

# **ELECTRIC RENTBOOK**

**Kirsty MacColl Homage**

**Issue 3 - July 2000**



**FREE - THIRD ISSUE**



**H**ello again MacColl maniacs of the British Isles and the world! Welcome to Issue Three of Electric Rentbook, the fanzine dedicated to all things Kirstyified! Well, what can we say - two tours within the space of three months, an album released inbetween, a sudden glut of television and radio appearances and the launch of this very fanzine. T'is truly a grand time to be a Kirsty MacColl fan (was there ever a bad time?). My thanks to everybody that took the time to write in with their views on the fanzine, not to mention all those who returned the slip wanting to go on the mailing list, and to everybody that entered the Tropical Brainstorm signed CD competition which ran in Issue Two, the winner of which shall be notified by post and announced in the next issue. Hopefully we will be able to bring you further competitions in future issues with more Kirsty goodies up for grabs, so if you didn't win this time - don't despair and better luck next time!

Hope that you enjoy the current issue and see you back here again within the next six weeks - ***don't you dare be late!***

# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THEN...

## Steve Wright's Roundtable reviews the new single...

**R**adio Two, once again, had the first play of the new single, *England 2 Columbia 0*, when it was featured on Steve Wright's programme on Friday 5th May. The single, with the line "I always pick a bastard who would have me for his dinner" having the word bastard being replaced by the word Scumbag, was played on his Roundtable part of the show. This was a special 'radio friendly' version, with the new lyric being recorded but the official release will retain the original lyric, which means we could have a new Kirsty collectable upon us!

The guests on the show were, one time Dr Who actor, Colin Baker and ex-New Avenger Gareth Hunt. Unfortunately the single didn't go down too well with Mr Wright, nor his guest reviewers.

Colin Baker called it a 'novelty number' and seemed to miss the point completely, awarding it a 5/10.

Gareth Hunt thought it started well but it got too repetitive, he also gave it 5/10.

Steve Wright had to air his opinion and said he thought it wasn't very good, sounding too much like the last release and lyrically Kirsty had tried too hard, making it sound too contrived. Not a hit then?

Credit must go to Radio Two, despite the record not getting a sparkling review on Roundtable, for giving the single an airing a full month before its release and for including it on their playlist. Any of you out there still tuning into Radio One, the station not even Mark and Lard can save from the state of their playlist, aren't you fed up of the same dull tunes, day-in day-out? Re-tune to Radio Two, you might be pleasantly surprised.

## Treachery on free CD.....

**T**he June issue of *Uncut* magazine had amongst the tracks of its cover mounted

free CD, *Treachery* from the Tropical Brainstorm album. This particular issue was even more aluring with a 19-page feature on the Sex Pistols, tied in with the release of the new *The Filth & The Fury* movie, and the inclusion of tracks by XTC, The Zombies and Idlewild also included on the cover mounted CD.

## Kirsty MacColl - appearing on a television screen near you...

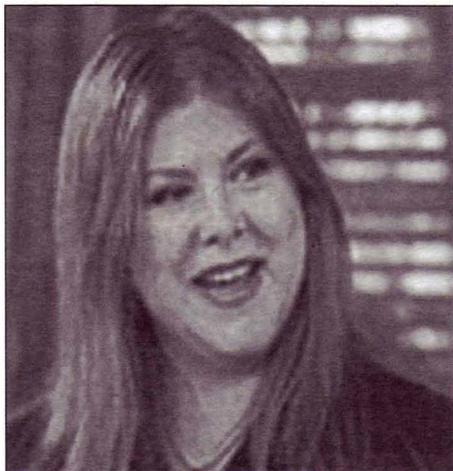


**D**id you all tune in to BBC 2 on Saturday the 15th of April for the new series of *Later* with Jools Holland?

For those of you who didn't you missed Kirsty's first television appearance for several years, not including the archive clips shown on TOTP 2, who also showed the promo video for *In These Shoes* on the programme broadcast on Wednesday 12th April and repeated on the 15th.

The *Later* series was celebrating it's 100th show, first being broadcast in 1992, and on the show along with Kirsty and her band were Paul Weller, Moloko and Idlewild. Kirsty performed two songs; *In These Shoes?* and *England 2 Columbia 0* and she also featured in a short interview with Jools Holland, you know the kind of thing, sat at Jools' piano. They showed an old clip from the 900th

TOTP when Kirsty was on performing *Chipshop* and her reaction to the showing of this archive clip was to jokingly call Jools a bastard and confess that that was back in the days before her sex change was completed and she still dressed in drag!



On Tuesday 25th April she was a guest on **Open House with Gloria Hunniford**, screened on Channel 5 (so nobody saw it!) Despite the shows title Angela Rippon was the shows host, stepping in for an ill Gloria. Kirsty performed *England 2 Columbia 0*.

Saturday 6th May and Kirsty is a guest panelist on BBC 1's **A Question of Pop** show. Resident team captain Noddy Holder was joined by Kirsty and Lyndsey from B\*Witched and the other captain Suggs was joined by Queen drummer Roger Taylor and Kelle Bryan from Eternal.

Kirsty had a stinker of a "pictureboard" question with a photograph of a pair of feet which it turned out belonged to Cyndi Lauper when they looked more likely to belong to a chicken! Suggs' team looked to be running away with the game when a late burst from Noddy's team saw nothing between the two teams at the final "on the buzzer" round - but, alas, Suggs took the game, 29 points against 22 points.

Lacking the humour of "*Never Mind The Buzzcocks*", nonetheless, "*A Question Of Pop*" makes quite enjoyable Saturday tea-time viewing - an improvement on the 400th re-

runs of *Dad's Army* anyway (Gosh, high praise indeed).



Over the Spring Bank Holiday the BBC ran **Music Live** - a marathon of live music on BBC television and radio, most of which, its fair to say, was crap. Kirsty featured on both BBC 2 and Radio 2.

For the insomniacs among us she joined Phill Jupitus live at 1.00 a.m. on BBC2 with a slimmed down version of her band, who were referred to as "All You Can Eat", they performed *England 2 Columbia 0*.

In the evening on Radio 2's Johnnie Walker show, broadcasting live from HMS Belfast at London's St. Katherine's dock, Kirsty performed acoustic versions of *Nao Esperando*, *England 2 Columbia 0* and *My Affair*, accompanied by Pete Glenister and James Knight.

BBC1 showed a miserly 40 second clip of Kirsty's performance at the world famous Abbey Road studios but BBC Choice fared better later showing two complete songs - *England 2 Columbia 0* and *Celestine*.

### **Ian Dury tribute concert**

**K**irsty appeared as one of the guest vocalists with the Blockheads as part of a tribute concert for the late Ian Dury at Brixton Academy on 16th June. Others featured included Robbie Williams (*am I the only person in the country who can't stand this bloke?*), Madness and Joe Strummer.

### **On top of all this, there's been a tour...**

**Y**es indeed, we have truly been spoilt this year with a second tour in the space of three months with dates played at Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Manchester and London during the middle of May.

# GIG REVIEW

## MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - 16/5/2000

It was 3 months, almost to the day, since Kirsty last played the Manchester University (reviewed in *Issue One of Electric Rentbook*) and it was barely 48-hours since I last saw her at Sheffield Leadmill, all this and until last February it had been four years and 8 months since I last saw her at the Heineken Festival in Leeds. The question now was to be - "**Can you get too much of a good thing?**", read on my friends and discover the answer.

The bar at the Manc Uni seems to have a knack of alluring me away from the support slot, perhaps it's the Grolsch at barely over a quid a pint - anyways needless to say I missed the support band, but no worries because I'd caught them at Sheffield and, although I can't remember their name, I recall that for a duo they made an amazing amount of noise and like Def Leppard they had a one handed drum, whose technique of hitting the snare drum was something to behold. I didn't see them tonight but I certainly heard them, as I handed out copies of the fanzine at the top of the stairs. A quick word on this, in Sheffield I couldn't hand them out fast enough but tonight it was like I was handing out dollops of dog poo and several people just didn't want to know, even the word **free** didn't entice many of them. Perhaps my Yorkshire accent put them off, I don't know.

Now, for any of you looking for an actual review of Kirsty's gig - here it comes (*at last, I hear you cry!*)

The bulk of the set was the same as when she played here back in February, but this time the songs were familiar to the audience following the release of the album and the reaction was better this time around (not that the reaction was bad last time, but you know what I mean).

Opening with *Us Amazonians* which quickly led into *Nao Esperando* the audience were now beginning to sway and even dance a little which proved the point that many of them



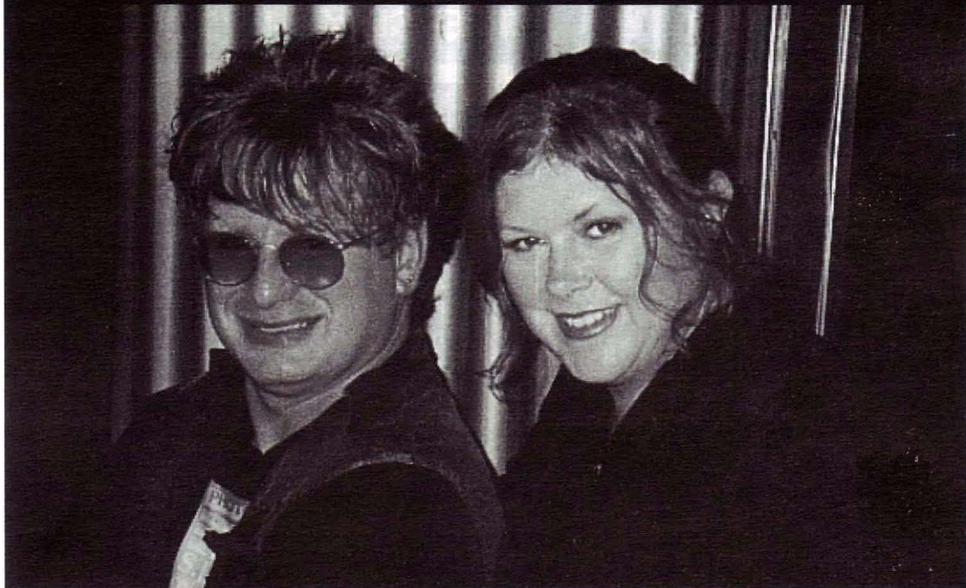
were now familiar with the new material. With Kirsty's promise that they were going to make sure Manchester turned tropical tonight (quite a feat, though to be fair it was boiling inside the venue), it was into *Mambo De La Luna* and then *Here Comes That Man Again*.

The critics have been full of praise for *Tropical Brainstorm*, many being so bold as to say that it's Kirsty's best album ever, and the way the songs are performed tonight alongside the odd oldie; *Freeworld*, *Days*, *Don't Come The Cowboy With Me Sonny Jim*, it's easy to agree with that kind of statement.

Kirsty's evil alter ego *Celestine* makes an appearance and *In These Shoes* gets possibly the biggest cheer of the night. We are then transported "way back in time", during the last world cup where "strange things were afoot" with the sorry tale of *England 2 Columbia 0*.

The whole of *Tropical Brainstorm* is performed tonight, with the exception of *Designer Life* and *Alegria*, and after a brilliant set Kirsty advises that if we'd enjoyed it tonight to go and buy the album. I doubt very much that there'd been many there that hadn't already done just that - if you're one of the exceptions go out and buy it now. Oh, and in answer to the question asked earlier, on tonight's evidence - **You can't get too much of a good thing!** I'm already looking forward to the next time.

## Interview with The Electric Landlady (Part 3)



*I caught up with Kirsty during her May tour and talked to her before her gig at Sheffield Leadmill on the 14th - Here we are sharing a laugh about Noddy Holder's competitive streak!*

**S**o Kirsty, here we are in Sheffield on the second night of the current tour, how did it go in Wolverhampton last night?

It went great, I think it was the first show that we've done since the albums actually been out, so there were already a lot of people there who'd got into all the new stuff and knew all the songs, so it was good fun.

**I bet you're 'gutted' about missing the Eurovision Song Contest (which took place the night of the Wolverhampton gig)?**

Well, you've got to suffer for your art. I'd heard very bad reports about the UK entry.

**Do you find that audiences differ in their reaction both internationally and nationally?**

I don't know really, I think that the people that come to see me, generally, are really into the songs. They're not coming because it's some sort of fashion statement, they're coming because they really like the songs so

the reactions usually much of a muchness. Last night we got like a huge cheer for *Amazonians* and another for *Nao Esperando* and in previous shows we'd been playing them to people and the album wasn't out so they were a bit "oh" - they liked them but they were hearing them for the first time, but once they'd heard them on the record there was a much more excited reaction.

**Recently you were a guest on "A Question of Pop" on BBC 1, how did you enjoy that experience?**

It was very, very dull (*laughs*). I thought it'd be more light hearted, I didn't expect Noddy Holder to be so terribly serious about winning. I thought it was a joke really. Noddy really was serious about trying to win and I thought it was just supposed to be a laugh, you know? So, obviously I had that wrong.

**It was well documented in the early days that you suffered terribly from stage-fright. Do you still suffer from nerves before a**

### **performance?**

Well I still do get really nervous before a show but I usually enjoy it once I'm on now, whereas before I used to be nervous before and during and after, I never reached a point where I enjoyed it. But I think the more I do I think the better I feel about it and they say the more you do the better you get.

### **What does Mambo De La Luna mean, I presume it means something about the moon?**

Yeah, it means Mambo from the moon.

### **What's a Mambo?**

It's a dance. (*At this point your interviewer felt incredibly foolish and apologised for his ignorance*). That's alright, it's a sort of Cuban dance.

### **On the video for Mambo De La Luna, I thought it was amusing that you went all that way and there was this guy with a Robert Smith T-shirt on . . . .**

Yeah (*laughs*). . . .

### **Are The Cure quite big over in Cuba?**

No, they're not big over there. Everybody wears t-shirts that have been given to them by tourists. Clothes are rationed in Cuba so all the forward thinking tourists take clothes with them to give away as they leave.

### **The next single, England 2 Columbia 0, do you have a bit of a secret passion for football then?**

No, I've got no secret passion for football. It was just that that event happened to take place during the World Cup.

### **So, it's nothing to do with the football?**

Well, I mean it is, I went out with somebody who wanted to watch the game in a pub. So that was going on while all this other stuff was going on.

### **So I've no chance of talking you into becoming a season ticket holder at Leeds United then?**

Absolutely no (*laughs*).

### **In issue two of Electric Rentbook I asked you about how close you came to giving up the music business altogether and you mentioned something about boybands, could you elaborate on this?**

It's a bit frustrating for most real musicians when 99% of the media is devoted to people who have nothing to do with making their own records really, do you know what I mean? There's an awful lot of television time given over to bands, so called bands, who don't actually play anything - very few of them even sing, and it's all about the haircut and the clothes and the dance routine and that's a shame because it means the standard is lower generally. People expect less, you know, there was a thing in Hyde Park, what was it called? Party in the Park or something, I think that last time it was on there was Geri Halliwell and all these people doing it and you know they were all miming except Ricky Martin, which is kinda bizarre, people think they're going to see a live show and they're just going to see a dance routine, I think it's shocking, I don't think people should be allowed to mime at live events.

### **There's people who pay like £30 to see a DJ, which I think is quite ridiculous....**

Well, that's fair enough if you're really into that sort of music. I mean I'd pay £30 to go and see a band I like and I have done, I've paid more than that. But if there's like an eight piece band that comes over from, say, Brazil - it's not cheap for them to do it, they're not making a profit, even if you're paying £30 for a ticket and there's a thousand of you it's not going to, you know. The thing about touring is it's really expensive and that's why we're not doing more dates on this tour. It costs us about three grand to do every gig. You're doing it because people who like your music want to see it live and it's great to do it and it's fantastic to play with this band particularly, but it's costing us a fortune and unless the record sales match it, then you can't continue to do it, which is a shame.

**You sing about the internet on *Here Comes That Man Again*, is new technology something you embrace?**

Yeah, I really like my computer. I spend a lot of time messing on my computer, playing games on it mostly I have to admit.

**So you do a bit of 'surfing' then?**

A bit of 'surfing' yeah but mostly I like playing Backgammon (*laughs*). It's a good game.

**Celestine, does she really exist?**

No, she's a wicked alter ego figure, an evil unborn twin.

**Jools Holland's 'Later' programme, which you recently appeared on, are all the performances recorded live in one take - What you see, is what you get?**

Well, yeah, you don't re-do it unless there's been a problem or unless something's broken. Paul Weller had a lot of problems, I think it was on his second number, it was like everytime he started it he broke a string and he didn't have a spare guitar, so there'd be like a ten minute wait while they'd re-string his guitar and he'd start again and it'd break again and that happened about five times, so obviously that's edited out but, no, you do get the real performance.

It's great, it's a classy show, it's the only show on TV where you have a real eclectic mixture of musicians playing live. It's the only programme where you get bands playing live, you probably get them playing live on *TFI* as well but that's only like two songs on the whole programme. So *Later* is **the** show really.

**The band that you're touring with at the moment, did they all play on the record?**

Yeah, except for Michelle, who I didn't know when we were making the record - otherwise she would have played on it! Pete and Dave co-produced the record with me and James plays sax on *Head* on the album and he played on *Golden Heart* (extra track on the Mambo single) as well, he played the tenor and my youngest son played the alto on that track. Chucho played the bass on a couple of tracks

on the album. Joe played trombone on *Celestine* and Ben played trumpet on *Shoes*. So yeah, all except Michelle.

**Talking about extra tracks on the CD singles, the extra track on the *Shoes* single, a live recording of *My Affair*, I thought that was really good. Have you not thought about releasing a live album?**

The only thing that annoys me about that track is that I had really bad tonsillitis when I did those Jazz Café dates. It's typical, you haven't done gigs for ages and you get these two booked up and all of a sudden you get tonsillitis and it's so disappointing because, to me when I hear it, it's like I'm singing with a mouthful of mashed potatoes because I remember my tonsils were out here, taking up my whole throat and it sounds like I've got something in my mouth, well I did - these huge tonsils. But I haven't thought about doing a live album really - there wouldn't be any point until I get better sales on the recorded albums.

**Of all the people that you've guested with on their records, and I know this is a difficult question because there's been so many, who was your favourite to work with?**

Oh dear, well I've got two favourites really and they both lead on to lots of other things. One was **The Smiths**, I was a mega fan of The Smiths, I just love The Smiths I just think they were *fantastic* and Morrissey is a lyrical hero and Johnny is a great guitarist. It was good, from like getting to know them from doing that, I worked with them both quite a lot after that - even when The Smiths split up, I went on to write with Johnny and sing with Mosser - so that was good and working with **Talking Heads** I enjoyed because they were a laugh and I really liked them as people and I went on to do stuff on **David Byrne's** solo album, I did a lot of backing vocals on that presumably because he liked the stuff that I did on the Talking Heads stuff and also I worked with Chris and Tina on some **Tom Tom Club** stuff, I really like Chris and Tina they're really good fun, so that was nice.

**Do you see anything of Shane MacGowan these days?**

No, I haven't seen him for 18 months, or is it 2 1/2 years - I can't remember.

**It's been mentioned that you like gardening, as one of your pastimes.....**

I do like gardening, yeah....

**What else do you enjoy doing when your not working?**

Well, I listen to music all the time at home but gardening is my main thing apart from music really..... Its what I *get off on!* I like planting things and watching them grow, its very exciting.

**Your sons, Jamie and Louis, do they show signs of following in your footsteps?**

I don't think so, I don't know to be honest. They both have nice singing voices, Jamie sings quite a lot and he sounds pretty good to me, he plays guitar and Louis sax but I've no idea if they want to do anything like that professionally, they're more interested in computers really....

**It wouldn't be a case of "oh, no don't do it lads, I don't recommend it"?**

No, I just want them to do whatever makes them happy, you know.

**You've now embarked on two British tours this year, a rare treat. Perhaps I'm being a little greedy and was wondering whether they may be more dates, other than the Fleadh and the Music Live shows?**

I don't know, I would hope that we would do some more gigs in the Autumn. As I pointed out it's really expensive touring with a big band but I don't really want to go out and do a load of shows as a five-piece without the brass because that would be really sad after we've been out all together. So, I don't know really - a lot will depend on how well the record does. If the record does well the record company are more likely to say "okay, we'll give you some tour support". If it doesn't really do much then they're gonna say "well, lets not spend anymore money". So hopefully come the Autumn we'll be playing a town near you again.

**With that Kirsty was called to the soundcheck and so I offered my thanks and looked forward to the show that night.**

## Freeworld - The Website

Anybody with access to the Internet really should visit the wonderful Kirsty MacColl pages at the **Freeworld** website at **[www.freeworld.demon.co.uk](http://www.freeworld.demon.co.uk)**

Run by Alan Officer, the site is regularly updated with up-to-the-minute news pages telling of up and coming Kirsty TV appearances, tour dates, record releases and the like.

You can view several photographs of the songstress, as well as stills from almost all of her promo videos and appearances on the *French & Saunders* show from the early nineties.

There are listings of all Kirsty's releases, so if you feel that there's a single missing from your collection you can check out the detailed discography section - there are also pages listing Kirsty's guest appearances with other artists (of which there are many!), and rare songs and B-sides with short reviews of each song.

If you feel the urge to send Kirsty an E-mail, there is a site where you can leave your message and if you don't want other users to read it you can even keep it private for Kirsty's attention only.

All-in-all, *Freeworld* is an excellent website and I strongly advise you to visit it now, just make sure you come back to the pages of **Electric Rentbook!**

# Electric Tenants have there say...

**E**lectric Rentbook is now on its third issue and it's with great delight that I have been receiving your comments about the fanzine. The feedback as been really tremendous and I felt it appropriate to include some of your comments within these pages. It really is great to know that in the five years that Kirsty has been out of the 'public eye' there's still so many people, like myself, who are huge fans.

## AN APPEAL

**Wayne Connolly of Leeds** wishes to ask if anyone has a copy of Kirsty's gig at the Duchess in Leeds, back in February, on tape.

He knows it was taped on the mixing desk but the guy gave the tape to some girl. So if you can help, drop us a line here at Electric Rentbook.

**Please note:** I will not usually publish an appeal for bootlegs but in this case I make an exception because I know Kirsty knows Wayne very well and the tape will not suddenly appear on the stalls at your local Record Fair.

### **Michelle Baxter of Derby wrote:**

*"I saw your fanzine mentioned on Alan Officer's 'Freeworld' site, and was about to send for an issue. In the meantime, a copy was thrust upon me at Wulfrun Hall - an excellent 'zine it is too. So please add me to your mailing list..... I love the interview page."*

### **Pat Brooks of Cardiff wrote:**

*"Thanks for sending me the two copies of Electric Rentbook. I think it's excellent, except it would be nice if it were longer! (That's not a complaint!) It's very informative and well set out."*

### **Lee Noble of Carlisle wrote:**

*"Please could you include me on the Electric Rentbook mailing list? I was very impressed with the first two issues and would like to start collecting it."*

*Kirsty's new album is superb and every track could be a hit single."*

### **Angela Green of Carson, California, USA wrote:**

*"I really loved your first issue. I've practically got it memorised, I've read it so much."*

### **Mic Shaw of Derby wrote:**

*"Many thanks for the copy of Electric Rentbook issue two, another excellent read and more congratulations go out from me to you, all that plus it's free, how the hell do you manage that?"*

### **Karen Holden of Liverpool, wrote:**

*"Was handed issue 2 at Kirsty's gig in Manchester. Think it's fab, and would be grateful to be added to the mailing list for future copies (can't wait)!."*

Okay, printing these letters is a little self congratulating..... but if you want to slag the 'zine off, I'll gladly print them too.

I don't, however, want to make this just a letters page. Send me your poems, for sale or wanted requests, penpal requests, etc to the usual address.

# Acknowledgements

*I'd like to extend a great big thank you to the following good people:*

**Kirsty MacColl** without whom this fanzine would most definitely not be possible. **Lisa-Jane Musselbrook** at Major Minor Management, for her continued support and help beyond the call of duty. **Alan Officer** at the Freeworld Website for featuring this 'zine on the net. **Alan Morris** for being a 'top geezer' on the May tour. **David Hyde** for the loan of his Apple Mac while mine was on the blink. **Dixon Target** for the cheap printing. **Teletext** on Channel 4 for the review of Issue One and mentioning to the country that Issue Two was out. **Record Collector** magazine for the review. The three most important people in my life; **Catherine Allton** and **Brandon** and **Sofi-Maria Scaife** for continuing to put up with my Kirsty MacColl and Stranglers obsessions. And finally **You** for your impeccable musical taste.

***Issue Four of Electric Rentbook will be out in August***



Well there we have it - another issue of Electric Rentbook.

Yet another twelve pages of lovingly prepared Kirsty MacColl homage.

Please send me your views and any contributions you may wish to send for future issues.

*Send me your details if you wish to go on the Electric Rentbook mailing list.*

Name: .....

Address: .....

Please send all correspondence to:

*Electric Rentbook, 8 Ashville Terrace, Cross Hills, Keighley, BD20 7LQ.*

## The recent tour - May 2000



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