez The Killer  
If We Believe What Love Can Do  
Rockin' In The Free World  
What You Wanted  
Into The Mystic

You Cant Always Get What You Want \*  
Crazy Little Thing Called Love  
Up Here In The North Of England  
You've Got To Hide Your Love Away  
I Will Rock You \*  
Melanie Still Hurts  
Black Sabbath  
Blackbird  
Roadhouse Blues  
(I Wish I Was In) California  
Rapids



## The Man Who Can Make The Audience Laugh

Like the 8 shows earlier in the year, the last tour provided many humorous moments as well as good music. Ian told some amusing and often very long stories, he changed lyrics around and even told a few short jokes.

The first story told on the tour was about the writing of the new song Hollywood Tears. Ian had been out in Los Angeles visiting a friend. His friend is a big mate of Adam Durritz of Counting Crows. Adam's house is in Bel Air and he lives next door to Sharon Stone. Ian and his friend Dave would go to Adam's house to write songs and they discovered that Sharon took a dip in her pool at about 2.30 each afternoon. On discovering this, Ian and his mates would take their breaks at the same time ! Ian got left on his own in a room with a piano and that was where he wrote the song. It is about people who pretend they care about something in order to draw attention to themselves and pretend they are having a bad time. Ian told this story the first few times he played this new track.

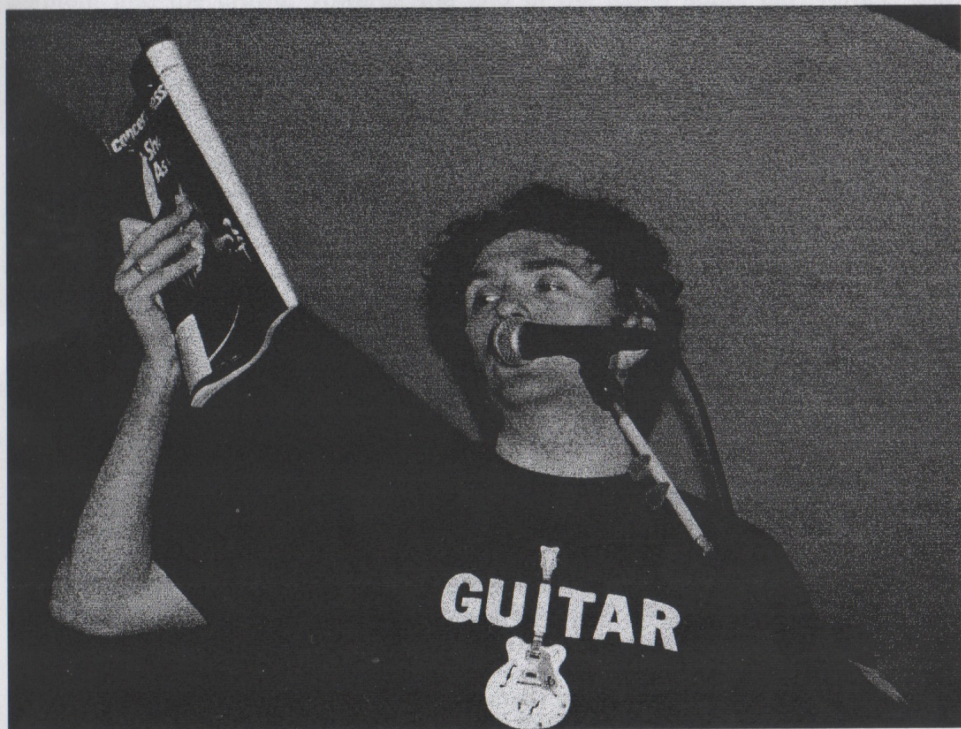
As on the last tour, Ian told a few stories about Crazy Horse. The first was at Leeds where Ian spent over 15 minutes telling of Noel Gallagher's appearance on stage with Ian and Crazy Horse at London's Kings College in 1994. Apparently the then relatively-unknown Gallagher was very nervous about going on stage with his heroes. He had to be persuaded to perform a guitar solo in the encore during Pushin' Too Hard. When he heard the recording, which was released on the North West Coast cd, he asked if he could re-do his guitar solo. Ian compromised by omitting it from the finished recording. The next Crazy Horse related story was told at Leeds and also at Milton Keynes Stables. Ian told two stories relating to Crazy Horse's stay in Liverpool during the recording of Head Like A Rock. Ian explained how Crazy Horse were so used to being chauffeur driven everywhere that when they got a chance to walk around the streets of Liverpool they found it fascinating. They even took photographs of butcher's shops! Ian had tried to get the guys to rehearse the old Beatles number Some Other Guy and his own If Love Was Like Guitars before trying the old Icicle Works song Firepower at Crash Studios in Liverpool. After a few days of shouting this song out in rehearsals, Ian decided to let bassist Billy Talbot sing the chorus. When the moment came Ian beckoned Billy - who was 56 at the time - to come to the microphone. Billy opened his mouth and his false teeth flew out of his mouth ! They then snapped back in as quickly as they had come out. This is Ian's overriding memory of Crazy Horse.

Finally on the Crazy Horse theme, Ian told the Sheffield audience of his two meetings with Neil Young. The first was backstage at Birmingham's NEC. The other was in Dublin when Ian briefly spoke to Neil before Neil introduced Ian to his dad (Scott Young) as "he played with the guys and is interested in Ireland". Ian was then left talking to Neil's dad for half an hour. "Anyone can meet Neil Young", said Ian, "but I met his dad and I'm happy with that and I hope you are too". Ian often introduced tracks from Head Like A Rock as "this is one I recorded with Neil Diamond's band."

The song Still Got The Fever, as in the earlier 1998 shows, provided Ian with the chance to inject further humour into his performance. The main butt of Ian's jokes was Robbie Williams. The first occurrence was when Ian sang "I can't help myself smiling when Robbie Williams sings". Ian threw in the line "that bastard's got my drummer" (referring to Chris Sharrock). The culmination was at the final show when Ian read out a Robbie review from Q as follows ..'And look', said Ian,



'there's a review of Robbie Williams ..... let's cut straight to the stars shall we?.... Four, mmmm.....What's that that's just caught my eye.... This paragraph... Let's check it out shall we folks? – Let's go through the Robbie window" And he read out the paragraph in question (see picture below) ' Lazy Days segues uncomfortably into Hey Jude – just the naa, naa, naa portion – not the dull verses. Win Some Lose Some is a very close cousin of Birds Fly (Whisper To A Scream) by the Icicle Works – former band of William's thunderous drummer.....' 'Still got the fever', resumed Ian, as he tossed the magazine over his shoulder. Robbie was even included on the guest list for the Stoke concert but failed to appear.



Another popular teen favourite were the subject of a McNabb comment. At Northampton Ian announced that he couldn't get to sleep the previous night. As he took off his shirt to reveal an All Saints t-shirt underneath, he explained that he was worried about the rumours that Nicole was going to leave the band.

In Still Got The Fever, Ian continued to throw in humorous references throughout the tour. There were 9 shows where Ian did this. At each of these shows Ian paid tribute to T.Rex and Mott The Hoople. He recalled watching T.Rex singing Metal Guru and Telegram Sam on Top Of The Pops in 1972 and Mott The Hoople singing The Golden Age Of Rock'n'roll on the same programme in 1974. Other recollections were Neil Young and Crazy Horse on Old Grey Whistle Test in 1976 singing Like A Hurricane, The Who on Russell Harty in 1974, Sex Pistols on Top Of The Pops in 1977, Little Feat on OGWT in 1975 singing Rock'n'roll Doctor and Doctor Feelgood on the same show. After mentioning a couple of these tracks, Ian would finish off with "seeing A Flock Of Seagulls on the Tube in 1985 singing Messages From The Rings Of Saturn" ! Some of the stranger ones were at Milton Keynes where Ian mentioned "smoking your first cigarette at school, scoring your



first goal for the school team. If you were lucky enough to be in the school team - which of course I was !" and "getting a Johnny Seven". He then went on to explain that a Johnny Seven was a kid's gun made out of plastic that shot seven plastic bullets. Ian only shot his once because he lost it! At Preston Ian mentioned Jeff Buckley and Nick Drake before saying "and it's not only dead guys" and then made a dedication to John Martyn. At Northampton Ian paid tribute to Donald Sutherland in Kelly's Heroes and reminisced about going to the pictures to see 2001 - a space odyssey. He even quoted a few lines from the film.

Before playing Liverpool Girl at Ashton Under Lyne, Ian asked if there were any Liverpool girls in the audience. When a few female voices were subsequently raised, Ian said "I'm just glad there's some girls in. My gigs usually look like record fairs! Every time I go to a record fair I feel I should be doing a gig. So thanks very much for coming ladies. I'm sure you've been dragged along by your boyfriends." He then put on a female voice before saying the following - "Who's he ? Ian McCulloch? - oh I love them. Isn't that the one who used to be in Dingo And The Bogeymen?". He then continued .. "this is a song about Liverpool girls. It's on the new album which I'm desperately trying to plug (after only playing one song from it at the previous show). I forget to do things like that. Give me a couple of lights, some PA and some people and I do some songs. I open the fridge door and do ten minutes!"

The format of the shows provided Ian with the chance to make the following comments throughout the tour :-

"The script is that I bore you rigid with some new stuff then we have a break and come back and play what you want to hear" (at Ashton)

"I really hate people who do gigs like these. I have to get into the songs pretty quickly otherwise I have a tendency to get into a comedy slot - which a lot of people say is actually better than the music " - after appearing back on stage for the second set at Whitehaven.

"F---in acoustics gigs - I'm sick of them " - at the soundcheck for the final gig of the tour at Bilston.

Ian's musical cohorts Roy and Mokka didn't escape his comments either. Ian said about Roy "I've sacked him so many times. He's done about five jobs for me - driven the van, played bass, played keyboards, t-shirts, telling me I'm great - now that is an important job! We'll be together forever". He said about Mokka - "when we did the Merseybeast tour we played a few stadiums in Germany. Mokka really got into this - so we called him 'Stadium Mokka'. This stage is a bit small and crammed for him - he's used to being on a riser with a few lasers on him. Can we have a spotlight on him please. We've been friends for years".

On the few occasions I arrived early for the shows, I witnessed some amusing incidents at Ian's soundchecks. At the Ronnie Scott's Christmas show Ian started playing the Eastenders theme music on the piano before breaking into Wham's Last Christmas. Unfortunately, Ian could only remember the first verse of the song and none of the onlookers claimed to know the second verse. Ian was getting rather frustrated at this and even asked a member of staff if they had a computer so he could get the words from the internet !



At the Cambridge soundcheck, Ian was playing Child Inside A Father when he glanced over to the merchandise stand. Still playing the track, Ian sang "how much is that Merseybeast shirt I sure would like to have one. Wow, only seven pounds – that's a bargain !" At the Bristol show Ian also plugged his merchandise. He was halfway through playing Merseybeast when he summoned Roy to come up onto the stage. Roy was holding a black t-shirt and Ian said "If you like this song then we've got these t-shirts for you. I wear these all the time and they're very durable. You can wash them loads and they bear that essential monicker 'Im funky and I'm free'. Thanks very much. There's a free one." And with that he tossed the garment into the crowd. Towards the end of the same song, Ian "forgot" the words. He said "Guys, the lyrics have completely gone". When handed a lyric book by the tour manager he enthused "That's a nice looking book that – what is it exactly? A lyric book of my songs ? Fantastic ! So that means that if I forget any of my words I can immediately refer to this handy, usable, cd-sized-and-shaped booklet that's only ten pounds? Can this be real ?" On spotting the signed inner sleeve he continued with mock disappointment "But there's my handwriting on the front so nobody's going to want that one !" As the song finished Ian began to strum the first few chords of the next number. On hearing it was Camaraderie, I was tempted to walk on stage with a box of mags to continue the sales pitch !

Several other tracks were subject to lyric changes throughout the tour. Merseybeast had the line "now he's happy eating Pringles as he shambles down to Netto". Ian then asked the audience "Have you got Netto in Birmingham? Have you got Aldi ? Morrisons is the one though. I think it's fantastic that the family of the original Doors get to own a supermarket." In "The Man Who can make a woman laugh" Ian often changed the line "for a grin" to "for a gin". In Sex With Someone You Love Ian would sing about "that lamb kebab". Obviously aware of his amusing lyrics, Ian would stop the song Liverpool Girl after singing the line "she likes her crisps" so that the audience could applaud him. On several occasions he would resume the song after saying "my name's Ian McNabb – it says songwriter on my passport". At the February Ronnie Scott's show Ian did a superb impression of Bob Dylan singing Great Dreams Of Heaven. He has also been known to sing the Grease favourite You're The One That I Want in Bob Dylan style during jam sessions.

At the Whitehaven concert Ian told a funny story about Jeremy Clarkson. The TV presenter was mingling backstage after the premiere of Steve Coogan's live show in London. He went over to chat to Kate Moss who didn't know who he was. He told her who he was but she was none the wiser. He tried again and said "I'm Jeremy Clarkson – I do Top Gear". Kate replied "it's OK thanks, we're sorted" !

At Bristol, Ian walked on stage and announced that he had just finished his first novel. He then qualified this by adding "I'm going to start reading another one tomorrow !"

At Southampton Ian sang the song I'm A Genius from start to finish in the style of Frank Sinatra. He threw in references to "Jack" ..... At Bilston Ian gave a superb trumpet impression towards the end of Hollywood Tears.

A couple of the one-liners Ian told were :--

What do you call a Teletubby who has had his telly nicked ? - A tubby and  
What's the definition of perfect pitch?

Throwing a Steps CD into a skip without touching the sides.



## ROCKIN' GOOD TIME ROY

It's been a while since we had a chat with Roy Corkill. Anthony Strutt put matters to right after the Bristol Fiddlers show last October.

A: Camaraderie is a continuation of McNabb Rag. You said a few things in McNabb Rag ..

R: I can't remember what I said !

A: You were born in Liverpool in '64 which was the height of Beatlemania

R: I know, and I missed it all

A: You don't remember any of it ?

R: I couldn't go to the Cavern when I was none ! I think my Mam went actually. I would like to have been born that ten years earlier or maybe a bit more, just to have been there

A: As a bass player how do you rate McCartney's bass playing ?

R: It's great

A: Even now? He's more of a guitarist than a bass player

R: Well all bass players are frustrated guitarists – apart from Mark King who's a frustrated timbali player. Things like Ticket To Ride – playing that riff and singing the song is dead hard. I don't know how he did some of that stuff. He was very underestimated as a bass player. I was actually looking at "Wings Over America" today. I was toying with buying it

A: Who were your first musical influences ?

R: You mean after Two Little Boys and Val Doonican that my Dad played to me? The Sweet were probably the first – when I was ten. My Dad wouldn't let my buy Ballroom Blitz because he thought it was inciting a riot. The first real influence was Alex Harvey. Someone got me into Alex Harvey when I was still at junior school. I got Next when I was in fourth year junior

A: So you were into glam ?

R: Well it wasn't really glam it was prog rock drama. I just like everything – I still haven't got my head around opera. I know there's some nice arias

A: What made you pick up an instrument – and why the bass ?

R: Why the bass? Because I wasn't a good enough guitarist! I'll give you the rundown.. I did study piano when I was a kid but I never wanted to do that. Who wants to be a keyboard player? I wish I'd kept it up because it's a useful thing to have. My hands are very small as well. I gave up piano when I was doing my "O" levels – good excuse! I'd got into guitar playing by then and was learning loads of



rubbish stuff, jamming along with things. I always hung around with older people. In third year senior someone sold me a bass for a fiver would you believe. Then I went to see Japan – oh dear!

**A: Mick Karn was a brilliant bassist**

**R:** I thought "I've got to file the frets off this thing". You can't play what he does with a fretted bass. So off came the frets with a file from my Dad's workshop. I then found myself being asked to play in bands at school. They were sixth formers and I was this little sprogg. But no-one plays the bass. Colin Vearncombe was in my school, you see. We used to write some songs and play some covers. We got to play at all the sixth form discos. I was fourteen and we got to play at these school bops where people drank and there were girls with tits. I used to get a bit carried away. I was into Kiss at the time so I wanted to be Gene Simmons. It all sort of progressed from there. I ended up playing in Black in 1981 – when it was a three piece. I didn't actually play Eric's but I saw Black in Brady's (formerly Eric's)

**A: Were you in the original line-up of Black? I read a discography that said you weren't**

**R:** The very first line-up was called The Epeleptic Tits. This was at school. He always hated our band because we used to do covers and he thought that was cabaret. But we were just having a laugh. There was Greg Leyland, Colin Vearncombe and a guy called Dane Goulding who actually designs rubberwear now! I've seen him on those Channel 4 fetish things. He was a real "pretty boy", you know. We're talking 1980 and he had long hair, leathers and thigh-boots up here. Then you had Colin in a pair of jeans and Greg who looked like a bricklayer basically. He used to have a massive kit – they were like a rockabilly combo. We played the Warehouse and did a demo of a couple of songs in SOS which is now Crash where we rehearse. Then Hamb – the guy who was in Hamby And The Dance, Pete Fulwell – who at the time managed Wah and later the Christians and It's Immaterial decided to put us in a different studio. We did a demo of Hey Presto which was eventually a single. I don't really know what went on behind the scenes but the outcome was that we were going to sack the drummer. He had a proper job, he was a computer programmer. I said "if he goes I go" and they said "f--- off then". We boycotted a couple of gigs and it was all a bit bitter. Colin lived in the house that I live in now – it was all very incestual! So I then went into Here's Johnny. In 1985 I bumped into Colin and he asked if I'd start playing again. This was when Mokka was playing guitar. Dave Dicks was on keyboards, Martin Green – who is now into string arrangements for the Manics was also in the band. That's when he'd written Wonderful Life and we did the sh—ty gig circuit for two cans of beer each and all that. The rest is history – he released that single and it all took off.

**A: The funny thing with Wonderful Life is that it's quite a miserable song**

**R:** Well he'd split up with his wife. In the interim period when I was in Here's Johnny he'd had his WEA deal where he put out Hey Presto and Eternal. He got dropped. They supported the Thompsons Twins and stuff like that. I went to see that at the Royal Court.

**A: Did the punk thing and the Bunnymen and the Teardrops influence you?**



R: It influenced everyone. I was still quite young then. In 1978 I was 14 and a bit of a metalhead. I was into Motorhead. One influence was Deaf School – I was really into them. My first real gig was Alex Harvey at the Empire with the full band and all the make-up. It was fantastic. I'd go and see anyone – I was never a punk put it that way. I was a rocker. People at our school started wearing pyjamas and saying they were into punk when they were into ska the week before! I always liked the Pistols but I thought the Stranglers were a phoney punk band. I didn't get the Buzzcocks at the time but looking back I think they've written some great songs. I got into the Banshees heavily but not until later on. I liked the Ruts and Eddie and the Hot Rods.

A: What about any Liverpool bands ?

R: I liked the Bunnymen but I never really saw them. I liked the Teardrops.

A: Pete Wylie ?

R: Shambico say Wah, Wah Was, Wah now ...- I think he was competing with the guy from Spizz Energi and Spizz Oil and Athletico Spizz '80 for the number of bizarrest names.

A: Your haircut is really unique. Were you influenced by Robert De Niro's character in the film "Taxi Driver" ?

R: It would be a good answer if it was. I've actually got a video of Black in 1981 on one of these local ITV programmes. I had it long at the front and long at the back. Then, straight on in the mirror, I decided to shave about two inches to my ear and up to the top. I thought it looked fantastic, looking at myself from the front. It was while we were doing the show that I saw myself on this monitor from the side. I looked like Igor from a Hammer house of horror film! In 1982 I got it really short but I left the top quite long. It ended up like a mohican. I could do it myself, I didn't have to go to the barbers. It's dead easy and ideal when you're on tour. I shaved it off when we did No Stilletoes and I hated it.

A: You wear a Star of David – is that because you're Jewish ?

R: No, I just like it. I think it stems from Siouxsie and the Banshees. There's a good story there. I got stopped by a Jewish woman in a shop near where I live. This was in the early '80s. I had a t-shirt with a big Star of David on the front and the Ju-Ju head on the back. It was Siouxsie's head in a silhouette. This woman was convinced it was a map of Israel and was trying to show me where she lived. I do like it as an anti-facist symbol.

A: In Liverpool how close are all the musicians ?

R: Liverpool centre is very small, so we go to the same pubs. Everyone knows each other but it's not real mateyness. I don't think it's any different from anywhere else. There's rivalry and backstabbing. There's a lot of people you say "hi, how are you doing" to and that's the end of the conversation. You always say hello but never buy them a drink or invite them round to your house.

A: I believe you first met Ian at an early Icicle Works gig in 1981



R: Yes. Prestcot Civic Hall was the first time I saw the Icicle Works. I think it was before 1981. It was before Nirvana was released. We just went along because they were playing our local gaff. I thoroughly enjoyed it because I was into Rush at the time and it was quite prog rock. I became a fan and went to loads of gigs

A: What impressed you on that first meeting to develop a friendship into a working relationship?

R: We never really got friends for a long time. I was just a fan. I didn't even get backstage early on. We did a Liver Aid thing. Black were in it - I wasn't in them then. Here's Johnny were on and The Christians did their very first gig there. Colin got up with Ian and did Hollow Horse and a big sing-song at the end. I was chatting with Ian that night. It was later on that we did things. We did a get-together at the Mardi Gras for someone's birthday. Mokka had Grown Up Strange at the time who were making a name for themselves in Liverpool. They'd done supports for Ian. It was the Blind era. It was Mokka playing guitar and doing a bit of singing. Ian was playing guitar, doing a bit of singing and a bit of keyboards as well. Chris was drumming. Dave Green was there but I don't think he actually played. Phil Wylie - Pete's brother - sang. There was my good self playing. We did one of everyone's tunes and a few covers. It was basically a party. That's when Ian got interested in using me. I got the gig from Black and the Icicles had split up so Ian came to me and said "are you up for doing this.. and getting Zak in ?". A Beatle !

A: How do you rate Ian's other bass players - because since the Icicle Works he's always gone back to you.

R: That speaks for itself !

A: Apart from being a bass player I believe you do keyboard programming and drum programming

R: It's a means to an end really. It can be quite tedious.

A: Is it more enjoyable than being a roadie ?

R: Oh yeah - I just do that to make money. I've never termed myself a roadie , it's just dead easy to do. The number of jobs I've done for Ian is absolutely ridiculous. There's driving, selling t-shirts, roadieing, keyboard programming, drum programming. I used to play keyboards on Presence at the start. I played guitar on Head Like A Rock.

A: Would you like to be a better guitar player ?

R: I'm quite happy stumbling along. For me, playing an instrument is about style. It's not being technically fantastic. Well that's my excuse anyway! I do my own thing. I think everyone sounds different. If you gave someone else a guitar and asked them to play something you've written it never sounds the same. Even if they're the best guitarist in the world they put some kind of influence on the work they play on. I do enjoy playing the guitar - because you can't sit at home playing the bass. The bottom four strings are the same as a bass anyway so quite often I'll work out a bassline on an acoustic guitar because it's louder



A: Do you think Ian would have preferred the original line-up of the Icicle Works not to have happened - because there was a lot of bitchiness ?

R: I don't think Ian and Chris Layhe ever got on. Chris always says hello to me. I just think once Chris Sharrock left, as far as Ian was concerned, that was that.

A: Is Candyman still an ongoing project?

R: No, that's dead. But I've got another couple of projects going. I'm working with the guy who use to be in Two Way Street, Gary Heatherington - a good songwriter. I worked with Mulu for about one gig but they decided they didn't want a band because they use backing tapes.

A: Do you like Cast and Space ?

R: I don't like Space. I respect Cast. They've got some good songs and they've not risen above their station.

A: There seems to be a lot of little clubs in Liverpool

R: To do a gig in Liverpool you've got to guarantee to sell so many tickets - ultimately to your mates to come and see a gig. There's only so many times you can ask your mates to go and see a gig, get a taxi home and buy ale. It's a weird situation because all these venues don't have a clientele that go back week in week out to see who's on. It's very difficult to build up a live following. The La's managed to do it. I was working at the Royal Court when they kicked off.

A: Are you a big club fan ?

R: No. I go to L2 now and then. I've been to Cream about five times. I find it really annoying after about an hour. After that I think "change the record" !

A: When you play bass for Ian do you play the bass parts to Ian's written music or do you just play the part that you think suits the song ?

R: I usually just do what I feel like doing - unless Ian's got a specific idea

A: So you don't actually read the music ?

R: No. When I did piano I used to read music. It's all gone now !

A: Any plans to co-write songs with Ian ?

R: Ian's very much his own writer. He does his thing. I don't think that would ever happen to tell you the truth.

A: OK cheers. Thank you

R: A nice concise little interview. Thanks very much!

NB The songs played at the Mardi Gras on 11/11/87 were as follows :- Ship Of Fools (World Party), Heroes (David Bowie), Friction (Television), Graceland (Paul Simon), Wonderful Life (Black), Blind (Icicle Works), Cinnamon Girl (Neil Young), Private Revolution (World Party), My Dream And I (??) and Helter Skelter (The Beatles).



## Travelling overseas ... Look at the State we're in

On April 3rd Ian played his first solo concert in America, at Arlene's Grocery in New York. Along with a couple of other Liverpool acts, he was taking part in the return leg of a Liverpool / New York band exchange package. Without Roy and Mokka the set was entirely solo and Ian was the only acoustic act playing there.

He opened up the set by whistling "Tulips From Amsterdam"! He dubbed his set "A Party Political Broadcast On Behalf Of The Farmers From The Mid-West" before fittingly proclaiming "She's a New York girl, she likes her chips". Other songs played were I'm A Genius, Blackbird, Out Of Season, Goin' Back and the big USA hit Birds Fly.



IAN ON STAGE AT ARLENE'S GROCERY, NEW YORK











## CUT OR UNCUT ?

Ian has asked me to print the following letter which he recently sent to UNCUT magazine. They were decrying the lack of male singer/songwriters from this year's Mercury Prize nominations. Ian thinks McNabb fans would find it interesting. He would be very surprised if UNCUT were to print this letter, and if they did, he's sure it would be edited quite dramatically.

Dear Sirs (Hi Terry),

I read with great interest a couple of separate comments in UNCUT take 28 re: the absence of male singer-songwriters in this year's Mercury Prize line-up. I myself was nominated in 1994 for my "Head like a rock" album, ultimately to lose out, with the other eight artists (there were only ten albums chosen in those days), to an M people album, the name of which escapes me now.

"Head like a rock," (my second solo album after leaving The Icicle Works) was released on a major label (This Way Up/Polygram) and subsequently was promoted quite heavily. Much of the 'angle' so beloved of journalists, was that Neil Young's legendary sparring partners Crazy Horse played on half the record. Fair enough. Lots of publicity ensued, I sold more CD's than usual and everyone's happy. A victory for male singer/songwriters!

When I released my third solo album "Merseybeast" in the summer of 1996, the album received my usual respectful postage stamp size reviews, but due to the fact that there were no superstars playing on it this time, and indeed the suspicion that therefore it couldn't be as good (oh ye of little faith), it garnered virtually zero publicity. Well, whatever. My record label still entered the little-loved disc for the Mercury Prize of that year anyway, I mean what the hell? "Merseybeast" nevertheless went top forty (as did the previous album). Once again, hurrah for male singer/songwriters.

Since that time, the record company I was signed to (This Way Up - a totally different set up to the label who now releases Tindersticks records... they're really on Island) basically folded.



This left me without a deal, and in a position where I had to fend for myself, seeing as male singer/songwriters aren't exactly being handed record deals in the street in the late nineties, unless you've been in a "boy" band (don't worry folks, the strong will survive).

Which more or less brings us up to the present. My current effort "A Party Political Broadcast On Behalf Of The Emotional Party" (thanks for the nice review, selling very well!) on Fairfield records, released at an eligible time to be entered for the Mercury Prize, is a self-financed affair, not only in the recording/artwork/pressing sense, but in the marketing and promotional sense also. For anyone who doesn't know, this is an incredibly costly situation to be in, but much more so if you're "lucky" enough to be nominated for a Mercury prize. Apart from the £150 (or is it more now?) entry fee, every plate at the table the lucky nominee's party sits at costs around £200. Let's say you want to take your partner. Plus you, that's £400. The guy who's plugging the record will want to bring someone, £800. The press officer won't come alone (I guarantee it), £1,000. There's bound to be someone who the distributor (£1,200) tells you will be mortally offended if you don't invite them, specially seeing as they worked so hard on the record and all, £1,400. Then of course, there's the alcohol (well you can't take bottles of Thunderbird in can you?), add your travelling, hotel, schmoozing costs (most of us don't live in London), and well, do the math. You're talking at least £2,500 to get drunk one night at the Savoy with Portishead. I could record half my next album with that (funny how you can when you have to). If you win, well I guess it's worth it. If you don't (and not many singer/songwriters do), well, 'nuff said.

Anyway I sent my £150 entry fee to the Marie Curie fund instead (honest).

As for male singer/songwriters, there are plenty of us out here, it's just that most of us aren't signed to Capitol.

Thanks for a great mag. Gimme a feature next time huh?

Ian McNabb,  
male singer/songwriter, Liverpool.



Here is the transcript of an interview with Ian McNabb by Jenny Young. For inclusion in The Manic Street Preachers fanzine.

Are there any plans to reform Icicle Works?

You can't rehearse a soufflé.

Where did the nickname "Boots" come from?

From the age of 20 all I ever wore was Cuban heeled boots. Something I'm glad to say I grew out of!

How did Richey James Edwards inspire you to finish the song "Too close to the Sun"?

The song originally was written for Nick Drake but remained unfinished.. see lyric book.

Where do you get Inspiration for your songs?

Life!!!!!!!

On which Mike Scott album did you do backing vocals?

"Still Burning"

Do you have a favourite Solo album?

By Me - Merseybeast.

By someone else - After the Goldrush.

If you could do a duet with a band or solo artist, who would it be?

I've already done it once! with Crazy Horse. I'd love to do a duet with Scott Walker

What's your favourite book?

The Right Stuff - Tom Wolfe.

Who has been the biggest influence on your music so far?

Neil Young. His attitude as much as his music. He just does whatever he wants.

Your latest album The Emotional Party, is this a turning point in your career or just a one off acoustic?

One off. Back to normal for the next one.

Have you moved on from "The Afterlife" or are they just taking a break?

Who Knows? Never say never again.

When you write, do you write music first or lyrics?

There's no one rule. Its happened in every different configuration!

You have made music videos in the past, will there be any to accompany the new album?

None for EParty - Sorry! I'm Paying!

Have you got a favourite venue where you love to perform?

Royal Court - L'pool.

What's your favourite lyric & song?

Sympathy for the devil. - R. Stones



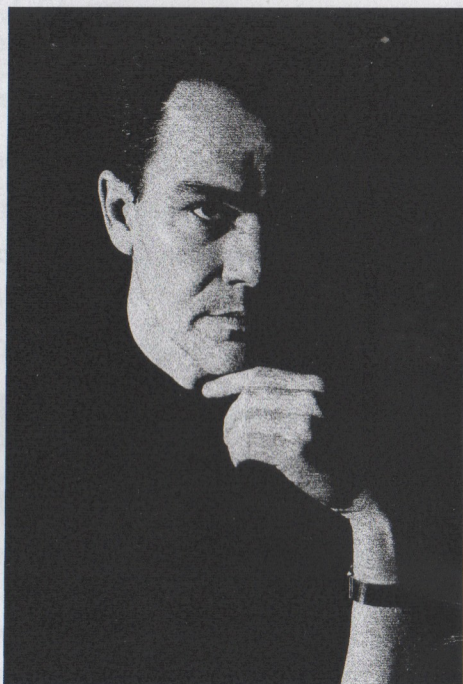
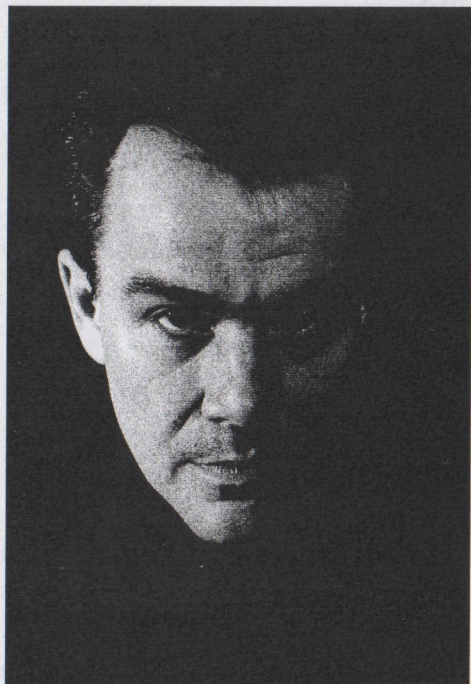
Ian performed a rare DJ slot at London's Borderline club in May. He brought along a selection of CDs from his large personal collection and played over two hours of music. He didn't play any McNabb songs, choosing tracks such as Eight Miles High by the Byrds and Sexy Mother F\*\*\*\*\* by Prince.

Having already been an M.C. in Europe, Ian clearly enjoys entertaining the audience in this way.

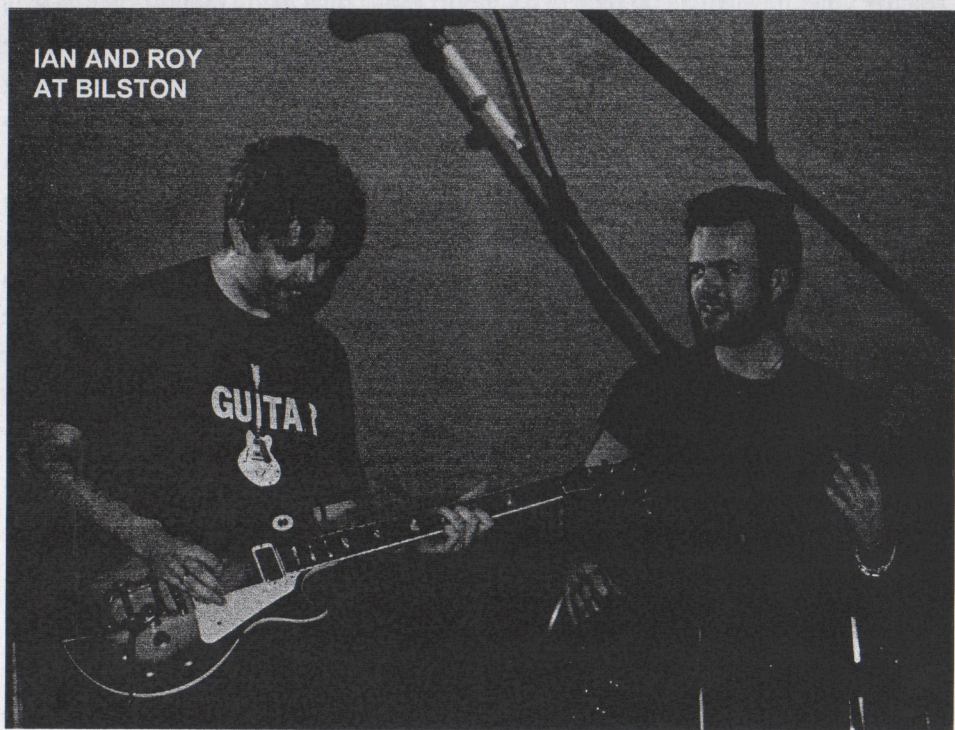
## **Benefit Concert in Aid of the Hillsborough Family Support Group**

As in 1989, Ian played a benefit for those involved in the Hillsborough tragedy. The show was publicised on the web-site but there was doubt as to whether the event would actually go ahead right up to the day before. Given the less than joyous reason for the show, this wasn't the forum to expect a vintage McNabb performance. Ian walked on stage sporting a "beanie" hat and kicked off his set with a cover of Bob Dylan's "Death Is Not The End". This was the first time he had played this track. Another debut song "You Were Meant For Me" soon followed, neatly segueing into the ever-present Evangeline. It wasn't until Little Princess - accompanied by Roy on bass - that the largely non-McNabb crowd began to take notice. "Who's he?", "this fella can play" and "is he famous?" were commonplace remarks. Towards the end of the song an elderly man in the crowd gave an impromptu spot of line dancing! An electric version of Love's Young Dream concluded Ian's set. He then introduced Pete Wylie before leaving the stage. He later accompanied Wylie on guitar for the final number of the evening. The pair had rehearsed old standards including God Only Knows and All You Need Is Love but fittingly finished off with a well-received version of You'll Never Walk Alone.





IAN AND ROY  
AT BILSTON





## TRYING TO SELL A CD ?

ALLAN OPENSHAW is looking for these Icicle Works and Ian McNabb CD singles:-

Motorcycle Rider, Melanie Still Hurts, I Still Want You, Great Dreams Of Heaven (both issues), If Love Was Like Guitars, These Are The Days, I'm Game, (I Go) My Own Way, Autumn 1993 Free CD, You Must Be Prepared To Dream (disk one), Go Into The Light (disks one and two) and Don't Put Your Spell On Me

He also wants any single females to contact him at ~~The Hollies, Walton Way, Stone, Staffs ST16 6BP~~

LEE COLLINS has been an Icicle Works and Ian McNabb fan for many years and makes the following plea to fellow fans ....Longtime I. Works/McNabb fan from the States seeks tape trades and camaraderie with other fans. Your list gets mine; am particularly interested in high quality radio broadcasts. I am willing to pay \$80 American for an original 'Ascending' cassette with artwork: Must be original and in excellent cond. ~~Lee Collins, 929 Lee Drive, Thomson, GA 30024 2511 USA~~ e-mail: lrbcoll@aol.com

He also has a plea for Ian: "Please come to Atlanta or Athens for a gig!"

PAUL BREDBURY is looking for the following Icicle Works albums on CD :- The Icicle Works (first album), Defeat Your Enemy, Blind and The Icicle Works (Seven Singles Deep plus other tracks compilation). Please contact him at ~~100 Blandford Street, Ashton Under Lyne OL9 7HG~~

GAVIN WILKINSON is selling his Icicle Works/McNabb vinyl collection. He is also willing to swap items for photos, live tapes, etc. Please contact him at my address. The items are :-

Albums - Icicle Works, Small Price Of A Bicycle, Blind USA, Blind UK and Truth and Beauty.

12 inch singles - Melanie Still Hurts, Little Girl Lost, Evangeline, Motorcycle Rider - etched, Numb, Seven Horses, Evening Session, These Are The Days, All The Daughters, Hollow Horse, Prepared To Dream, Here Comes Trouble, North Of England, High Time, Love Is .. , When It All Comes Down and Go Into The Light.

DAVE HINGLEY has various Icicle Works and McNabb recordings to sell. They include promo CDs as well as regular releases. Contact him at 31 St. ~~Andrews Crescent, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 2EU~~. Please send an SAE



