

# Those 1970 blues : disaster

By STEVEN DAVEY

1970 has been a disasterous year for music. Amidst hype and back-stabbing, rock and roll has hit rock bottom. Hopefully, the only way it's heading is back up. Hopefully.

1970 will be remembered as the year of the solo album. The Beatles made it official and split into two sections: McCartney vs. the others. Paul, after conveniently rumoured to be dead, unveiled his long awaited album and was greeted with mass yawns. We all tried to convince ourselves it was good, but it wasn't. At its best it sounded like a poor Beatles' copy. Ringo's two attempts I'm sure were sincere, but they too failed, first as a take-off on Andy Williams then Hank Snow.

George Harrison's album is a homogenized Eric Clapton playing the Ronettes. However, it is the best of the Beatle solo recordings so far. Wisely, John Lennon is still working on his, although he appears to have fallen under the guidance of Phil "Da Do Ron Ron" Spector (remember "Let It Be"? Oh no...).

Woodstock got out of hand. A simple (?) music festival was turned into a record company publicist's dream. Woodstock, the movie, charged \$4 admission in Toronto and \$6 in New York. Woodstock, the album, listed at \$16. The very mention of the word "Woodstock" brought cries of "right-on" and "outasite". And who can ever forget the aroma of the Uptown theatre, or Max Yasgur making a feeble peace sign? Dope and long hair were "in". Yessir!

Other memorable failures include Blood, Sweat and Tears, Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young (ad man-rock), poor Bob Dylan, Chicago (housewife-rock), John Sebastian (he should have stayed with the Spoonful), Melanie (fifteen year old girl-rock), Grand

Funk Railroad (little boy and mod teenager-rock), country-rock (with the notable exception of Poco and the notable failure of the Grateful Dead), and countless others. I have, no doubt, listed your entire record collection. See what I mean?

The positive events of the year were few and far between.

The Who, after six years, finally received the audience they have long deserved. The Byrds, at last, have relased an album ("Untitled") equal to their talent. Traffic re-grouped and came up better than ever with the addition of ex-Blind Faith member Rick Grech. Thunderclap Newman gave us "Hollywood Dream" and Free made it for what they were -- an unpretentious blues group.

And believe it or not, Anne Murray, late of Frank's Bandstand (Whatever happened to Frank?) became a star! "Snowbird was dreadful, but listen to her new album: Anne Murray and the Moog of John Mills-Cockle? Bruce Cockburn and James Taylor tunes? And rocking along on guitar is the leader of Frank's house band, Brian Ahern! Next thing you know the Girlfriends (Diane, Stephanie, and Rhonda) will get back together and Dave Mickey will get a reprieve from CHUM!

All we need for things to right themselves will be for Fleetwood Mac, Elton John, the Soft Machine, the Beach Boys (yes, the Beach Boys!), and Emmerson, Lake, and Palmer to make it. We might make it yet.

I have this strange feeling that it is really December 1963 and that on Ed Sullivan's February 7 show I will see Keith Emmerson ripping out the innards of a Moog, while 13 year old girls scream between acts and Ed tries to keep the crowd under control. . .



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