

NOV-DEC, NO. 16, 1991

BLUES ETTER

THE ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY PROUDLY PRESENTS

ST. LOUIS BLUES

Showcase 91

NOVEMBER 22-23

Featuring St. Louis' Finest Blues Artists

MISSISSIPPI NIGHTS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY

OFF BROADWAY NIGHT CLUB

BLACK TOP RECORDING ARTISTS
ANSON FUNDERBURGH &
THE ROCKETS FEATURING SAM MYERS



WED, NOVEMBER 20

BULLSEYE RECORDING ARTISTS
LITTLE JIMMY KING
AND THE MEMPHIS SOUL SURVIVORS



SAT, NOVEMBER 30

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 15
ACOUSTICITY

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16
Warner Brother Artists
JIMMY BUFFETS BAND
P.M.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Black Top Recording Artists
ANSON FUNDERBURGH &
THE ROCKETS FEATURING
SAM MYERS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21
ST. LOUIS MUSIC NETWORK
SHOWCASE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22
TOM RUSSEL & ANDREW
HARDIN WITH KATY MOFFAT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
Rockabilly Pioneer
CORDELL JACKSON WITH BRIAN
HENNEMAN

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 27
ACOUSTICITY

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29
Red Hot Rhythm & Blues
THE ROCKIN' LUCKYS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30
Bullseye Recording Artists
LITTLE JIMMY KING & THE
MEMPHIS SOUL SURVIVORS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6
BILLY PEEK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7
ACOUSTICITY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11
ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY
ANNUAL MEETING & PARTY

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 16
SPATZ WITH TOM HALL AND
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ST. LOUIS MUSIC NETWORK
SHOWCASE

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26
ACOUSTIC NIGHT WITH
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BLUESLETTER

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THE ST. LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY

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CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Hello St. Louis Blues' lovers. I'm here to tell you the Blues are still alive and doing very well in St. Louis as evident by the wealth of good Blues music to be had here in the upcoming months. And this issue of the BluesLetter will fill you in on all the details.

Growth, and lots of it, is what the Blues Society has been experiencing in the last year, specifically the past several months. It's definitely been a time of new direction for the Society. And by all indications, there are many more good things to come.

A good thing you should mark your calendar for is the biggest gathering of St. Louis blues artist ever in one place. "St. Louis Blues Showcase '91," which will feature 37 acts during a two-day event, will take place Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22 and 23 at Mississippi Nights. This will be a must-see. Check out the related story in this issue.

Speaking of the Blues Showcase, Kathy Corley of Legacy Productions, will be capturing the entire two-day event on video especially for our Blues Archives collection, which is housed at the History Museum, in conjunction with the Missouri Historical Society, a co-sponsor of this project.

In other goings-on, we will be holding our annual members meeting at Off Broadway on Wednesday, Dec. 11. For more details, see the related ad in this issue.

A couple more notes...the Board of the St. Louis Blues Society is very happy and honored to finally call Paul Stewart, a long-time volunteer to the Society and lover of the Blues, a member of the board. Paul's bio appears in this issue.

The Board would like very much to thank Charmaine Thorpe for all her help in throwing a special Halloween Blues party at Off Broadway. It's because of volunteers like Charmaine that the Blues Society thrives.

Finally, we're back on track with the BluesLetter, so you can count on receiving your copy every two months and it's guaranteed to keep you up to date on all the Blues happenings at home and elsewhere.

We very much appreciate your continued support of the Blues Society and Blues music in St. Louis.

The St. Louis Blues Society, a nonprofit Missouri corporation in its seventh year, is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating Blues music in St. Louis, to foster its growth and appreciation and to provide Blues artists the opportunity for public performance and individual improvement in their field, all for the educational and artistic benefit of the general public.

With a membership of 500 strong and a board of directors consisting of 16 devoted Blues lovers, the Blues Society actively participates in a number of ongoing projects, including the acclaimed "Blues in the Schools" program, the publishing six times a year of a respected newsletter titled "BluesLetter," the acquisition of Blues archives materials, and the producing of live Blues concert series throughout the year, which culminates in the annual St. Louis Blues Festival.

BLUESLETTER

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(314)241-BLUE, P.O. BOX 78894, ST. LOUIS, MO 63178

Deadline is two weeks prior to publication.

CAMERA-READY DISPLAY ADS: A camera-ready ad must be a PMT or a velox of your finished ad that is professional in appearance and to THE BLUESLETTER'S exact size. Handwritten, poorly typewritten or xeroxed ads are not acceptable. All ads must be bordered. Half-tones must be 85-line screen or coarser. Any ad that is done on illustration board, or one that must be reworked in any manner, is not camera-ready and a production charge will be assessed.

AVAILABLE ADS	PRICE	MECHANICAL DIMENSIONS
FULL PAGE	\$325	57 X 10 inches (42-1/2 X 60-1/2 picas)
TWO THIRDS PAGE	\$255	4-5/8 X 10 inches (28 X 60-1/2 picas)
HALF PAGE	\$165	7 x 4-3/4 inches (42-1/2 X 28-1/2 picas)
THIRD PAGE	\$125	3-1/2 X 2-3/8 inches (21-1/4 X 14-1/4 picas)
QUARTER PAGE	\$85	2-1/4 X 10 inches (13-1/2 X 60-1/2 picas)
SIXTH PAGE	\$50	2-1/4 X 4-3/4 inches (13-1/2 X 28-1/2 picas)
BUSINESS CARD	\$20	

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Upcoming Events

November 20
Anson Funderburgh & The
Rockets featuring Sam Myers
Off Broadway Nightclub

November 22-23
St. Louis Blues Society
Rhythm & Blues Showcase 91
Mississippi Nights

November 30
Little Jimmy King &
The Memphis Soul Survivors
Off Broadway Nightclub

November 11
St. Louis Blues Society
Annual Meeting & Party
Off Broadway Nightclub

December 27-28
The Bel Airs
Off Broadway Nightclub

GET INVOLVED IN THE BLUES Society Committees

LEGAL: Research & Consultation

FINANCE: Fund Raising, Grant
Acquisition, Sales, Marketing,
Accounting

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT:
Establish Society Goals & Objectives

PROMOTION & PUBLIC RELATIONS:
Public Relations, Arts & Graphics,
The BluesLetter

EVENTS: Blues in the Schools, Blues
Archives, Concerts, Festival

VOLUNTEER: Liaison & Schedule with
Committees on an as needed Basis,
Membership, Poster Distribution

FOR INFO PLEASE CALL 241-BLUE

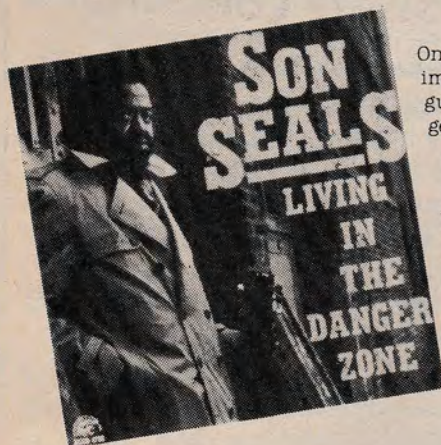
Official Notification ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERSHIP

**Wed, Dec 11, 1991
Off Broadway, 8PM**

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any Current Dues Paying
Member or Anyone who
would join that night
Elections to be Held**

**Live Hot Blues
Beginning at 9 PM
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blue-collar blues . . .
fiery, searing guitar
playing.

—GUITAR WORLD

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Top Ten Desert Island Discs

By Tony C.

1. Lightning Hopkins, "The Herald Recordings": Collectibles label. Post-war electric Texas finger-pickin blues, mournful vocals; the roots of Stevie Ray Vaughan's sound.

2. Professor Longhair: Nighthawk label. New Orleans whorehouse piano meets 50's R & B shuffles; rock-n-roll is born.

3. Blind Willie McTell: Yazoo label. Piedmont blues of the Georgia school; great 12-string slide guitar and bluesy hillbilly-styled vocals.

4. Johnny Taylor, "Raw Blues": Stax label. Memphis gospel vocals in the Sam Cooke tradition with the Stax Band wailing on soulful blues.

5. Henry Townsend: Wolf or Nighthawk label. The Delta comes to St. Louis; outstanding finger-picked guitar, tremendous piano and vocals to raise the dead.

6. Robert Johnson, "The Complete Recordings": Columbia-Sony label. The heart and soul of the blues; a better match of vocals, lyrics and guitar playing couldn't be made by the devil himself.

7. Howlin Wolf, "Rocking Chair Album": Chess label. Delta sounds electrified Chicago-style Hubert Sumlin and band write the book on powerhouse playing.

8. Sonny Boy Williamson, "Down and Out Blues": Chess label. The KFFA -King Biscuit boys from Helena, Arkansas come to Chicago and take no prisoners.

9. Muddy Waters, "Best Of": Chess label. The best Delta derived post-war Chicago blues vocals of serious merit and ensemble backing by his band that hasn't been exceeded to this day.

10. Little Walter, "Best Of" and/or "Hate to See You Go": Chess/Checker label. The Delta-based Chicago sound meets jazz-based jump-n-jive; the best all around harmonica the blues has ever produced, with vocals that produce tears, elation and Satyr's mood of unsatiable horniness.

MORE NEW TAXES

By Barrett Braun

In mid-Summer 1991, the City of St. Louis License Collector, Thomas Nash, decided he could no longer ignore two ordinances of the City of St. Louis which gravely affect musicians playing in the City in nightclubs providing live music.

Nash announced he would begin enforcing two ordinances that had not previously been applied either to musicians or nightclubs located in the City. Nash informed club owners, particularly those having liquor licenses, that they would be required to prove that musicians playing in their clubs had obtained and paid for an annual graduated business license from the City of St. Louis. He also stated that such clubs would be responsible for the payment of an amusement tax of five-percent of the gross receipts charged as admission to any club.

The reaction to the announced changes was widespread and vocal. Beginning with a meeting convened by the St. Louis Music Network, Inc., a not-for-profit music organization, and a panel discussion presented at the Sheldon in mid-August, a variety of people and groups urged the Board of Aldermen to nullify the impact of the proposed changes in the existing ordinances.

On October 15, representatives from many organizations, including the St. Louis Blues Society, met with Collector Nash and Aldermen Dan McGuire and Paul Beckerle to discuss the graduated business license and amusement tax problems.

Before discussing the changes proposed at that meeting, consider the two ordinances as they are currently

interpreted and applied by the City:

1. Graduated Business License.

Since June 1988, the City has had an ordinance requiring each person conducting any business activity within the City limits to obtain a business license. The cost of the license is based on a graduated level, with the least expensive license being \$150.00 annually. The cost of the license increases with the number of employees.

2. Amusement Tax. This ordinance, originally dating from the late 1960s, imposes a tax of five-percent on the gross receipts of any person engaging in the business of admitting people or groups to a theatrical production for the payment of an admission charge, with the exception of scripted plays in permanent proscenium theaters.

The obvious effect of enforcing these ordinances is to require the musicians to pay \$150 each year to the City in order to play at any City venue, plus have the City take five-percent of the cover charge (which is usually the sole source of payment to a band), plus charge musicians an additional one-percent of their gross earnings under the City earnings tax ordinance, all for the same activity. This combination of taxes gives St. Louis the highest cumulative taxes of any major City in the United States.

The proposal advanced through the coalition organized and spear-headed by the St. Louis Music Network has proposed the following:

1. Graduated Business License.

The St. Louis Music Network proposal is that the City specifically exempt musicians and performing artists from the graduated business license

ordinance, as was done prior to the passage of the ordinance in 1988. The Music Network proposal is based upon the following:

(a) Any license fee, even at a lower level, is more than most performing musicians can afford. As a result, musicians will cease booking dates in the City of St. Louis. A quick survey of venues advertising and providing live music in the City of St. Louis from August and September issues of the RFT confirms a drop of more than 30 percent in the number of clubs in the City offering live music. The number of clubs in areas outside the City offering live music in the same period of time increased at almost the same rate.

(b) At a time when the City of St. Louis is attempting to bolster its convention and tourism trade to support an expanded Convention Center, the City cannot afford to drive live entertainment away, thereby making the City less appealing to potential conventions, as a city with no nightlife.

(c) Many performers have indicated they will not comply with any licensing ordinance, based upon their beliefs that the power to issue a license carries with it the power to deny a license for any reason. Recent developments in the City of St. Louis with the surrender or loss of the business license by the topless bar on Laclede's Landing serves as vivid proof of this fact.

(d) The gross and net revenues generated by taxing musicians would be comparatively miniscule. To date, approximately 100 people have applied for and obtained licenses. The total revenues generated cannot offset

the costs that will be incurred in enforcing the ordinance and maintaining records and personnel to implement the ordinance.

2. Amusement Tax. With regard to the amusement tax, the Music Network proposal is to drop the five-percent tax on cover charges and ticket sales or limit the collection only to venues seating more than 15,000 persons at any time. The reasons for the proposal are similar to those stated above.

(a) As applied to small venues, an additional five-percent gross cost revenues will obtain make live music in a club unfeasible. As such, venues that currently provide music will stop providing music and may not be able to meet their costs in order to stay in business because of the loss of revenue.

The loss of entertainment venues not only means that the City become a less marketable commodity in the convention and tourism trade, but also means that people working in those venues will be out of a job and that the City will lose earnings tax revenues previously derived from these people.

(b) By simple computations it becomes apparent that the net amount of revenue to be gained by the City by taxing venues seating fewer than 15,000 patrons may not exist. That is, after deducting the costs of collection from the dollars received from smaller venues, it is doubtful that the City could generate any net revenues.

In conclusion, although it is hard for many to believe the City is ready once again to shoot itself in the foot, the City appears poised to do so. If you have an opinion on this matter, and believe the City may be on the verge of doing itself more harm than good, then you have an opportunity to express your concerns for the City. Contact your alderman and urge changes be made in the ordinances to save the City from itself by saving live music. ♪

JOHNNIES OH SO COOL

By Peter Yewell

In the last Blues Letter (#15), we featured an article on Johnnie Johnson and his current ascent to Blues stardom. At that time, his new album, "Johnnie B. Bad," was still being recorded. However, Bob Schoenfeld, who wrote the piece, wrote a great story on just how and why all the new attention is being paid to this great musician. As Bob implied, the Eighties were very fruitful for Mr. Johnnie B. Bad.

Well, the new album is now out and it is as good as anyone who has followed this guy would expect. It features no less than two rock superstars, Keith Richards and Eric Clapton, with whom he has collaborated several times in the last few years. In addition, accompanying Johnnie is a lengthy list of well-known lead and backup musicians.

This recording reminds me somewhat of "Showdown," the '86 Grammy winner for Blues album of the year, which featured Albert Collins, Robert Cray and Johnny Copeland. It is not similar in music style, but rather it features a group of great musicians having a great time doing what they do best. This album is full of big smiles like the one you'll get listening to "Tanquary" and "Stepped in What!?"

Every Blues musician has to be able to play the serious stuff too and it would be a crime to mention the heavy emotions that are poured into cuts like "Blues #572" and "Key to the Highway." This latter cut is the best version of the McKinley Morganfield (Muddy Waters) song I have ever heard. Keith Richards' cracklin', cigarette smokin' voice sounds more at home in this song than Roscoe Gordon is in a red, crush velvet suit singing "No Mo Doggin'."

"Johnnie B. Bad" is a text book example of a versatile musician who brings years of experience to the ivory when he plays. As a front man, he has found a comfortable singing style to accompany his instrumental prowess. However, he is just as comfortable with others singing lead (Keith Richards, Al Anderson and Steve Ferguson) and playing lead (Keith Richards, Steve Ferguson, Eric Clapton and Michael Ray). As for the song credits, they are just as varied. Mr. JJ writes four songs, Steve Ferguson penned four and the rest are mostly Blues classics. Basically, Johnnie Johnson serves in just about every role possible.

I recently saw him and his band at Mississippi Nights and it was a damn good show! At age 67 years young, Johnnie rules the class room and so does "Johnnie B. Bad". ♪

-FRI-

NOV. 22

8 PM - 1 AM

featured with
Showcase Band

Jim McLaren

Coconut Willie

Rich McDonough

Chicago Slim

Marvin Martin

Beth Tuttle

Maggie Blue

John Zoroya

John Erblich

Dick Pruitt

James DeShay

Pat Liston

Danny Liston

Max Baker

Keith Doder

Charles Taylor

Silver Cloud

Fred Grant

Clayton Love

Ersine Oglesby

Glenn Changan

Steve Morgan

Oliver Sain R&B

All-Star Revue

Marcell Strong

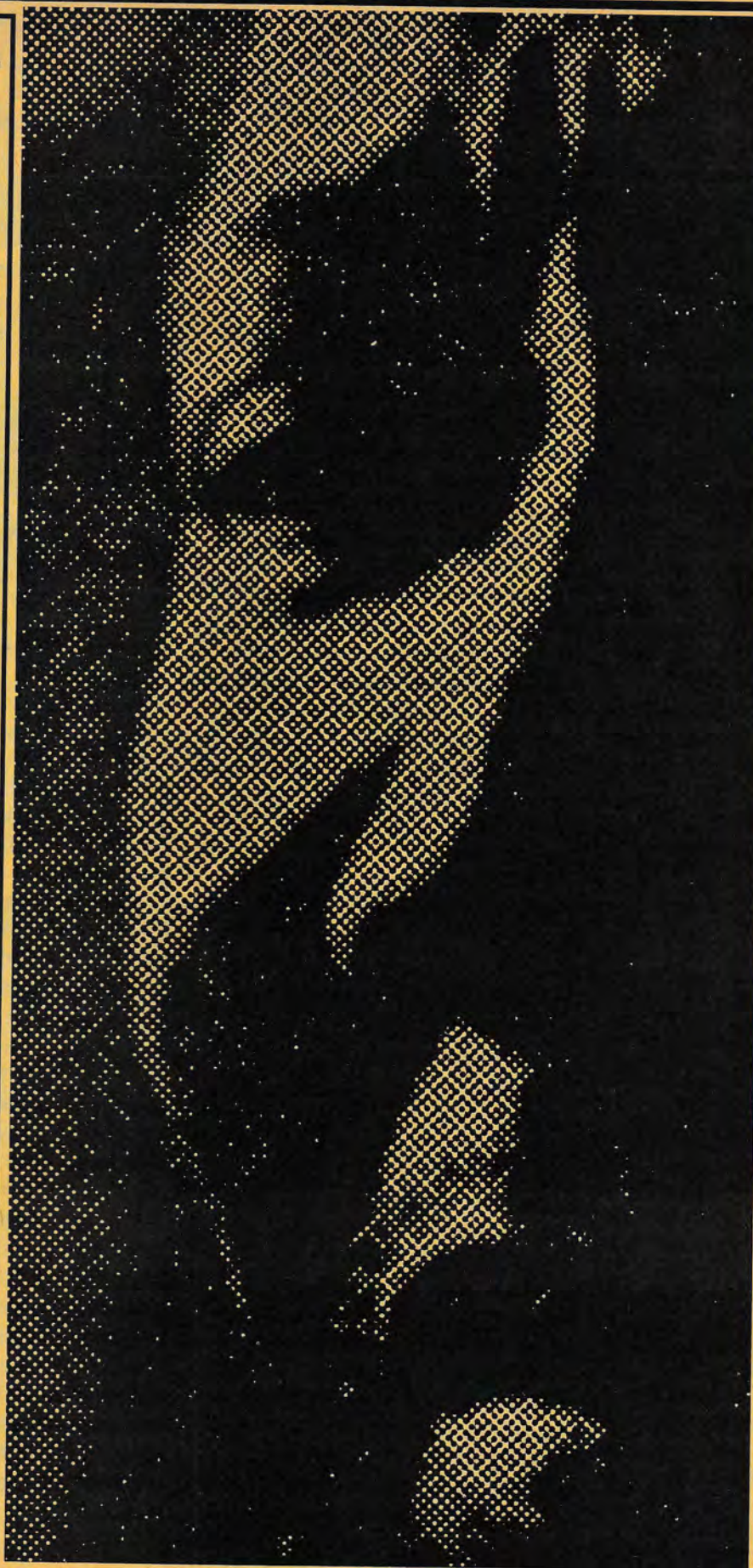
Tom Ray

Barbara Carr

Screamin Joe Neal

Dave Foley

Bob Case



-SAT-

NOV. 23

NOON - 2 AM

Performances By

Sharon & Doug Foehner

Jimmy Lee &

The Joint Jumpers

James Crutchfield Band

Leroy Pierson Band

David Dee &

The Hot Tracks Band

Little Walter Westbrook

& The Phantoms

Tom Hall

J.R. Reed &

The Real Blues Band

The Rockin' Luckys

Rondo's Blues Deluxe

Tommy Bankhead &

The Blues Eldorados

Piano Slim

Silvercloud & The

St. Louis Blues Band

Doc Terry &

The Pirates

James DeShay Band

Big George &

The Houserockers

Blue City Band

Twilight Jump

Mojo Syndrome

Jam Session

ST. LOUIS BLUES SHOWCASE '91

By Terri F. Reilly

On Friday and Saturday, Nov. 22 and 23 at Mississippi Nights, St. Louis music lovers will be able to witness the biggest and best showcasing of St. Louis Blues talent ever to hit a single stage when "St. Louis Blues Showcase '91" kicks off. Never before have so many great St. Louis Blues artists assembled for one incredible Blues jam.

"St. Louis Blues Showcase '91," produced by the St. Louis Blues Society and sponsored by Emergency Networks and the Riverfront Times, will feature a whopping 37 acts in two days.

This very special event is keeping in the tradition of the Blues Society's philosophy of promoting the wealth of tremendous Blues talent right here in our own backyard. This show is also very important to the Blues Society in general, in that it is considered a benefit for the organization—vital to the continued proliferation of Blues music in St. Louis.

Friday's show, which will begin at 8 p.m. and go to 2 a.m., will feature a evening of Blues duets by some of the finest Blues solo artists and frontmen in St. Louis. Duet performers will be backed by David Lee and the

Houserockers, featuring the Benders' horn section.

The highlight of Friday's show is certain to be an extended set by Blues legend Oliver Sain who will be bringing his all-star R&B revue to the stage. Oliver's revue will feature R&B stars Barbara Carr, Vernon Guy, Stacy Johnson, Marcell Strong and Papa Ray.

The Showcase will start again at Noon on Saturday and jam all the way to 2 a.m. The show will feature the most well-known and most important Blues bands in St. Louis and will climax with a jam session sure to blow off the roof.

All styles of Blues music will be represented during the Showcase—from classic and acoustic Blues and downhome and country Blues to the rockin' electric Blue notes of more recent times. The range in age among the performers is from the early 20s to 82 years.

Celebrity MCs will include Post-Dispatch critic-at-large Harper Barnes, columnist Bill McClellan, feature writer Ellen Futterman and music critic David Surkamp, KSHE's number-one man Smash, the RFT's big boss Ray Hartmann and KCLCs DJer Cindy Fehmel, to name a few.

During Saturday's show, Blues lovers will be treated to a feast of good food offered by Dennis Connelly and the Hard Shell Cafe. Blues T-shirts and other merchandise will also be available.

Tickets for this great event are \$10 on Friday, \$13 on Saturday and are available at Tickets Now locations, Mississippi Nights and Vintage Vinyl. A limited number of special two-day tickets are just \$15 and are available only at Vintage Vinyl, 6610 Delmar.

The St. Louis Blues Society would like to thank Emergency Networks, a sponsor of "St. Louis Blues Showcase '91," for its support of local Blues music. Emergency Networks is a security firm specializing in electronic home security systems.

The Blues Society also wishes to thank the Riverfront Times for its continued support of our endeavors, as well as McMurray Music, at 10201 Page, for its generous donation of music equipment for the Showcase.

"St. Louis Blues Showcase '91" is guaranteed to be the best Blues jam to ever hit town. This is definitely a must-see event.♪

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S	M	L	XL	Charlie Patton
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ANSON FUNDERBURGH- SO WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Peter Yewell

On Wednesday November 20, Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets featuring Sam Myers will blow into Off Broadway for one kick-ass show that won't soon be forgotten.

I can sort of hear Kevin Costner now, "If you put him on stage, they will come." Take it as a hint and go! Several of Anson's recent songs are slated to appear in a new Costner film due out in 1992.

"China Moon," which stars Ed Harris and Madeline Stowe, will feature Anson and the Rockets in a familiar setting - a smoky southern Blues club - churning out their standard high-energy brand of the Blues.

But back to Anson at one of our favorite Blues clubs-Off Broadway. At first, you might think the line-up is very strange: A large, black, older singer/harpist named Sam Myers and a young, clean-cut, guitarist named Anson Funderburgh. Even the names don't add up.

However, don't let this appearance fool you. For underneath that mild-mannered young exterior lurks a lean Texas guitarslinger whose classic tone, stinging leads and impeccable arrangements have made Funderburgh and his Rockets one of the tightest Blues ensembles on the contemporary scene.

The band has certainly been impressing the people involved in the W. C. Handy Awards. For example, Anson and his Rockets garnered four awards in 1988 and



Anson (second left) Sam Myers (right)

four more nominations in 1989.

In addition to the these accolades, they have recently pounded out two European tours and a stop at the King Biscuit Blues Festival. And the Miller Genuine Draft Band Network has included Anson in its impressive line-up of great artists.

In addition to Mr. Funderburgh's fire, Sam Myers, who joined the band in 1986, adds a definite spice to the band. Prior to the Rockets, Myers was best known for his 1957 Ace Records single, "My Love Is Here To Stay." Myers is also directly responsible for one of the 1988 Handy Awards for "Miscellaneous Instrumentalist of the Year."

The new album by this group, on Black Top Records, is "Tell Me What I Want To Hear" and is the bands sixth release. It features 14 tracks of straight-ahead blues and shuffling R&B numbers.

For those of you who have seen Anson and Sam together, you know what a blast it is. For those of you who haven't—whatta you waitin' for?

AUTUMN BLUES PARTY

By Charmaine Thorpe

The St. Louis Blues Society hosted a fund-raising event on October 28, 1991, at Off Broadway.

Three bands provided the entertainment. Their time and skill was rewarding and fun for those who attended. Are & Be Band opened the evening with a thrilling performance. They were followed by the Blues-O-Matics, now called Twilight Jump. Fortunately for us, Twilight Jump is still into Blues, and everyone will be in for a nice surprise. The Rockin' Luckys ended the evening with a never-cease-to-amaze-me, highly effective close.

The hors d'oeuvres catered by Chris Otzenberger of Gustine Market were delicious and added a

nice touch. We need to make this guy a member. All remaining snacks were donated to Shalom House, a shelter for homeless teens.

It was great to see some old friends and faces. It would have been greater to see more of you all.

For those who made this event happen, I thank you for your time, it was really appreciated. Our objective was to raise funds and have a good time doing it. The concept was to make this an opener for the "Main Event" next month. A special thanks to the Camaratas for their hospitality, and to the musicians and vocalists for an excellent evening of Blues. ♪

PAUL STEWART ELECTED TO BOARD

Editor's Note: Paul Stewart was elected to the board of Directors to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Bob Schoenfeld. The Board thanks Bob for his dedication to the Blues Society and Blues music and wishes him all the best and continued success with his Nighthawk Records.

Paul Stewart grew up in Buffalo, N.Y., where he developed an interest in Blues after hearing rock guitarists like Eric Clapton and Keith Richards profess their respect for many Blues greats. Paul has been an avid collector of Blues recordings for almost 20 years and

also is an avid fan of concert performances.

Paul moved to St. Louis in 1978 and has been gratified to see the rapid growth in the local blues scene and the number of local venues that feature Blues.

Paul has taken an active role in volunteering his time to the Blues Society as chairman of the membership committee and as the coordinator of the volunteers, work he will continue to do as the Society's newest member. The Board of Directors is thrilled that after countless hours of dedication, Paul Stewart is officially "one of us." Welcome Paul.

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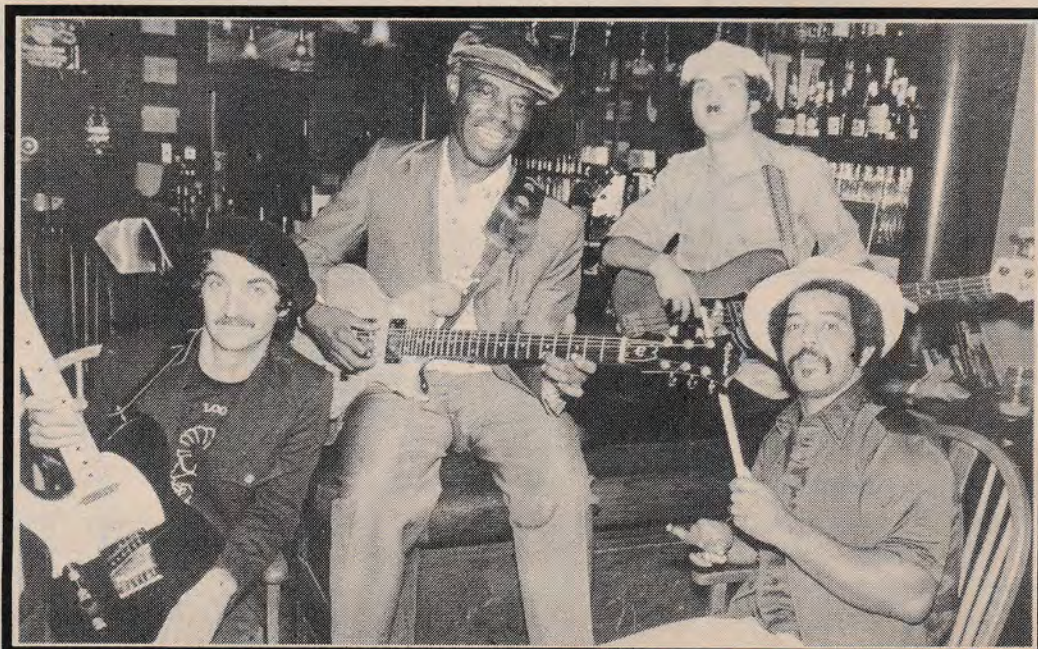
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From the Collection of Ron Edwards



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Bankhead &
The Blues
Eldorados
circa 1983**

**JB Hutto and
the New Hawks
at Huttos
circa 1980**





The Soulard Blues Band at BBs Jazz & Blues circa1981



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RECALLING SADIE'S

By Keith Doder

The Spring of 1976 was a watershed period of schooling in college and my awakening to the local Blues scene. A blurb in *Living Blues Magazine* had piqued my curiosity:

"Tommy Bankhead and the Blues Eldorados"
Wednesdays at Sadie's
Personality Bar
2401 N. Union Blvd.

The Blues had bitten me previously on countless records, occasional concerts at Kiel and D.J. Gabriel's late-night show on KATZ, however, I was unaware of the live Blues music in my own backyard.

Actually, Sadie's Personality Bar was a far cry from my middle-class home and backyard in Rock Hill, Missouri. As I cruised north on Union Boulevard, I noticed a hodgepodge of confectionaries, dry cleaners and corner bars. The streets bustled with traffic and people congregating outside on that warm April night. I felt apprehension and youthful anticipation rolled into one; culture shock filled the air.

I walked nervously into the bar welcomed by animated chatter, clinking glasses and suspicious glances. My next greeter was the owner's husband, Robert Hunt. Robert chomped on a smelly cigar and drunkenly mumbled about my I.D. I hadn't turned 21 yet, so I had borrowed an I.D. from my friend's brother. We bore no resemblance other than both having white faces. Robert immediately questioned the I.D., but he realized my love of the music. He and his beautiful wife, Sadie, agreed to let me stay and listen.

The first number that Tommy Bankhead hit was Muddy Waters' classic, "Still a Fool." Tommy's version was lowdown and riveting. Sadie's was packed with an assortment of laborers, nattily-dressed hustlers, city hall big shots, and street denizens. As the evening wore on they cavorted and



caroused. A gigantic man known only as "Byers" strutted to the bandstand and tipped Tommy to play Elmore James' "Standing at the Crossroads." Tommy broke out of a taciturn trance and poured his heart out on his cousin's song. By closing time, I was intoxicated from the good sounds and potent screwdrivers concocted by Mae, the barmaid.

I returned to Sadie's on many Wednesdays over the next two years. Local musicians, the likes of James DeShay, Arthur Williams, Doc Terry, and Ben Wells sat in regularly. My harp playing improved enough to fill in for my mentor, "Harmonica" Steve Kaufman. Sadie's continued to hold a Wednesday night set; the crowd gradually changed complexion as young students and chic suburban types crowded out the regulars. Poor people, who were downtrodden in Mississippi, partied with bankers' sons, who were pampered in Ladue.

Sadie's was a throwback to a time when Blues was relegated to rough-and-tumble ghetto joints. The spirit of the Blues was diluted as the music fanned out to more pretentious white clubs. Regardless, Sadie's remains a vivid memory and inspiration. Sadie's awakened me to the local Blues scene and spawned by growth as a Blues musician. ♪

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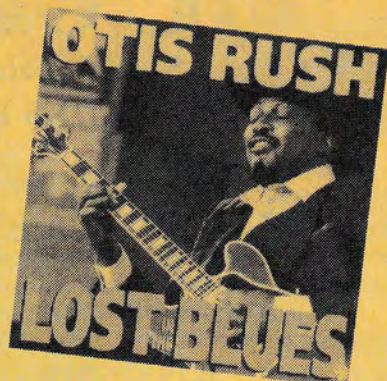
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HENRY TOWNSEND PART 1

By Leroy Pierson

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**"I come to be a man
about age nine...**

I had to." -Henry Townsend

Allen and Omelia Townsend's third son, Henry Jesse Townsend, was born on October 27, 1909 in Shelby, Mississippi, but Henry has no memories of that state as the family moved when he was very young to Future City, Illinois. Located just north of the important lumber and rail center, Cairo, Future City was a notorious and squalid shanty town of about 50 homes serviced by a dirt road.

Henry's earliest musical memories are of his father playing guitar or accordion and singing songs learned in his native Mississippi, but he also remembers hustling street musicians in Cairo and had one boyhood friend, David Perchfield, who played guitar years before Henry began.

Allen Townsend was a strict disciplinarian and his confrontations with Henry were violent and numerous, eventually causing Henry to leave home at age nine. He started walking north on Highway 3, stopping frequently in towns near the river to work or hustle up some food.

Shortly after his arrival in St. Louis (circa 1921) he managed to get a job shining shoes at 2600 Short Market in a parlor that served

as a front for a speakeasy. The entire Townsend family moved to St. Louis a few years later as did many from the Cairo area, but Henry never lived with them again, preferring to support himself.

Henry began playing guitar at about age fifteen and after a few false starts, soon became devoted to learning as much as he could from several local sources. David Perchfield had also moved to St. Louis and Henry was quick to renew the friendship and equally quick to absorb everything Perchfield knew about playing the guitar.

Other bluesmen who Henry, in his formative years, admired and learned from were "Dudlow Joe," Henry Spaulding, Son Ryan, Clifford Gibson and Lonnie Johnson. "Dudlow Joe's" name was Harry and he was a fine guitarist playing in open tunings. He took Henry under his wing, giving the youngster his first chance to perform in public.

Henry feels "Dudlow Joe" would have become a recording artist but, "Harry got sort of a bad break. Two fellows followed him and beat him up, oh this was in the middle of the twenties. He came back and killed them both with a pistol. He went to Penitentiary and that destroyed him."

About this time Henry began following Henry Spaulding and Son Ryan, two older musicians who both played guitar in the style

Henry would later favor on many of his recordings, a full-handed approach in open tuning with pronounced popping of the high E string, normally with the thumb.

Both Spaulding and Ryan performed versions of "Cairo Blues" years before Spaulding finally recorded the piece for Brunswick in 1929. Spaulding, a barber by profession, was in his early thirties when he cut his one record, and tragically he passed away shortly after his session. Ryan disappeared about the same time.

Lonnie Johnson was Henry's idol during the mid-twenties and this is no surprise, for alone among his St. Louis contemporaries, he was already a popular recording star, comfortable in both blues and jazz formats, and capable of accompaniments on many instruments including piano, mandolin, violin, banjo, and of course, guitar. Although they never became close friends, Henry managed to learn quite a bit from observing Lonnie's performances in East St. Louis, where he also met Clifford Gibson, another fine guitarist.

"We would watch Lonnie's fingers, and then go home and watch each other's." Gibson became a modestly successful recording artist in late twenties and was an early accompanist to the great pianist, Roosevelt Sykes, who he introduced to Henry.

To be continued in the next issue

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Sunday 10 PM -2 AM, Gabriel

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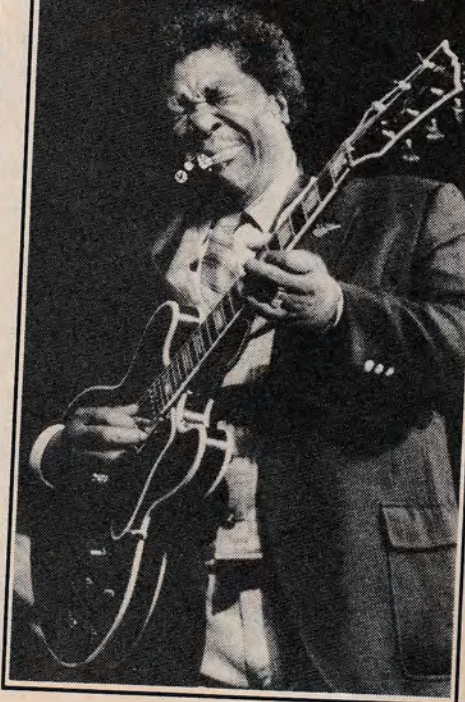
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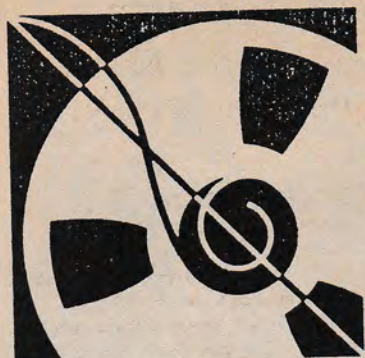
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RECORD REVIEWS

By Steve Morgan

As a result of the "CD Revolution," a development that at first looked like a new way to part listeners from their money, a number of remastered, remixed reissues are on the market. While some may believe that the purity of the performances has been compromised by remixing and remastering, the clear winners are the artists themselves, and for my money, so are the listeners.

Junior Wells

On Tap

Delmark DD 635

"What my Mama Told Me," "So Long," "Key to the Highway," "You Gotta Love Her with a Feeling," "The Train I Ride," "Watch Me Move," "Someday Baby," "Junior's Thing," "Goin' Down Slow"

Junior Wells is paired in a number of listeners' minds with Buddy Guy, a result of several recordings and tours together. In this live CD, Junior is teamed with the players that regularly backed him at Theresa's, a club on the South Side of Chicago. Delmark has remixed this tape, and it's about time we got to hear something from Junior that lives up to his reputation. This is unquestionably a must for any fans of Junior Wells. Sammy Lawhorn, longtime guitarist at Theresa's, very ably supports and complements Junior's playing. Other players include A.C. Reed on tenor sax and Big Moose Walker on piano/organ. The live performances of Junior and the band are first-rate from the first cut. This issue is a Junior Wells classic, right along with *Hoodoo Man Blues* and *Comin' at You*.

Eddie Taylor

I Feel So Bad

Hightone HCD 8027

"I Feel So Bad," "Jackson Town," "Stop Breaking Down," "13 Highway," "Stroll Out West," "Sittin' Here Thinkin'," "Going Upside Your Head," "Twelve-Year-Old Boy," "There'll Be a Day," "Bullcow Blues," "Wreck on 83 Highway," "Blues in the Rain"

This CD is reminiscent of the Junior Wells CD

previously mentioned. It too was recorded some time ago (1972), and has almost no bad spots. In addition, this was Eddie Taylor's first LP. This CD spotlights the versatility and talent of one of the all-time great blues guitar players and musicians, backed up by Phillip Walker's band, himself a guitarist that is now coming into his own. Guest artists also include the late George "Harmonica" Smith. Eddie Taylor is the backing guitarist on the VJ sides cut by Jimmy Reed, and he also played with Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Elmore James, and a number of other Chicago greats. On this CD we had slide playing (and singing) heavily reminiscent of Robert Nighthawk, acoustic blues guitar, and Muddy Waters-flavored arrangements on a couple of tunes. In fact, Eddie Taylor shows us that he can pretty much sound like whoever and whatever he wants. If you have wanted some Eddie Taylor for your collection. Look no further, this is the one.

Albert Collins

The Complete Imperial Recordings

EMI CDP-7-96740-2

"Do the Sissy," "Collins' Mix," "Let's Get it Together," "Got a Good Thing Goin'," "All About my Girl (originally titled 'Left Overs')," "Stump Poker," "Let's Get it Together Again," "Ain't Got Time," "Tumin' On," "Whatcha Say (I Don't Know)," "Pushin'," "Doin' My Thing," "Harris County Line-Up," "Conversation with Collins," "Jawing," "Grapeland Gossip," "Chatterbox," "Trash Talkin'," "Baby What You Want Me to Do/Rocky Me Baby," "Lip Service," "Things That I Used to Do (originally titled 'Talking Slim Blues')," "Back-Yard Back-Talk," "Tongue Lashing," "And Then It Started Raining," "Soul Food," "Jam It Up," "Do What You Want to Do," "Black Bottom Bayou," "Junkey Monkey," "69 Underpass Roadside Inn," "I Need You So," "Bitsey," "Cool 'N Collards," "Blend Down and Jam," "Sweet 'N Sour," "Swamp Sauce"

This double CD collection is a remixed and remastered compilation of Albert's first three albums for Imperial. The unfortunate aspect of this is that whenever there is a "complete" collection there are some dogs that should have been kept leashed. The first two albums represent Albert at the top of his form. Albert is essentially a guitarist as opposed to a vocalist, and the instrumental selections really highlight his incredibly inventive and emotional playing. In his earlier performing and recording days Collins played with a big band featuring horns, and there are plenty tasty selections to choose from. As regards the third LP, which makes up a little over half of the second CD, the less said the better. With only several months between recording sessions, it appears perhaps that the material began to run short. Albert also experimented with guitar effects on this album, and apparently he wasn't too satisfied either. Still, this is primo Albert Collins in his early years, and what you hear is a seasoned mature instrumentalist second to none in his ability to

get his message across. Expanded liner notes by Pete Welding are a welcome addition.

The Smokin' Joe Kubek Band featuring B'Nois King

Steppin' Out Texas Style

Bullseye Blues 9510

"Comin' Home Today," "I Wonder Why," "Natural Born Lover," "Everybody's Talkin'," "Square Bizness," "Hands On It," "Smokin' Joe's Cafe," "That's All I Want," "Steppin' Out," "Lonely Days"

I think we have a hot one here. It's one thing to suddenly stumble on a hot new guitarist, but when he's coupled with a first-rate singer, it's time to do some serious and pleasurable listening. The Smokin' Joe Kubek Band hails from Texas, long the home of great Blues musicians. B'Nois King is strong, smooth and expressive as a vocalist. Additionally, he is no slouch as a backup guitarist. Joe Kubek is authoritative and powerful in his role as lead guitarist. Obvious influences range from Freddy King to Albert King to Stevie Ray Vaughan, with a little slide thrown in. There is an obvious comparison to the Fabulous Thunderbirds when Jimmie Vaughan was still with them. They are definitely similar, but B'Nois King's vocals together with Joe Kubek's playing lift this band out of the role of just another modern blues band. Greg Wright on bass and Phil Campbell on drums complete the band with a little help from Bullseye session players Ron Levy on piano (also producer), Sax Gordon on tenor, and Tino Barker on baritone. Jimmie Vaughan calls these guys the "real thing." I'd agree. Have some fun and check these guys out.

Charles Brown

All My Life

Bullseye Blues CD BB 9501

"Early In the Morning," "Fool's Paradise," "Bad, Bad Whiskey," "When the Sun Comes Out," "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," "That's a Pretty Good Love," "A Virus Called the Blues," "Seven Days Long," "Joyce's Boogie," "Trouble Blues," "Tell Me Who," "All My Life," "Too Late"

Charles Brown has influenced Ray Charles, Johnny Ace, Floyd Dixon, B.B. King, Fats Domino, Bonnie Raitt, Dr. John, and just about everybody else. Bullseye has teamed him with great players and songs and produced a terrific CD. This is not your hard rocker, but rather the smooth urbane stylings that for so long represented the West Coast sound in Blues. Charles Brown is responsible for: "Driftin' Blues," "Merry Christmas Baby," "Black Night," and others. Tasty piano and organ pieces abound. It's not hard, listening to this, to envision the small intimate club atmosphere that was his bread and butter for years. So go ahead, invite your baby over, dim the lights, light the candles, and enjoy the mood.

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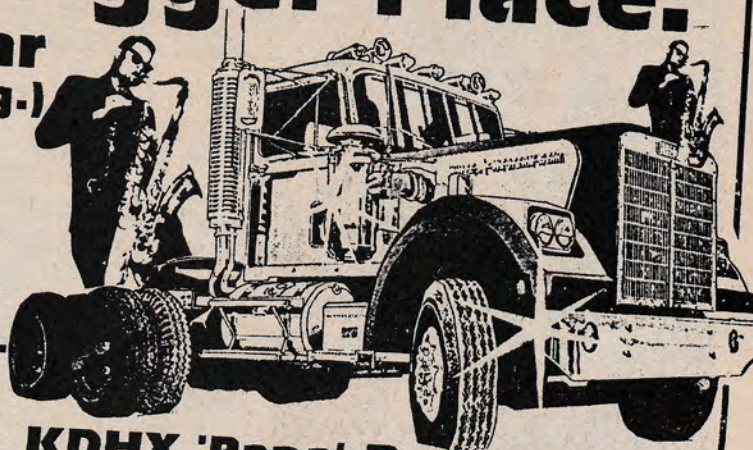
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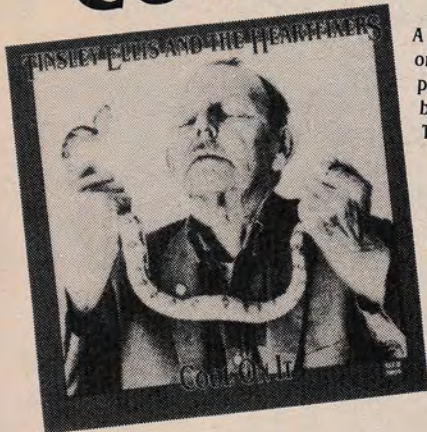
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