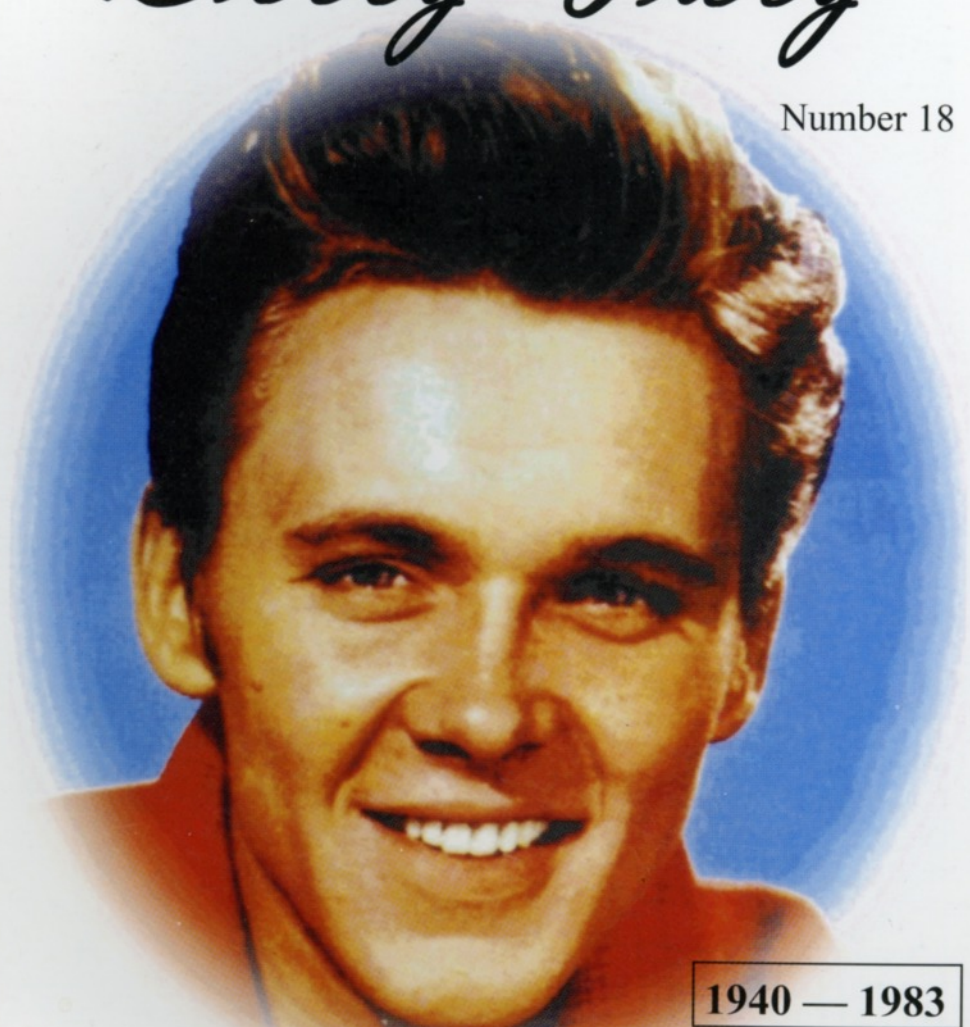


Billy Fury

Number 18



1940 — 1983

THE SOUND OF FURY
Official Billy Fury Fan Club
20th Anniversary Edition





BILLY FURY

Always Remembered....

THE SOUND OF FURY

Official Billy Fury Fan Club

c/o 36 Manbey Grove Stratford London E15 1EX

Fury Sounds on every page

It's Mag Eighteen, we've come of age

Hello Fury Followers

We hope you all had a Happy Christmas and are looking forward to good things in store in 2003.

There's news in the mag about the bronze, the film and forthcoming Billy events; we'll keep you informed about everything that's happening. Read on!

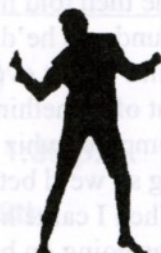
Love and Fury

Maureen

Maureen Bowden, Jackie Clark, Chris Eley
Clare Mehmet-Nugent, Jean Prosser

January 2003

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CROSS MY HEART

by Maureen Bowden

I sn't technology wonderful?! I recently had the brilliant idea of making myself a Billy calendar with twelve photos from Harry Whitehouse's web site "The Billy Fury Story". The trouble was I didn't have a clue how to do it but Becky, my eleven-year-old foster daughter came to my rescue. I called up the web site and went into "gallery" (I can manage that) then I showed her the photos I wanted and she took over. I said "show me how to do it so I can do it myself next time." She "right clicked" on something then "left clicked" on something else, menus shot all over the screen, she minimised and maximised and did things that have impressive names in a language I don't understand and I gave up! She then produced a CD thingy, which she shoved in an orifice in the PC's nether regions where I never look because it all seems vaguely obscene down there. (Fear of the unknown I suppose.) A calendar page for January 2003 miraculously appeared, she did some more jiggery-pokery and Billy's picture popped onto it. Eventually we had all twelve months stored somewhere in the ether. I printed off January and watched in fascinated horror as the ink levels shown on the little printer fadooka dropped rapidly. It soon became apparent that we were likely to use up the ink cartridge somewhere between the Spring Equinox and the Ides of March. The brainchild had a better idea. She said "Don't worry mum, I'll download it onto a floppy (what the hell does that mean?) take it to school and print it from one of the school computers." I had visions of the Education Authority dragging me off to jail in chains for misusing school property but she assured me it was okay because pupils are encouraged to use the computers for their own projects. She said "I'll tell them I'm making a Billy Fury calendar for my mum. I'll probably get credit marks for it." I said "Alright, go ahead and floppy the download or whatever." She then told me she didn't know how to do it but she'd invite Theo round and he'd sort it out. Her friend Theo is the most accident-prone child who's ever likely to bump into you. He's always falling off, over or out of something and he looks like Harry Potter. He's also apparently a computer whiz kid. I warned my husband Dave that Theo would be visiting so we'd better remove all breakables then I hoped for the best. When I came home from work next day I knew some computer activity was going on because the phone was making funny bleeping noises. I

peeped cautiously round the study door expecting to see Theo lying in a pool of blood among assorted wreckage. Instead, there was Becky with her friend Gwawr. (I know it sounds like something off the sound track of The Lion King but it's actually Welsh for Dawn.) I asked where Theo was and they told me he hadn't been invited yet because Becky and Gwawr were doing their homework using the 'net'. The homework was history, they had to choose a historical event or an historical figure and do a project on them. Becky was doing the Titanic and Gwawr was doing Elvis! (That makes it official folks; Elvis is history.) When I was at school I was more likely to be asked to do a project on William Pitt the Younger.

I was given another reminder of the changing times when my granddaughter Lauren last came to visit. She was singing and dancing and doing what appeared to be the hand jive! I said, "Is that the hand jive you're doing Lol?" She said, "No Gran, it's the Ketchup Song." I said "Don't confuse me, I'm an old lady." She said, "Is that why you've had your hair cut like Lulu?"

NEWS FLASH

The film based on the stage play "The Sound of Fury" is back on the agenda. The latest news from Joe Boyle, who's written the screen play is that shooting will start in Liverpool in Spring.

The role of Billy hasn't been cast yet.

Auditions will be held.

DIARY DATES for 2003

Next Mill Hill reunion is Sunday 13th April around 1:30 p.m.

The October date has changed to Sunday 19th

20th Anniversary Information. New Billy Fury tribute CD release-Without You.

by Chris Eley

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of Billy's passing Billy fan Harry Whitehouse has undertaken this interesting and challenging project. This double CD collection features 19 or so different vocalists, many of whom have been active in performing live musical tributes to Billy at some stage. Most are not lookalikes, or indeed soundalikes, but all attempt to do justice to Billy's numbers, in their own individual way. Most succeed really well. This is a sincere tribute and not a money making exercise. While too many companies and individuals who should be putting something together for January 28th are not bothering to do so, this release should be the more applauded and supported. On behalf of the Sound of Fury and Billy fans everywhere I would like to thank each artist for freely contributing their time and not inconsiderable talent to this special project, at this special, but sad time.

The price is £12.99 (incl. postage), for payment by cheque or postal order. All should be made payable to Harry Whitehouse and sent to Harry Whitehouse, Memorial CD, 48 Queen Street, Balderton, Newark, NG 24 3NS. Payment by credit card is via the internet only, with a 5% surcharge, www.billyfury.org. Financing is by peaksoft and Harry's website. After costs, any profit will go to the BF Bronze Fund. Good will messages and photos have been contributed by the likes of Sir Paul McCartney, Sir Cliff Richard, Joe Brown, Tommy Bruce, Marty Wilde, John Leyton, Vince Eager and ace producer Stuart Colman. Buy it folks-and help to keep Billy's legend alive. It will no doubt be collectable in a few years. The front cover features the lovely pink jumpsuit shot from 1974.

There are a total of 34 tribute songs plus one surprise bonus track by Billy (live in about 1964 !). Artists include Garry Slade, Johnny Red, Toini Knutsen (great Wondrous Place), Allen Austin, Paul Neon, Johnny Storme, Brian Lee, Rob Dee, Colin Paul, Ray Shenton, Geoff Howlett (a Sting type treatment of Do You Really Love Me To), Dave Michael, Colin Gold (in duet with Chris Raynor), Guy Clover, Graham Hunter

(perhaps the nearest to Billy in vocal sound), Russ Dee, the young Laura (with her excellent contemporary version of Like I've Never Been Gone), and Vince Eager with the great Big Jim Sullivan (a true gent as those who have met him will know). Ballads, some 'B' sides, three Polydor numbers, regrettably only one Parlophone cut, (ably handled by Colin Paul). Johnny Red's contributions are exceptionally authentic, (rockabilly), and must be mentioned. The participants can be really proud of their contributions—great stuff.

This is a must have collection. Performances and sound quality obviously vary a little but overall it makes for enjoyable listening.

GONNA TYPE A LETTER

*Did you hear the sad news about the death of Sharon Sheeley? I receive an Eddie Cochran fan club magazine and I read last month that she died in Los Angeles on 17th May. I didn't realise that as well as being Eddie's girlfriend, she was also a close friend of Elvis before he went into the army. I believe also that Billy befriended her when she was in England in 1960. She certainly knew all the right guys!

Sue Taylor, Norfolk

... You're right Sue. Billy gave Sharon a lot of support after Eddie's death and they continued to keep in touch. I'd like to think that somewhere, in someway, she and Eddie are together again now.

*I have a new CD out called Paradise and the Fury. Lots of Billy numbers and Elvis too. It has been made for charity to raise funds for the Beacon Centre for the Blind, Sedgley Road West, West Midlands which is a very good cause. Maybe other members of the Billy Fury Fan Club would like to buy a copy. It costs £7.99 for a CD and £3.99 for a tape and can be ordered from Jane Pilsbury, senior fundraiser at the centre on 01902 880111.

You may already know that the auction of rock 'n' roll items I set up for them raised in excess of £3,500 in just over two hours. I am pretty well known up here!

Keep up the good work for the fan club.

Phil Solomon, Willenhall

...Thanks Phil, sounds like a great job you're doing.

This 'n' That

with Chris Eley

As I start my column I can hardly believe that it will soon be 20 years since we lost Billy. I have located and submitted some articles (found elsewhere in this magazine), which bring back happy and sad memories from that time. 1982 was the most special year of my life, a time of hope, of meeting Billy and having new great Billy music to look forward too, and 1983 one of the worst. All hope and promise died, and as with you all, part of me died too. I had intended writing a special piece on my memories from that time, the most special Billy time for me, far more even than 1961-66, but time has run out. I only submitted one obituary-I feel that we should be celebrating the life and music of the great man, yes, a great Briton indeed, and a sorely missed and underrated one at that. Come 28th of January I know you will all both mourn, and celebrate, each in your own special way. Yet, we will be united in our mixed feelings. Lets just do all we collectively and individually can, throughout this special year, to help to keep his legacy alive and kicking. Just come my way from Billy fan Adrian Watts (at Mill Hill) is a CD by Hot Rockin', One More Star, Foot Tapping records Cat.No. FT001. It's rockabilly but the major point of interest for us is the title song, which is a pleasant enough tribute to Billy. The song, a ballad, is written and performed by Dave 'Porky' Coates. Quite a distinctive vocal style, some nice rockabilly. Available from telephone/fax no.01253-782018.

Met Rob Dee at Mill Hill. He sells his very pleasant Billy tribute CD at his venues; it's worth picking up. Something you really must hear is the US original of 'A King For Tonight', surely in the running for Billy's finest performance. Barry Darvell (Cecelia's US cousin?) does a cracking job, more of a ballad version. It can be found on a Darvell compilation, Geronimo Stomp...and all the rest, Mr Potato Records 501(specialist dealers only). Also on a cracking compilation, Teenage Dreams Vol 15, Farmer Records FR 1020. (specialist dealers only). Also featured is 'Heavens Plan' (Lefty Frizzell), the female version of 'The Young Ones' (Cathy Carroll) and Nat King Cole amazingly singing pure early 60's pop with 'The Good Times'-great stuff. I saw the truly legendary Slim Whitman on tour recently, supported by Narvel Felts. Narvels new CD is Super Songs Narvelised and features great versions of Cara Mia,

'Great Balls of Fire', 'Lotta Lovin', 'Til Sundown' and many others. Cone CD2002-Import. Elsewhere you should find information on the first ever Billy Fury Tribute CD to feature his songs recorded by a multitude of tribute acts on a double CD assembled and self-produced by Harry Whitehouse for only £12.99 inc postage. Perhaps surprisingly, given that absolutely no one can do Billy's unique voice more than passing justice, this is a very enjoyable package that I highly recommend. Not all are ace performances but most are good and a few are excellent; Billy would say, inevitably, that some are better than his. That of course would be untrue but do check it, available via the www.billyfury.org website. A good and sincere tribute.

A Billy Fury Tribute Show is planned, in support of the Bronze, in Margate on 5th March 2003. Organised by Tony Harte, a 60's style tribute singer who loves Billy's music and who seems to be a genuine guy, updates can be found by accessing <http://www.magic-music.freemove.com>. About 10 tribute artists are (I am told) to perform about 3 numbers each, for free, for the Bronze.

Mill Hill in October was successful and a big thanks is due to everyone who contributed to the raffle and auction. Nice to see a mix of faces old and new there. Let us hope January is a big gathering. It should be, given the significance of it.

Reported in the Nottingham Evening Post, the discovery of a recording of Billy's, of 'Love Hurts' from the 70's. Apparently it was in a box of junk at Chris Raynors home and may come out in 2003 as a single for the 20th Anniversary. As Decca has postponed this years anniversary release, it would be welcome; if it happens. The show has helped tremendously in keeping the legend alive; if only more fans would join the Club and buy the CDs, so many are apathetic when it comes to really supporting the memory. The last CD release, Love Songs, limped out. If CD's are not bought the fans cannot expect more money and time to be spent on getting those unreleased tracks out. Billy is not a big seller anymore. The film might change that for a little while. Having said that I am told that the Cliff In Kingston CD only shifted 9,000 copies on initial release. The Billy Anthology topped that, but The Sound of Fury double CD only made 3,000 sales. Either fan apathy and/or no realisation that this was the very first time on CD for the mono tracks I would guess. Disappointing. If you cannot find the CDs in the shops, politely make a fuss and request they be stocked. You will waste your breath in the new Virgin (formerly Our Price) outlets-but elsewhere you might succeed. I was told that Moya

went one step further than most of us (who push all the Billy ones to the front of the F's every time we enter a shop). Moya apparently put the Billy CDs into the top 10 slots-not a popular move! Actually many good shops have had a Billy section ever since January 1983. How shameful that it took Billy's passing for this to happen. for the first time since his hey day.

For lovers of British Rock'n'Roll there is a little compilation neatly entitled Rockin' in the British Aisles, Rocking Records RRR 1003. Truly great performances such as Jimmy Crawford's 'Our Last Embrace' rub shoulders with the pleasant 'Like a Good Girl Should' by Bill Forbes, who I hope is still a member of our little club. There are tracks by Grant Tracey, Brad Newman, Jerry Lordan and what I presume is an Embassy records cover of 'Last Night was made for Love' by Johnny Chester. Jim Proby is his own worst enemy we all know but no one or nothing can take away the fact that he had a voice to die for. I had only heard the very pleasant Rick Nelson version of 'In My Dreams' until I got sent a CD of the demos done during the early years, including the above track that he cut as a demo for Elvis. It is a superb version and it's sad that it was not laid down fully. You can picture Elvis doing it but wondering whether he could match it! The CD James Marcus Smith AKA PJ Proby is available from Spinning Disc in London-sound quality obviously not first class but clear enough to be really enjoyed. Also included. Handsome Guy, What did I do to you? Clown Shoes etc-but worth it just for the above track. I would like to thank Di and Ann Vickers for all they do for Billy and say how sad we all are about the close personal loss that they have recently had. Also, our thoughts are with any of our members for whom life is difficult at the moment, for whatever reason.

Sir Paul McCartney in his 1983 autobiography said, "Billy Fury was Britain's best and most believable rock'n'roll star". True indeed, as we all know. The title track from the movie 'Maybe Baby', performed by Paul is the best version I have ever heard. Pity the rest of the soundtrack is pretty disposable. If you find a copy in the bargain bin it's worth having just for the title track. I recently came across a version of 'I'd Never Find another You' by Paul Anka. Very good too, based on the Tony Orlando original. Available on Paul Anka Vol 2 Cedar CDCAR 2041 (from Bimbam Records, tel. 023 8060 0329. Finally for Buddy Holly fans an essential purchase, Ray Ruff at his Very Best-My Gift to You on Hotholly 1001. My Wish is You, Umm oh Yeah, Pretty Blue Eyes, Well All Right (covered also by Billy of course, and the title track. Cannot think why they failed to

include So What, but a nice little collection. Specialist dealers only. Do look out for the Billy product in the CD stores and on that note there may be some of the limited edition Billy plates left, featuring a picture, which looks very much like the one on the front of the second issue of the Paradise CD. Contact Lawrence Seymour (the name of the company)-Tel no.020-8408 7133. Quote reference CPBF.

Had a lovely surprise last night, a phone call from Emile Ford who told me he once topped the bill in 1960 and that Billy was on the same show. I am not sure of the venue. What a great guy he is, and apparently a sound engineer without equal. I particularly like his version of Rick Nelson's 'You'll Never Know What You're Missing'. We had a grand time at the Westcliffe Theatre in Clacton on 15th November at 'An audience with Brian Lee.' A mix of comedy and song with the rock'n'roll being provided by a band from Wales, Red Alert. Competent, and they paid tribute to Billy with 'It's Only Make Believe' but they had not heard of 'Turn My Back On You' or 'My Advice'! Unbelievable. They have now! Nice to hear Harry Hayes open the show with his country version of 'Halfway to Paradise', rather different. Top of the bill was Big Jim Sullivan, a great guitarist and smashing guy. There are some good guys in the business. Watch out for a new CD release, "The Sound of Fury Demos", on Castle Select Records—SELCD 608. Nice (cheap) package with 19 early tracks.

Well, that's it for 2002, where has it all gone, Life is flashing past and the world, and especially this country is fast becoming a topsy turvey old place, nothing like the ordered 50s/60s world we used to know. understand and love. Billy's music, the ballads at least, together with that of our other favourites is fast becoming the equivalent of what we know as easy listening. Pre Beatles music is seen as being 'primitive'. We may not agree, and we won't lie down over it, but it's how it generally is. Sad. Perhaps a bit of a fuss over the 20th Anniversary, requests on Radio Stations etc and the raising of the statue will hold those widely held misconceptions at bay for a little while longer. Time now to prepare for another fundraiser at the Hotel, which kicked off the Bronze Fund, the Allendale. A weekend amongst Billy friends, just the ticket. Until April 2003-adios, and may your festive Season have been filled with love, happiness, good health and good luck.

The thoughts / comments in this article are mine and are not necessarily shared by the rest of the syndicate.



Billy, Michael Winner and Anna Palk—"Play It Cool"



From "I've Gotta Horse"

This'n'That Extra The Ace Café (London) Bronze Fundraiser.

with Chris Eley

For some years, on the occasion of Billy's Anniversary dates some of the bikers who frequent the Ace Café have visited Paddington Cemetery and done a drive past of the grave. Billy's love of motorbikes is well known and there are a number of photos featuring this. Many bikers are lovers of (proper) rock'n'roll music and it seemed only fitting that it should all come together in this way. Having been refurbished the time was finally right and a great night was had by all. Thanks to the selfless generosity of Mark Wilsmore, who now manages the Ace, about £3,000 was raised on the evening of the 19th October for the Bronze Fund. The event was organised by Chris Jones of Spinning Disc, for Billy but also in memory of her late husband Terry who loved Billy's music and who had been supporting the Bronze before he was lost to us. Jenny Warwick, who works tirelessly to support Billy and the Bronze, travelled all the way down from her Welsh farm prior to the event to help with the organisation and met us on the afternoon of the event to co-ordinate it. Big, big thanks Jen. A host of stars, many former colleagues of Billy were invited by Chris to either attend or participate and it was very much an 'off the cuff' night. Too many attendees and people would not get in, too few and the 'gate' money we had been promised would not be substantial enough to break the back of the fund, as was hoped. In the event some of the artists cried off. A very attractive Oriental lady (who was aged 44 but looked about 30-not that I took much interest!) approached my Linda for an autograph because she thought she was 'Miss Twinkle' !. Actually neither Twinkle or PJ Proby, or Vince Eager, Jimmy Crawford, amongst others, turned up. We were so very thankful to those who did perform and owe them a big debt of thanks. There was no payment and the courtesy drink idea died a death because it would have taken a JCB to clear a path from the stage to the bar. It was supposed to be me that met them off-stage and took them to the bar-fat chance. Following on from the DJ, Big Beat Chris, (who was allegedly at the Buddy Holly Week event in London

when Billy was a judge), the Flames kicked the night off with their usual solid rockin' sound, nice set of guys and great to dance to. Jeff Tuck (drummer), John Burleigh (lead guitar), Jeff Jeffery (rhythm guitar), Brad Dallaston (bass guitar). I think they share the vocals. Regrettably none of the SOF or Jenny or Linda could get to the stage or near the artists because of the workload so a blow-by-blow account of the numbers etc is not possible. As I recall Tommy Bruce was the first solo act and then there were performances by John Allison of the Allisons, who used to tour with Billy. A Ricky Nelson number followed by 'Runaway' I think. We did get to meet John but not the others regrettably. The compere was a nice guy and a professional singer, Graham Gardener (Hunter) who has become a friend of ours and who once spent several hours in a hide with Billy, bird watching in the pouring rain! Lucky guy, wet of foot but happy! But that's another story. According to Graham, Billy's old mate Dave Sampson would have stayed on stage all night-I do remember some pretty good rock'n' roll coming from his set. Billy Egan did a good sounding 'Nothin' Shakin', and some guy called Jetstream did a number. I really regret not switching on and getting Billy to contact Harry Whitehouse about contributing that number to the new tribute CD-too much on my plate as usual, sorry Billy. That's of course providing Billy would want to contribute. If there is another volume released, I hope he does. Danny Rivers delivered a set (sorry mate, missed it) and his wife Emily thanked everyone for participating, something I should have done; but we have sent thank you letters to everyone. We also owe thanks too to those celebrities who turned up to prop up the bar and sign autographs. Jet Harris was pleasant and it was great to see Clem Cattini again, looking pretty good following his recent illness. Jess Conrad is a lot taller than you think too! I was told that Mike Sarne, Neil Christian, Terry Dene and Brian Gregg were also there but did not get to meet or see them. That is unless it was Neil who came over at the end to shake my hand and say thanks, a tall dark haired guy in black with a white jacket and considerable presence. It was nice of someone to do that, to acknowledge the work involved although the lions share was not ours, we just supported it all. I had hoped to see and meet the Gamblers who were mooted to turn up and who I always rated as being a terrific band; perhaps some other time. A really pleasant surprise was to be introduced to a charming and impeccable looking lady who turned out to be Judith, formerly Judith Hall, Billy's wife whom he married in 1969. Nice to see old faces there, Steve Kramer, Bob Paskins and Sue (thanks Bob for your significant contribution to the

fund) and to finally meet up with Sheryn J Hinton and Vic England.

My framed shirt of Billy's went for £290, (for the fund), to a really big Billy fan and biker from East Sussex, Phil Bradley, who offered up a Billy autograph, which went for only £40, but to a good home. Graham Hunter contributed a set of three quite rare publications from the 80's, one of which featured a good article 'Remembering Billy', with some fine photos. Billy fan Jeff Holland won the bid at £60. Thanks, all of you. A big thank you too to Jenny Warwick for providing, at her own cost, a range of merchandise for the night, including a limited edition commemorative plaque, in advance of the January Anniversary, and too Jenny's cousin for also manning the stall. Thanks are due to our Clare (we of the SOF take each other far too much for granted), and to Linda, who works as hard as anyone to support Billy.

Finally I would like to thank the staff at the Ace and everyone who attended the event. In paying the entrance fee you all helped the fund. Another Billy Fury Tribute Night is planned for the 18th of October 2003. Let us hope the statue is up by then and that the money can go to a worthwhile cause. Some time has elapsed since the event and I could only have half an ear and eye on the proceedings so if I have neglected to mention anyone, or anything significant please except my apologies.

This 'n' That Extra

The Carousel Hotel Weekend

(Blackpool) 8-10th November 2002

by Chris Eley

The hotel is now no longer under the ownership of Mr and Mrs Roth but Diane Wardle was still instrumental in organising and running yet another successful weekend, netting around £1,000 for the Bronze Fund. Another weekend is happening at the Metropole Hotel in Blackpool over the weekend 21-23 Feb (details elsewhere in the mag). It is the end of an era and will never be the same, due to modernisation and upgrading which is taking place now that the Carousel is part of a major chain of

Hotels. Since 1992 (when Linda and I met) it has had special meaning for many Billy fans but all things do come to an end. Thanks are due to the Manager Dave McMillan who turned out not to be as sinister as the phone earpiece painted him, (we thought he was the bouncer!) and who contributed some hooch for the raffle. The encroachment on Saturday night by too many non-invited and/or non-resident persons was annoying but all in all it was a great weekend. I keep raving about Colin Paul I know but as a live band/act it really does not get much better. The usual high standard was maintained and it was nice to hear 'Turn Your Lamp Down Low' being done live, also the newie from a German band originally it seems, 'High Class Lady' (which I dedicate to my other half). Colin is also doing an album of non-Elvis songs in the Elvis style. If 'Tears from Heaven' is any indication it will be a must to have. You must do 'In My Dreams' Colin!, Dean Memphis is very good and I am sorry that I failed to switch on in time to get Dean and Alan Heyes included in the Billy Tribute CD. Sorry guy's, call it a senior moment, you should have been put forward to Harry, and thanks for the entertainment. Albie Wycherly, still not very well following his recent spell in hospital, performed his usual set, being well received as always. Old friend Neil Hiley played his usual disco blinder-you can't retire yet mate, what would we do? It was great to finally meet Moya Gleave from New Zealand, surely the most dedicated (and off the wall) fan on the planet. Warm and scatty, plus a great mover on the dance floor! I kept getting my wrist slapped for calling Elvis the 'King' (we actually had Elvis and Marilyn in for the weekend!!), and they were always on the dance floor. I thought they were just a couple of big headed posers until I took the time to chat on Sunday and found it was all tongue in cheek and fun on their part-they were ok. Moral-talk to folk and then you will know where they are at. Too much email in our world, not enough face to face contact. It must surely have been Moya who got Colin to sing 'Glory Glory Billy Fury' to American Trilogy at the close of the evening! We never got time to talk half enough about Billy (who Moya knew well), and we really are going to have to catch up on that next time around. Friday night was relatively quiet but the atmosphere on both days was wonderful. It was nice to meet all the old friends, too many too mention but special mentions are due for those who contributed to the raffle and auctions. It really is the same people who continually come good for the Bronze. There may be thousands of Billy fans in the world but when this statue goes up it will be due to the efforts of hundreds, perhaps more correctly, several dozen continual contributors. For the raffle, thanks to

Monica O'Bierne (who also helped at the stall), and to Arlene Jones, Val Deavoll and Billy's Mum Jean. Also Di and Ann Vickers for their cake for the very successful Sunday raffle. It is mostly only the Fury faithful who are left on the Sunday. For the Billy posters Tony Hopper and the Liverpool team autographed football, John Maule. For the Billy and Elvis prints, Lyn and Glyn Holloway, now really significant contributors to the fund. Thanks too for those who succeeded at auction, Colin Ward, Wendy Wright, Jenny Warwick, Steve Kerr, Madelene Bourne and Billy act Ray Shenton. Nice to meet Ray and his charming wife. I hear Ray has a good act. Eric Gunn's donation was as the result of the kindness of Gary Slade in sending two of his CDs free of charge to Eric-thank you both. Linda and I were overwhelmed at the generosity of Wendy and Phil in presenting to us the weekend break in the Isle of Man that they had won in the raffle. Thanks so much, and to Dave McMillan for presenting it as a prize in the first instance. Thanks too, to Colin Paul for contributing MP3 discs of hundreds of Billy's numbers (on each disc), well worthwhile for you computer buffs. I still only have one at work at present.

It was either Colin Ward or Steve Kerr who generously allowed the football to go to another bidder but still put in the bid sum-generosity that typifies the spirit of the weekend. If I have forgotten anyone, my apologies, there is a lot on at the moment with the promise of a heck of a lot more commitment required in the coming 20th Anniversary year. Finally thanks to everyone who attended, and anyone and everyone, including especially Diane and all of the acts and the staff, for making it happen and making it so successful and enjoyable. Once the Bronze is finished I know the intention is for the weekends to continue for the chance for us all to renew our Billy friendships, boogie on down for as long as we are able, and, as an incidental (which will be a relief!), raise money for whatever charity or hospital is decided. It still means raffles and a little work, but it should mean more play, and we all need that I am sure. Life is too short! Linda and I hope to see you next year in Blackpool. Do come and say hello, we don't bite.

THE BILLY FURY BRONZE FUND

by Jean Prosser

Just before Christmas I sent a cheque to Tom Murphy for £15,862.50, which is the cost of casting the statue in bronze plus Tom's fees plus VAT. The bronzing has now commenced and it should be completed by the end of March. We all hope that the statue will be unveiled in the Albert Dock area of Liverpool some time in April 2003 but negotiations are still continuing.

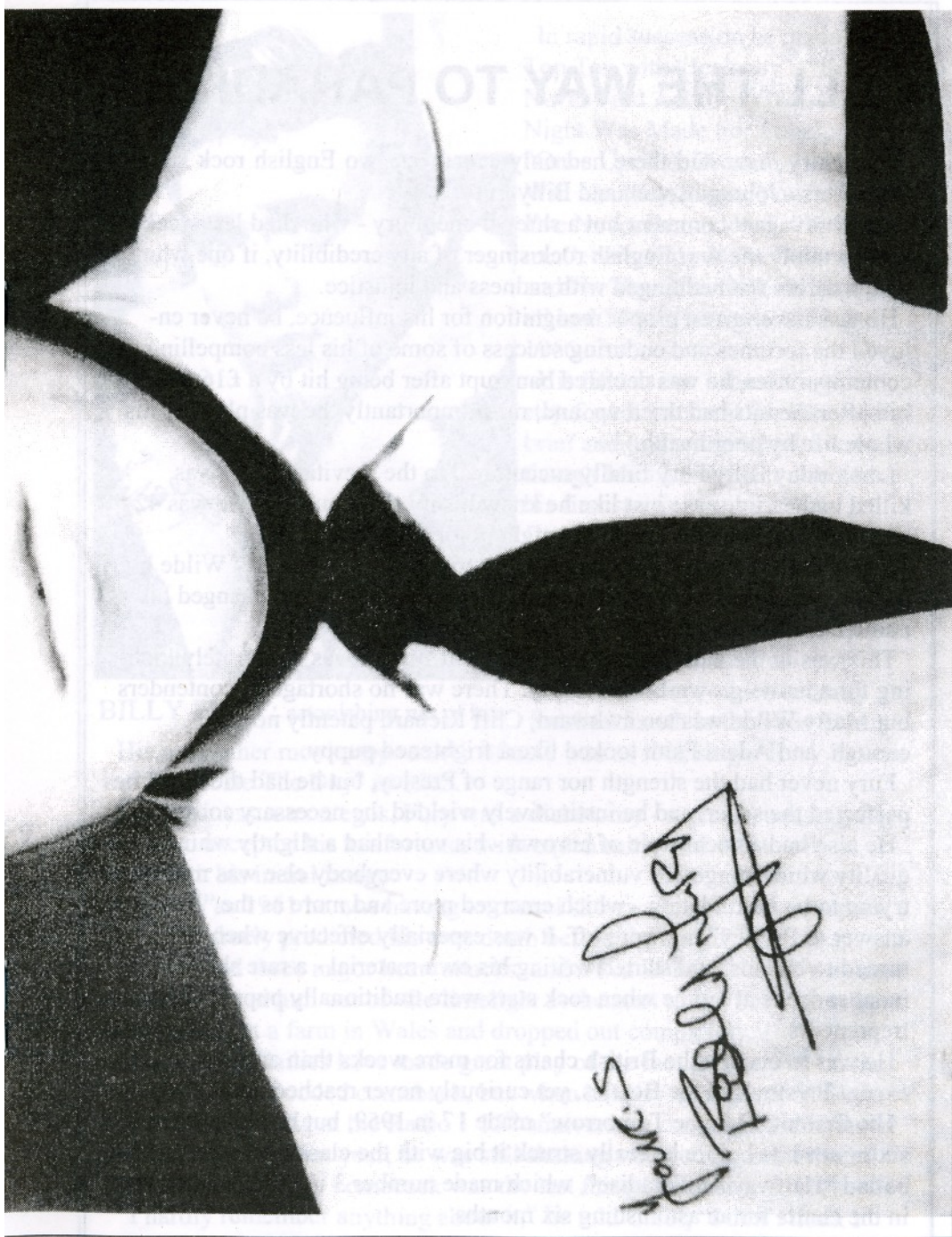
I think that the unveiling ceremony for the statue will take place before the Spring magazine is published, therefore if you do want further details about this, please send a stamped, addressed envelope (size 8 ½" x 4 ¼") to The Sound of Fury P O Box 60 Biggleswade Beds SG18 0SR as soon as possible please. Further details will then be sent to you as soon as they are known.

We have sufficient funds left in the bank account to pay for the costs of delivery and installation of the sculpture as well as the cost of a circular four-foot base plate, £1,997.50 (includes VAT). Tom Murphy thinks that the four-foot plate is adequate, but a five-foot base would be better, therefore the Billy Fury Bronze Fund is not closed, as we would like to raise the extra funds for the five-foot base. We also need funds for a plaque and a few other incidentals. Nor is it clear (at the time of going to press) whether The Sound of Fury will need to continue raising funds to pay for future cleaning, repairs and maintenance and insuring the statue. Hence our fund raising continues but as we have now nearly reached our goal as far as the statue is concerned, I would like to thank each and every one of you for supporting our fund raising efforts. Your support and generosity has been greatly appreciated.

Fan club member John Kavanagh did write to Liverpool City Council at the end of last summer asking for a donation from them for the statue. I did write a follow up letter to Liverpool City Council but I am delighted to say that we didn't need a donation from them because the faithful Fury's Followers managed to raise the funds themselves. Thank you all once again for your support.







ALL THE WAY TO PARADISE

Ian Dury once said there had only ever been two English rock 'n' roll singers - Johnny Rotten and Billy Fury.

An extravagant comment but a shrewd one. Fury - who died last week - was certainly the *first* English rock singer of any credibility, if one whose whole career seemed tinged with sadness and injustice.

He was never given proper recognition for his influence, he never enjoyed the fortunes and enduring success of some of his less compelling contemporaries, he was declared bankrupt after being hit by a £16,000 tax bill after the hits had dried up, and, most importantly, he was plagued his whole life by poor health.

Last Friday Billy Fury finally succumbed to the inevitable - he was killed by heart disease just like he knew he always would be. He was 42 and working on a new single the night before he died.

It was Larry Parnes who originally discovered him at a Marty Wilde gig, took him from his job working on Liverpool tug-boats, and changed his name from Ron Wycherley.

This was in the late Fifties, at a time when Britain was desperately looking for a home-grown Elvis Presley. There was no shortage of contenders but Marty Wilde was too awkward, Cliff Richard patently not evil enough, and Adam Faith looked like a frightened puppy.

Fury never had the strength nor range of Presley, but he had the quiff, he perfected the sneer, and he instinctively wielded the necessary conviction.

He also had a vocal style of his own - his voice had a slightly whiney quality which suggested vulnerability where everybody else was madly trying to be intimidating - which emerged more and more as the "Britain's answer to Presley" tag wore off. It was especially effective when he turned to ballads, and started writing his own material - a rare show of independence at a time when rock stars were traditionally puppets of entrepreneurs.

He was to occupy the British charts for more weeks than anybody else except Presley and the Beatles, yet curiously never reached number one.

His first hit, "Maybe Tomorrow" made 17 in 1959, but he had another six minor hits before he really struck it big with the classic moaning rock-ballad "Halfway To Paradise", which made number 3 in 1961, and stayed in the charts for an astonishing six months.



BILLY FURY: astonishing run of hits

In rapid succession he made the Top Ten with "Jealousy", "I'd Never Find Another You", "Last Night Was Made For Love", "Once Upon A Dream", "When Will You Say I Love You", "Like I've Never Been Gone", "In Summer", "It's Only Make Believe" and "In Thoughts Of You", and in all had 25 hits between 1959 and 1966.

His film career - the automatic step for rock stars at the time - was brief and undistinguished, even though Michael Winner directed his first starring movie, "Play It Cool".

His second film, "I Gotta Horse", was a biographical reflection of his well-documented love of animals and also featured his own race-horse, Anselmo, which actually finished fourth in the 1964 Derby.

His only other movie appearance of note was as rock singer Rory Storme in "That'll Be The Day" in 1973.

In a business run on egos, Fury was a dichotomy - a gentle, unassuming guy who accepted his misfortunes with equanimity, and was totally at odds with his initial image.

As early as 1961 he was having to cancel shows after various collapses, and often freely predicted his own death before the age of 30.

He suffered three major heart attacks, and when ill-health and changing fashions forced him out of the limelight at the start of the Seventies, he quietly bought a farm in Wales and dropped out completely.

The national dailies have made great play of the fact that he was on the verge of a full blooded comeback, but when MM's Carol Clerk spoke to him after he'd sung at the Radio 1 15th anniversary concert at Hammer-smith Odeon late last year, he was still shaking with terror, and inferred that a full-time stage comeback was the last thing he needed.

"I hardly remember anything about it," he told Carol, "I don't think I

could face going back to it....”

He did have a small hit last year with “Love Or Money”, but it’s doubtful if he could have ever made a successful comeback. Or even wanted it. Billy Fury was that sort of bloke. - COLIN IRWIN

Copyright - Melody Maker, February 5th 1983

Postscript by Chris Eley

This obituary was actually quite sympathetic and did reflect Billy’s status at the time, which is why it’s reproduced now, on the 20th Anniversary of this awful time. As someone who writes CD sleeve notes and articles I know only too well how easy it is to allow errors to creep in. Once in, they take some undoing!

However, other artists of his generation over and above the Beatles and Elvis, did spend more time on the charts than Billy (up to 1983). These include Roy Orbison, Everly Brothers, Cliff, Jim Reeves, Pat Boone, Lonnie Donegan, The Hollies, Rolling Stones, Tom Jones and Shirley Bassey (really both in a different musical category), and the Shadows. Only Elvis, Cliff, Pat Boone and Roy Orbison were really his contemporaries as such, in terms of solo artists, so his achievements are still considerable, myths to one side.

‘Maybe Tomorrow’ hit No. 18 (possibly 17 in some charts), and there were 28 hit singles not, 26, at the time of the obituary.

There were 26 hits between 1959 and 1966 - not 25! He actually played Stormy Tempest, not Rory Storm, in ‘That’ll Be the Day’ (but Tempest was based on Storm).

Heart disease did claim Billy but as he said on the Russell Harty Show in 1982 - he did not suffer from heart attacks. His symptoms were different. Obviously, it was a heart attack that finally claimed him. Also, he had a hit with ‘Devil or Angel’ in 1982, in addition to ‘Love or Money’.

Billy – halfway back

Billy Fury, the 60s' pop legend who once drove the girls wild with his Eddie Cochran looks and heart-melting love songs is back in the business that nearly killed him.

After eight years in the wilderness caring for wildlife on a remote farm in Wales, he has just embarked on a comeback tour - despite doctor's fears for his health.

He was forced to quit the rock scene because of a heart condition and has twice undergone open heart surgery to have new valves fitted. And during both operations he thought he would never pull through.

Today, at the age of 41, he is giving the pop business another try and says: "If I'm going to go, I'd rather go doing this than sitting around doing nothing."

Survivor

Even so, he's minimizing the chances of a recurrence of his old problem by taking, on medical advice, two weeks off after every two shows.

"How do I feel? Well, I'm a healthy wreck," says Billy. "But I'm a survivor."



He looks desperately gaunt and shuffles uneasily as we talk after his first night back on the road, at a club in Burton-on-Trent.

"I still need the works oiling a bit . . . but it will get better," he insists. "There are times when I really started to enjoy myself out there."

His audience had no doubts. Some waved banners declaring: "Welcome back, Billy" and they kindly overlooked a few fluffs in the show. They were still calling for him long after he'd taken his final bow.

Inevitably, his act includes hits as *Halfway To Paradise*, *I'd Never Find Another You*, *It's Only Make Believe* and *I Will*.

When he sang those songs in his early 60s heyday, he was earning £10,000 a year, which was a fortune at the time.

His big break had come after writing some songs for Marty Wilde.



Billy outside his barn—1982

Marty, already an established pop idol, introduced him to his own manager and soon Liverpool-born Billy was to be the latest singer to be signed up for the legendary Larry Parnes stable.

A string of hit records followed and Billy, real name Ron Wycherley, was mobbed by frenzied fans everywhere he went. But while he was flattered by the adulation, it also scared him.

"I was so shy I used to lock myself in the bathroom," he says.

Despite a liking for sports cars, he invested most of his earnings for the rainy days that lay ahead. And when he

finally quit the business he was able to buy a 100 acre farm in Wales, where he raised 300 sheep.

"I still have the farm and love being there," says Billy. "Unfortunately, most of the sheep have gone. My doctor advised me to give them up because the strain of tending them was getting too much for me.

"Now I have just 40 - and four horses."

The wildlife of the countryside, as opposed to the wild life of the rock business, is still his greatest joy and he talks enthusiastically of the birds that he cares for at his farm-cum-sanctuary.

"Caring for wildlife started off as a hobby but then it became a huge part of my life," he says.

His current project is to try to save Frodsham Marshes, at the mouth of the Mersey.

"It's vital that this area of outstanding beauty is retained. It's a beautiful place and it's the only clean part of the river that's left. It is so important for wildlife because . . ."

He breaks off in mid-sentence and says: "I get a bit carried away when I start talking about wildlife. And saving Frodsham is my number one ambition. It means more to me than show business.

Pressures

Even so, during the last few years he has grown to miss the music scene so much that he welcomed the chance to work with musicians again. And it's these musical friends who have tempted him back into the recording studios - and back on stage. His current single "Love or Money", put him back in the lower reaches of the charts.

"I want to combine my wildlife work with the music business," he says. "I have reached the stage in my life where I want it to be as full as possible.

"The pressures of the music business don't worry him and he's looking forward to the release of his next single, 'Devil or Angel', this Friday.

"I'm taking things very leisurely, so there's no real problem," says Billy. "This is a very exciting phase in my life and I'm enjoying it."

Neil Bonner

Source unknown

Postscript by Chris Eley

The Burton on Trent gig referred to was on Oct 1st 1982 at the Inde Coope Social Club. Billy was backed by the Mick Green Band and rocked and heavy on 'Unchain My Heart' and 'Johnny B Good'. It was not his first gig that year—he had done the Blue Boar site at Hucknall on July 17th, (but with other artists).

Farmer Fury is a pop star again

by Simon Kinnersley

BILLY FURY has to take two fistfuls of pills every day. On his doctor's orders. Without the drugs his life would be in danger.

Heart trouble forced Fury to quit the pop world at the end of the 60s, following two major operations after he had collapsed on stage. Surgeons battled for six hours to save his life.

So it was, by necessity rather than fulfilling the archetypal pop star dream, that he bought a 100-acre hill farm in the Brecon Beacons in Wales, and devoted himself to his 300 Suffolk breeding ewes.

But even as he looked after his flock, the illness that haunted his pop career was never far away. Earlier this year, he had to be rushed to London after collapsing on his farm.

'I have had to come to terms with the fact that I am a physical wreck,' he says with a wry smile. 'I try to live life as hard as I can, because I hate the idea of being an invalid. But now and then I break down like a clockwork toy, and I know that one day I won't recover.'

Glamour

'It's for this reason that I'm not going to have children, because I don't want them to be left without a father. My wife, Lisa, and I have four dogs, and they have to make up for it.'

But for all the doctor's warnings, as well as those of his heart, Billy Fury is back with his first chart record, *Love or Money*, since those successes in the 60s that included *Halfway to Paradise*, *Jealousy*, *I'll Never Find Another You*, and *Like I've Never Been Gone*.

So, for the moment, Fury has left the tranquility of his farm to return to his magnificent house in St John's Wood, with its thick piled carpets, lavishly furnished rooms and barred windows.

'I never missed the glamour or the bright lights, it was the music I longed for. In the long winter evenings, when I couldn't work with the sheep, I would sit down with my guitar. I had all these musical ideas and no-one to discuss them with.'

Although he has been farming for 12 years, Fury now 41, still looks the pop star, with his streaked hair, skin-tight trousers and Californian-type sun tan.

Caring

But there is little doubt that Fury, born and brought up in Liverpool and a forerunner to the Merseysound of The Beatles, Gerry & The Pacemakers and Billy J. Kramer, has a strong affinity with the countryside and its animals.

‘When I was six, I suffered from rheumatic fever. I missed a lot of school because I was in and out of hospital. As a result I got very behind and became an outsider, so I used to skip school and go out into the country to watch the wild life.’

It was a deep interest that continued to develop throughout the Sixties when he performed to sell-out audiences of screaming girls in his black leather jacket and body-hugging trousers.

After moving to Wales, he began caring for injured animals such as fox and badger cubs, swans, hawks, kestrels and owls that were passed on to him by the RSPCA for recuperation.

Sadly, the doctors have ordered him to cut down on that as well as the size of his flock if he is not to suffer another attack, which might prove fatal.

‘The trouble is,’ he says, ‘I push myself. I live hard, I smoke and drink, I want to farm and be involved in music. If I can’t do these things, then what’s the point in being alive?’

‘It’s a matter of being able to handle the pressure. I’d love to go on stage



because I love appearing in front of an audience, but I know it's going to take too much out of me, and physically I know I can't handle it.'

Youth

Although flattered, Fury is rather surprised by his reappearance in the charts. 'Let's face it, it's ridiculous my being back at my age. I was one of the people who forced the young issue in the Sixties, and since then, the charts have always been associated with youth.'

'But to be honest, I don't care whether the single is a hit or not. I'm far more committed to farming than to singing. My sheep and horses are very important to me.'

Copyright Daily Mail, Tuesday September 21 1982.



Billy on stage in the early 70's



Billy with the New Tornadoes—1975

CHATTIN' WITH BILLY . . .

I sat back slightly more in the front seat of the green Jaguar as Billy Fury opened her up over 100 miles an hour and casually passed a red sports car with about two inches to spare. "I like driving" he said slowly. This had become obvious ever since we had reached the beginning of the M1. We hadn't done less than eighty miles an hour since we'd joined it! Billy saw the large restaurant on the left hand side, flicked the car over with a quick twist of one hand and we roared into the courtyard. Ten minutes later, over hot dogs and coffee, Billy confessed that when he gets tired of listening to records, and his schedule allows him time off, then this is where one can usually find him.

"Sometimes I prefer to drive in the dark" he grinned. "Actually it's a lot better driving on this road at night. I like being alone a lot, and this gives me about the only chance to be alone" as he pointed to the still-smoking Jag outside. "I guess" he added seriously, "some people would say it's all publicity or something like that when I say I'm on the road on my own all the time, and I like to be away from everyone, but it's true man!

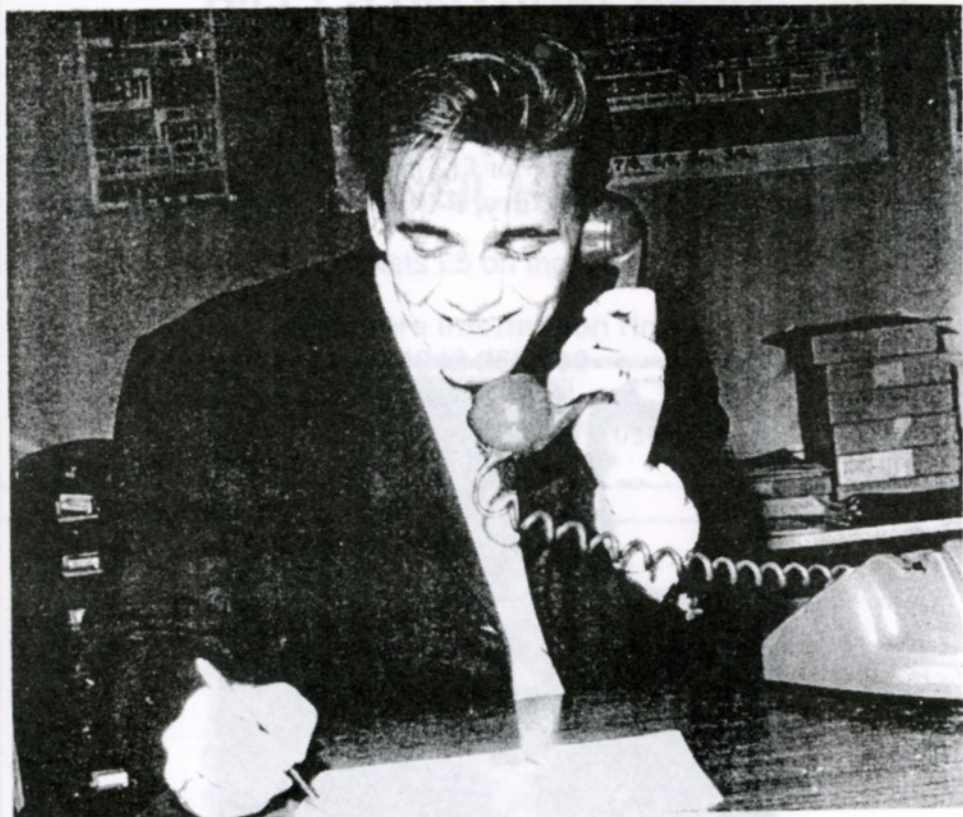
"When I get sick of records, TV, radio, as every artiste does sometimes, especially when he's tired, then I do one of two things if I have the time. I either go back home to Liverpool to see my family, or else I come out driving. No one bothers me when I'm driving. I can just put the radio on, bring a portable record-player and some sandwiches and coffee, and I'm alright for five or six hours." I asked him about girls. "Do you ever bring any with you on these drives Billy?" He shook his head. "No, they're part of another sort of life. Sometimes I feel I want to, but then you get over that.

"It's much better being on your own. You just think of all the things that you once used to do and what you do now. Would I change my life? What could I change my life to? I mean I've been in show biz nearly all the time. I've worked on the docks, and things like that but I certainly don't want to do that all over again. Anyway, I like the life, except when I'm getting near the end of a long tour." He grinned and said, "It's funny, y'know. Everyone thinks that at the end of a big tour all the artistes go out and have a big party, but nine out of ten do one thing. Head straight for plenty of sleep." He looked at his watch, and added, "I don't think I'm

gonna get much today. Not unless we do over a ton on the way back."

Watching the happy gleam in his eye as he climbed into the driving seat of the big Jag I had no doubt that we'd be doing "over a ton." And it's not only "In Summer" that he does it !!

POP Weekly 7/9/63



CHATTIN' WITH BILLY . . .

20TH ANNIVERSARY PLAQUE

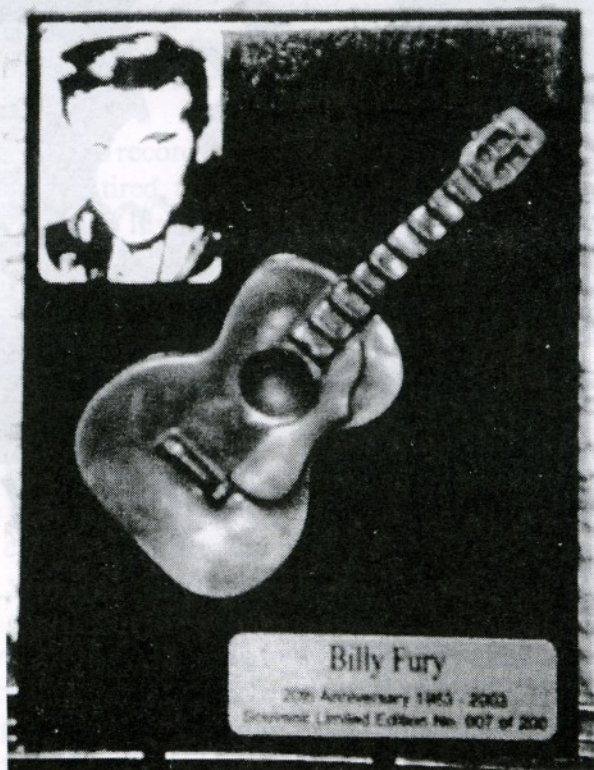
(Net Profit will go to the Bronze Fund)

A special commemorative plaque has been produced for this year, the 20th anniversary of Billy's untimely death.

The plaque is a limited edition and only available on a first-come, first-served basis for 2003 only. It consists of a bronze guitar mounted on an oak base with a brass nameplate stating edition number and a brass picture of Billy.

It measures 8" x 6" and comes with brass fixings to mount on your wall. It is available by sending a cheque for £12 made out to :-

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wants two videos of Billy doing "Unforgettable".

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IN THOUGHTS OF YOU

Our special thoughts in the New Year to:

Hal Carter who recently underwent surgery.

Wendy Lloyd who lost her husband last year.

Maggie Clarke who's husband Les is seriously ill.

Frank and Mig Bull who have on-going health problems.

Arif Mehmet who's recovering from surgery.

Our Clare, who has very good days, bad days and very bad days with her health.

"Lolly" Whittaker who has on-going health problems.

Any everyone else out there who has had particular troubles to deal with.

We wish you health and happiness in 2003.





Billy's final resting place

