



CHAPTER 6

Friends Re-united

Late 2005 I'd started getting in contact with Sean again (from Reg Varney Trio), who was now located in Bath (West England). He started coming to London to stay with us and during that time we collaborated on three songs for "When I Grow Up I Wanna Be a Space Cadet" (Interferon, Stop! and Personal Hygiene). He also added some extra guitar to "Spit Me Out" towards the end of sessions. It was great to hear him play guitar again, he was quite a legend back in the day, and he enjoyed getting involved in making music again. He hadn't really done much since we split up. Tomoko was amazed by his talent and soon became a big Reg Varney Trio fan. Sean also taught her a lot about guitar playing and she used to practice for hours a day doing what Sean had taught her.

We discovered around this period that there was a website that celebrated the Kent scene that Reg was part of, called "Medway Powerhouse". It was run by a guy he used to have something to do with The Charlatans. The history of the Medway Delta scene and its influence is a separate story of its own. Anyway, I uploaded a Reg tune onto the site and to this day I believe it is still the sites top download.



We were all back in contact with each other and there was some renewed interest in our old band, so we took up an offer to get back together for a one off gig somewhere. Marcus had recently got back into drumming again and was playing in a band called The Shagmunroes in Kent. Serious money was offered for our reunion, but we decided to do it for nothing just for the fun of it and started to rehearse in the Camden Arts Factory sometime in September 2006. From first rehearsal we were pretty tight (there's some video footage on youtube as proof of that) and we were all really enjoying the band thing again, looking forward to playing live once more after a too long absence. We even rehearsed a Clinker tune for the gig ("What Yr Thinking" from "The Truth About Nuts").

After a while though, I realised the reunion was slowing down the progress of Clinker. I now wanted to get a band together and do Clinker. I wanted Sean and Marcus to still be in the band, along with Joe and Tomoko. They agreed to do it.

The logistics of it wasn't ideal with Sean and Marcus living so far way,



but we went for it and started Clinker rehearsals at the beginning of 2007. My original set list consisted of mainly tracks from “When I Grow Up I Wanna Be a Space Cadet”, which by this point was complete, but it was proving very tricky and progress was slow due to the amount of layers we’d put on the recorded versions.

After three rehearsals, Sean sadly dropped out. It was all proving too much for him travelling up from Bath and he felt his creativity was being stifled having to stick pretty much to what was recorded on the studio versions.

Tomoko up to this point had been playing keyboards and violin, but after Seans departure took it upon herself to play guitar aswell. The set was gradually changing too to suit the band. We went back to older tunes that suited the set up more as it was. This was mainly due to Joe. He’d always been pushing me to do Sega, Sunnyside Up, Am I Good, etc, but I’d always said no because it didn’t fit in with the album we’d just produced and wanted to promote.

So Joe got his way and rehearsals moved along a lot quicker. The problem to me was that I wanted people to hear the studio versions of the songs we were going to play live via myspace, but those old versions were of inferior quality. So we set about re-recording the old tunes and write some new songs to suit the band that we now were. By now it was March 2007. “When I Grow Up I Wanna Be a Space Cadet” was completed in January. So as the year progressed, another album was pretty much recorded and we still hadn’t made “...Space Cadet” available.

There were quite a few hold ups along the way too which slowed down the progress with the LIVE band.

I got offered and accepted a job as the sound designer for a theatre production of “Charlie & Henry” which ran from April 26th 2007 for 5 weeks. Tomoko was also hired as the stage manager/operator.



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The play was written by Peter Maddocks and was being directed by Jason Lawson. Peter worked as The Who's lawyer back in their wild heyday and has quite a few stories to tell. He spent a few years in prison on drug smuggling charges and started writing the play whilst incarcerated, partly influenced by his experiences. After coming out, he made his money in water coolers and only came back to the play years later. Jason I'd known for a while. Tomoko had worked on a few productions with him and he was the planned director of Nick Browns "Quinto Quarto" that I'd prepared the music for. He's the son of actress Hayley Mills, so obviously got the theatre interest from her and her family (unlike his half brother Crispian who went into music, forming Kula Shaker in the 90's).

The story was a comedy and revolved around a bunch of Aristocrat junkies.

The pay was very good and I created 30 minutes of new material inspired by the script in a very short space of time (most of which couldn't be used). It was pretty much a full time job leading up to the first show. A lot of money had been thrown at the project and everything had to be perfect. Very stressful, but I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Jason did a brilliant job directing, reviews overall were very good and it was great sitting there in the theatre hearing my tunes play out in the show.

Due to my work on the show I got offered a job soundtracking a cookery programme. Apart from the obvious, what do you write for a cookery programme (?), I didn't follow it up because I wanted and needed to focus on Clinker.