

HERCULES

THE MAG

inside this issue:

Elton talks about his relationship with David

EXCLUSIVE!
Part 2 of our Nigel Olsson interview

The truth about the Aida tantrum

El Dorado CD reviewed

Competition results

USA Spring Tour review & Set List

PLUS:
News, Trivia, Quizzes, Your Letters & more!



Issue No. 51
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FAN CLUB INFORMATION

Annual membership fee for the UK is £14 if paid by Standing Order/VISA/Mastercard. By Cheque/Postal Order it is £15. For the rest of Europe it is £14, and for the USA it is 17£/US\$30. Please note that your renewal date is printed on your address label in European format day/month/year.

Membership passes are available from your local HERCULES department: send a small photo of yourself when requesting your pass.

Please don't send enquiries or **fan mail** to the Elton John management, but to HERCULES Coordination. Letters will be passed on if necessary.

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Member participation is always welcome. We are thankful for your submissions of any kind: reports, articles, photos, drawings, and suggestions. Please send them to the Editor, Tammi Law. Please understand that we cannot always publish all contributions. All photos will be returned.

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(see review page 10)
(Photo: Lynn Sykes)

Back cover:
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(Photo: Nannette Bac)



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FROM THE EDITOR...

Most of us this year will be lucky enough to have the opportunity to see Elton in concert, as he takes his hugely enjoyable Solo Tour from country to country. This surely must be in the running for the longest Elton tour of all time! Having completed the second leg of the United States, Elton is now bringing the Solo Tour back to Europe this summer. Check out the Tour Dates on page 27 for full details of his busy schedule. Let's just hope for his sake that he's not over-doing it!

With Elton's increasingly raised profile, and the advent of Elton's new official Website, news and information about Elton is easier to obtain than ever before. Particularly welcome is the news that Elton will be back in the Studio in September, to record a new John/Taupin album. More information about this can be found in our News Bullets section.

Hercules Fan Club celebrated our 12th birthday in May. This coincided with another milestone for Elton's fan-club; the Hercules Website achieved a total of 400,000 hits since it's launch two years ago. That's an average of 530 people visiting our Website every day! Check it out for yourself at www.eltonfan.com

As part of the service which we offer to fans, Hercules have again been able to secure group allocation premium

tickets to many of Elton's shows this year. We don't make any profit on the tickets which fans buy through Hercules, it's purely a way of ensuring that great seats are available for real fans. A free Hercules banner was mailed with the UK tickets to everyone who ordered through Hercules. The mailing commenced on 22 May, as soon as we received the tickets from the Tour Promoter. Be sure to wave your banners at the concerts - Elton loved them last year! If you need tickets for any of Elton's German shows in the Autumn, details of how to purchase them through Hercules are on page 27.

We've had a lot of feedback from you to say how much you enjoyed our exclusive interview with Nigel Olsson in the March issue. Part 2 appears in this issue, see page 22. We have a couple of interviews with Elton featured in this issue too. He talks about current projects, and how happy his personal life is now, after years of well-documented unhappiness.

Keep your letters coming in to The Editor, it's always nice to hear from you (address on page 2). In the meantime, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at Elton's European shows this summer!

Tanni



"Broadway Cares" (Photo: N Bac)



Hershey, PA (Photo: N Bac)



Dresden 1996

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



Full details of the following news items have appeared on our Hotline and Website

TROUBLE WITH AIDA

There were a few rumours doing the rounds that Elton walked out of a preview performance of Aida in February. Here, Elton explains all.....

"I walked out to make a point," Elton explained during an interview on "Good Morning America" "They didn't listen to what I had to say in December, and I wrote the music and it's my bloody name on the billboard, and I don't want to be associated with something I did not write."

The superstar singer says he bolted a performance of the \$15 million mega-musical last month after Disney execs turned a deaf ear to his requests for changes in the show's score.

"I was absolutely incandescent with rage," he said. "After I'd seen the show in Chicago, I wasn't very happy with the music. So we had a big meeting in December in Los Angeles and I said, 'Here are two things that I really don't like in the show...'"

Two major songs that he had written, "Another Pyramid" and "My Stronger Suit," were dramatically changed, he says, with the addition of techno-music. Elton told the producers,

"I don't like it. I didn't write it, and you know, it's my music in there, and please change it."

Well, they didn't. And when Elton attended a preview in February and saw that the songs were unchanged, "I was so incensed. And I just walked out, I walked calmly out, and I smiled on my way out and I got out in the street and went, 'Rrrrrhhh.' "

Elton said he told Disney, "If you don't listen to what I'm saying, I'm going to get mad.' And so I got mad." He also acknowledged that the frustration wasn't pretty. "I wear my heart on my sleeve; I was annoyed," he said.

These days, though, all is well with Elton and "Aida." The changes he requested have been made, and he says he enjoyed a recent performance of the show. "It was brilliant," he says of how the music plays now. "I don't have to worry about this anymore."

ELTON CLOSES US SOLO TOUR

Elton closed his Medusa tour in America in Atlanta April 29, with proceeds from ticket sales going to Atlanta charities. Members of eltonjohn.com who were given complimentary tickets were not invited to the pre-show reception, and were seated on the far end of the venue on the "ten yard line," much to everyone's disappointment. After the show, Elton thanked everyone for their support and gifts, but surprisingly neither accepted gifts nor signed autographs during the show, which he had done at all previous shows on the tour. (For USA Set List, see page 17)

JUST LIKE STRANGE

RAINFOREST SHOW

Sting, Elton, Billy Joel and James Taylor performed at Carnegie Hall in New York on April 13. The audience paid a combined \$2.5m in tickets -with all proceeds benefiting the rainforest. Stevie Wonder appeared just in time for a final star chorus of Amen. Elton stuck out in a white suit and pink shoes. Sting introduced him as "my boyfriend Elton John."

ELTON AT TOWER RECORDS

Elton sat down at Tower Records on 8801 Sunset Blvd. and signed copies of "The Road to El Dorado" as the album hit the street on March 14, 2000. Lyricist Tim Rice was also announced, but didn't show up. It was a well organised event with all major radio and TV stations at place, and even the weather was perfect. It was 5 years almost to the day since Elton and Bernie Taupin did their last autograph party at Tower Records in LA.



Elton at Tower Records



NORMAN BOOK GETS A FACE LIFT

Philip Norman's Elton biography - originally released in 1991 - is now available as "updated" re-release, titled Sir Elton. The paperback book (Sidgwick & Jackson; ISBN: 0283063548, 592 pages) tells the story up to his performance at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. The book also includes an (updated) discography. Price £14.99.



RECORDING NEWS

Elton was in the studio in Atlanta with Earl Scruggs on March 6, 2000 recording for his 50th anniversary tribute project, for which Earl Scruggs had chosen to include Country Comfort. Elton plays the piano tracks on the song and also does some (backing) vocals.

On March 10, 2000 Elton was in the studio again - this time in New York - recording vocals for Moby's next US single Why Does My Heart Feel So Bad. The royalties from the sales of the single will be donated to the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

On the new official website, Elton also reports that he will be in the studio again in September this year for a new Elton John/Bernie Taupin album. Producer will again be Pat Leonard who has worked with Elton on the "El Dorado" soundtrack.

ELTON CONCERT BROADCAST LIVE

Riffage.com partnered with BBC Worldwide, hosting the premier BBC Music Live music festival running May 25-29, as the event's exclusive webcaster for North America. Performances included a concert from Elton from Woburn Abbey, UK on May 29th, and thousands of stages and 40 outside broadcasting units across BBC's entire TV and radio network.

LOUDER THAN CONCORDE?

According to Swedish medicine magazine "Läkartidning", Elton John was the loudest performer of a research study undertaken in 1998. The audience at Elton's concert "experienced" an average level of 107,5 decibel. Almost as loud was Elton's buddy Rod Stewart with 104,5 decibel. It should be added that the research study only included eight concerts and all of them were at the Nya Ullevi arena (an outdoor venue) in Gothenburg during 1998.

ELTON'S PICTURE SNAPS

Chorus of Light: Photographs From the Sir Elton John Collection will be at the High Museum of Atlanta, USA from Nov 4 to Jan 8, 2001. The exhibition, which will not travel elsewhere, will fill the museum's fourth floor and spill over to its downtown branch in the Georgia-Pacific Center. 150 celebrity photographs will be on view. "Elton John feels an attachment to the city," said an exhibition spokesman. "He has been a member of the museum's Director's Circle, which is the highest level of membership."

LION KING GOES LA

Disney Theatricals (Peter Schneider and Thomas Schumacher, Producers) announced tickets for the Los Angeles production of The Lion King; they went on sale May 3. Tickets are available at the Pantages (Hollywood Blvd. and Vine) Theatre Box Office, through TicketMaster, +1 213-365-3510, or online at www.lionkingla.com. Preview performances begin Sept 28, and opening night is scheduled for Oct 19, for this limited Los Angeles engagement.

JOHN REID AUCTION AT SOTHEBY'S

In a bid to shed himself of Elton memorabilia, his ex-manager John Reid is auctioning some rarities from his personal collection via Sotheby's in the next few months. There are 84 lots, most of which are sales awards ranging from the 1970s-90s. Many of Elton's albums and singles are represented and prices range from \$700-\$1600 for white matte format US gold awards to a range of modern CD format awards from various European countries, prices \$150-400. Most are named to John Reid, with some to Rocket Records and others. The rest appears on Sotheby's website in batches over the next few months. Those interested should go to: sothebys.amazon.com

TIME UP

Luxury goods e-tailer Ashford.com partnered with Xemex USA to be the exclusive Internet vendor of the Xemex Offroad Millennium Elton John AIDS Foundation Watch. The initial issue is a limited edition of 200 watches, with all profits going to EJAF, and was released on Elton's birthday, March 25. The sale of these watches is expected to generate more than \$100,000 for EJAF. Go to www.ashford.com for details.

EJ NEWS BULLETS...



Full details of the following news items have appeared on our Hotline and Website

ELTON'S HOUSES SHOW-CASED

Mirroring our Elton look-a-like Ray Johnson (who is a qualified carpenter and cab driver) "If I weren't a musician, I would love to be a decorator," real Elton revealed to Architectural Digest in the May issue. Each one of his homes - in Old Windsor, London, Atlanta and Nice - conveys a distinctive identity and rock star glamour.

Rumour has it that Elton made "diva-like demands" to Architectural Digest for permission to publish exclusive pictures of his villa in Nice. Elton, who also gave the magazine access to his three previously covered houses in Old Windsor, London and Atlanta, was hoping A.D. would devote a whole issue to him, sources say. When he learned otherwise, editors mollified him by putting his portrait on the May cover - at least for newsstand issues.

Subscribers got a less People-like picture of one of his gardens instead. Conde Nast rep Laurie Miller denies John was a



"demanding diva." In fact, she says, "He was very happy with the photos and everything. We were given a lot of access, and the Nice photos were a big coup

for the magazine." "It was the magazine's idea to include all four houses," says Elton's spokeswoman, Fran Curtis, "and they've had lots of celebrities on their cover." The beautifully-shot 19-page spread showcases Elton's aesthetic philosophy, "Less is less, more is more, more is good and a lot more is very good." He loves classical nude statues, Versace fabrics, and Robert Mapplethorpe photos.

Please do not ask Hercules for copies of this magazine.

AN "UNFORGETTABLE EVENING"

Elton was part of the "Unforgettable Evening", contributing a one-hour concert at Cedars-Sinai Research for Women's Cancers benefit, at the Beverly Wilshire on March 28. Reportedly, ex-manager John Reid was at Cedars-Sinai for alcoholic abuse in 1988. The benefit was not an indication of thawing relations! See Sotheby's auction news. The event, underwritten by Saks Fifth Ave, raised \$1.4m. When asked by Rita Wilson to perform, there was no hesitation in Elton's reply - plus a promise to return for 'em whenever they call again. In his repertoire, he included a special tribute to honouree Hillary Rodham Clinton.

BRITISH PAPER WINS BATTLE OVER ELTON JOHN SOURCE

Britain's Daily Express won a court battle April 19 over its refusal to reveal the source of documents leaked from Elton's lawyers. Express Newspapers had asked the Court of Appeal to overturn a High Court ruling that it must reveal how it obtained the confidential dossier, which relates to Elton's forthcoming action against his former accountants PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

CINEMA AGAINST AIDS

Fashion and celebrity came together at amfAR's Cinema Against AIDS benefit during the Cannes Film Festival on May 18. Luxury goods e-tailer Mondera.com co-sponsored a star-studded gala with honorary chairs Elton and Elizabeth Taylor. Celebrities wore more than \$20m of jewellery that evening.

BROADWAY CARED

Elton was feted by Broadway stars at the New Amsterdam Theatre in a concert to benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS (BC/EFA) April 3. Nathan Lane and Christine Baranski were the hosts. They were joined by artists including Aida's Heather Headley and Sherie René Scott. "This is Your Son - Broadway Sings Elton John" saw Sandra Bernhart perform a dark version of Madman Across the Water, Betty Buckley sang Country Comfort, Honky Cat was performed by Deborah Gibson, Andrea Mcardle did Bennie and the Jets, and Adam Pascal performed Someone Saved My Life Tonight. Heather Headley came on stage for a version of Easy As Life from AIDA.

At the start of the second half, Elton appeared in one of the VIP side boxes. He watched most of the second half from there. Making his grand entrance in his "traditional style", Elton marched on stage, with his diamond covered shoes leading the way. The audience was cracking up to his version of Diamonds Are A Girls Best Friend.

HERCULES GERMAN CONVENTION

Hercules will host a fan Convention during Elton's Solo Tour in 2000. It takes place at Hotel Schweizer Hof in Kassel, Germany, June 23.



ELTON RECEIVES

VITO RUSSO AWARD

Elton was honoured by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) at the 11th Annual GLAAD Media Awards. He was presented with the Vito Russo Award at a ceremony in New York City April 2. Named after founding member of GLAAD and author of *The Celluloid Closet*, the Vito Russo Award is presented to an openly lesbian or gay entertainment or media community member for outstanding contributions in combating homophobia.

Elton, wearing a leather blazer and pants and red eyeglasses, accepted his award from Judy Shepard, the mother of murdered gay student Mathew Shepard. He said he keeps a photo of Mathew in his kitchen. "It breaks my heart to look at that photograph," he told the audience of some 1,500 at a Manhattan hotel. "That he had to die -- but he didn't have to die in vain," he said.

8TH OSCAR NIGHT PARTY

Elton hosted the 8th Annual In Style Oscar Night Party to Benefit the Elton John AIDS Foundation on March 26. This year, the event was held at 8800 Melrose Ave. (formerly Pagani Restaurant). The gala party began with a benefit dinner and viewing of the Academy Awards telecast, followed by an after-party in honour of the Oscar nominees and winners. The event raised approx. \$500,000 and had a guest list that included Gloria Estefan, Elizabeth Hurley, Leelee Sobieski, Jane Seymour, James Woods, Jay Leno, Janet McTeer, Martina Navratilova and Olivia Newton-John.

ELTON ON TODAY SHOW

Elton performed at 8:30 am on NBC's Today programme March 31, outside on the street in New York. He and fellow band mates, including Nigel Olsson, sang the first three songs from *The Road To El Dorado* soundtrack.

Elton then performed Circle Of Life to the huge crowd that had David Furnish among the fans. For the finale, Elton and the band offered Crocodile Rock, but NBC pulled the plug on the show before he could finish it!

OSCAR TANTRUM?



According to a report on MSNBC, Elton was spotted on Oscar night "having a major hissy fit" when one of Los Angeles' finest police officers refused to let him drive through a roped-off area. "He was screaming his lungs out at the cop," says an Oscar-party-going source. "He was calling him all sorts of names." Elton's spokeswoman had no comment. The source says the police officer didn't seem cowed by Elton. "The cop was just smiling at him," says the source, "and saying, 'Go on, Mr. John, you are making my day!'"

NEW UK SINGLE

The much-awaited new Elton single from soundtrack *El Dorado* "Someday Out of the Blue" comes out in the UK Monday, July 17, 2000. The single was released in the USA in April.

GERMAN VOLUME CHARTS OF

THE 90S

Elton holds position 7 in the German charts of the most longplay entries in the Nineties with a total of six albums. That's only two albums less than Joe Cocker at number one, followed by Queen, Madonna and some German artists with 7 entries.

Q MAGAZINE PUTS ELTON IN

TOP BRITS

The May edition of Q Magazine puts Elton's *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* album at 84th in a poll of its expert writers to gauge Britain's best 100 albums of all time. The poll involves only UK bands and artists. Surprisingly, no other Elton albums made the grade.

WATFORD VIGIL OVER

Watford suffered relegation from the Premiership Division in May, after a late season burst of some wins and draws wasn't enough to placate a string of New Year losses. Even knowing it was heading back down to Division 1, Watford gave formidable champions Manchester United a fright on April 29.



5 QUESTIONS WITH ELTON

IN MARCH, ELTON TOURED THE USA PROMOTING HIS NEW CD 'THE ROAD TO EL DORADO'. DURING THIS TIME, HE SPOKE EXTENSIVELY TO THE MEDIA, AND HERE WE HIGHLIGHT THE BEST PARTS FROM ONE OF THE MAGAZINE INTERVIEWS:

Don't talk to Elton John about slowing down. "It's very hard for me to sit still," he said as he embarked on a USA promotional campaign for a new album, and his Broadway musical "Aida."

On the eve of his 53rd birthday, it is obvious he has mellowed a bit. That's due to either maturity or physical realities: he was fitted with a pacemaker last year to overcome what he called "a minor imbalance in my heart."

During his stay at his home in Atlanta, he goes shopping, browses record stores and stays accessible to fans and the media. He doesn't understand those reclusive celebrity types. "I think that's more of an American disease - Barbra Streisand, Michael Jackson, people like that. I like going out. People are always very pleasant. I'm not going to shut myself off. It keeps you grounded a bit," Elton said in a telephone interview from his West Hollywood hotel.

Although his outfits are now relatively conservative in black or white - and no glitter - Elton is not resting on his numerous laurels, including Oscar, Tony, Golden Globe and Grammy awards, and, of course, that British knighthood bestowed by Queen Elizabeth. But he's still energetic. The Broadway curtain

rose on March 23 on Disney's "Aida," with a pop score by Elton and Tim Rice. A week later, The Road to El Dorado was released in cinemas across the USA. (see Issue 50 for more details).

The soundtrack "Elton John's The Road to El Dorado" has six songs from the movie. "I decided to write more and 11 made the cut," he said. "It's more like an Elton John album than a soundtrack, and I'm very happy with the result."

Besides juggling his musical projects, he's also passionate about charity work. The Elton John AIDS Foundation was formed in 1992. "When I got sober and clean, I wanted to do something positive with my life," said Elton, whose annual Oscar night party in West Hollywood raises about \$400,000. His annual US tennis tournament "Smash Hits" also adds to the coffers.

1. A month before your 53rd birthday, you were presented with the Grammy Legend Award by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences. Does it make you think more about your mortality?

Elton: Oh, I take these things with a pinch of salt. I've never really taken them too seriously. What I take seriously is my work. "The Lion King" was a piece of magic for me. It opened a lot of doors for me, like the film score for "The Muse" with Albert Brooks and "Aida". I'm not finished."

2. How's your health?

Elton: I'm fine. I've never felt better. I play tennis every day about eight in the morning. I always have to watch my weight. It's always up and down. It will be 10 years this July that I'm clean and sober. I stay away from alcohol and drugs.

3. How does Hollywood react to your commitment to AIDS research and your Oscar party?

Elton: People here are very AIDS conscious. There's a fundraiser every night in this town, you know. The consciousness is always there, though. We come away with about \$350,000 to \$400,000. It's an evening where you meet and greet people and schmooze and have fun. Everyone just walks across the street from the Vanity Fair party. In Style magazine is our sponsor. We have dinner to watch the ceremony, and then we wait for people to arrive after the show. I'm busy making sure people are comfortable and providing sound bites for people outside. I love it. I get to meet people I've never met before.

4. "The Lion King" won two Oscars and three Grammys and sold more than 10 million albums. Is it tough to live up to those expectations with your new "El Dorado" album?

Elton: "The Lion King" is what everybody aims for. But you can't make another Lion King. No one can. I think the songs on this album are actually better than "The Lion King." But the movie is an enigma, really. The Road to El Dorado is a fun movie, but it's not The Lion King.

5. You are awake at dawn to do this interview. Do you ever want to sit back and relax?

Elton: Well, I think about it. On my days off, I know how to chill. It's very hard for me to sit still. I'm not one to sit still and read a book, although I do read. Instead of reaching 50 with a career and concerts, I've got my fingers in different pies. I can't just sit down and write rock 'n' roll songs anymore. I've evolved. This is fabulous.

Adapted from an interview by J Wilson, Los Angeles (AP).

Please do not ask members of the Hercules Team to supply copies of the original interview.

A light-hearted look at some of the facts & trivia behind Elton's live performances and recordings over the years.

Compiled by

Adam Buckley

QUESTIONS

- Question 1:** At which gig did Elton perform "The Benedict Canyon Boogie"?
- Question 2:** Has Elton ever performed the Thom Bell song "Mama Can't Buy You Love" live on stage?
- Question 3:** Who did Elton dedicate his rendition of Pinball Wizard to on Christmas Eve at the Hammersmith Odeon in 1982 ?
- Question 4:** Portland, Oregon, USA, October 1975 - the West of the Rockies tour; Elton starts playing Goodbye Yellow Brick Road. A few lines into the chorus, the band stop. Then Elton himself suddenly stops playing. Elton insists it is because the crowd are not joining in to help him out with the high notes. What was the real reason? Was it because,
a.) A herd of buffalo were charging the stage?
b.) There was a power cut?
c.) Someone threw a firecracker onto stage?
- Question 5:** Elton once famously said on stage that The Fox album had not been a major sales success. Did he say it had gone :-
a.) Plastic? b.) Cardboard? c.) Senile?
- Question 6:** In which year was the song Chameleon, which features on the Blue Moves album, written?
- Question 7:** How many "fish" references are there in the song "Solar Prestige A Gammon"?
- Question 8:** What year was Elton's version of Pinball Wizard recorded? It was put out as a single in 1976 right? But when was it recorded ?
- Question 9:** Why was the Yellow Brick Road album not recorded in Jamaica, as originally planned? Bernie Taupin once explained why in an interview, what did he have to say?
a.) "Elton preferred the Chateau instead - with it's tennis courts and on-site catering."
b.) "Because the Jamaicans are all jerk-offs."
c.) "Things were pretty funky in Jamaica at that time."
- Question 10:** What is Elton's most performed live song of all time?
a.) Burn Down The Mission. b.) Your Song. c.) Daniel.
- Question 11:** In 1978, Elton performed a novel rendition of Rocket Man before a stunned Australian audience. During this 25 minute marathon, Elton apparently slugged off a whole gamut of celebrities and dignitaries. Can you select the correct trio who were most on the receiving end of Elton's acid tongue that night?
a.) Mother Teresa, the Ayatollah and the Pope.
b.) Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and the Prince of Wales.
c.) Madonna, David Bowie, and Rod Stewart.
- Question 12:** In what year and with whom did Elton write the Goaldiggers song? And what was it's aim?

Thanks to David Bisese and Ted Walters for their contribution

ANSWERS:

- Answer 1:** The Century Plaza, New York, October 1978, where Elton unveiled A Single Man album to the executives and staff of MCA Records. A member of the audience shouted out "Play the Benedict Canyon Boogie, Elton!". Elton didn't know this number, but, ever one to please the crowd, he gave it his best shot, and so he made up the words.... with hilarious consequences.....
"Oh the Benedict Canyon Boogie, is better than cold water, oh the Benedict Canyon Boogie is a better than cold water.... but I don't give a sh*t..... cos the song's not a hit!"
- Answer 2:** Surprisingly, yes, at least once - he played it at a solo gig at the Universal Amphitheatre in Los Angeles in October 1979.
- Answer 3:** "Pussy from Scotland". Does anyone know who this is?!
- Answer 4:** = c.)
- Answer 5:** = b.) Cardboard
- Answer 6:** Although it did not appear on Blue Moves until 1976, Chameleon's lyrics can be traced back to at least 1974. The melody itself was supposedly written in 1974 while Elton was aboard the cruise liner the SS France. A most fruitful trip for Elton, that same stint aboard ship produced much of the music that graced the beautiful Captain Fantastic album.
- Answer 7:** Five (Turbot (Turbot); Salmon; Sardin (Sardine); Cod; Ray.)
- Answer 8:** 1974.
- Answer 9:** = c.)
- Answer 10:** = b.) Gotta be! Have any fans out there been to an Elton show when he HASN'T done Your Song?!
- Answer 11** = a.) And despite there being a recording, Elton maintains we shall never get to see or hear that one - but he still loves to talk about it anyway!
- Answer 12:** 1977 - with Gary Osborne. It was written to raise money for more and improved football and recreational grounds throughout the UK.



Club member
Nannette Bac
tells us about two
amazing "Elton events"
she attended in April....

**THIS IS YOUR SONG:
BROADWAY SINGS ELTON JOHN**

**Sir Elton
headlined a
major concert
event at Broadway's
New Amsterdam**

**Theater, where a cast of
celebrity performers from
Broadway joined him in all star
tribute in his honor on April 3,
2000. The Elton John Band
provided the accompaniment to
all the performers and Nigel
Olsson joined in on backing
vocals and as a drummer as
well.**

Having had the pleasure of attending this once-in-a-lifetime event, I was dazzled as the stars of Broadway performed the hottest hits of Sir Elton's career. He returned the praise by singing some of Broadway's greatest showtunes, including, "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend," (Gentlemen Prefer Blondes), "Somewhere," (West Side Story), and closing with "Circle of Life."

Hosted by Nathan Lane and Christine Baransky, Broadway's brightest stars participated in the all star tribute by providing their breathtaking interpretations of Elton's music through the years. Highlights included, Adam Paschal (AIDA) singing "Someone Saved My Life Tonight," Sam Harris, "The Bitch Is Back," Andrea McArdle with "Bennie and the Jets".

Wearing Harry Winston diamonds valued at \$5 million dollars, Elton made a glittering entrance with a tiara, dangling earrings and necklace. His black Versace suit with glittering stones complemented his diamond splendor. Elton graced the stage with an entourage of attractive men to perform "Diamonds are a

Girl's Best Friend," and set the audience roaring!! He truly appeared to have a great time, allowing himself a few pausing moments and a good chuckle to enjoy his dancing male chorus. It was a pleasure to see Sir Elton perform in this type of repertoire, as his talent is immense and more complex than as he puts it, "being stuck behind the piano."

Following the event, which raised \$450,000 for Broadway Care/Equity Fights AIDS and the Elton John AIDS Foundation, a party was held at Barney's on Madison Avenue in New York City. The famous department store prepared special windows, using costumes popularized by Elton during his three decade career. The display included the Donald Duck outfit from Central Park 1980, early 70's costumes, and various stage costumes recognizable as vintage Elton. One that particularly impressed me was the spaceman costume with a train that encompassed the entire floor of the display window.

I think it's gonna be a long long time before an opportunity comes along like this again. Bravo to all the performers and congratulations Sir Elton on one long and illustrious career.



But it doesn't stop there! Ten days later, and I had the great pleasure of attending the annual RAINFOREST BENEFIT SHOW....

Carnegie Hall rocked with this year's Rainforest Benefit on April 13, 2000. This year marked the 10th consecutive year that Sting and his wife Trudie Styler have sponsored the annual event. "Respect" was the theme which included Sting, Elton, James Taylor, Billy Joel, Macy Gray, Percy Sledge, Gladys Knight, Martha Reeves, Sam Moore (of Sam and Dave), Ricky Martin and the Impressions. Two surprise guests included Dan Akroyd, and last but not least Stevie Wonder.

This year's 10th annual Carnegie Hall event was, in my opinion, the best I have seen to date. Having had the pleasure of



seeing the event since 1995, this event was the most memorable, tripping down the fantastic Motown memory lane.

The show opened with Sting, Elton, Billy, James and the Impressions singing, "People Get Ready," which set the tone for the soulful sounds of the music of the 60's and 70's that was to follow.

Sting introduced Elton performing a tribute to the late Screaming Jay Hawkins by saying, "The group took a vote backstage as to who would sing the tribute. Elton said he would do it since he's been screaming all of his life." Elton then entertained us with his version of "I Put a Spell on You", wearing a darling version of an early Halloween outfit, which



consisted of a black velvet cape, sunglasses and a voodoo stick that had a lighted skeleton head. Creeping about the stage, hiding beneath his cape, and singing in a growling "bluesey" tone, he stole the show.

Elton also sang, "It Takes Two," with Gladys Knight in the first half of the show. In the second half he appeared in what can be described as a "John Travolta Original" white suit with pink shirt and pink patent leather shoes. He did not disappoint with the only disco number in the show. Elton said, "We're going to go back to the days of Studio 54, where I left my nose." He then sang lead on "Disco Inferno" with James Taylor, Sting, Ricky Martin, Tom Jones, and Sam Moore, backing



him up in a complete ensemble of neon colored afro wigs!!

In the finale, the entire group joined in a version of "Amen" and "Dancing in the Streets." Elton donned Macy Gray's red feather boa, and along with some of the other performers brought audience members on to the stage. Elton grabbed a lucky lady who seemed to have the time of her life participating with Elton and the rest of the group on stage.

This was the last Rainforest Benefit for awhile, as Trudie and Sting reassured they were only taking a break next year. "We'll come back at it the following year in a different location and change it," Trudie stated in a TV interview. Whatever and wherever it will be, I'm sure it will gain our "RESPECT"!

CHORUS OF LIGHT

Part of Elton's famous art collection is set to be the subject of a Museum

Exhibition later this year.....

"I've become passionate about this, more than anything I've collected - and I collect a lot of things!"

Elton is talking about his 10-year-old photography collection, being readied for its first public showing. Chorus of Light will be on view from Nov. 4 2000 through to January 2001 at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta, where Elton has a home.

The collection is heavy on vintage 20th century black-and-white photos, with surrealist work, studies of natural forms from flowers to the human body, fashion pictures and celebrity photos that include The Beatles and jazz greats.

It will be installed in the way Elton displays the photographs at home, in mixtures of styles and periods. Dressed in a plaid jacket, orange T-shirt and socks, and khakis, Elton was exuberant at a press event: "I've never been so excited by a visual art form." His collection has swelled to about 2,500 items; he has expanded from the 2,000-square-foot duplex he bought in 1991 in Atlanta to 18,000 square feet, with wall space for 800 to 900 photos. He's about to hire a curator to deal with it all.

Having a personal collection, he says, "is like having a child." It's hard to have it leave home: "I'll be sleeping at the museum every night," he joked.

Elton, who never takes photos himself, is thinking big about his passion. London lacks a separate photos-only gallery, and he says: "I'll pioneer for the rest of my life to get a proper photo museum." The High Museum plans a fund for a permanent collection in Elton's name.

Asked if he has any pieces that might be objected to by New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who has taken issue with some art, Elton said, "Not in the exhibit. But if you come to the apartment, there's a lot!" The High curator for his show said it does include male and female nudes.

HERCULES HOUSE

EXCLUSIVE: A HOUSE NAMED HERCULES - FOR SALE

MOST ELTON FANS WILL REMEMBER HE ONCE OCCUPIED A LOVELY BUNGALOW-MANSION IN VIRGINIA WATER, SURREY, CALLED HERCULES.

Hercules, Elton's fan club, is delighted to exclusively advise that this house is now up for sale. It's fate could belong to a non-fan purchasing it, or it could even face demolition. The property's future lies in the hands of anyone with the asking price of £1.495m to spend on a purpose-built, well-maintained house, freehold land and swimming pool/garden.

The property is surrounded by other houses, separated by the usual walls, hedgerows and two gates serving the drive to the front of the 1960s property. It has a wonderful horse statue in the back garden, towering above the swimming pool.

The fate of the property is not a straight forward matter. Current owner, Robert White, partner in White Development, bought the house six weeks ago from a Jordanian family who had renamed the property more suitably Villa Rayah. The previous owners also decided to take most fixtures and fittings with them.

The one act of sacrilege was to remove the name of "Hercules" from a boulder which stands outside the main entrance. The inscription was chiselled away. But don't blame Mr White - this was done before he had bought the property.

However, as the photos show, the property itself is in good decorative condition, and everything was in working

order when Hercules UK manager George Matlock and Hercules web reporter David Wright paid a visit to the premises on May 7, 2000. The fitted kitchen has been recently modernised.

Viewing this property shows that marble is also much in evidence on the ground floor, and two elegant Roman pillars support the reception hall area.



Hercules (aka Villa Rayah), spanning 6,300 square feet on land of 0.845 acres, is pencilled for demolition by Mr White, to make way for a larger, more functional property which will utilise the existing land coverage but increase height by a total of 2,000 sq. ft. That's an increase of 30% of the existing property size.

A new swimming pool is also planned. The property, which Elton sold in 1976 to move into nearby Woodside, boasts 4 bedrooms, two bathrooms and an extension built by the recent owners to facilitate a family room/conservatory - although with less glazing than such extensions typically afford. One of the bathroom showers has room for 5 persons standing! So, doubtless it will be useful to the Watford football squad!

Demolition and re-



development will require the consent of municipal authority Runnymede Borough Council. The Council is due to meet in committee in late May/early June to consider the application for demolition and to hear local residents' views. Mr White maintains, in a brief interview with George, that the property specifications do meet planning requirements, and precedent for material changes has been set - the property to the left is currently undergoing extensive work. Mr White explained that he has already satisfactorily worked on four properties in the area.

However, there are also two bids for the estate which may save the property from any substantial change. We do not wish to make any extensive description of those offers, nor prejudice the council meeting. However, in order for you to make a rational decision on whether or not to volunteer a serious offer for the estate, we must advise that both offers already made are serious, and amount to close to the asking price of £1.495m. The property is being marketed by estate agents Chancellors. Mr White has kindly agreed to leave the offer open to others after



Hercules' intervention.

Apparently, both potential purchasers have advised Mr White they are willing to increase their offers, but Mr White is also willing to take serious offers from other parties.

The buyer, we hope, would be an Elton John fan. We have also advised Elton's management of the sale opportunity. However, even someone known to a real fan who may learn of this sale through us would be welcome. Our only intention is to provide fans with an opportunity to preserve the property if a buyer can be found speedily.

Hercules is not acting as an agent in this sale and stands to make no financial gain. We merely bring this information to your attention as a public service. Serious offers only please, should be sent in confidence to Robert White, White Developments, 33 Hillsborough Park, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 1HG, United Kingdom. Tel. +44 1276 683410.

Hercules cannot receive any offers. White Developments must receive directly detailed bids by 16 June 2000, and initial offers should preferably be lodged before then. All other enquiries to White Developments. Hercules would like to thank Mr White for his assistance in access to the property, and wish all parties an amicable resolution.



JUST FOR FUN

LYRIC QUIZ

Have a go at our popular lyric quiz. We give you a line - see if you can name the song! (Answers on page 26)

1. She's calculated
With the kiss of death
2. We just breed and we lose our nerve
And there're bombs going off in
every corner of the world.
3. Just like a hustler when they look
attractive
It's nothing much more than a slap
on the back.
4. With a bottle of booze in the back of
my car
You're a song on the lips of an ageing
star.
5. And mother drops by Mondays
Just to nag about the world
6. For that sweet bird of youth
I could be great like Tennessee
Williams
7. And as her car pulled out of the
motel
She felt the presence of someone
8. Yellow blue green and blue
Settling on the window pane
9. It's meant a lot to me to start anew
Oh, the winter's cold and I'm so
warm with you
10. There are caravans we follow
Drunken nights in dark hotels
11. Watched you kiss your old daddy
with passion
And tell dirty jokes as he died
12. Strangled by infatuation
Buried under someone's thumb



Road to El

By the Editors of Hercules

As with our AIDA review in 1999, we asked several Hercules department chiefs to give their expert views in short bursts on Elton's new album release. They voted for their best songs, voting 14 for their favourite song and 1 for their least. We collate their votes below.

AB = **ARIEN BUIKSTRA**, Hercules Benelux
TL = **TAMMI LAW**, Hercules Chief Editor
FL = **FRAN LINDEN-GILLES**, Hercules Francais
GM = **GEORGE MATLOCK**, Hercules UK
BM = **BARB MEADOWS**, Hercules Chat Editor
MM = **MIREILLE MOLBERT**, Hercules Fan Adviser

EL DORADO

Reminds me of Healing Hands. My favourite (TL). Same here! Great live band song, akin to Tears For Fears' Seeds of Love, or Beatles' Sgt. Pepper (GM). Nice song overall, but nothing special (AB). I'd like to hear it without the fanfares (BM). Nice beginning for a soundtrack. Especially like the fanfare - very glamorous. Song is great to sing along to (MM). Nobody can be insensitive to this powerful intro with trumpets (FL).

SOMEDAY OUT OF THE BLUE

Very powerful. I just love the lyrics. The bridge "I still believe / I still put faith in us" is a strike of genius. Have missed those alternating rhythms for some albums now (MM). Grows on you. Love the alternating of Elton's voice alone and with the background vocals (FL). Catchy tune (TL). Fit for Sir Cliff Richard. In I Guess That's..Blues genre, so I love it! (GM). Can't see it making the Top-40 in Holland. A plain song from the Elton-makes-them-by-the-dozen factory (AB).

WITHOUT QUESTION

After the intro you could expect a better song, a little too repetitive (FL). I think we have had enough ballads. This track is not very inventive. The chorus reminds me of Emily. Very good

backing vocals "echoing" the lead vocal not unnoticed. Don Henley did a great job (MM). Vocal performance a bit laboured. A dreary song in my opinion (TL). Conquer the Sun? Alas, after that interest ebbs (GM). Begins with a piano-riddle that reminds of a concert Take Me to the Pilot intro, but comparison stops there (AB).

FRIENDS NEVER SAY GOODBYE

My favourite. I would like to see this released as a single (BM). The song with the most hit-potential. Backstreet Boys...their input, I admit, surprised me (AB). Backstreet Boys, vilified for their AIDA work, have reputation redeemed! Great backing vocals! (GM). The rhythm fascinates me most. The background organ seems to work against the voice but they blend in very nicely. I have not heard a song by Elton which would be fit to compare with this one (MM). A top-40 candidate. Wonderful balance between strings, piano and guitar. Bewitching chorus, a good marriage between Backstreet Boys' and Elton's voice (FL). A song written for a stage musical. Builds to a moving chorus (TL).

THE TRAIL WE BLAZE

A Country feel - my least favourite of Elton's styles. Just not for me (TL). Organic Latitude sound, genetically modified with The Big Picture elements (GM). I like the country style, pleasant song, nothing more (FL). Adventurous. Love the bass (BM). Gets you going from the very first second. A song in the style of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young with a bit of Dixie Lily. Cosy and comfortable song (AB). I loved this song from the first: return to Whitewash County, though much softer. Proves Elton could be a great Country singer. Nigel Olsson: never imagined I would be able to tell his voice from other backing vocals but "Shangri-La" in this one does it. Nigel is back! (MM).

16TH CENTURY MAN

Would have made a great theme song to the movie in lieu of Someday/Blue. A good beat, a lot of fun. I'd like to see The Muppets do the video (BM). I thought Elton had forgotten how to rock - judging The Big Picture. History can never become boring with a song like this! (MM). The one true uttempo song on the album. Chorus quite catchy. Nothing like the ones from the 70s (AB). I would like to hear live. I can easily imagine Elton shaking his right leg while playing it (FL). At last! A rocking, romping song which reminds us that Elton CAN rock! (TL). Misplaced rocker. There's a time and place...(GM).

THE PANIC IN ME

Sultry ballad, twist of Just Like Belgium (GM). For me a real pearl. Perfect combination between words and music. Elton's voice is perfect. Thanks to Sir Tim Rice for these powerful lyrics (FL). Lovely, velvety song to get lost in (TL). This song features my favourite piece of lyrics for a long time: "For when you are laughing / Like silver like rain / You cool me you soothe me / And love me again." (MM). Couldn't really make up my mind, but after a few more listens, I decided to like this song (AB).

IT'S TOUGH TO BE A GOD

(Duet with Randy Newman)
Probably the Hakuna Matata of El Dorado. Very funny indeed. It fits perfectly to an animated movie. Rhythm and trumpet give this work a Latino feel. This is something Elton has definitely never done before - at least on his own albums. More duets! Some of Randy Newman's more satiric songs would be perfect (MM). Hakuna Matata it's not! Too sharp duet (GM). I don't like Randy Newman too much and I don't like the song itself too much (AB). Not a classic Elton song - just sounds

Dorado

like a filler (TL). Too bad Elton and Randy's version wasn't used in the movie - it's delightful! (BM). Let's not forget these songs are made for an animated movie and for children. I have tested this song with my children. They definitely love it (FL).

TRUST ME

David Bowie-influenced powerhouse. Brill! (GM). Good chorus (TL). I love the demonic arguments of the piano and strings in this one (BM). Start of song promises a lot. Hints of world music. You might hear a Didgeridoo. But, this song loses much of its depth with the comparably flat chorus. The "untuned" violin makes it more interesting but subdued verses with the sitar-like sounds are more of a highlight (MM). No comment! Since the first listening I automatically jump this song. Don't know what Elton tries to prove with it (FL). Elton recorded this one from his toilet. Sounds that way. Strange song, even sounds a bit experimenting but can't really excite me, even with more piano than other songs (AB).

MY HEART DANCES

Soft ballad with a Spanish feel. Lovely (TL). Like AIDA's How I Know You ala Blessed (GM). Good, simple lyrics, as for the rest I'm not really thrilled by this one (FL). Just the opposite of Trust Me. The very sadly sung chorus is no match for the slowly rippling verses. Due to the prominent Spanish guitar parts, this reminds me a lot of "A Word In Spanish" which was not a creative highlight either (MM).

QUEEN OF CITIES

A bit too much of the word El Dorado, which is probably a lot less irritating when you see some pictures with it (AB). Repetitive, too much "El Dorado" (GM). As a French-speaker I'm not tired

hearing Elton saying Barcelona, Aragon, Castille, Madrid with his English accent. I also love the end of the song with the second voice in the background (FL). The chorus with the least variation in words since Whispers. Still, the often repeated "Eldorado" never gets boring. It is not as powerful as New York New York, but then El Dorado is not a metropolis (MM).

CHELDORADO

Catchy, fun (BM). Silly name for this classic (GM). Sad, lamenting Spanish melody (TL). Not assessed by other editors.

THE BRIG

Not something I'd choose to listen to; probably won't appear on my CD player very often! (TL). Risque, spicey - nice instrumental (BM). Not assessed by other editors.

WONDERS OF THE NEW WORLD

Evocative, liberating, world-encompassing film score. Too much Star Wars, but swashbuckling too. A musical myriad! (GM). Fine, in the film context (BM). Nice rolling percussion. Obviously written for a 'happy' moment in a film (TL). Not assessed by other editors.

THE VOTE:

<i>El Dorado</i>	51
<i>Someday Out of The Blue</i>	50
<i>Without Question</i>	28
<i>Friends Never Say Goodbye</i> ..	48
<i>The Trial We Blaze</i>	37
<i>16th Century Man</i>	42
<i>The Panic In Me</i>(Winner!)	52
<i>It's Tough to be a God</i>	40
<i>Trust Me</i>	28
<i>My Heart Dances</i>	39
<i>Queen of Cities</i>	28
<i>Cheldorado</i>	15
<i>The Brig</i>	6
<i>Wonders of the New World</i> ..	15

HUGE RESPONSE TO LAST ISSUE'S TOUR T-SHIRT FREE PRIZE-DRAW!

In the March issue of The Mag, we gave all readers the chance to win one of two very rare Elton Tour T-shirts, by entering a Free Prize Draw. We had an overwhelming response to this Draw - the highest number of entries to any Hercules offer in history!



The two lucky winners were drawn on May 14th, and they are: Katherine Phillips, Florida, USA; and Keith Whitty, Wirral, UK.

A T-shirt has been posted to each of you - well done!

Don't despair if you missed out - you still have a chance of getting hold of one of these rarities! We have two T-shirts available for auction, with proceeds benefiting the Elton John Aids Foundation. Here's how it works:

Write on a postcard the maximum you are willing to pay in DM (German Currency), with bid increments in 5DM. The highest bidder will get the shirt for the second-highest bid, plus DM5.

For example: The highest bid is DM 250. The second highest bid is DM 175. The highest bidder will get the shirt for DM 180. If we have more than one highest bidder, we will draw the "winner".

Send your postcard, also stating your name, address and membership number to: Stephan Heimbecher, Hercules T-Shirt Auction, Orleansstr. 59, D-81667 Munchen, Germany.

Closing date: July 31st 2000.

concert Zippo's ~ concert review ~ concert review

USA

FIRST EPISODE AT LAKELAND

February 5, 2000, at 4:00am was a very dark and cold Saturday morning that found me travelling at break neck speed to the Lakeland Civic Center in Florida. I was about an hour away with a mission to be among the first of the local die-hard fans to purchase a ticket for the upcoming March 17 Elton John solo concert. The tickets would be available at 10:00am, but I needed to be in the line very early that morning. First come first served was the rule of the day. It was essential for me to get there ahead of the crowd in order to be seated in or near the front row. As I neared the Civic Center, anticipation mounted in my soul. My spirit was high with accomplishment of having arrived in record time. That is until I saw a large group of people already gathered at the ticket booth.

Disappointment immediately set in as I counted 55 people waiting in line ahead of me. Eventually, I found out that some of them had been there as early as 4:00pm the day before. I am a true die-hard fan, but I could not imagine braving below freezing weather for 18 hours with very little protection. Since this same scene was probably taking place at other ticket locations around Florida, I could not help but wonder if I would even be able to get a floor seat.

Time pressed forward as I became familiar with the other fans in line. I discovered that a few of the people were there simply because their partners had

A personal account of one of Elton's USA solo concerts, by Reggie Zippo



sent them alone to brave the elements. One husband told me that his wife said, "Don't come back without great seats!" That poor fellow was just ahead of me. By 7:00am, a local radio station had set up a remote broadcast to report on the fans that were waiting to purchase tickets. Classic EJ songs filled the air as the morning sun began to glow. At around 9:00am, the line behind me stretched out to a sea of fans that were not as smart as the rest of us. I started to feel a little better about being number 56 in line.

Finally, 10:00am signaled the opening of the ticket booths. As the first few people received their treasures, I could hear shouts of glee that they had gotten seats in the seventh row. First in line at the location of the concert and the closest they could get was in the seventh row? What chances would I have of getting that close when I was so far away in line? At this point, I doubted that I would even be able to get one of the floor seats. Finally, I was the next to receive the long awaited ticket! Row 39! Well, at least it was a floor seat. As I walked back I passed the many fans that would still be in line long after I found my way back to the main road home. I felt so sorry for them to have to settle for less than favorable seats; this sorrow,

however, was misplaced when I entered the auditorium on the evening of the concert.

When March 17 finally arrived, I was so excited that I could barely contain myself. The plan was to meet up with a fellow Hercules member (Barb Meadows from Orlando) and arrive at the auditorium in plenty of time. Since Barb got sidetracked trying to sneak into Elton's sound check session, which she did not accomplish, we were not able to meet for dinner.

As I entered the main building of the Civic Center, the mood seemed rather hushed. Not a typical setting for an EJ concert. Everyone was just quietly walking around. This seemed odd to me, so I began to hand out Hercules postcards to anyone who was wearing an EJ concert T-shirt. Before long, Barb came over and introduced herself, and showed me a wonderful creation that she had commissioned to specifically give to EJ during the concert. It was a marionette doll with a perfect rendering of EJ's face from the Made In England album. The face was a remarkable detailed painting and the rest of the doll was equally crafted. This doll would prove to be a show stopper. More about that in just a moment.

Earlier, I stated that my sorrow was misplaced for the fans who



would not get favorable seats. Well, the reason I said that is because as soon as I entered the actual concert area I realized that ALL of the seats were FANTastic! So, it really didn't matter if I had floor seats or otherwise. The auditorium was so small (the size of a large school gymnasium) that EJ was going to be close at any angle.

The crowd still seemed rather hushed while they quietly waiting for EJ to arrive. As the prerecorded intro music began to blare at about 8:15pm, however, the tranquil gathering turned into a frenzied throng of die-hard fans. EJ was about to emerge! On cue, Elton entered the stage area and quickly made his way to his trademark black grand piano to begin the familiar "Your Song" show starter.

To describe EJ's performance for each song would be pointless, since we all already know how brilliantly he performs each old song to sound brand new with much enthusiasm. Suffice it to say, EJ was flawless throughout the entire concert. I was not surprised by any of the selections because I had a copy of the set list firmly in hand before the concert even started.

Hanging from the rafters above Elton was a very large apparatus of

lights that had parachute type fabric extending outward to give the impression of a hot air balloon, which had imprints of golden Lalique type angels all around. After several songs, the lighting rig began to slowly extend outward in all directions. The end result was a magnificent chandelier of lights and golden metal.

Mid way through the concert, EJ did the usual signature walk in which he starts at the far end of the stage to begin shaking hands and autographing various memorabilia. As EJ neared the end of this autograph session, I happened to look up at one of the large video screens to see Barb's marionette doll in full view. Elton was smiling and laughing as he played with the doll on stage. The crowd went wild. Everyone cheered as EJ worked the marionette until a stagehand came to take it away from him. Barb's gift was clearly a hit with EJ and the entire audience.

As the nearly 3 hour concert came to a close, and all of the encores had been exhausted, it was finally time for Elton to say goodbye. Everyone knew that "Candle In The Wind" would be the last encore because EJ was now wearing his travelling outfit when he emerged onstage. It

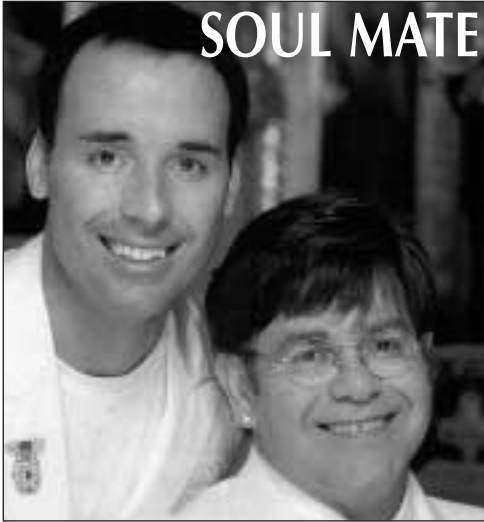
seemed only a moment ago that the concert had started. Was it worth braving hours of chilling winds to purchase a ticket? Was it worth taking a day off from work to travel to Lakeland to attend the concert? I would not have changed a single moment. The whole experience was, for lack of a better word, awesome!

SET LIST FROM THE SPRING 2000

TOUR OF THE USA:

- Your Song
- Skyline Pigeon
- The Greatest Discovery
- Border Song
- Daniel
- Harmony
- Honky Cat
- Rocket Man
- Tiny Dancer
- Someday Out Of The Blue**
(accompanied with fresh video scenes from El Dorado)
- Philadelphia Freedom
- Blessed
- Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word
- I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues
- Ticking
- Carla/Etude
- Tonight
- Burn Down The Mission
- The One
- Blue Eyes
- Empty Garden
(accompanied with a video tribute to John Lennon)
- Take Me To The Pilot
- Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me
- Crocodile Rock
- Can You Feel The Love Tonight**
(accompanied with video scenes from The Lion King)
- Bennie And The Jets
- Candle In The Wind

ELTON OPENS HEART ON HIS SOUL MATE



Elton has opened his heart on his relationship with David; in an April interview with UK daily newspaper *The Mirror*, he calls David "the love of my life".

Elton also says his feelings for the former advertising executive may lead to him to cut back on his workload. "If I don't start taking it easier, David will

with keeping his feet firmly on the ground. "Drugs and drink nearly destroyed me and I didn't know how to have a healthy relationship," says Elton. "But I've been sober now for ten years and what I love most in my life is my sobriety and my relationships with my friends, family and partner. David is clever and intelligent and not willing to put up with any shit.

probably kill me," he said. "He misses me when I'm away.

"I'm so in love with the guy. The picture of him I keep beside my bed is one of my most treasured possessions. If there was a fire in my apartment - in Atlanta, where I have a beautiful photograph collection - the one picture I would take is the one of him as a little boy."

Elton laid bare his emotions in his suite at the Los Angeles Century Plaza Hotel. And he went on to credit David

He has his own identity and job and that's why it works. We have our disagreements but it's a 50-50 partnership. The worst thing you can do is make someone follow you around the world because in the end he'll feel like a lapdog. I made that mistake so many times.

"I would fall in love after seeing someone across the bar. Then he'd go through the Elton John treadmill and come out with a Cartier watch and no identity."

Elton, says he's a changed man in more than one respect. His love of all things flamboyant is not as excessive as it used to be. He shudders when he's reminded of the Louis XIV costume he wore to his 50th birthday party. The wig was so big that Elton had to ride to the bash in a van.

"The driver went the wrong way to the party so I was stuck in the van for an hour and a half. I was screaming with pain because the wig was stuck on with knitting needles and glue and everything.

"When I was lowered from the van I went, 'Aaaargh!' and raced in and took the wig off and said to David, 'If I ever do this again, please stop me.' I enjoy dressing up but things have changed and I'm much more mature now."

Adapted from The Mirror, April 2000.

Please do not ask the Hercules staff to supply copies of the original newspaper interview.

BETWEEN 17 AND 20 · BETWEEN 17 AND 20

ANOTHER VERSE OF OUR REGULAR COLUMN FEATURING TRIVIA AND

HERCULES

Neil Sedaka was the very first recording artist to sign with Rocket Records.

Elton did not want to release "Bennie And The Jets" as a single in the USA, but Dick James insisted.

HERCULES

17-11-70 was released earlier than planned in an effort to undermine the bootleg copies that were already in circulation.

HERCULES

Dick James did not want to release "Daniel" as a single in the USA, but Elton insisted.

The original title for "Rock Of The Westies" was "Bottled and Brained".

My Trip Down The Road to El Dorado

A review of the movie by Barb Crowley

Elton may have outgrown the duck costume, but *The Road to El Dorado* proves he's still playful. While R2E isn't necessarily the best movie for young children, it's great for teens, and of course Elton fans of all ages. What fans can be offended by a few "hells", when Elton himself swears like a sailor in *Tantrums & Tiaras*?

Set in Spain in 1519, Elton narrates this historical fiction, a story of Tulio and Miguel, as they inadvertently find themselves aboard Cortez's ship headed for the New World.

The partners befriend Cortez's horse, Altivo, and the three are on their way to the Queen of Cities. Of course, by the end of the journey, they realize that friendship is more valuable than the gold of El Dorado. The city of El Dorado resembled the Mexico ride at Epcot - a little too much for my comfort.

Fortunately, I wouldn't expect Disney to embrace the movie and renovate, so I guess we're



still safe from the bad guy, Tzekel-Kan, at Epcot.

But, back to the movie...

Musically, Elton's "sound-track" album is much more enjoyable than the

music in the actual film. Keep your ears open for "Without Question." It begins, and ends, with the first few measures of "Daniel." (Could this be a reference to Daniel heading for Spain??)

This will be an exciting movie to rent on DVD. Hopefully the producer will include several of the deleted scenes. It would be interesting to see the scenes that we've heard the music for, such as "Hey Armadillo!" and "The Panic In Me."

In summary, WITHOUT QUESTION, I have to give R2E double thumbs up. TRUST ME!

Whilst the movie is on general release in the USA, European fans will have to wait until later this year to see it for themselves.



idol

No, Sir Elton, we do not have any eye glasses larger than those.



by Reggie Zippo

BETWEEN 17 AND 20 · BETWEEN 17 AND 20

GOSSIP ABOUT ELTON - FOUND OF COURSE, BETWEEN PAGES 17 AND 20!!

HERCULES

Pat Boone once sued Elton for the "la la la la" passages in "Crocodile Rock". He claimed that they were stolen from his 1962 hit "Speedy Gonzalez".

HERCULES

When Elton was awarded a star on Hollywood Boulevard's Walk Of Fame on November 21, 1975, it was the first time in the history of 1,662 ceremonies that the whole street had to be closed off because of the crowds of fans.

HERCULES

During the summer of 1979, at a rented house in the south of France, Elton wrote the words and music for a song about his Polaroid camera. It remains unpublished.

conventionally speaking...



On Elton's birthday, March 25th, Hercules held conventions in London, Chicago and Florida. It's a great excuse for fans of Elton to get together, swap stories, buy or sell merchandise, and generally have a lot of fun.

In the UK, Elton look-a-like Ray Johnson turned a few heads when he walked into the bar of the Anna Hotel in London to join in the fun. Some American visitors to the UK, who happened to be staying in the same hotel, thought that it was Elton himself who had arrived. So much so, that one lady ran out and bought him a bunch of flowers to show her appreciation!

The new CD, *The Road to El Dorado* was played loudly in the bar; it was the first time many fans had had the chance to hear



Ray 'Elton' Johnson and Nigel Coleman relaxing in the bar at the UK Convention (Photo: N Coleman)

it. And the usual quizzes and games were played to test the knowledge of even the most ardent fan!

In the USA, members had the chance to talk about recent EJ shows they had attended, and as you can see from the photo, the party in Florida celebrated with Elton's favourite - the infamous

Diet Coke!

The next Convention will be held in Germany, prior to Elton's concert in Kassel on 23 June 2000.. All fans are welcome at the Hotel Schweizer-Hof from noon to approx 6pm, which is within walking distance of the concert venue.



(Photo: Barb Crowley)



All smiles at the USA Convention (Photo: Barb Crowley)



Watford atch

David Wright takes a look back over Watford Football Club's season

CLUB AT THE END OF THE TABLE

It seemed inevitable that Watford's stay in the Premiership would be brief and so it was. The Hornets finished seven points adrift at the bottom of the table, where they have been for most of the season, and ten points from safety. These are the depressing statistics:

**Played 38,
Won 6,
Drawn 6,
Lost 26,
Goals for 35,
Goals Against 77,
Points 24.**

But it wasn't all doom and gloom. In the third game they pulled off arguably the shock result of the season with a 1-0 win at Liverpool. Then there was the 1-0 home defeat of Chelsea. Combined with another 1-0 win against fellow relegation candidates Bradford, it didn't look too bad. Two wins from the following twenty two games painted a more realistic picture.

They suffered injuries too. Nick Wright, scorer of that wonder goal in last year's play-off final, started just two league games and has a question mark

hanging over his career. Bart Noel-Williams, Tom Mooney and Allan Smart played only one, seven and thirteen games respectively. Crucially these were the players central to Watford's survival hopes. With a squad already short of the necessary quality, injuries like this were a killer blow.

So what are Watford's chances for next season? Good, if the players mentioned above play a major role. Add promising youngsters like Charlie Miller, David Perpetuini and Darren Ward and the strength of £1.5 million signing Heidar Helguson and they might just do it again.

The final word goes to the fans. At Middlesbrough, the final away game, they carried a self-mocking banner reading "We're Out Of Your League".

You can keep up to date on Watford's progress through their excellent website – www.watfordfc.co.uk <<http://www.watfordfc.co.uk/>> - as well as the weekly Watford Watch on our own Hercules site.

PART TWO HEALING HANDS

nigel olsson

TALKS EXCLUSIVELY TO HERCULES

FROM CALIFORNIA,

13 NOVEMBER 1999

This issue features Part 2 of the interview. See Hercules Issue 50 for Part 1.

George Matlock: *One of the things I wanted to discuss was how the emphasis of the band changed, to focus more on Elton. Charlie Morgan was recounting to me that he found the musicians were treated as session musicians, hired and fired at will. The sleeve of "Philadelphia Freedom", actually refers to the "Elton John Band". So this began to change. Would this be around the mid-seventies?*

Nigel Olsson: It was really in the early 1980s, when it became more of a business than the enjoyment of the music. We still pulled the music off. When he first let Dee and I go, when he went to Caribou to cut "Rock of the Westies!" that was both a kick in the pants and total shock. He hadn't told us what was going on. In fact, he called me the week before, and he was raving that we're going to do Dodger Stadium, it was a sold-out gig, and nobody plays at Dodger Stadium, especially rock and roll bands. The next week I got this call from Steve Brown saying 'Elton doesn't want you guys involved in gigs or recording anymore, what are you going to do?' all in one sentence. I was floored.

GM: *Did you feel that was Elton speaking or management? How did you interpret it?*

NO: I've had many years to grind my teeth about it. I think it came from the hierarchy. I never got to know why that decision was made. Me and Dee were called back a few years later, and let go again in that sudden way. We were called by someone. I had wished Elton had made the call himself. It

would have been much easier. The reason for why he let us go, as far as I read in the press, was that Elton wanted to change musical direction. And I don't think he's quite got that together yet. Still the records sound like me and Dee play in the background. And Dee went to his grave not knowing why the change [Dee died in 1992]. We were very close and living in Nashville. A few weeks before Dee died, I visited him. He was very sick, and we would reminisce about our careers. One of the last things Dee said to me was: 'Nige, I wish we'd been told what the hell we did to be fired. We never got the right story.' That really saddens me, and there's really not a day that goes by I don't think about Dee. It was the best band Elton's had - ever.

GM: *Elton's had many highlights since, but it was, I suppose, an amazing era because the band was producing up to three albums a year, and all were consistently good. Going back to the 1970s split, you at least had Steve Brown contacting you. But did you already feel then that management or the record company was commercialising?*

NO: Yes, I already felt that a little before, because when Dee and I came back from the second tour we did here (USA), we were called into the office, and got told we were earning too much money as sidemen and that we'd have to take a break in our wage packets. In those days we didn't think twice about it. We were so into the tours, recording, we were playing an album ahead of ourselves on tour. It was fine. I had money in the bank, a house and a Mini Cooper car! Whereas now I'm absolutely fuming about it. In those early days the management

people in the industry were very cut-throat.

GM: *I want to ask about your roots. You haven't lost your Sunderland accent. How do you keep it polished?*

NO: You know, I don't know. My mum, who passed away three years ago, would always notice an American word, and would say 'you're losing your accent. Don't forget where home is!'

GM: *It's definitely more West Country than West Coast [laughter] Do you spend all your time in the States, or do you ever come back to Sunderland?*

NO: I've had a Green Card since 1972. And lived all over the States, here in Los Angeles, Atlanta for nine years, North Carolina for nine years, Nashville for seven years, and now I'm back here. So coming home is rare and far between. The last time was for mum's memorial. And she would have been proud of us. All the brothers and family members got together and had a great piss-up! It was great. We celebrated life, not mourned passing away. That was the last time for me in England. But now I have BBC America on cable television, so I keep up with what's going on in England. Especially when I see these shows in the English countryside, I get this urge to come back and enjoy what I've missed. When you're on tour you're worn out. You see just arenas. In the latter period on tour, we'd have the whole stage and dressing rooms flown with us. We could be in Los Angeles one day. Two days later we'd be in Australia, and ask whether after a 17-hour flight we left anywhere!

GM: *Do you have a view over the sea?*

NO: No, we're in one of the valleys. I live in a cosy Spanish-style house with my wife and son, Justin. We're just a short drive away from the beach, Malibu and Santa Monica.

GM: *How do you put up with the smog? Or isn't that a problem where you're living?*

NO: It's great now, because we had some rain two days ago, and kind of washes it away. But you find normally about three inches of dirt on top of your car. I've got

a white Range Rover, but now it's kind of a smoggy yellow [laughter]. It really takes the pain off.

GM: *What makes you want to live in a place like that? Think of your lungs!*

NO: I know. Well of course I'm smoking ciggies! It's close to the music business, and close to my racing interests. I've been racing cars for 10 years now. I've got a big race in Las Vegas next weekend. It's also close to other band members. If I was in the band, where I lived wouldn't matter as I'd commute wherever. Of course, the tax situation here is mental. We pay a state tax, and a federal tax.

GM: *So you're happy where you are!*

NO: Well I'd love to end up in the south of France somewhere. But, hey, God loves a trier and a dreamer, and that's me!

GM: *For the new album with Davey and friends, have you got songs together? And what style are they?*

NO: Well, I'm a great balladeer. "Yellow Brick Road", "Someone Saved My Life Tonight", those are my forte. And I love doing background vocals. I have enough songs now to do two albums. Some are mine. Some are from friends. David Foster given me a song, there's also Bill Champlin, who plays with the band Chicago. In fact, I saw him at the supermarket the other day, and he said 'I've loads more songs. Come up to the house and we'll go through them.' I want to use real strings. I'm not going to be singing lead vocals on all the tracks. It's very hard on stage to sing and use your hands and feet throughout two hours. So I want to have a couple of really strong female vocalists.

GM: *Have you kept your fingers nimble in the past few years? Have you recorded any solo albums?*

NO: No. You know, after I got let go in 1985 I got kinda disillusioned with the music business. There was a lot of backstabbing going on. Me and Dee stayed in Nashville for a while, but working in Nashville is a whole different thing to LA. Most producers in Nashville have their

own clique of musicians they're frightened to get away from. So it was very tough to get into the session musicians thing there. So I went into racing. The Ferrari Challenge, sponsored by Ferrari in Beverley Hills. I then did some endurance testing for the BMW Motorsport 3. I then did a thing for Ford's 35th anniversary of the Mustang, taking people around the track, and basically scaring the pants off them! And hopefully they'd go out and buy the car.

GM: *Did people know you were Elton's drummer?*

NO: Well, I kept it low profile, but word got out and I was doing autographs for the fans, which is great. I'm very appreciative of the fans who've put me where I am. So now I've got the surge again, and I'm doing these Drum Clinic Tours. These are sponsored by my cymbal company, which is Paiste, as well as my microphone company, Sennheiser, and Rhythm Tech, who are a percussion company out of New Jersey.

GM: *Do you keep in touch with other band members?*

NO: With Davey I keep in touch at least once or twice a week. He lives only 30 minutes' drive from me, and that's about it. I talked to Kiki Dee a couple of weeks ago about whether she'd like to record a song on the new album, and about a tentative appearance at the NAMM convention in January, where new musical devices are displayed. She's shown interest. And that's great, because I've always loved Kiki, she's like a sister. I've also tried but failed to hook up with Ray Cooper. I think Ray's gone back into the films business. Ray was a big wheel for Handmade Films, when George Harrison was involved. The last time I saw Ray was when I was invited over to Brunei to jam with Prince Hakim. Ray was under contract to the Prince, about three years ago. I've been trying to get hold of him for this record, and to do a couple of clinics together. The elusive Raymond!

GM: *In a Hercules interview two years ago in Zurich, Davey called it "The Ghost of Ray". His influence lives on, he said. Do you keep in touch with Charlie Morgan?*

NO: The last time I met Charlie

was five years ago when the band played MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

GM: *He's actually in Nashville right now. Are you an Elton fan and do you collect his recent recordings?*

NO: I'm a massive fan, obviously, of his older stuff. I've heard "The One" and that sticks in my mind. I'd love to have played on that, and it even sounds very much like me playing, so there you go! I'm still a big fan.

GM: *You refer to the song "The One", as much of the material included drum machine.*

NO: Right. He kind of went hi-tech on it, and it lost something in the transition.

GM: *What other music do you like?*

NO: Beatles, Jeff Lynne, Stevie Wonder. Newer stuff, I love pop records. Britney Spears. It's great to see kids coming through and not being treated like a joke. I listen to Brandy. She has a great husky voice, and it's the type of thing I'm looking for on my record. I'd also love to work with Shania Twain. And also (US Country singer) Faith Hill. I knew her back in Nashville. She was a shy, laid-back girl, a secretary at a record company. And now she's big. Also heard of Eternal, Oasis.

As Hercules reaches issue number 50, it seems opportune to ask Nigel what he thinks of HERCULES The Mag.

GM: *Do you receive The Mag and what do you think of it?*

NO: I do, and read it all the time. I think it's very well put together.

GM: *I'll pass that on to our editor.*

NO: **Please do. I think we need to upgrade it to colour [laughter]. Colour inside. And bigger writing please because I'm 50 years old [laughter] I need to upgrade my glasses! It's got all the stuff in that the fans would want to hear about. And I'm so glad that we've finally connected.**

GM: *I'm very grateful as well; it's been my pleasure.*

WEBSITE REVIEW

eltonjohn.com

The Official Elton John Web Site, <http://www.eltonjohn.com>

Elton and his management have recently launched an official Website.

Here, we bring you a review of the main features... *by Reggie Zippo and Tammi Law*

The website is graded from 0 to 4 Stars.

Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★

The moment the new URL was revealed, I hurried to be among the first to catch a glimpse of its infancy. The flash animated preview page was quite impressive with classic EJ circular photos appearing in tandem to the intro of Elton's original "Bennie and the Jets" recording. The finale prompted me to "Ride The Rocket", but that command promptly brought a feeling of apprehension, which was confirmed after an automated email response revealed that an annual membership fee would be required to access the full benefits of the site. I had no reservations in paying the fee because the benefits were exceptional. Free rare MP3 downloads, a free T-shirt, an exclusive live CD, with the promise of more perks to come.

The only problem was that I was required to pay the fee with a credit card online. No other alternatives were offered. I simply refuse to use a credit card online. So, I sent a message to the site's staff members requesting to pay via personal check, but I never received a response. Undaunted, I visited the site again after its doors were fully open to the public. Excitement quickly followed as I discovered that many aspects of a true fan site were in place. If you have the most up-to-date computer equipment and software downloads, (and that's

a big 'If'!) the welcome page was an outstanding array of impressive graphics, flash animations, and the sounds of "Philadelphia Freedom" enticing me to venture further.

I found that I had access to read the latest EJ news and concert updates, watch video diaries direct from EJ and the "Some Day Out Of The Blue" music video, absorb EJ's personal messages and music reviews. By this time, I was not upset that I wouldn't be receiving the "free" perks that came along with the membership fee. My only disappointment is that I will not have the backstage access to EJ's concerts (exclusive to a limited number of members).

Members also have the opportunity to purchase tickets to Elton shows via the website, and a limited number of "promotional" tickets are given away to members on a first-

come, first-served basis shortly before a few selected shows. There is some concern that the website is American-biased, and indeed, it is run by an American Website Design company. Some fans in Europe have expressed disappointment over this. The only other aspect which caused concern is the hi-tech computer equipment required to access all areas of the site.

Even though the "news" section was quite informative, I find that the news section of the Hercules web site is kept up-to-date at a faster rate. The flash animation is still prevalent throughout, but does not distract from the content. I recommend this site as a companion to all other EJ related web sites. Overall, I must give this site 4 stars as it met with every expectation.



Send your letters to
Tammi Law, Editor
 (address on page 2) or
 e.mail her at
HerculesEd@aol.com.

Hercules Coordinator Stephan Heimbecher informed me that a German TV channel was looking for someone to play in their quizshow "Risiko" recently, with the subject being Elton John. I applied to the casting company, and after a short general knowledge test on the phone they invited me to the casting in Hamburg. The casting worked well and three days later they invited me to the studio recording.

I arrived at the studio with other contestants, who were specialising in other subjects. The general knowledge questions passed without any problem and I was through to round two. The second round was OK too, except the last question, which I unfortunately didn't know: which song on the John Lennon album "Walls and Bridges" did Elton play the piano? I was therefore knocked out of further rounds, but nevertheless I won a nice prize and had a lot of fun.

Juliane Kessing, Germany

Iwould like to tell the story of how my life changed when I became an Elton fan and 'Reghead'. I was born and grew up in the 'second' German state - the German Democratic Republic.

It was impossible for the people here to see a superstar like Elton. The border was insurmountable - no hope for a good life. As a teenager, I would often hear Daniel and Your Song on the radio. I became an Elton fan in 1997 when I bought the book "Rocket Man" and was fascinated. In summer 1998, I had the Moment Of My Life; I was so proud to be able to see my idol live on stage in Munich. I just knew I had to see him again!

As a Hercules member, I have met many new friends by placing a Small Ad in The Mag. It's a great feeling to meet up with these friends at concerts in Germany. Last year, Sir Elton gave me three autographs on my membership pass and fanzines at concerts. Now I'm looking forward to the Medusa Solo Tour this summer. Sir Elton is the best thing in my life and 'My Greatest Discovery'.

Carmen Wernicke, Germany

In the last installment of Kaleidoscope Eyes, I've noticed that in the list of Elton's 70s TV appearances you haven't included the first Italian appearance that he did in 1972, and that I proudly have in my collection. It was to promote Crocodile Rock, his new single and his Italian tour. He was guest in a show presented by Gino Bramieri together with Nigel, Davey and Dee. The instruments were all pre-recorded (but it wasn't the usual studio version) but he sang it live. Beautiful!! I think this will be a nice contribution for the video list.

All the best!!

Christian, Italy

Like every other Elton fan, I was very excited to learn about the launch of the official web-site, eltonjohn.com. In fact, it prompted me to purchase my first home PC, and I duly paid up and became a member as soon as I could. Needless to say, I also joined the on-line membership for the Hercules website.

However, I have a small problem with the official site. Although it is great to receive news and personal messages from Elton himself, I can't help feeling that as a non-USA member, I am treated as a second-class citizen. As far as I can see, the Website is very much geared towards the American fans. The dates which are listed (Tour Dates, Launches etc) are all written the American way (month/day/year); I would be interested to know whether there is any reason at all for this, or why they simply can't state the month NAME. It wouldn't be any fairer if it were the other way round (ie European format), but surely by writing March, June etc, it would keep everyone happy.

I've also discovered (to my cost!) that the merchandise available for purchase is subject to a huge shipping tax for non-USA members. It would perhaps be better if some of the merchandise was also kept at a second central office somewhere in Europe (Elton's management office?), to be sent to European members who purchase the items.

Come on, eltonjohn.com, stop making us Europeans feel that we are visitors at someone else's party! Our money is as good as those fans living in the USA. The Hercules Website seems far more aware of the International interest and appeal of Elton.

Andy Thorpe, Brentford, UK

SMALL ADS

These are free to Hercules members. Send yours to Tammi Law, Editor, 49 Horseshoe Crescent, Swindon SN5 5AX, UK., or e-mail her at HerculesEd@eltonfan.net

LIVE IN NY FOR SALE:

Double CD import "ELTON JOHN LIVE IN NY CITY, OCTOBER 1998". 20 GBP. I've got other Elton's items for sale. E-mail to rocket@inwind.it (for list) and a.perfumo@tiscalinet.it (if you're interested to double cd) or write to Alessandro Perfumo, str Maggiore 65, 15011 Acqui Terme AL, ITALY .

PEN-FRIENDS WANTED!

I am looking for any Elton fans to become pen-friends. Please write to me at: Susan Fisher, 86 Ridgeway, Edgbaston, Birmingham B17 8JG. UK.

EJ CELS

Similar to the way animation Cels are made. Matted and presented in shadow box frames. 16 titles available. Some in limited edition! SPECIAL FREE OFFER! Write to: Cartoon Creations, PO Box 396, Dunedin, FL 34697 USA or visit our website at www.angelfire.com/biz/celebritycel Our home since 1996!

FOR SALE / TRADE

Updated 7 page list includes, 7", 12" vinyl, CDs, Videos, Books, Photos, T-Shirts and more. Please write to Steven Betts 75A Coillesdene Avenue, Edinburgh EH15 2LN, Scotland U.K. or e-mail stevenbetts@btinternet.com

HERCULES MEMBER DISCOUNTS

AT WRAP IT UP!

Hercules has negotiated a permanent discount package worth up to 25% to club members buying selected Elton goods from our retail outlet Wrap It Up! Quote your member number (on your passes) to Wrap It Up!, PO Box 220, Lincoln, LN1 2RZ, England. Tel/fax +44-1522-529275 or email: eltonwrap@aol.com for a list of Elton merchandise.

FOR SALE:

Tour programme The One. Maxi CD Runaway Train, Chicago. A Step Too Far CD and all maxi CDs of The One. Does anyone know who sells signed copies of El Dorado CD in the USA? Or press material/pictures regarding the making of El Dorado. Write or call. Rainer Petersen, Strandstr. 105, 23669 Niendorf, Germany.

idol

Reggie's father said that he will grow up to be an accountant, but I have my doubts.



by Reggie Zippo



Elton shows off his surgical scar!

LYRIC QUIZ ANSWERS

1. L'il 'frigerator
2. Restless
3. Just Like Belgium
4. Razor Face
5. Poor Cow
6. Lies
7. Religion
8. Just Like Strange Rain
9. Seasons
10. The One
11. The Cage
12. Easier to Walk Away

PLEASE REMEMBER...

ALWAYS state your membership number if you send a cheque to Hercules, or pay into one of the Club accounts.

ALWAYS let us know the expiry date of the card, and the cardholders name.

Please note that if you have paid your Membership Fee by Credit Card, your card will automatically be charged again for the renewal fee, at the end of your membership year. If your card has expired in the meantime, or if you have switched companies, please forward your new Credit Card details to Hercules Coordination in time for your next renewal.

MS. UNDERSTOOD

by Barb Crowley

I'd like to introduce you to Ms. Understood, who, until now, was offered exclusively to Elton fans who accessed our website. If you ever thought you knew the words to an Elton song, only to find out later that you were totally wrong, then you're in good company! Enjoy these lyrics (from *eltonfan.com*). Our next issue of the fanzine will feature misunderstood lyrics from *GYBR* album. E-mail your lyrics to me, barb@eltonfan.net, or mail to Miss Understood, c/o Barb Crowley, 3039 Lazlo Lane, Orlando, Florida 32837 USA.

Ms. Understood from The One:

Casey: In the second that you have her kids,
(in the second that the hammer hits)

Alexa: When life holds the gun,
(where wild horses run)

Jennifer: When studs collide like you and I
(when stars collide)

Kay: In the moment that they have a kiss
(that the hammer hits)

Ms. Understood from Your Song:

Megan: It's a little bit sunny
(funny)

Ms. Understood from The Bitch is Back:

Daniel: I'll eat a light steak on a stack of knives
(I even like steak on a Saturday night)

(Daniel again!): I was just a pie, then I was five
(I was justified, when I was five)

Ron: I entertain my pickin' brains, sell my dope by droppin' names. I don't like to throw my car wash hats. Oh and something likes to grab me when the bitch gets back.

Ms. Understood from Bad Side Of The Moon:

Jeannie: Who's in my light?

Ann: Losin' my life!

TOUR DATES

EUROPEAN SOLO TOUR 2000

01 JuneReykjavik, Iceland
Laugardalsvöllur

03 JuneDerbyshire, UK
Chatsworth House

04 JuneDerbyshire, UK
Chatsworth House

06 JuneHampshire, UK
Broadlands

07 JuneHampshire, UK
Broadlands

11 JuneBerkshire, UK
Highclere

13 JuneLincolnshire, UK
Burghley Park

14 JuneLincolnshire, UK
Burghley Park

17 JuneLoeben, Austria
Hauptplatz

18 JuneBregenz, Austria
Seebühne

20 JuneBrescia, Italy
Stadio Rigamonti

23 JuneKassel, Germany
Wilhelmshöhe
Hercules fan convention

24 JuneHamburg, Germany
Derbypark

27 JuneCologne, Germany
KölnArena

28 JuneCoburg, Germany
Schlossplatz

30 JuneLeipzig, Germany
Völkerschlachtdenkmal

01 JulyStuttgart, Germany
Schlossplatz

04 July ..Mannheim, Germany
Schloss Ehrenhof

05 JulyKoblenz, Germany
Schlosshof

07 JulyKünzelsau, Germany
Schlosspark

08 JulyMunich, Germany
Königsplatz

13 JulyLiverpool, UK
Kings Dock

15 JulyChelmsford, UK
Hyland House

16 JulyChelmsford, UK
Hyland House

19 JulyPort Talbot, UK
Margam Park

22 July Northamptonshire, UK
Castle Ashby

23 July Northamptonshire, UK
Castle Ashby

27 JulyLondon, UK
Hyde Park

29 JulyCo. Durham, UK
Raby Castle

13 NovOslo, Norway
Spectrum

14 NovOslo, Norway
Spectrum

18 Nov..Rotterdam, Netherlands
Ahoj Arena

19 NovHannover, Germany
Preussag Arena *

21 NovFrankfurt, Germany
Festhalle *

22 Nov ..Dortmund, Germany
Westfalenhalle *

24 NovZurich, Switzerland
Hallenstadion

US SOLO TOUR 2000 (CONT.)

05 DecJohnson City, TN
Freedom Hall

* A limited number of fan tickets are available for the three November shows in Germany. Interested fans please contact Stephan Heimbecher, Hercules Co-Ordination (address on page 2)

2000



For up-to-the-minute news about Elton,
callers in the UK can phone the

HERCULES Hotline on 0906 888 20 20

Calls cost 60p per minute anytime