

Pagan Altar

THE END OF THE ENIGMA.



THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF DARKNESS ON THE WINGS OF MANS DESIRE,

CONJURED BY THE SOULESS ONES AT THE EVERLASTING FIRE,

BORNE ON WAVES OF INSANITY FROM MANS PRIMEVAL PAST,

THE MANTRA OF THE TUMULT HAS AWAKENED THEM AT LAST

Behind The Cloak

Index

Table of Contents

Page 3 Preface by Ivor Harper

Page 4 In the Beginning

Page 10 The Line Ups

Page 15 On the Road

Page 23 The Old Studio

Page 28 A New Lease of Life

Page 41 Recording the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' Album

Page 48 End of an Era

Page 50 Pagan Altar 2007

Page 54 Pagan Altar 2008

Page 59 Pagan Altar 2009

Page 69 Pagan Altar 2010

Page 78 Pagan Altar 2010 -2013

Page 80 Recording 'The Room of Shadows' 2013 -2015

Page 81 Mixing 'The Room of Shadows' 2017

Page 89 Pagan Altar 2017

Page 97 Discography

Page 103 Lyrics

Preface

When it was first suggested that I write this article I must say that it was with a certain amount of trepidation and mixed emotions that I agreed. I initially considered that being so close to members of the band for years that have spanned from before Pagan Altar was formed to the present day would not make me objective enough in my approach. Having been an ex-drummer with the band, in fact the first, an association that I am extremely proud of, I suppose my natural tendencies and inclinations would lean towards looking at the band through rose coloured glasses. I have therefore tried to observe and analyse the whole situation from a totally detached viewpoint, but human nature being what it is, some of my own opinions and observations have probably crept in and become incorporated within some of the analytical assumptions. I have refrained from



mentioning myself in the Bio, this is not due to any pretence at a misguided view of modesty that I might have but because I genuinely feel that any major achievements made by the band were after my departure. Although I'm sure these two factors can't possibly be related? I have however succumbed to the temptation of inserting at least a couple or so pictures of myself seen here (opposite) with Glen and Alan. I did however; get a mention inside the sleeve of the CD, which pleased me immensely, if only to remind me of probably one of the funniest periods in my life! My initial instruction was to formulate a biography that was actually as near to the truth as I could get regarding the circumstances behind events that transpired to create the Pagan Altar enigma, such as it is, and one that has prevailed for almost twenty years

I have endeavoured to cover in depth as much ground as possible taking into account the time factor involved and peoples varying conception of what had occurred. I have managed to unearth quite a few photos and information that haven't seen the light of day for some considerable time that may or may not be of interest to the reader and also attempted to evaluate the situation up to the present day. It's been quite fun putting it together and I hope that aspect comes across as well as being of some use to the fans (Bless 'em).

Ivor T. Harper 2003

In The Beginning

The enigma that surrounds Pagan Altar has been an on-going saga for some 20 years. How was it possible for a band that has now been acknowledged and recognised as an innovative example of the heavy rock/metal scene of the time, is inexplicably ignored in 1980-86. Pagan Altar now receives acclaim from countries all over the world, from fans and musicians alike, a far cry indeed from the early eighties when no record company or real management seemed interested in the slightest.



Nunhead Cemetery 1982

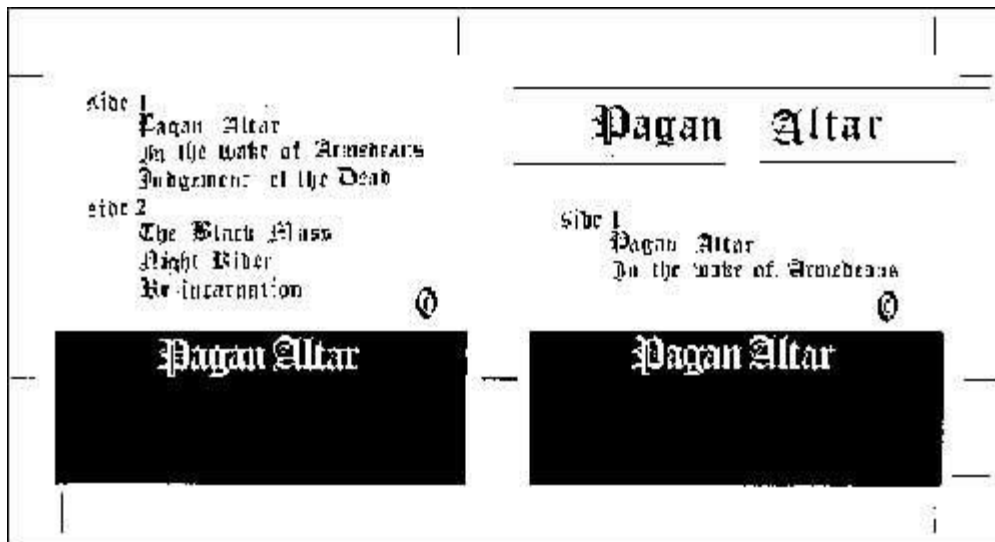
Nunhead Cemetery in Brockley S.E. London was a favourite location for all Pagan Altars Photographic sessions. Its crumbling chapels and Gothic monuments provided the ideal backdrop and was the inspiration behind numerous songs such as March of the Dead, Judgement of the Dead and The Sentinels of Hate.

Pagan Altar the obscurest of the obscure, a classic reflection of British media hypes in the early 80's. It is now common knowledge that like many other good Heavy Rock bands of that period, Pagan Altar were simply ignored by the established music press. They, in their supposed coverage of the British Heavy scene, tended to concentrate on the more lightweight, socially acceptable "Poseur" Bands that they assumed, in their ignorance, were more popular. They probably considered Pagan Altar and their like to be unfashionable and not to their own, or the majority of their readers personal tastes. Much talent was lost in this way and it was only the advent of the Internet that has brought many bands like Pagan Altar to light. I suppose to put the blame solely on the shoulders of these cretins would possibly be giving them undeserved credence, but at the time, publicity from whatever quarter was necessary to progress. Pagan Altar were true underground, but in being so, their music has survived to resurface and be given a new lease of life in this new millennium, almost twenty years later. The Internet, with its far-reaching tentacles, has given a new and far larger audience the freedom of choice to judge for themselves the qualities or frailties of individual bands.



The Invocation (The Tramshed 1983)

Pagan Altar was an extremely good live band, bringing theatre, atmosphere, power and a presence that was at times awesome. The use of a high draped Altar topped with a large inverted cross, skulls, black candles etc, overlooked by the Sorcerers head and flanked by Marshall stacks made an imposing back drop. The cloak clad figures emerging from the mist to the accompaniment of a Gregorian chant was pure theatre and what a great way to get on stage! Inexplicably no major recording company came forward to sign them and it still rankles with me, a comparative outsider, that no one had the foresight to see the lasting potential within the band and their music.



Original inserts for the demo tapes that were distributed throughout the USA and elsewhere. Circa 1982/83.

I FEEL I must agree with Dave Larsen and Roger the Lodger on their point about 'young persons' at HM gigs. I know this is a free country and anybody should be allowed to see his/her favourite band regardless of age but it's getting a bit silly now. Kids of 12 and 13 with all their badges and patches neatly sewed on by mum, glitter 'print-while-you-wait' trendy t-shirts from Oxford St and nice neat haircuts coz 'mum won't let me grow it long'.

Robbi Miller, in her recent Iron Maiden piece, stated how 'Parents wait in cars, secure in the knowledge that their offspring are safe with a wholesome heavy metal band'. Parents wait in cars!!! What is this? I even saw one kid at UFO's gig at Hammersmith earlier this year with his mum. He was about 10 or 11. Also I find a lot of 'kids' following the so called 'NWOBHM' bands, the majority of which I find feeble and uninteresting. The only band of this category with any bollocks is Samson and the as yet unsigned but brilliant Pagan Altar. But I digress.

I work in a record shop and therefore see a lot of new converts to HM, which is good for obvious reasons, also a lot of 'old school' headbangers and it's great to see singles and albums doing really well instead of all this fashionable mod crap. But so many of these 'new converts' range from 10-14 years old and are simply following the trend of the moment. It does get a bit of a drag, as the only headbanger on a staff of about 30, when workmates nudge me and point to some kid just out of nursery school wearing a Saxon or Iron Maiden T-shirt and ask "One of your mates?" - The Split Brother (age 21).

PS Pagan Altar - the future of rock'n'roll.

A cutting from the 'Sounds' music Newspaper circa 1980/81 obviously from a real disgruntled 'Heavy' not too impressed with the reported music scene of the time. Like myself he didn't seem too keen on some of the 'poseur' bands either, still, judging by the comment about Pagan Altar and the PS his heart (and his ears) were certainly in the right place! Just seems a shame no one took any notice of him!

Pagan Altar were well known throughout S. E. England and played most of the notable and some perhaps not so notable venues, but that was as far as it went, except, oddly enough, in the United States. In 1982 a demo tape of the first album circulated the U.S.A. and has been bootlegged ever since. This not only had the effect of keeping Pagan Altar alive but also has now raised them to cult status, funny how some things have a way turning full circle. The original Demo, recorded in their own studio consisted of random tracks taken from various themes that were written as a series of songs. 'Judgement of the Dead' is the conclusion to 'March of the Dead' as 'Reincarnation' and 'Pagan Altar' is the finale to 'Armageddon, The interlude and 'The Aftermath'.



A good view of the coffin, complete with blood, and Altar complete with cobwebs

Pagan Altar tended to prefer to write in this manner and songs were constructed both lyrically and musically to reflect the various circumstances and feeling within each given scenario. The band considered that to produce a concept album at that stage might appear to be slightly gratuitous and may only appeal to a limited audience. On reflection this would seem to have been the case. As soon as the first issue of the Heavy Metal magazine 'Whiplash' with the favourable Pagan Altar demo review inside had hit the streets and circulated throughout the U.S.A. the effect was instantaneous, and the band were hard pushed to keep pace with demand. Mail arrived on a daily basis and it was a full time vocation to answer every letter and package and send off the multitude of requests for the Demo. This was however achieved with the help a number of handmaidens who relished the task and were only too pleased to help when and wherever they could!

The circumstances and events that transpired in this period of the band history created the Pagan Altar enigma, far more than playing the various venues which only tended to keep the fan base localised.

It is hard to comprehend that a chance meeting in an obscure rehearsal studio with Sam Kress the editor of a previously unknown HM magazine would still be reverberating some 20 years on.



PAGAN ALTAR, the name so typified the band, although pigeon holed with other supposed Satanic orientated bands of the time, this was actually a misconception. If you were to look closer you would find Pagan Altar had carved out a niche of their own. Although a lot of material was devoted to different aspects of the dark side as it would appear from Vol.1 the overall picture of their material as a whole covered a much wider spectrum.



Pagan Altar's musical style was also slightly different, guitar lead breaks and infill's were as much an integral part of the song as the vocals and they played off one another like Morecambe and Wise. This unison of compatibility is what helped make Pagan Altar what they were. If you listen closely to middle passage of 'The Wake of Armadeus' in particular you will hear the guitar playing in harmony with the vocals, I personally can't recall anyone else doing that before!

Their music was constructed in such a way as to extract the maximum power from each riff. The subtle changes of rhythm between riff sections give the impression of flowing and blending into each other and so appear as a natural progression. Never one to overkill a riff Pagan Altar designed each song with an overall viewpoint that gives the song a beginning, a middle and an end and so becomes the complete, finished article.



An extremely tight not over-elaborate bass allows the drums to be both fluent and powerful giving a free flowing, yet still rock solid foundation for the intricacies of guitar and vocals. A subtle mix of gut wrenching power riffs and downright earthiness sit comfortably with Alan Jones's lead guitar sound some guitarists would give their right arm for! As a matter of note, for any interested parties, Alan uses a Hagstrom 'Super Swede' with a Derringer pick up at the neck and a Demarzio at the bridge. The Amp is a 100W Marshall Head (valve) through 2 x 4 x 12"s. The vocal line is set quite low in the mix and this give the overall sounds an ambience and fullness that add to the feeling of power. Amidst all, the music retains momentary wistful passages in contrast that make it compelling and interesting. The feeling of emptiness generated in 'Judgement of the Dead' is so strong you can almost smell the graveyard. The end result of which, is music that still stands up today after 20 years. Over those years, people have likened Pagan Altar to this band or that band, but this just substantiates my point and that Pagan Altar were a breed apart and the listener will read into the music what they will!

The Line Ups

At this juncture I feel I should introduce the band formally, as I have previously been speaking of them in collective terms. Also to give a brief insight into the bands history prior to the formation of the final line up. Alan and Terry Jones (obviously related) lead guitar and vocals respectively and founder members of Pagan Altar circa 1978/79. Trevor Portch, Bass, who having seen them play at the 2001 club in Erith in 1981 came up and spoke to them afterwards, (I should mention that Trev was dressed as Angus young at the time!). He answered their ad in 82 and stayed to the bitter end. John Mizrahi, Drums, who after having had a finger blown off in action in Israel decided it wasn't for him and joined Pagan Altar instead! (You can make your own mind up whether he made the right choice!). Alan came from Brockley, South East London from where the band was based, Trevor hails from Slade Green, Erith in Kent, Terry originated from Rotherhithe, Bermondsey in South East London and John from a bomb crater with an unpronounceable name somewhere in Israel.



Terry Jones

Lead Vocal



Alan Jones

Lead Guitar &
Backing Vocals



Trevor Portch

Bass & Backing
Vocals



John Mizrahi

Percussion

The Classic 80's Line Up

Alan and Terry composed and wrote all Pagan Altars music between them and this was very much a joint effort. Alan would compose and put together the music and then do a basic recording. Terry would then listen to it, sometimes for days, see how it made him feel in regard to subject matter and then write the lyrics to suit. On one occasion he sat alone in Nunhead Cemetery at 12 o/c at night whilst working on 'March of the Dead' and 'Judgement of the Dead' to get the right vibes. The next stage would be to structure the song. This was done together and often led to arguments between them. The end result though always came out as an amicable effort that was agreeable to both. Both had been in other bands Prior to Pagan Altar, possibly the more notable being 'Hydra', but the hankering to write and play their own brand of heavy Rock was always uppermost in their minds and so in 1978-79 Pagan Altar was conceived. The original name was to be just PAGAN, a name they liked but one that didn't really conjure up the right image, although, was easy to remember! And so it became PAGAN ALTAR after Stonehenge and Avebury, places that are of considerable interest to Al and Tel. It was a name that gave a wide scope for song writing material subject matter and also projected the effect they wanted. Pagan Altar started life as a 5 piece and this situation existed for the first 2-3 years or so. There were obviously numerous member changes before settling on the final 4-piece line up. Some of these were such 'arseholes' that I can't even bothered to mention them. There is one Dickhead though, that I feel must, but only because inadvertently he had a hand in the evolvement of Pagan Altar.

The band travelled to play a gig in Reading but was unaware that Ian Gillan was appearing just down the road, so the audience was obviously somewhat thin on the ground. The prick thought he would do a 'Bill Ward' and walk off stage with his gear following an argument. If you do it front of thousands of people you make a point, to do it in front of a handful, you look like a pratt, nuff said. Pagan Altar still went on stage, but as a 4-piece, they liked the sound and that's how it stayed. The following rhythm sections I thought I would include as being worthy of note for the part they played in the evolution of Pagan Altar.



Glenn Robinson (Bass)



Mark Elliott (Drums)



Toby



Greg

Before I leave the subject of ex band members it might well be as good a time as any to add that Brian Cobbold or Mark Elliott could still have a major part to play in the final chapter of Pagan Altar.

Throughout their existence Pagan Altar were gigging on a regular basis and played all the notable 'Heavy' Venues in and around London. They always felt that they were heading in the right direction and that something would materialise at some stage. Needless to say, it never did. At least not at the time of asking! Extra cash was earned by hiring their studio and P.A. system at prices other bands could afford and this allowed the band to make all-round improvements and upgrade equipment over and above their general running costs.

I mention this only because the band considered that to seriously compete with other bands that had an influx of real money you had to look, and more importantly sound, comparable. In the majority of small and medium sized Venues there is usually no In-house P.A. so the options are, to use your own or hire, and this can create something of a financial burden to the relatively smaller bands.

Most people watching and listening to bands play never take into account the quality of the sound system or sound engineer and consequently judge the band by what they hear. If either of these critical factors is deficient it reflects on the band and tends to put them in a poor light. Pagan Altar had no intention of leaving this to chance and everything was geared to improve the sound at every opportunity. They did however have an ace card in the shape of sound engineer Phil Hearne, a friend of the band, but I shall come back to him later. Even with the constant round of playing and self-promotion they couldn't seem to break the shackles of limited acknowledgement. Reviews in the national music press were limited to a few lines and usually detrimental. This resulted in a few skirmishes with the music press and a stinking article followed that probably did the band no good at all. From this point on they were totally ignored and with no real way of responding the only option was to carry on under their own steam.

Pagan Altar continued to persevere and progress in terms of searching for stage and musical perfection of a music they believed in, and the visual stage aspect that accompanied it. To them it was the complete article.



Early PAGAN ALTAR poster Circa 1980

Nothing or nowhere was safe from the demon fly posters. Anything with a flat surface was fair game and was duty bound to receive a quick slosh of paste and a poster. It became almost a competition as to who could plant a poster in the most unique and noticeable places. Moving buses were always a good one. The doors of the pagan mobile could slide right back allowing complete freedom to lean out and do the business whilst moving. Personally I still think the wallpapering of Bow church late one Saturday night ready for the service in the morning was the piece de resistance!

On The Road

From mid-1982 onwards the band made great strides in all departments. The music had never really been a problem, but now considerable time and effort went into portraying the mood and feel from a visual aspect. The stage act was perfected to a fine art and followed an on-going theme that continued throughout the whole set beginning with 'Pagan Altar' and culminating in the 11 minute long 'Armageddon', which contained solos by each member of the band. The dual-purpose and reasons behind the stage act were not only for the visual effect to accentuate the theme behind the songs, but also as a means to get on stage. I certainly can't recall any other band of the time doing anything remotely similar and if there was, not one in the same position as Pagan Altar. I have gone to great length later on in this bio to describe in lurid detail the whole beginning section and the background behind the stage act. I consider it may also have some bearing on the lack of achievement accrued by a band that obviously had a wealth of talent. I am not one to cast aspersions so I won't mention any names, but I do know that on at least two occasions when well-known bands came to watch them play with a view to them filling support slots on tour, none of which ever materialised. I leave you to draw your own conclusions as to why.

When Pagan Altar did manage to get a support slot it didn't go quite according to plan either the main band or I use the term loosely, heard them doing a sound check and flatly refused to go on after them, Pagan Altar headlined!

Periodically Pagan Altar were booked to appear on the touring 'Powerhouse' Heavy Metal road show. On one such occasion in '81 at a venue called 'The Headstone' all the preparation and setting up had been completed and the band was sitting in the dressing room waiting to go on.

I walked a reasonably well-known band of the time and asked if they could use the bands gear to play a spot after Pagan Altar had been on, apparently to promote their new single. Terry pointed out that they were welcome to use their gear but as they were a five piece and Pagan Altar was now only a four would that not cause a problem. The band in question replied that it wasn't important, as the crowd had all come to see them anyway. Fair enough, Pagan Altar went on stage and really played well, Al had a field day and really let rip. Terry announced over the P.A. that the other band was to follow them and play their new single. The other band refused to go on and just sat on their arses and signed a few autograph.





The band would record material while they were rehearsing and also during some live performances if the right circumstances prevailed. They could then listen back at leisure and make any necessary adjustments and improvements. This was invaluable when working on new material and also to look retrospectively at the existing songs.

It was also an ideal opportunity, when Phil was available, to record tracks to be later assembled in album form. In theory this was ideal but in practice had one major flaw, but I will return to that episode later.

On reflection, if someone with the foresight to professionally advance these recordings at the time the Pagan Altar story could have been so different. Vol. 1 can be attributed to this period both as a demo and the basis for an album.

It is now common knowledge that the effect achieved by one demo, both at the time and up to the present has been phenomenal. This was not the case in 1982-3. The band was under the impression that it had been taken as far as it could go in the U.S. and that was it. They couldn't have been more wrong!!!!



As the band moved on and progressed so did the problems. The whole point behind expansion relies on the need for venues of a size that will cater for the growing band. The venues that could possibly cater for Pagan Altar became less and less frequent to find. Agents that already had their own artists to cater for usually carried out the venue bookings; they were now in a vicious circle.

To return to playing the smaller venues just to keep gigging seemed to be a regressive step. Agents were tried, most of them had no idea of what Pagan Altar was about and either booked unsuitable gigs or just simply backed off. The only option left open was to hire venues and set the gigs up themselves, and this they did. The only drawback with this, was that again, without the publicity of the national music press, no one knew where they were playing, so to make it financially



viable it had to be localised to where the bulk of their fan base were situated.

Never the less they continued to grow in stature in regard to professionalism and persistence, but were forced into being more and more insular!

A phone call from Sam Kress at 2am one Sunday morning looked as if it might lead to a break through. He had previously informed the band they were to be on a compilation album, but this had now changed and they would now have their own instead. Was this possibly the start of the bootlegs?

He had been in touch with the manager of the then up and coming Metallica, regarding the possibility of a tour of America. All Pagan Altar had to do was get themselves over there. A total financial impossibility!





Even the College circuit, once a great source of outlet for Pagan Altar, and Heavy bands in general for that matter, were looking elsewhere for musical entertainment to feed the younger influx of students. The down side of this was that the colleges had the necessary facilities to accommodate Pagan Altar's needs and the gradual closing of this avenue was quite a blow.

The only way Pagan Altar could reach new audiences was to play and this was being slowly cut off. The local gigs always went well and were a great confidence boost, but the time had come to expand the band's horizons.

I appear to be painting a picture of doom and gloom, but this certainly was not my original intention as nothing could be further from the truth. What I am attempting to portray however, are the reasons and difficulties Pagan Altar had in reaching new pastures and consequently to a wider audience at the time. Another vital factor, that could in all probability have resulted in a totally different outcome for the band had it been achieved.

I have read some of the present day reviews from Distros around the world and it is painfully obvious that I'm not alone in making this assumption! There is of course the other side of the coin to be considered. If, at the time, Pagan Altar were to have been elevated to a brief period of acknowledgement and then sunk into obscurity as happened to numerous bands resulting from the media hype, we wouldn't have the scenario we have with Pagan Altar today. The e-mails from fans that have been sent to Oracle Promotions from around the Globe are printed off and filed. This has given me an insight whilst preparing the background for this Bio, to read through and gauge the effect that a band that was presumed as of no account at the time has had on a fan base they were totally unaware of!

I have to say that I was both amazed and impressed at the loyalty and appreciation for the music shown by fans after all these years made even more astounding when you think that there has been only one album and very little information to go on! Young people from around the world, via the Internet, are now seeing Pagan Altar in their true light and are latching on to the music and its vibes, maybe Pagan Altar were ahead of their time and it has taken the rest of the world twenty years to catch up!

The band themselves, or should I say the remaining members, (John's probably off fighting a war somewhere in Israel!) are totally knocked out by the response to the CD and have tried to fulfil an avalanche of requests by resurrecting the old recordings, I will return to clarify the situation and what has occurred Later!!!



John Taking A Break

Al Taking The Money

Trev Taking A Piss

I mentioned the integral part that Internet distros, magazines and fanzines now play in the circulation of recorded material old and new and also in supplying background information on the various bands. These outlets operate for the benefit of all concerned and are run by people with a genuine love for the music whatever genre. They also possess an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the music and are extremely loyal to the metal cause. A far cry indeed from twenty years ago when everything was governed by a music press and 'disc jockeys' that were so far up their own arses that they couldn't see what was really going down. The odd begrudging review on a heavy band was written by nerds sitting in their little offices playing along to the latest pop song on their little acoustic guitars.

The 'disc jockeys' were just as pathetic, forty odd year old men making out they were in tune with the youth of the day, waxing lyrical on how they just loved the latest outfall of sampled pop bilge and how they must add it to their own record collection! From a media viewpoint the NWOBHM wasn't happening, at least not in England!

There were only three DJs that I can remember that actually played heavy music on their extremely rare shows and they were Alan Freeman, Tommy Vance and whispering Bob Harris on his 30 minute a week slot 'The Old Grey Whistle Test. These bastions of heavy rock music, as it was called then, were pilloried and treated like lepers by the so called 'with it' brigade who appeared to look down on them as being boring old dinosaurs!

The hierarchy that existed in the early eighties is thankfully no longer with us. As soon as it was realised that the music newspapers were only good for wrapping Fish and Chips and just exactly how much talent was required to put a piece of plastic on a turntable, their reign of incompetence was over.

Too late it would seem for Pagan Altar! On the next page I have put together a few of many quotes from various distros, magazines etc from around the World to exentuate the point of difference in opinion between then and now. I will leave you to draw your own conclusions!

Too bad these guys didn't get anymore attention in the past, for they really deserved it, I think it seems as if they even inspire bands nowadays! Spin City Magazine. BELGIUM.

The sound quality of this album is awesome!
Game Two Records. U.S.A.

Pagan Altar blow a new fuse in the word heavy, It takes the speakers a while to recover!
G.L.Productions. SWEDEN.

Holy Metal!!! Is this a Cult? If so I'm part of the fan club. Pagan Altar have the stuff to tempt the world!
Hellion Records. GERMANY.

Do these guys kick ass or not!!!!
Knights of Sunrise. GREECE.

Real metal to the BONE!
Snakepit magazine. U.S.A.

Gosh, I don't know what to say! As for me, this album sounds AWESOME!
To be honest, for me Pagan Altar is one of the most original NWoBHM bands ever
Secrets of Steel. POLAND.

This CD is fucking impressive!
The Tempter. SPAIN.

The sound quality on this Oracle release is far better than the bootlegs and make it much easier to realise this bands genius!
Underdogma Records, USA.

They kick ass, of course!
Doomed Planet Records. U.S.A

At last, one of the all-time greatest Doom bands that not many know about, the U.K's Pagan Altar.
Slow Ride. U.S.A.

I recently acquired your CD and its totally brilliant!
Metal Blade Records. GERMANY.

Thanks for turning me on to this Awesome album!
Hole in the Wall Music. U.S.A.

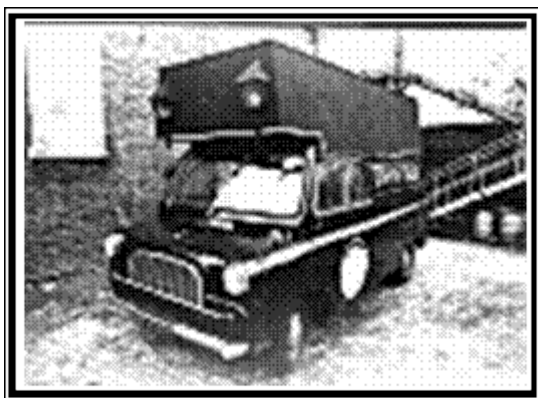
I realised that This was That Demo That yanked my crank all those years ago!
Physchedelic Zine. HUNGARY

I heard you released the Pagan Altar debut on CD, I MUST HAVE IT!
Minatuari. FINLAND.

Enjoyed the CD immensely, Great heavy guitar!
Slayer magazine, U.S.A.

Brockley was alive with music during this period of time with the likes of Kate Bush in residence and members of various bands dotted all over. This gave birth to the PAGAN-MOBILE, a mode of transport that would set the band apart from the rest. This exquisite piece of refined Machinery certainly did, even Bob Geldolf stopped filming as it passed to mutter "What the fucks that!!!" The interior was Oak panelled and was the envy of many a Funeral Director. Once enroute to a venue with the coffin tied to the roof, the Band were caught up in a Funeral cortège and preceded towards Brockley Cemetary at a leisurely pace looking to all intents and purposes like Burke and Hare the grave robbers. They didn't ask the mourners if they wanted to come to the gig! The coffin itself also caused a few problems. It was stored, when not in use, in the cellar below the Pagan Studio where also the Electric meters were housed. A new woman meter reader called to read the meter as was her want. The light bulb in the cellar had just blown but she assured the band it was not a problem as she had a company issue torch. The band left her to her own devices and carried on rehearsing. Later, the police turned up saying a hysterical woman had run into the police station claiming bodies were being stored at that Devil worshipping house in Upper Brockley Road.

Even a Christmas shopping expedition could not pass without incident. The band couldn't be bothered to unload the coffin after the gig the night before and left it in the back of the van. On leaving Bromley shopping centre the next day, the Pagan-Mobile, full of Christmas cheer and groupies wearing very little but a muff, was pulled over and stopped by a Plod-Mobile full of pigs. They insisted on searching the van on the pretext of searching for bombs, as was norm during the current spate of bomb scares. They really wanted a better look at the ladies, or gropies as they called them. When they were told there was nothing in the back except a coffin it was greeted with cynical sneers of disbelief. It was a pleasant experience to see their faces when they found it. Even when told its occupant had been dead for 3 years they still refused to open it!

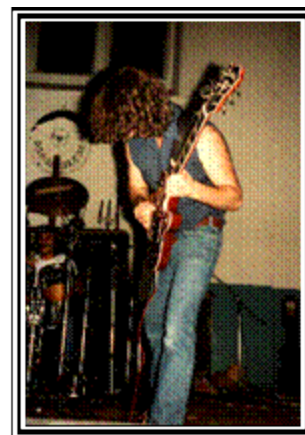
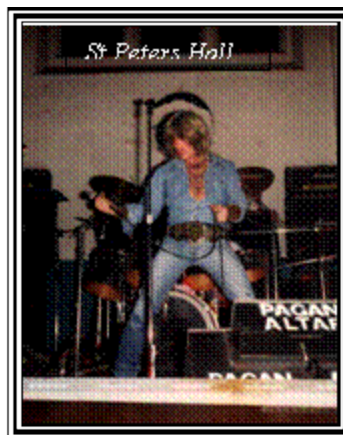


The Loaded Pagan-Mobile, complete with coffin on top hitting warp factor 5 over Blackheath.

Lewisham shopping precinct didn't escape either, whilst on the way to play at the Tramshed in Woolwich, the coffin was wired up to the van battery prior to setting out. When the van drew alongside a bus stopped at traffic lights the coffin lid slowly opened oozing smoke. Its bored occupants instantly saw the coffin, which was now at eye level with the top deck of the bus. The bus was nearly turned over by people clambering to port to look inside....



An early attempt at a video also finished in complete debacle. The band decided to hire St Peter's church hall in Brockley, a Gothic monstrosity if ever there was one, but inadvertently forgot to mention what kind of band they were. The warden, only too happy to take the thirty pieces of silver offered said they could do what they wanted as long as they were out by the allotted time that was etched in stone. Imagine the faces of the local church Burgers when they walked in to the strains of the 'Black Mass' at 12 o/c to see what to them was the desecration of their church hall! The Burgers were not amused to say the least, whilst drive it wasn't. The ensuing mayhem was hilarious...

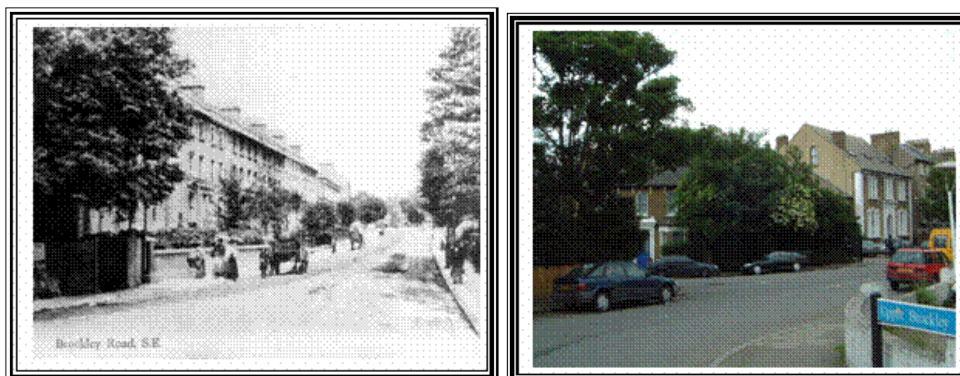


The Old Studio

I have often wondered how much of the atmosphere inherent within Pagan Altars music and certainly throughout the Vol 1 album can be directly attributed to the studio itself. It was attached to a large double fronted Victorian house built on Church ground and situated on what used to be crossroads. Rumour has it that witches were burnt in the location of the sign of the cross that the crossroads would naturally form.

The area of about 500 yards surrounding the house was suspected of being cursed, a local superstition that was gleaned from the long-time residents of the area. It was evident however that no businesses ever flourished there; in fact they all went down the pan almost as soon as they started. A local Turkish business centred there had gone the way of all flesh and they had actually consulted their religious hierarchy to try to get the curse lifted, all to no avail! A large building concern called Brian Whitty Ltd bought up a row of old shops nearby and turned them into office space only to disappear almost overnight! Barwells a big removal firm next door went under and the garage opposite had more owners than I've had hot dinners. Pagan Altar certainly had very little real luck either! The house was somewhat daunting in appearance and very dark and overgrown which in turn gave it a somewhat unfriendly feel. It also had the reputation locally of being haunted and the longhaired occupants that frequented the place were all a bit odd anyway! Mothers with young children on their way to school would cross the road rather than walk past the house, an ideal and fitting home for a band called Pagan Altar one would think! There are many occasions of strange unexplained happenings throughout the house itself but the majority seemed to be centred in and around the studio. The band didn't give too much serious thought to the subject and assumed that any ghost that could stay in there with that volume would by now have been profoundly deaf anyway. They have always been somewhat loath to mention any of the odd occurrences in case it appeared a bit naff, for publicity reasons or to give the band an air of mystique but I don't have these same restrictions, I now have the opportunity to bring it to light. I personally didn't actually see anything particularly untoward in my time there but I certainly felt as if someone was constantly watching me and heard odd sounds that were certainly not from any instrument. Things would often go missing and then turn up again in totally different places but the band tended to put that down to either drink or the late nights and so didn't really think too much of it, but it did happen with alarming regularity.

There was a suggestion from the locals that the house was actually haunted by a woman, an Irish girl named Mary Brown who allegedly died there rather mysteriously about the turn of the century. This fact was substantiated with the use of a ouija board late one night when the temperature in the studio dropped to such a low that rehearsing was uncomfortable to say the least. From then on any odd happenings were put down to Mary!



It is a known fact however for generations past the female occupants of the house were affected with mental problems!

One night the band was doing a late session as usual (the band tended to prefer working at night,) and everyone had come out for a break except for the bass player Greg who wanted to run through his part again? When the band eventually returned to the studio he was just sitting in the corner too scared to move his face as white as a sheet and repeating "I've seen it, I've seen it". Apparently he had seen the shadowy form of a woman in black cross the room then drop through the floor. The band had stage lights in the studio to give a bit of atmosphere so perhaps it was a trick of the light, but one thing for sure he would only put his bass tracks down in the daytime and nothing and I mean nothing would induce him to go back in there on his own again. One of the roadies named Arron was left on his own in the studio for a short while to pack up some gear ready to be loaded for a gig. When a couple of the band went in to see how he was doing he asked, "Who's the bird, I haven't seen her before". Obviously when everyone looked round to see who he was talking about there was no one else in the room! Mind you he was pretty stoned as usual. On another occasion the band were recording a track called 'The Sorcerer' and had just laid down the main vocal line. They were in the process of doing a rough mix to see how it sounded when they noticed a female voice singing along in harmony. No matter how many times they run it through and listened no one could explain it! The bathroom and toilet was located off a landing midway between two flights of stairs just outside the studio. It had at one time had a different use probably as another bedroom of which there were many in the house. Terry having felt the need for a piss headed up the first flight towards the landing as he neared the top the figure of a woman dressed in black came out of the bathroom and silently passed up the second flight of stairs to the top landing where she promptly disappeared, apparently into a room. Terry, thinking it was one of the female occupants with a strop on from one of the numerous bedrooms off the top landing shouted after her "Don't fucking talk then!" It was only after coming out of the loo and banging on her door that he found out she hadn't left the room for hours, her door had been locked and she had been laying on her bed listening to music with her headphones on! ! ! The purpose of this bio is solely to give a background to the band so I won't dwell on the subject any longer but I did think it was worth a mention.

Pagan Altar was due to have a single pressed and issued by the Beatles Abbey Road studio in late 1980. Everything went fine and the aluminium master was laid down ready for pressing when some idiot shot John Lennon. The whole of the Abbey Road facilities were switched to producing John Lennon recordings and previously unrecorded material, everything else was farmed out to other pressing plants to relieve the pressure.



The idea was fine except that the plant responsible for the Pagan Altar single went into bankruptcy, called in the receiver who then impounded everything including the master. By the time all the legal wrangling subsided and the master was returned it was too late; Abbey road had other fish to fry! Incidentally the aluminium master shown opposite went missing for years and has only recently resurfaced.

It was probably just an oversight with someone forgetting where they originally left it or maybe it was Mary was still up to her old tricks!

The reason I have taken time out over the last couple of pages to give a brief light hearted look at just a few instances, and believe me there are many, of the other side of Pagan Altar is to try to give an alternative insight into the band itself. In 1982 it was the accepted practice to project an image of sullen, mean and unapproachable musicians that were deeply into the occult with music that was solely performed to celebrate the glory of Satan. I sometimes felt that bands of this genre and time occasionally took themselves just a tad too seriously and as a result, looked decidedly naff.

Pagan Altar didn't particularly want to fall into this trap, but to be perfectly honest didn't do a great deal to deny it either.

Pagan Altar did however, work on a different principle, more what you can't see the more you imagine. A cloaked figure coming through the mist, carrying a candle with no discernible face or feet becomes a being of mystery; the onlooker's imagination then fills in the lack of information obtained from his eyes with whatever he conceives this being to be. A good example of this is a child lying in bed and peering into a dark corner of their room and seeing whatever their imagination tells them is lurking there.



The need and concept of the stage act was not, as I've said before, done solely as a gimmick or to shock, it was borne out of necessity.

When Terry and Alan watched other local bands perform they noticed that by the time the band had toddled on stage, got themselves sorted out and announced their first song, they had already lost the audience's attention. People would either be talking, ordering another pint or going for a piss! The conclusion was obvious, keep all their senses occupied and you kept their attention. The next problem was to get on stage; the majority of smaller venues didn't even have a proper stage let alone curtains.

I would like to describe the bands stage entrance in full if I may, if only for the record, and of course posterity, as there is very little likelihood of it ever being seen again!

The whole stage was set up to represent everyone's conception of a satanic church, (Stonehenge was a physical impossibility, ask Spinal Tap). On top of the P.A. system were two skulls that burned Kyphi (Satanic Incense), the Altar draped in blue velvet with a large inverted cross, black candles and burial urns covered in cobwebs. The complete set was bathed in a blue light. You now have sight and smell all that was needed was hearing!

A roadie dressed as an undertaker, complete with battered top hat and wearing a latex facemask of a white haired old man shuffled on stage, turned momentarily to glance at the audience, then continued on to the Altar slowly reaching up to light the black candles on the top.

This was the cue for the Gregorian chant to start very quietly at first then slowly building, as if getting nearer!!!! The coffin lid would slowly open and ooze smoke that lay on the floor like a thick carpet. From the side of the stage mist and leaves blew in as if a large door had been opened. Through the mist emerged three hooded cloak clad figures carrying candles (and guitars) slowly walking in single file. As each member drew level with his respective amplifier, or drums, he stopped and stood still waiting for the one in front to reach theirs. When the last one had paused opposite his amp, they all turned as one, shuffled towards the Altar and placed their candles on the top. As they did so, out of sight of the Audience, they plugged their guitar leads into their amps and switched the Amps off standby. Then with heads bowed, in unison, they slowly turned in the swirling mist to face the front of the stage, and waited. The Gregorian chant had now reached quite a level and that was Terry's Cue to come on. Walking assertively through the mist with black Dracula shoulder cape flying, he would turn, face the Altar and raise his arms. The chant fades.... Still facing the Altar the invocation 'Samiel, I call you' would ring out.... The rest you can hear at the beginning of Vol. 1.

As the tempo speeded up at the end of the second verse Terry would spin round and the front of the stage would instantaneously blow up. This had the effect of momentarily blinding the audience enough for Terry on turning, to unhook and discard the cloak. By the time the audience's eyes had readjusted their focus Terry appeared to be dressed totally different, as if metamorphosis



had taken place on stage. As I have said before, pure theatre!

The problems of getting on stage had been accomplished, easy, but setting the whole thing up certainly wasn't, it took all day!!!!.This sometimes could cause problems with the management of the venues as they saw bands as a necessary evil and couldn't see why they couldn't arrive at 7.30 and be on stage at 8.0! With the preparation required to create the Pagan Altar image and sound this was completely out of the question. If they arrived at the crack of dawn it was still touch and go to be ready in time! Very often down to a few minutes before going on stage. Pyrotechnics and lighting were thoughtfully used throughout the set to great effect and each track would have something of its own to offer.

Bands of the time tended to make an impact at the beginning and then fail to sustain the height of interest reached at the offset. Pagan Altars strategy was to start off on a high and then take it higher. 'Armageddon' was the ideal finale and the band had great fun changing the end to surprise even the most ardent fan.

This biography would not be complete without mentioning two important behind the scene members. Pagan Altar were indeed fortunate to have had good personnel behind them in the shape of Tony Deehee (lighting Engineer) and Phil Hearne the sound engineer. Both were an integral part



of the Pagan Altar set up and the band were very appreciative of the work and time both put into ensuring everything went according to plan and consequently looked and sounded as Pagan Altar should. Phil had worked with many artists in the past, including Richie Blackmore and his experience and knowledge was invaluable. Phil recorded everything Pagan Altar did including some live material, most of which was kept and stored, not it would seem, in



the best place.

A serious attempt was made recently to salvage something from these earlier recordings, which took over a year. The tapes themselves were found to be in poor condition, after a time lapse of nearly twenty years, and were causing considerable damage to recording equipment. All the original multi-tracks laid down between 1982 and 1986 were recorded on AMPEX 406 tape, which unfortunately had started to degrade (shed oxide layers). Even the master tape for the first album vol. 1 is now unplayable and that was kept in a safe place. It was sheer luck to get all the tracks down in one piece for the CD.

As Pagan Altars studio has ceased to exist for some time it was farmed out to Phil's own studio in Swanley, Kent to try to resurrect some live tracks. With overdubbing, sampling and lashing sections together it no longer was Pagan Altar and consequently they finally give up.

The web site was repeatedly asked to remove what had always been an overoptimistic venture, but as far as I am aware this has not yet been done! In fact when it was first suggested to reproduce the albums they were asked not to put them on the site until it was certain they were of high enough quality to be used, but the requests were ignored causing considerable confusion to all and sundry! Although listed as the official Pagan Altar website the band actually had little or no direct control over what was installed there and this has caused Oracle all sorts of problems. The very fact that part of this bio is to be included on the website is a good indication that these problems have now been overcome to the benefit of all and the whole project can now progress. An abortive attempt to get recorded material circulated in the eighties was doomed to failure and being partly my fault the less said about that episode the better! So what's New!!!!

The necessity to issue the CD Vol. 1 (which should have been titled 'Pagan Altar') was originally brought about, not for reasons of financial gain as some have suggested, but for the fact that bootleg albums were being sold at exorbitant prices and honest fans were being 'ripped off', a situation that couldn't be allowed to continue. When this was brought to the attention of the remaining members of Pagan Altar they decided to do something about it and Oracle Records and Oracle Promotions was formed. The efficiency of both factions has fluctuated due to internal wrangling, but now having been brought under one roof, so to speak, a drastic improvement should be evident in the not too distant future!

A New Lease of Life

The circulation of the Vol. 1 CD was initially a bit slow to get off the ground but with more than a little help from Russ Smith of 'Black Tears' Distro whose knowledge and assistance was invaluable it wasn't too long in making its presence felt.



Apparently the bootleg albums had been selling well since the mid nineteen eighties and had gone through numerous represses. As this had always been the only previously known option of obtaining Pagan Altar material this avenue had to be first diverted and then superseded. As the purchasing cost of the bootlegs was set at the perpetrators asking price, which was considerable, this wasn't too difficult once word got around.

I personally have little idea of what the sound reproduction of the bootlegs was like but as it could only have been taken from an early Demo it must have been piss poor by now!

As I've said before the reaction to and consequent demand for the Oracle CD has been amazing especially in the U.S.A and Germany and has certainly surprised everyone, none more so than the band itself. Imagine putting your heart and soul into something for eight years with no real acknowledgement only to find after you have finally given up the ghost it had actually been alive and kicking all the time.

Just in passing, I did notice on one metal website the vocals on the CD were described as nasal! The person doing the review must have really listened closely because during the original recording session three members of the band, including Terry had the Flu, their overriding memory of occasion being speaker bins full of used tissues!

The financial aspect, such as it is, is of little or no consequence to the band itself and any revenue received are channelled back into projects such as this bio and to try to bring Pagan Altar from 1982 to the present day. The one thing that is of prime importance to the band though, is the reaction and loyalty of the fans, which to them is priceless. After what has gone before this experience is extremely gratifying and to receive E-Mails from fans all over the world some of which



have been around for twenty years is certainly a new and unique experience to a band that thought no one gave a shit! The constant demand from fans for more Pagan Altar material inspired the aforementioned aborted attempt to resurrect the old recordings. The result of this failure and the arguments that ensued as to whether or not they were of a suitable standard to distribute ended with someone's car wearing most of the tape! These slight altercations at 3am one morning have now been resolved, much to the relief of the neighbours, and has instigated plan 'B' which entails going into the studio and re-recording the albums more or less the same as the originals.

Most of the basic guide tracks have already been laid down for the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' album and apart from a few hiccups and memory lapses leading to disagreements as to 'what went where' it seems to be moving along fairly well, at least up to this moment in time!

The drums have been a problem though, as usual, John Mizrahi couldn't be found (what a surprise) probably propping up a wall in a back street somewhere in Soho where he spent a lot of his time! A similar replacement was required ASAP and I did consider offering my services but as I haven't played for years allied to the fact that one so called music reporter had once insinuated in print that I couldn't hit two tin cans in a straight line (the Bitch, I'm sure I hit three once!) I thought better of it!

Mark Elliott had then been tracked down and seemed prepared to commit himself for once but that was short lived and wasted a considerable amount of valuable time. As was the case before, to get him to get off his arse and actually put himself out to do something was a major achievement, so he was let back out to graze. Brian Cobbold, A drummer from the latter part of the bands existence appeared out of the Ethos to take up pole position and that's how the line up now stands. His style of playing is somewhat different to Johns, very Neil Peart, whereas Mark is noticeably very Jon Bonham.

It has always been a facet of Pagan Altars music to utilise the drums in such a way as to enhance and accentuate sections of the material with their fluency and not just as a time keeping part of the rhythm section. The constant subtle changes of tempo dictate that the drummer has to be constantly aware of where he is at all times, which is probably why Pagan Altar burned so many drummers out. Stoned or pissed you haven't got a chance believe me I know!



Pagan Altar Born 1978 Died?

Whether or not this bio is considered to be a fitting epitaph to the band is a matter of personal conjecture, but I do hope it has been of some use, if only for information on the band that would otherwise probably have been lost forever. I suppose the fan's reaction to the proposed albums will be the telling factor and will gauge if the cult status now achieved by the band after all this time was actually borne out of the music or the enigma that has always surrounded them. This time though I feel things will be different! A network of promotional Magzines and distribution outlets manned by personnel that have in-depth knowledge of present day marketing and promotion now surround Pagan Altar and Oracle.

The circulation of the first CD has paved the way for the release of the re-recorded albums as and when they can be completed. The fan base, having waited this long will hopefully assist in installing Pagan Altar to their rightful position that I believe was denied them in the early years. need for the kind of music they had so much faith in twenty years ago is still all too apparent, I rest my case!

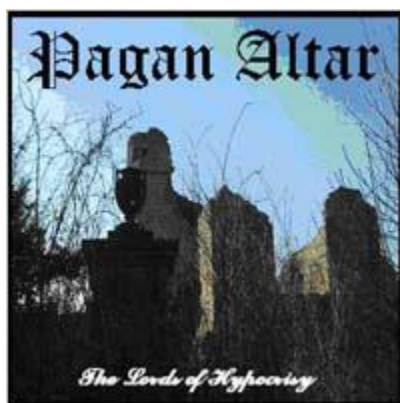


Although probably no longer a live force Pagan Altar can still add their two penneth to today's Metal which in turn would be all the richer for it. It would seem from the information I have gleaned whilst compiling this bio that the need for the kind of music they had so much faith in twenty years ago is still all too apparent, I rest my case!

Although by no means a foregone conclusion, I have included what I believe to be to all intents and purposes the front cover and track list for the first of the re-recorded albums. There are a couple of changes from the original however; The Witches pathway has been moved to the third album and Satan's Henchmen installed in its stead. The Sentinels of Hate, a previously unrecorded track has been added which if my memory serves me well will give the album balance.

The track order is still under discussion as to whether or not to make 'March of the Dead' or the 'The Lords of Hypocrisy' the first track both have their merits but being the title track I suppose 'The Lords of Hypocrisy' should take poll position, but then again perhaps that's a tad twee! Anyway, as far as I am concerned getting them down without any major fallout is the main objective.

The photo on the album cover is of a ruined church situated on the road to Pluckley, Kent. Pluckley village is reputed to be the most haunted place in England; rumour has it, sounds about right for a Pagan Altar cover! The ruins themselves give a great pictorial perspective of the demise of an age of hypocrisy in this Country spanning over a thousand years leaving a heritage of pain, suffering and death in its wake.



The Lords of Hypocrisy
Satan's Henchmen
The Sentinels of Hate
Armageddon
The Interlude
The Aftermath
The Masquerade
March of the Dead

I have it on good authority that this is to be the probable order of songs. I personally feel it achieves its objective in giving the album the right balance and subtleness that is synonymous with Pagan Altar.

There is a mode of discontent towards bands rerecording old material. I personally have no problem with it and can think of numerous bands that have achieved a far better result the second time round! Pagan Altar have no alternative, all other avenues to use and reproduce original material have been tried and found wanting. They have however, no intention of changing the original format and are Hell bent on reproducing the sound and feel that was their forte twenty years ago.

It would be churlish of me to suggest that they won't make use of some of the advantages of modern recording techniques but only in regard to making life easier. Al's guitar will still put a lump in your throat or cut your guts in half! Whether or not Pagan Altar can pick up the threads of the past we will see in the fullness of time!!!!

The theme of the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' album covers the full spectrum of the subject from the personal side of human nature and culminating in the ultimate hypocrisy, Armageddon. The proposed artwork for the CD itself is shown opposite depicting the old sorcerers head coming through the atomic cloud. You can put your own connotation as to its meaning!



Whilst on the subject of releases there has been quite a flurry of activity with regard to Pagan Altar material of late. With the demand for vinyl increasing two enterprising record labels I HATE RECORDS (Sweden) and BLACKWIDOW RECORDS (Italy) are preparing a couple of projects to placate the need for Pagan Altar vinyl issues to supersede the inferior bootleg variety.

These releases have the blessing of the band and have been put together with the cooperation and assistance of Oracle so both are the genuine articles. Oracle themselves have no interest in producing vinyl only in reproducing the Pagan Altar material on CD that would otherwise have been lost forever.

Pagan Altar Guitarist Alan Jones had for some time been in close contact on a friendly basis with guitarist Ola Blomqvist of Swedish doomsters The Doomsday Cult and a co-partner in I HATE records. Alan sent Ola some very early P.A. material for Ola's own information and interest certainly with no prior intent in mind of taking it any further. Alan thought no one would still be interested in it, but Ola liked the recordings to such a degree that he requested permission to bring it to light on vinyl. The tracks 'The Time Lord' and 'Highway Cavalier' were recorded in New Cross studios in late 1978 when Pagan Altar was a five piece.

New Cross studio itself was a 24 track and from equipment viewpoint was considerably up market for the time as is obvious in the sound reproduction of these two tracks. The musical construction and subject matter also differs from the atmospheric doom laden metal that was shortly to follow lending itself more to the commercial rock music of the time.



These tracks do however show the bands progression, as certain aspects within them were to reappear in a veiled form throughout later material. The line-up at this time included Les Moody on second guitar, Glen Robinson on bass and featuring none other than moi (Ivor Harper) on drums!

'Judgement of the Dead', 'The Black Mass' and 'Reincarnation' were recorded 1980/1ish and were the first tracks to be recorded in the bands own studio which by now had been converted from rehearsal to a recording studio. The equipment used then would now be considered very basic; an eight track bounced down onto a Revox two-track but the end result certainly had an earthy feel to it.

By This time Les Moody had gone under a bit of a cloud and a number of other rhythm and second guitarist had fell by the wayside as I've mentioned earlier. Glen Robinson was still on bass but Mark Elliot had now replaced me on drums. For the first time Alan laid all the guitar tracks down for these recordings and that situation has existed ever since!



I must confess that I have weakened in my resolve not to include myself too much and thought I would just slip this photo in, that's me on the left in case anyone's interested! This band promotional photo could never be used because if you look very closely you will see that there is a twig apparently going up Terry's nose. It is actually two foot in front of him and a lot clearer on the original, shame though; it's a damn good one of me!

The reason I have dug this photo up is due to the release of 'The Time Lord' mini LP so I suppose that's a good enough reason to include it as it was taken about the same time as the recording was made. As always it was taken in Nunhead cemetery as if you hadn't already guessed!

Actually, looking at this photo again has brought back a flood of personal memories that I still find funny. For some unaccountable reason Bass player Glenn's girlfriend of the time had hidden her vibrator in his Guitar case (No! before you ask it was only a normal size vibrator). Of course as soon he opened the case it fell out and slowly rolled across the stage much to the delight and rapturous applause of all and sundry. Mind you, I remember one night when Glenn played a gig with a five-inch gash in his head where she had bottled him before he went on, nice girl! All the blood certainly added a touch of realism on stage.

Our early attempts at using smoke were very basic to say the least and consisted of a convenient metal ashtray and some smoke pellets that I used to get from work, very toxic I believe! It was set down out of sight beside the drums so at some point in a song I could surreptitiously bend down and light them. Two pellets were enough to fill a hall but maths was never my strong point so I just used to throw a handful on! Anymore than a couple and they usually burst into flame which they invariably did catching light to the stage curtains on numerous occasions! My hit list included The Newlands Tavern, Peckham, The Ruskin Arms, Bethnal Green, The Green Gate, Bethnal Green, the Target Club, Reading and Woolwich Polytechnic etc. God knows how many pints of beer we wasted putting them out!

Talking of the Ruskin, it was run by the ex-boxing champion Joe Lucy who used to call us Smog because he reckoned his boxers couldn't see a hand in front of their faces for smoke in his gym upstairs for days after we had played there! I think they were just useless; they had enough trouble catching and hitting the heavy bag!

Anyway, one night after one Pagan Altar extravaganza some girl took a bunny boiler liking to me and kept trying to get on stage to get at me. Pissed she may have been but ugly she most certainly was, everyone has a right to be ugly but she abused that right and was also built like a brick shit house! She could have started World War three single-handed. I had just come off stage and that was her chance, she came at me like a charging rhino knocking everything out of her path. One of these items was a large cast iron chair that landed on Terry's foot breaking it in two places. I managed to get away but Terry spent the next month having to limp on stage, not exactly very rock and roll! Incidentally, the Time Lord and Highway cavalier were recorded in two all-night sessions so if any of the drumming is out of time, I was asleep!

The Black Widow vinyl issue is an absolute work of art and at last reflects everything Pagan Altar had initially planned for the album. The original name for the album was to be 'Judgement of the Dead' but this fact was forgotten when the Oracle CD artwork was sent for printing as was the title for the short acoustic guitar track that was initially called 'The Dance of the Banshee'. The person responsible for handling the printing side of the proceedings decided to put his own connotation to the titles and so Vol 1 and 'Acoustics' was born. To be honest the band members were totally pissed off that someone with nothing to do with the music had taken it upon himself to change the titles but it was too late and too expensive to do anything about it. Black Widow has now put this right and has restored the album and track title to its original format much to the final satisfaction of Alan and Terry Jones. It's about time someone got something right with this band!



The only problem and worry being as far as they could see was that fans may conceive it as a new or different album and buy it under that misconception. Black widow has assured them that it will be made perfectly clear to one and all exactly what is involved and this was the agreement made before either Oracle or Pagan Altar would allow its reproduction. For nearly four years now Black Widow have requested permission to reproduce the album but Oracle had always declined because of the reasons above but having been reassured by Massimo of BWR that all precautions would be taken they finally agreed. Black Widow true to their word have spared no expense, even the artwork has cost an arm and a leg! From a collectable viewpoint I believe that BWR have certainly produced a fitting tribute to the band that has been long overdue. The quality of which should in turn help to



elevate Pagan Altar to the status they should have always occupied!

It's an odd scenario for Alan and Terry, seen opposite on stage together, to finally see their efforts all those years ago now reaching fulfilment in its originally intended format. It has certainly been a long time coming but with the much awaited 'Lords of Hypocrisy' album slowly edging its way to completion and the two vinyl issues I've mentioned being circulated should do the band no harm at all and could possibly be the final death knell for the bootlegs!

I understand there is also a proposed vinyl issue of the first album due out sometime in the future in Greece but at this moment in time I have very little information on what shape or form it will take! What I do know however is that the motivation behind this effort is Panos Tsioubris a staunch fan of the band for years who is at present engaged in putting together a record label of his own.

Always on the side of the underdog, having been one themselves for years, the band have agreed to let Panos use the Pagan Altar material to help get his label going!

This is the original photographic artwork for the first album cover, although never used I still feel that it would have stood up today even with all the flamboyant artwork that's around. To me its sheer Gothic simplicity makes it appealing and no one could be under any illusion as to exactly what the album contained! I have often been fooled when searching for new material by the artwork on the album cover that depict great scenes of artistic licence only to find that the music inside is shit. I wouldn't think for one minute that I'm alone in being caught out in this way! The band photograph on the front cover of this bio was to be the centre fold of the album and the back cover was plain black with the lyrics printed in white. I have searched high and low but have been unable to locate the artwork for the back cover anywhere. A series of promotional photographs were taken in a Satanic church in Deptford about 1980/81 but they tended to look totally staged and naff and were promptly abandoned. I did still manage to rake out one remaining specimen though! See below. As I have mentioned before this kind of staged publicity was the 'norm' with a quite a few metal bands of the time. Pagan Altar thought they would give it a try with the help of some friends who actually were deeply into the occult. Having looked at the proofs in retrospect they saw it as being somewhat pretentious and all a bit sad and so gave up on the idea!



Although there may seem a lot of photographs of the band there were certainly three times that amount thrown in the bin. Photographers when filming heavy bands feel that they have to make them look sombre and mean. A hard job I'm afraid with our intrepid bunch, they couldn't keep a straight face for more than ten seconds if they were lucky, so the photographer had to be really quick! Obviously in the photo below he wasn't quite quick enough! The Gregorian chant at the beginning of the first album was an absolute nightmare for Phil. All they had to do was stand around



the microphone facing one another and sing the harmony chant in unison. They must have had at least twenty goes at it and finished up with two. Either one or other would start pissing themselves laughing, it was meant to have four rounds but they had given up by then and settled for the two!



Videos were in their infancy in 82/83 and attempts outside of professionally organised and heavily financed promotional efforts normally had a limited success rate but never the less another impromptu live one was attempted after the debacle of St Peters Church. Some friends of John the drummer were enlisted to supply and operate the cameras and that certainly made a subject change for them, as it was common knowledge that both usually operated in a porn studio in Soho but unfortunately you can't film a band in the same manner. The video was to be shot during a live performance at the Tramshed. A favourite venue of the band and one that had all the facilities needed and could also be guaranteed a full house. Everything seemed to be in order and on the day every precaution had been taken to ensure that all the essential parts of the stage act were actually captured on film but as usual it got totally screwed up.

To this day I am still mystified as exactly what happened to the whole of beginning because it certainly wasn't on the video! The cameraman had probably seen a tasty bit of totty and as old habits die-hard found her much more interesting and decided to film her instead!

They had been told to stay in front of the PA system so the sound would be constant but as they were used to crawling all over the place trying get the most intimate shots they were everywhere, climbing all over the stage, knocking over and disconnecting pyro connections as they went!



The resulting sound track on the video was consequently all over the place and no amount of remixing later could clean it up. As every band knows the onstage sound is mixed totally differently to that emanating from the front and is governed by the requirements of the individual musician. Another factor that also was ignored was the sheer volume of the band. If the camera had been set up at the rear of the theatre it would have stood a chance but from where they were positioning themselves it didn't have a hope in Hell! The Microphone was blown to bits and everything was compressed out of sight. As I said previously videos were in their infancy and the shortcomings of the sound recording side had not been fully investigated. Now even a five year old knows you can't ram 3000 Watts down the throat of a microphone that had been constructed for speech and had only known the grunts and groans of the participants in a porn movie but it has at least given me a wealth of live pictures!

I was under the impression when I started this bio that I could just throw a few pages together and add a few pictures and that would be it. It now seems to be turning out like a sequel to War and Peace and appears to be becoming my life's work having never previously written anything longer than my own name! During the time it has taken me to put it together the situation has constantly changed, moved forward and required updating etc. In addition, certain aspects and photographs previously forgotten or mislaid at the offset have now come to light and have been included. This may give the appearance of making the chronological order of the bio seem



somewhat disjointed and for that I apologise but I'm certainly not starting again! I don't profess to be a writer and according to some I wasn't a musician either but I have read various bios before attempting to write this one and to be truthful have found some of them to be somewhat dry, impersonal and pretentious. There seems to be a trait of long in-depth investigative literature on how meaningful the music is and the self-sacrifice needed to create it. I have endeavoured to try to make this one somewhat light-hearted for a change and included facts along with a considerable amount of associated trivia that seems to be what the fans really like to know.

Anyway, back to the business in hand. Terry would be the first to admit the limitations of his vocal range and could only get through a gig with the help of a packet of 'Fisherman's Friends' as seen opposite! He did however have an extremely good knowledge of vocal timing that he could call on when the need arose to get him out of trouble on stage. This ability, allied to the fact that he could also write good lyrics was invaluable when composing new material, as Alan's sense of timing and odd use of the accent within the music was similar. Terry was also instrumental in the arrangement, feel and direction of the music, spending hours splicing Al's original taped ideas

together to arrange the songs to make the complete article. If there were any sections that required changing or a different slant he would explain to Al what was required, Al would toddle off for a few minutes and return with about five variations of the same theme, it was then a simple matter to insert the most suitable. Alan was without doubt the musical guru behind all the Pagan Altar compositions with an inexhaustible supply of power riffs and leads breaks with so many different variations and feels. I have always thought that Al is one of the most underrated guitarists ever and should, in my opinion have achieved far more recognition. This may of course be due to some extent to the shortage of recorded material available at present so perhaps with the release of the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' and the 'Mythical and Magical' albums this little oversight may be rectified in the not too distant future and be obvious to all.



Trevor was very much the quiet one but his input was never the less extremely important. A stickler for detail and timing Trev would give great thought as to how the bass parts could benefit the music as a whole and wouldn't settle for anything less than what he considered to be his best shot! Trev was also very good at making stage props in the Co-Op engineering workshop where he worked, many of which are still in existence today. The construction and internal workings of the coffin were down to him.

On the first album Trev kept things rather straight because of John's style of drumming but his ability and versatility is more prevalent on the forthcoming albums as the percussion is played in a more forthright manner in certain areas giving more scope for some telling bass work. When it came to arranging material Trev was left very much to his own devices and invariably came up with the ideal bass line. Trev and John worked very closely together at keeping the bottom end tight and always sorted out between them who would keep things straight and who would supply the augmentation.

John varied musical background gave him an extremely wide range of rhythms and fills and he could supply countless variations of rhythm to the same section of music. When he first phoned in answer to the add for a drummer he had asked if the band minded the fact that he was an Israeli and was promptly told "We don't care if your green and speak Martian as long as you can play the drums". This immediately endeared John to the band and that relationship remained constant throughout. The band during their time together always respected one another's ability as well as getting on amicably on a personal level.

This compatibility and respect made Johns leaving very strange indeed, as he always seemed perfectly happy in what he was doing and the way he was allowed the freedom to musically express himself. He just turned up one day with another guy and said, "I've got to go" hurriedly packed up his gear and left, no one has seen or heard of him since!

I always felt that after John left things were never quite the same and something went out of the band. Numerous drummers followed and were quite good in their own way but for some reason it never quite gelled as before. One guy, another John, had a massive double bass drum kit, each bass drum was five foot long but mind you he was six foot four himself so he and his drums suited each other!

If you look at the on stage picture on the front cover of the first album you can see them quite clearly. He himself was a very solid and powerful drummer but perhaps lacked a little bit of fluency and subtleness, which in turn maybe detracted somewhat from the lighter passages of Pagan Altars music. I suppose you could point the finger to when Israeli John left as being the time when the music had to change somewhat to compensate and perhaps move on, I'm not saying it was any better or any worse, just different and to be honest I liked the direction it was heading



Initially Pagan Altar had always been somewhat loath to use keyboards except solely for the purposes of effect. They considered that they would have a tendency to take over and change the structure of the music if used to any greater degree but needless to say towards the end the use of keyboards had become more prominent and also the occasional use of Electric drums. The whole feel of the music was now moving away from the basic three piece with its somewhat earthy sound and being replaced by a much more involved musical variation of the original themes. The broadening of these horizons gave the band scope to carry the music a stage further with many more options to hand. Obviously with some songs it didn't quite work and these were left as they originally were. Satan's Henchman, Night Rider and The Witches Pathway being a case in point but many benefited greatly and were given a new lease of life and depth as a direct result of the progression. The early basic arrangements of the material as demonstrated on the 'Time Lord' vinyl album differ considerably from the slightly later Oracle 'Pagan Altar' CD. A clear indication of how



the band had started to introduce keyboards to give mood and variation to the basic sound of a three/four piece line up.

There exists at this moment in time a trend within metal music to revert to a more basic song construction but Pagan Altar's repertoire encompasses such a broad spectrum that it moves easily between each faction. When the decision was first made to upgrade the music to a new level by introducing effects and influences within the tracks the band were laying down for the original Pagan Altar demo they asked a local folk band they knew vaguely for the use of their keyboard player.

In came this guy named Bob dressed in a brown monks habit and sandals with his Stylaphone on legs tucked under his arm. His equipment was somewhat basic but it was far more state of the art than his brain, he could completely forget everything taught him almost immediately and had a memory span of about two minutes. He could make a goldfish appear to have the intellect of Einstein! Alan had to go through each of his keyboard passages with him line by line while he recorded them! The keyboards in the Black Mass are considerably lower than they should have been because by the time he'd been told how it went, gone through it and got ready to record, he'd forgotten it, so Phil just put it lower in the mix!

I don't know if he was just totally stoned, thick or what but it took longer to get those keyboard parts down than the rest of album put together! The band had previously laid their tracks down really quickly and more or less done them in one hit! Whether or not Bob is aware his efforts of over twenty years ago are still being heard all over the World I haven't got a clue but then again he probably wouldn't remember doing them anyway!

What made things even more bizarre was that at the same time as the band were laying down the demo the Pagan Altar studio was also being used by a God fearing guitar playing Reverend who was recording some demo tracks he had written to the glories of the right hand path! So on the same reel-to-reel tape you had songs such as The Black Mass etc mixed with such heavy metal gems as God is my Saviour, Alleluia! Weird or what? And so it came to pass that the gods were eventually mightily pleased with their creation and sent it forth to spread the word to the four corners of the known World, well, to America anyway, and if you have read this far you already know what happened next!

I have read countless reviews and articles on the band and their music since I started to write this bio and the overwhelming consensus of opinion that repeatedly emerges, allied to the accolades with regard to the composition of the music in general, is the feeling of atmosphere within the songs that is still as effectual now as it was when it was written. So the conclusions drawn as to the direction, progression and feel required, reached by Alan and Terry in 1982 as described on the previous page would appear to have been correct as usual! I then again have to ask myself the same question as before, why wasn't this seen and utilised by someone in a position to exploit it at the time?

The reason I have gone down this particular road is as a prelude to the forth-coming albums and at the same time attempt to explain the musical changes and evolution that is evident within these later recordings. The horizons reached in the first album have been expanded and surpassed with the resurrection of the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' and will be pushed even further when the 'Mythical and Magical' album finally surfaces again. All the songs on both the aforementioned albums stand up in their own right. Pagan Altar were never one to believe in 'fillers' to pad out an album and every effort is made to achieve the maximum effect for each subject dealt with! The same subtle principles used when devising the original stage act are incorporated within each song and the listener has only to open their mind to be part of it.

I would assume the majority of Pagan Altar fans have already acquired this ability and look much deeper into the soul of the music to relate to the underlying feels and vibes generated that is as much a part of the addiction as the songs themselves. The rhythm, pace, timing and overall sound is carefully calculated to reflect the meaning behind the lyrics and this becomes more evident when viewing the whole spectrum of Pagan Altar's compositions. To try to assess Pagan Altar's contribution to the metal World on the strength of just one album could be grossly misleading! As I have said previously Pagan Altar have always had a knack of combining the music, subject matter and resulting atmosphere to create songs that to my mind at least stand out as original individual works in their own right that truly reflect what is intended! Whether or not this coincides with most peoples conception of what Pagan Altar are about I have no way of knowing and only the manner in which the new issues are critically received will reflect this! If it is expected that the forthcoming albums will be just doom-laden dirges about Satan and death I'm afraid the listener will be sorely disappointed! One has to sometimes look below the surface to find the true meaning within the songs such as the 'Masquerade' for example, the musical passages of which define life's merry-go-round or carousel! With 'Armageddon' the political build up, deployment of armies and resulting mayhem is put to music leading into the emptiness of the 'Interlude' and culminating in the finality of the 'Aftermath'. It is this kind of approach to music that I for one find intriguing and to my mind elevate Pagan Altar above the norm' but you do have to look for it. The music can at last be presented and expressed to its full potential in the manner it was originally written and convey the full depth and feeling held within the various themes.

Attempts are frequently made to pigeonhole Pagan Altar into the Doom genre, I'm not quite sure if this is, in effect accurate, after all what constitutes Doom? I am by no means a connoisseur of doom as it is today and cannot make up my mind as to whether it is the slow dirge type riffs with guttural vocals or the subject matter that is the relevant factor? If it comes down to subject matter Pagan Altar have it in abundance but due to they're occasional somewhat subtler approach maybe the Doom factor can sometimes be hidden or missed under the guise of lighter songs or passages that don't necessarily follow the general Doom pattern! I personally find that with Pagan Altar it is more the concept of impending or resulting doom brought about by the mistakes of the past or warnings of the future mixed with analytical assumptions that is prevalent and these don't always require the same heavy treatment! As I said at the start of this bio Pagan Altar do have their own niche.

Recording 'Lords of Hypocrisy' Album

Pagan Altar got back into the recording studio to record the album "The Lords of Hypocrisy. Crumbling Religion subsides into dust and retreats into obscurity. The tower of Babel rises again in the path of his Majesty.



I thought I would give Brian Cobbold a mention in the right place because Brian was quite instrumental in the reforming of the Pagan Altar the second time around and was involved at the start of the album The Lords of Hypocrisy. Neither me nor my dad knew anything about computers, the internet or even how to turn a computer on at that time and it was Brian who found out about our demo tape (volume one) being sold at a phenomenal price. He also helped us with getting the first album out.

Although the recording never worked out and he never played a gig with Pagan altar he was actually in the band for about a year and he did play drums for Malac's Cross with me in the early 90's.



The 'Lords' album at this moment in time seems to have taken forever to finalize and it would appear to have become a two horse race as to who will pass the finishing post first, Pagan Altar with the album or me with this bio, still what else would I possibly be doing if I wasn't sitting here writing this! To be fair, the usual catalogue of trials and tribulations has again befallen the band throughout the recording of the album and there have been numerous occasions when they seriously thought of forgetting the whole idea and just letting it die. Firstly, they lost the use of the Pagan Studio after all the hassle and finance to put it back together again after years of neglect. The local Council have a number of plans for the area and the Pagan Altar Studio is certainly not one of them! Another studio had to be found and rigged out post haste. Terry had to convert part of his house for the purpose and albeit somewhat makeshift for the time being at least the recording could still carry on! The sound of the drums and the drums in general for that matter has been a major insurmountable problem! The drum parts to the whole album had been recorded five times and were nowhere near right in the bands eyes. The trouble with this scenario is that guitar and vocal parts have all to be re-recorded again as well to compensate for the deviations in real time. Band members having already been hard pushed to find the time within various personal and family commitments now had to do it again and again. It had got to such a point that something had to be done and done quickly. Another drummer had to found that could actually play the way Pagan Altar required. Ex-drummer Mark Elliott was brought in at the eleventh hour to try to resurrect things before all the momentum had been lost completely and the band made to look decidedly stupid. Terry was



adamant he wasn't going to release the band's music if he wasn't totally happy with it especially as it had waited all this time to be heard! After the debacle of trying to resurrect the earlier material and the failed attempt at overdubbing the live stuff it would have been ludicrous to settle for anything other than what could be termed at least a reasonable facsimile of the original. Mark had previous knowledge of most of the material from his time with the band but that was over twenty years earlier. His wife has been suffering from a long-term illness, which meant his time for rehearsing was quite limited and was the reason he had declined the initial offer to play on the album! Even so within a very short period he had put the songs together enough to record. It actually only took him one and a half days to record the whole album and the result of this necessary change of drummers to finally get the album finished did have some minor repercussions however, in as much as some rather nasty innuendos were left on various site forums under an assumed name but everyone including the thread organiser knew whom the author really was! , what a waste of the previous year and a half!!!!

The reaction of the fans was amazing and they were queuing up to lambaste the dirty deeds perpetrator, a one 'Albertnemesi' in the bands defence, so much so that the troops had to be called off in the end. If ever the band needed confirmation of their fans loyalty this was it! Terry had long requested the Pagan Altar website be updated as it was looking decidedly drab and dated compared to what was on offer elsewhere. No action had been forthcoming in this department so he had taken it upon himself to organise and set up a new version; with hindsight it was lucky he did as the old one was closed down immediately and a stupid childish message left in its place as a direct result of the necessary personnel changes. As I have said before, from a drumming point of view you need to have your Pagan Altar head on to play their music otherwise it just doesn't work! The photo opposite depicts the main members of Pagan Altar who finally completed the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' album and I suspect will be the line-up that will record the remaining albums. In saying main members this term in no way demeans the input of the supporting cast whose contribution has made the album the total success it has now become!



The long periods of inactivity and frustration did at least have some compensation and positive aspects. It allowed Alan and Terry to trace Valery Watson a brilliant female backing singer they had lost contact with some years before. Personally, I think that Val's contribution to the album was exactly what was required to give certain sections of the music a different depth of feel and also expand it to a new level. The three different keyboards players used all played their respective roles to perfection giving performances that although not initially apparent at the offset certainly subtly embellish each individual song concept in their own way without being overbearing. Louise Walter is classically trained to a high degree, Young Jack Carter is a touring Jazz pianist of some renown in his own particular field and Dean Alexander is very much an accompanying player with a good ear for effects! Put all these attributes together and you have the perfect scenario to every conceivable aspect needed to augment music with so many variations in subject matter! Obviously with so many different Genres of Metal and varying tastes now on offer Pagan Altar will never be everyone's cup of tea but they do have a knack of bridging some of the main aspects of our favourite music. I suppose being born on the cusp as it were of what is now considered 'Old School' and the 'NWOBHM' their music could be considered as a hybrid mixture of both! They personally tend to see themselves first and foremost as a Heavy Rock band, as was the case when they were first conceived towards the end of the Seventies!

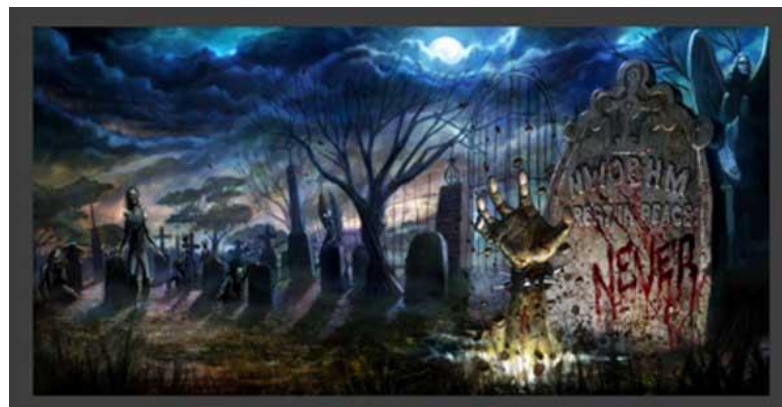
At that time all bands and music of that ilk were joined together under the one banner with the fans loyalties usually divided by their own personal liking for one particular band or group as they were called then although they would still go to watch and support certain other bands they considered Heavy! The scene is far more fragmented now and bands that do not fit into a certain small category are usually considered of no account or dismissed, not for their ability but for the music they play! To me this has an underlying tendency to weaken the field of Metal music as a whole, united we stand divided we fall springs to mind!



Val

The intro to the 'Lords of Hypocrisy'

As far as I am aware there seems to be a consensus of opinion that there is no place for female vocals within the true Doom genre but I really don't concur with this theory. If used to their full potential as and when required they could be as versatile as another instrument and far more haunting. I believe Pagan Altars introduction and utilisation of Val within the production of their material has achieved this effect to perfection. It would not surprise me in the least if after the release of the 'Lords' album to find other bands of a similar ilk following suit and expanding their horizons in the same manner! As the youngest member of a large family growing up in Glasgow in Scotland at a time when all the shipyards were closing Val is probably more aware of what the reality of doom feels like than the majority of people reading this bio and I think this is self-evident in the depth of feeling she puts into her performance! The recording of the album in July 04 was interrupted by the need to produce a previously unknown song for a U.S radio station 'The Old School Metal Show'. The album is of a collection bands from around the Pagan Altar period so they should be in good company. For more information you could do worse than contact Mike Grindstaff the DJ whose baby it is at grinder@nwobhm.net . The band weren't too sure exactly what was required so two Pagan Altar tracks were submitted 'The Witches Pathway' and the 'Flight of the Witch Queen' both from the 'Mythical and Magical' album and both different in their own way. After much deliberation and soul searching by the producers it was finally decided to use the 'Flight of the Witch Queen'.



The intro chant at the beginning of the first album was always going to be a hard act to follow so the best thing to do was to go for realism. The first track on the 'Lords' album being the 'Lords of Hypocrisy' and one that deals with all the double standards that exist within the church of today you wouldn't think it would create too much of a problem to get realism seeing as how there are numerous churches dotted all over the place, but it does rather depend however on what you intend to do there! Having previously tried and failed to get the right atmosphere in the studio our intrepid bunch toddled off to St Mary's church in Cobham, Kent via 'Ye Olde Leather Bottle' public house to try their luck in the right surroundings to match the song. Jazz pianist Jack (Jazzy) Carter (No relation to Lynn of Oracle) went along to try his luck with the church organ and tickle the ivories if he was given half a chance! The usual entourage were there flower arrangers, wardens and general busy bodies and hangers on who think you should know how much the roof cost to repair, the exorbitant cost of the upkeep of the church and of course their infallible knowledge of the church and its history, for Christ sake they're the biggest land owners in the World surely they can pay for their own new roof? They viewed our little bunch with a certain amount of interest but were too full of themselves to ask what the song was about or what its implications were! We lost Val for about half an hour while she was frog marched around the church on an enforced guided tour of the windows? She would have been much happier if Quasimodo had offered her a guided tour of the bars in the old Tudor pub opposite. When things were set up and ready to go and 'Jazzy' had had a little plonk around on the organ they were quite happy to let a woman of obvious devout Catholic upbringing sing Latin in an angelic voice and settled down to watch. Not so happy though when a longhaired individual in shades started replying in Latin from the pulpit about the day of Satan! I think it was about then that the penny dropped and questions were asked as to the name of the band and the album. Terry just couldn't resist this and gave them the full SP, the faces and stammering that followed was a joy to behold but they didn't argue too much when we put about a tenner (£10) in the poor box, still that should buy them a couple of tiles for the roof!

Below Terry reciting Isaiah chapter 36 verses 12 to 13 and Val admiring Jack's Big Organ



After finally surmounting all the obstacles with regard to the recording of the album you would



think that the final simple aspects of pressing and printing would have been a mere formality, but I'm afraid not with this band! The whole artwork had to be converted into Quark format before it could be printed which of course delayed the proposed release date for some three weeks and then a fault was found with the jewel cases that creased and distorted the covers which in turn delayed it even further. The whole lot had to be reprinted and done again, typical! That said, all the crap that had preceded the release was soon forgotten once it finally saw the light of day and started to circulate. The mood had obviously been kick started and set in motion

by an excellent review of the album written by Rich Walker (Miskatonic Foundation) for the U.S based 'Hell Ride Music' site, which certainly stirred up a considerable amount of initial interest from many respected quarters, which has continued and is still accelerating up to the time of writing. Many excellent reviews followed, the Literary standard and grasp of expression of the various authors is of such an extremely high standard and calibre that rather than let them be lost forever after only a few short weeks to languish in the various Zine

and website 'reviews archive sections' they have been collected, with the consent of the composers, and installed on the bands website for all to read for the foreseeable future! If just a fraction of this positive reaction had been forthcoming all those years ago who knows what would have transpired! The upshot of this surge of activity has led to a further fortuitous widening of the bands horizons with Pagan Altar now being accepted in other areas of our favourite music. For example a considerable amount of albums have been circulated through many sites that deal mainly with other Genres i.e. Stoner rock etc which probably would have been unthinkable before the release of the 'Lords' album! The new release has also generated a resurgence of interest in the first album, which has now almost moved into the realms of folklore to



some. Many new bands openly admit that this album and Pagan Altar in general for that matter had greatly influenced their early musical beginnings and I feel there is no greater compliment one musician can pay to another! The question of supply and demand also applies to I Hates 'Time lord' vinyl with Oracle receiving many requests with regard to where and how to obtain it but having been a limited edition it is now becoming increasingly rare! Perhaps with hindsight Ola of I HATE RECORDS should have initially upped the ante and had considerably more pressed before it eventually finds its way onto E BAY at a ridiculous price or some bright spark decides to bootleg it! To be truthful I don't think he and most certainly Pagan Altar themselves had the remotest inkling that the demand would reach the level it did!

End of an Era

I suppose the only thing left to add is what happened to the various band members after the demise of Pagan Altar.

By end of 1984/5 the NWOBHM was well on the wane with other genres of music taking its place. There were a few half-hearted attempts to rekindle what had once been but it all now seemed rather a pointless exercise. To the band, they had given it their best shot and whatever way you look at it at the time of the bands dissolution to them they appeared unsuccessful, it was time to move on. John Mizrahi had previously left and the chore of finding a replacement was a daunting prospect. A couple of drummers fitted the bill including Brian Cobbold and things picked up briefly, but the soul had gone from the band. Alan decided enough was enough and disappeared off to Wales to play in a band called XYZ that was touring and laying some tracks down in The Enid's recording studio in Cambridge, he returned some two years later. He then formed various bands again in an effort to put across his own music, which by now had evolved into Rock music with a more Celtic feel. The more notable being 'Iceni' and a band that I consider to be of outstanding quality in their particular field 'Malacs Cross' soon to have their first album out on Oracle, Perhaps like Pagan Altar it will take 20 years before anyone recognises their potential as well? Trev's fortunes followed a similar pattern, in an effort to produce his own music he formed a number of bands with little or no impact, probably 'The Goon Squad' being the most successful. He still carried on recording bits and pieces of his own material but it was more for personal satisfaction than serious intent.



Al and Trev at the Eagle's Nest Heavy Rock Venue



Al With Malacs Cross

Terry considered that he'd put everything he had into Pagan Altar to no avail and didn't want to continue with the performing side of music again, concentrating on setting up first a construction company and then a successful Design Consultancy for the disabled. He still liked to keep his hand in though; usually by acting as sound advisor and engineer to the others and that is how it stood until the need for the Pagan Altar CD arose.

Bill Carter, Terry's father-in-law, who had always believed in Pagan Altar, insisted on supplying the initial financial backing to launch the Oracle project and after a few teething problems it is now on an even keel. With the forthcoming issues of the re-recorded Pagan Altar albums later in the year the band feel that perhaps it will in some small way repay the loyalty and patience shown by so many, which to be perfectly honest is actually the main reason the band are doing it. As someone once said "*There you have it*".

Ivor. T. Harper. 2004

2007

Line Up Terry Jones, Alan Jones, Diccon Harper, Peter Dobbins & Rich Walker.

I think now is about time to carry on with the story of the band. Unfortunately Ivor T Harper is not around anymore to finish off the last part so it is left to me (Alan Jones) to try and put it all down the best I can and mention some of the things that happened offstage as well as onstage. Before I go on I would just like to thank my two sisters Jen and Rachel who without covering for me every time I went away I would never been able to have done any of this.

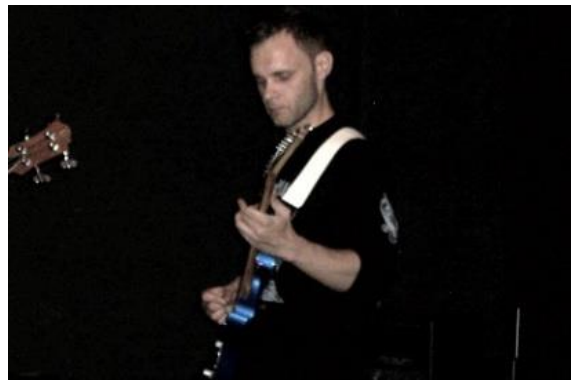


Jen

Rachel

I will start this from after Mark and Trev had departed from the band, mainly because it is a good starting point and apart from a photo shot we never really got anything going.

Diccon had joined after Rich Walker had put us on to him and we did have a second guitarist for a while called Matt who wasn't really with us for that long and never actually played a gig with us, but it was worth giving him a mention because he was a nice guy and we all liked him. He defiantly won first prize for the most inventive and outlandish excuses for not turning up for rehearsals .He was a fantastic player while playing on his own, but just couldn't seem to get it together playing with a band. I think the last straw came when we had a rehearsal in front of about fifteen friends and he virtually fell to pieces.



Total Rock Interview Spring 2007

I haven't got a precise date for this but we was invited to do a radio interview for a DJ called Greenz for Total rock radio up near Demark Street London in the spring of 2007. We had never done anything like this before and we probably seemed like a bunch of kids. It is funny because you are in this little soundproof room talking and totally forgetting that people are listening to what you are saying.



The first line up for playing live was Pete Dobbins on Drums and Rich Walker on guitar who had been championing our albums for a while and was quite familiar with the music and Diccon Harper on bass. My Dad had asked Rich if he would like to play live with us after Matt had left and he was more than happy to step in.

After a couple of months rehearsing we were ready to play our first gig. Most people think the ULU London was our first gig, but it was actually the Fenton pub in Leeds on the 9th of September 2007 which we used as a warm up for the ULU a week or so later on the 19th of September.

The Fenton Leeds



The ULU London 19th September 2007

There was quite a build up on the internet for the ULU and I knew people were going to come from around the world to see this one so I was a bit worried we wasn't going to live up to people's expectations. There was a good bill that night and a lot of camaraderie between the bands because we all knew each other. To cut a long story short the whole night went ok and although we had a few wobbly moments, we got through it. I never really enjoyed this gig much mainly because I couldn't stay long after we got off stage and had to get the last train home.

The ULU London



Keep it True 3rd November 2007

After the ULU we were off to our first gigs in Europe. The first was Keep it True in Germany which was quite a Baptism of fire us with some great bands on that night such as Portrait, Hyrax and Leatherwolf.

From the airport it was a four hour drive to the venue split between two cars. Although Peter was a lovely lad he could talk the hind legs off a donkey which for me a Diccon who had to share the car with him was mind numbingly tedious. I have never known anybody talk for so long about nothing. When we got out of the car at the other end we were both absolutely knackered.

On the night of the gig we were about half way down the bill which at festivals is quite a nice place to be because you go on at a reasonable time and get to talk to people after you have come off. We put on a good show that night and got a great response back from the audience. We still found it hard to get our heads around the fact that these songs we had written in our house in Brockley were being sung along to by people in Germany.

The time the gig had finished and we had got back to the hotel it wasn't worth going to bed because we had to be ready for the train at five A.M for Rotterdam and the Dutch Doom day. We stayed up with the guys from Hyrax until it was time to go. Unfortunately Peter had gone a bit far with the drink and we had to virtually carry him to the train station. The train went through Germany and Holland with him snoring and farting all the way while the Germans on the train gave him plenty of room because he was beginning to get a bit whiffy. Once we had got to the venue

Peter was still the worse for wear and for quite some time had disappeared off the face of the earth. We finally found him still sleeping it off behind the stage.

Just before going on stage I thought I would go to the toilet. It was behind the stage and was part of the kitchen so it was for the bands use only. I had been a couple of times before and thought I would just go before going on stage. As some people know my eyesight is really bad so when some bright spark put the white seat with a scratched circle in the middle down I was never going to see it. What made it even worse was that I was actually looking at what I thought was the basin and wondering why my legs started to feel wet. Five minutes before going on stage I was on my hands and knees clearing up a large puddle and trying to dry the legs of my jeans under to hand dryer.

The gig itself went quite well, but there was trouble looming and a bit of an atmosphere. Peter was the first to receive the Black spot (Treasure Island) and we were left to find a new Drummer.

Keep it True



Dutch Doom Day



2008

Line Up Terry Jones, Alan Jones, Diccon Harper, Peter Dobbins & Rich Walker.

It took a while to find another drummer and we tried quite a few people. You need a person to have the right mix of personality, ability and to be able to fit in with the rest of the band. Diccon on the off chance phoned an old friend he knew from South Africa who was living in London and had played in bands in South Africa, Germany and England.

At the rehearsal it only took a few bars of Pagan Altar to know Andy Green was the right man for the job and it didn't take long before we asked him if he was interested in playing with the band.

Belfast Metal Racket 6th April 2008

Belfast was our first gig with Andy and it couldn't have been in a more beautiful venue. It was an old time music hall with chandeliers hanging from the ceiling and old wooden handrails.



Diccon doing his superhero pose

The guys that looked after us on this show did a great job for us it was a pleasure to play in that lovely old place. I also got a chance to see the two cranes that built the Titanic at the Harland and Wolf which was a real thrill for me.

If ever there had been a world record for snoring my dad would have been undisputed champion. We were in the same room at the B&B for this gig and although I have been away with him before it's never been in the same room. It normally takes a while for me to get asleep and although it doesn't have to be dead silent I was never ever going to get asleep that night with the equivalent of a jumbo jet taking off in the next bed. The thing is as soon as his head hits the pillow he is out like a light. At about four in the morning he got up to go to the toilet and found me on the floor with the covers wrapped round me, and still awake. Sometimes for a brief while he would stop snoring and that was worse because it seemed like he had stopped breathing and that kept me awake as well. Rich was snoring in the next room as well just to put the whole thing into stereo. By the next day I was completely spaced out and it took the whole day to wake up.

I don't know where they had come from but someone gave one of the band members their lucky Irish Pants which we had a bit of fun with. I put them on my guitar for the first song Pagan Altar for a laugh but one actually noticed.



Athens Greece 17th May 2008

Athens was a real landmark for the band and would be a couple of days none of us will ever forget. I always remembered thinking at the time how much Athens was like London in the late sixty's with rock music coming out of every shop. Everybody seemed to smoke as well, I think even the babies in their prams smoked woodbines. (We went back to Athens a few years later for the up the hammers gig and the atmosphere had completely changed. You could see the hardship and frustration and some people were living in tents on the streets because they couldn't afford to pay their rent anymore.)

There is so much history in Athens and some of the guys took the band up to the Acropolis where we spent a few great hours looking around. We went in this little museum next to the Parthenon where I read this sign in English that said "here is a copy of the Elgin Marbles, the real Marbles are in the British Museum London "What, I've just bloody come from there!!". Me and Diccon also found the Athens museum and in there were the bronze arrows that killed the last of the 300 Spartans. I loved the film of the 300 Spartans when I was a kid and never dreamed I would ever get to see any of that for real.

The gig itself was totally mad. If we could take ten Greeks to all our gigs I would be happy because they would make enough noise and emotion for about 50. We actually run out of songs and had to do a couple from the set and we had been on for well over two hours before that. There were also people from all around Europe as well and at one point I looked up and saw Christian (the flying Swede) floating past six foot in the air on everybody's hands.

I think we have probably played better, but it really didn't matter, the air was electric and I don't think I have ever played one since with that intensity.



Bradford 12th July 2008

This one must have been the day after my 46th birthday. All I can remember about it is Grim up North and a bit run down and Grey. I think the gig was actually in an old cotton factory and it looked like it. It was quite a surprise when we went inside because it wasn't that bad and the stage even had a carpet which was quite a novelty.



The band Forsaken from Malta was on the bill with us and we had an opportunity to play the demo track Room of shadows to Albert Bell for whom the song is about. My dad had asked if anybody on the Pagan Altar Templar's website had any ideas for subject matter and Albert had come back and said there was always a room in his childhood home that he was frightened to go in, and the Room of Shadows was born.

The whole night was very enjoyable and all the bands played really well which inspired us to play very well that night as well.

Hells Pleasure 19th July 2008 Open Air

This festival was in the east of Germany quite near the Polish border and in a field in the middle of nowhere. The promoters had a shuttle service that went from the hotel to venue and back so it was fine unless you missed it and had to wait for the next one. We were staying in a hotel called the St Petersburg run by a Russian lady who seemed very patriotic by the size of the enormous Red flags in her back room. Rich had brought his son along so they had a separate room while me Andy and Diccon were in another room with my dad (the Pavarotti of snoring.) I don't know if it was the wooden beds, but it seemed the whole room was resonating all night. The next day everyone was knackered except my dad who had a great night's sleep.

Pagan Altar, The Lamp of Thoth and Warning all went together as a package and that was great fun because we had all played on the same bill several times before together and knew each other quite well. It is funny because people probably have the impression that these guys are really serious and sombre but that couldn't be further from the truth, we all had a right laugh.

This festival was traditionally for Black metal or Death metal bands I'm not sure what the difference is but everybody behind the stage looked like Gene Simmons. I think the promoters had decided to mix the festival up a bit that year and gave everybody a rest from just one type of music which seemed like a good idea.

This was an open air festival and the weather had looked as if it had wanted to rain all day. I just knew that it was going to wait for us. Just before we went on stage the sky started to go Black and there were a few rumbles of thunder in the distance. When our intro started I thought I could see a lot of photos with flashes going off but it was not photo's it was lighting with a big clap of thunder shortly after. The Irish contingent that were always fantastic to have at festivals were well oiled by now and after we came off they said they thought it was part of the stage act. I don't know how they all stayed out there in that rain. As we came off, one of the other band members from one of the death metal bands was watching from behind the stage. He was swaying about and extremely drunk. He said "wow that was great man" just as he fell forward straight onto my guitar hard case and folded it in half. It was so lucky I hadn't put my guitar in it because he wouldn't have just looked like a corpse! The three bands came back home to London before going our separate ways.



Metal Brew North London 26th July 2008 Open Air

After Hells Pleasure we had a run of gigs in London. The first being Metal brew on the outskirts of North London. It was a strange sight for a south Londoner to see the city in the distance in the wrong direction. Rich couldn't make this one for some reason so we played with just the four of us. The stage was a sort of Metal gazebo with lights and speakers which lucky enough were not subjected to a lot of wind because I think it may have taken off. We went on stage just as the sun was going down and got a really nice reaction from the audience. I really enjoyed this one.



Bedford Park Streatham South West London 16th August 2008

This gig was at Diccons local pub. They had been doing a rock night and it wasn't too far to travel so we used it as a live rehearsal. We were still missing Rich for this one but a bit of re jiggering the set around and being in a small pub made it quite easy to switch. Plus Pagan Altar has done it with one guitar many times before so it wasn't a problem for me to swap.

I had decided to grow a beard to look a bit more rock n roll and I thought it was coming on quite nicely which is quite relevant to the story as you will see.

It is very hard to park around that area and there is always parking attendants ready to slap a ticket on your car window. We had been there before and my dad had got a parking ticket so he wasn't too keen to park too close to the venue and had parked the car quite a way away. We had spotted a parking space quite close that did not have a yellow line so my dad told me to stay at the space and wait until he brought the car around. After about five minutes what looked like a down and out comes up to me and starts talking. He starts off with asking had I just come out of the pub and then moved on to world events .After a while he says," If you haven't got anywhere to stay tonight I know somewhere where you can get some sleep."He thought I was a bloody tramp! After that I shaved my beard as soon as I could.



2009

Bedford park Rock Attic 17th January 2009

This was really a warm up to get back into playing live after a lay off of a few months. Rich was back with us and we also had the Lamp of Thoth and a young band who we knew called symmetry also on the bill.



Metal Merchants Oslo Norway 30th January 2009

This was our first trip to Scandinavia and maybe a chance to see the northern lights (It didn't happen) our hotel this time was I think the best hotel we have ever stayed in. It had been build for the winter Olympics in the 50's and looked like the inside of the Titanic (when it was above the water).

Breakfast was like a king's banquet with just about everything you could want and I felt a bit like Oliver Twist going back up for more. This place even had a glass lift inside. I don't know if there was a miss world competition on in Oslo because there were a lot of stunning looking women everywhere wondering around the hotel.

While we were in Oslo we had the chance to go to the famous Viking Museum which was absolutely wonderful. I think if Diccon could have got away with it he would have lived in the ship inside the museum.

The band had started to get into its stride by now and we were playing well on every outing. I had a slight problem when my Euro plug went off in one song, but it was just a loose connection and we taped it together just to hold it.

After we had played we went outside and had a chat with some people that had come to see us. We have always thought that is the least we could do for people who have travelled miles to see us play. Being Norway in January there was quite a bit of snow around and it was quite slippery in places. I was talking to someone and out the corner of my eye I saw a pair of feet go up in the air. I looked around and Diccon was a big heap in the snow. It did look quite comical but I think he hurt his shoulder quite a bit and landed on his jaw.

The Weather in Norway had been quite good to us and although it was about minus five it never felt that cold. As we come out of Gatwick airport back in Kent England it started to snow....And snow and snow. By the time we got to Diccons car it was more like Norway than Norway. Diccon being Diccon had not got around to getting his heater fixed in his car so the drive home was absolutely freezing because we had to keep the windows wide open to stop the condensation. We could only go about about 15 miles an hour on the motorway and the car felt more like a sledge. I don't know how we managed to get home in one piece.



British Steel festival London 4th April 2009

This gig is now the infamous eleven minute show we did at the Camden underworld club. Andy by now had moved to Wiltshire which is about a two and a half hour drive in normal circumstances. This time, (Lucky Us) even though he came out and gave himself four hours he got caught up in two pile ups on the motorway which you can't get out of and the car can be stationary for about an hour before anything moves. As it was getting closer to the time we were due on stage the panic started to set in and although we were in contact with Andy we were helpless. We did ask Cloven hoof who were co headlining with us if we could swap places with them but they weren't interested. I think they thought we had Andy hiding in the toilet and we were trying to nick their spot. Andy finally got there with about twenty minutes of our slot left. We wired up as quickly as we could and went on. We packed a whole set in that eleven minutes jumping about and giving it everything because we knew we were going to be off quite quick. I had been asking my friend Jo to come and see me play for about twenty years and she showed up that night. I worked that out at about two years a minute. The Promoters were very understanding and said they would book us again which they honoured.

Doom Shall Rise VI Goppingen Germany 17th April 2009

This would be Rich's last gig with the band. He had been staying over at my dad's house and there had been some sort of altercation, I'm not sure who with or what happened I wasn't there but that's where he received the black spot. I'm sure if it would have happened anywhere else we could have possibly sorted it out but I'm sure it had been brewing for some time and Rich wasn't the nicest person in the world at times either so it was probably one half a dozen of the other.

The venue for Doom shall rise is in what used to be a church and probably had more people in it now than it ever did in the past. We were there for the two days of the festival so we had a day off to watch the bands on the day we weren't playing. I had a plan that if I had one of the suspicious looking hotdogs every time I had a beer I wouldn't get too drunk while watching bands and talking to people. This worked very well all the time the hotdog stand was open but toward the end of the evening I did start to get slightly bladdered, but not as bad as Barry from Ireland who was face down in a puddle the last time I saw him that night.



On the day of the gig I thought it had all been sorted out with all the warring factions because everything seemed pretty normal and everybody seemed to be getting on well again and the mood was good.

We were in the changing room waiting to go onstage and there was a mix of musicians that had either been onstage before or were waiting to go on later. There was one guy from a band from south America who was so out of his face on god knows what, had nosedived to the floor and had not moved. We all thought he was dead and tried to revive him but he still wasn't moving. After what seemed like an age he sat up bolt right and looked about not quite knowing where he was. I saw him later in the evening wandering around like nothing had happened.

We went onstage and I think that was the best we had played up to that point. Andy had a bit of trouble with a snare halfway through but we had Sharnie ready so that me and Diccon could play it as a backup if anything like that happened. It was not long before we managed to get playing again. I remember playing the Black Mass and everybody singing along "this is the age the age of Satan" and thinking we are in a church. It just felt a bit surreal. Just before the last song my dad

announced that this was Rich's last show and I knew that it would be me having to go through teaching someone else the same old songs all over again.

We all seemed to part amicably enough but as soon as everybody got home and got out their computers they all started acting like a bunch of five year olds. That is all I will say on that.



Dublin 20th May Belfast 21st may 2009

Line Up Terry Jones, Alan Jones, Diccon Harper & Andy Green.

This gig felt like playing in someone's living room. It was upstairs from the main bar downstairs which before we went onstage had a Irish Dancing act (for the tourists I expect). I nipped downstairs to watch these three girls hammering the hell out of this wooden floor and couldn't help but be impressed. Watching it on the Telly isn't the same thing as feeling that sound go through your body with the Irish in me not to far up the family tree it was probably the Celt trying to get out in me.

We went onstage and it was so imamate it felt like we playing in front of family and friends. At one point through Sentinels of hate there is a gap and the audience made so much noise we couldn't hear my dad who we used to wait for to lead us in. It was quite funny because he had to quieten them down and then bring us in. It was a unique moment.



The next day we were off on a coach for the next show with several of the guys that saw us at Murrays the night before. It wouldn't have been Ireland if it wasn't accompanied by a large crate of beer and probably a few other doggy substances. We went on the main motorway from Dublin to Belfast and it felt more like the end of the film the Italian job. We finally got to Belfast in one piece (without hanging off a cliff) and had to wait about an hour before we could get in.



Barry contemplating world events

During the evening I remember that the Eurovision song contest was on in the bar of the pub part of the venue. I kept sneaking in there to give my Brain a rest from the very loud music and just to try and chill a bit before going onstage (Ireland or the UK never won). We went onstage to quite a lively audience and towards the end of Judgement of the dead we couldn't hear what we were playing. What made it worse was the audience were singing along to the wrong bit. It was like

having two Radios on at the same time on different channels. We managed to get through it and by the end of the song they were back singing the right bit again.



We stayed overnight at one of the promoters house and because there was a lot of us we made do where we could. Andy's wife Michelene had come with us to these gigs and was pregnant with their first baby and quite rightly they had the bed. The rest of us had a Lillo (Air bed) each and as you can guess they all went down during the night. I did make an attempt to blow mine up at about three AM in the morning and gave up because we were leaving at five AM anyway and I couldn't find the foot pump.

Belgium 24th May 2009

This was the first time we have taken the ferry over to Belgium. It is quite stressful driving with the steering wheel on the passenger side of the car. It takes two people, one to steer and the other to look out of the window. It took about an hour to get to the venue and we did have a bit of trouble finding it at first. When we did find the venue it looked more like a small pub in England. I suppose there were about 25 to 30 people that turned up for the show, but they did make it worth the effort and we did have an enjoyable night. The one thing I do remember was having one of the best beers I've ever had after the show.



Metal Magic Festival Frederica Denmark 5th June 2009

This must have been the easiest flight we have ever been on. We went with an airline from Denmark in the middle of the week and I think all in all there were about ten people on the plane not including the staff. It was the nearest thing to flying on a private jet.

The Metal Magic festival was a new festival at the time and had not quite got established yet so it was quite small compared to some of the other festivals we had played in the past. It had a really nice atmosphere to it and the stage was built around an old railway platform. We were on in the daylight which in one way is good for me because I can actually see what I'm doing, but is not great for the band because somehow it just doesn't seem to work. The occult works better in the shadows.



After the gig we took some promo pictures around a lake where we spotted a bottle nose dolphin swimming around. I never got a picture though.



Lusitanian Mass Lisbon Portugal 10th June 2009

Lisbon is a lovely place and luckily we got a good chance to have a good look around. My dad always used to say to the promoters that we always like to have a look around the places where we are playing. One of our promoters (Francisco, I think that was his name) on this occasion took my dad's word to the letter. We had virtually got off the plane when we were whisked off for a history and cultural tour on foot of the city. In Lisbon they have these little shops that are more like holes in the wall with a little stalls squeezed in-between. The only things they sell are these little plastic cups of something very similar to port for one Euro. The problem was that these shops were about every 30 or 40 meters apart and Me Andy and Diccon couldn't seem to get past them without buying just one more. After about three hours we were virtually staggering around and half asleep half-drunk trying to get Francisco to get us back to the hotel.



Looking for the next stall

The gig itself looked like a converted cinema and had a gallery upstairs which all the bands had used a separate area. When we got to sound check I must admit I was panicking a bit. Normally most of the amps were A Form of Marshall or something quite similar which you can fiddle about with and get sort of the same sound. This amp sounded like a wired up corn flake box. I don't know what the PA guy did but when we played that evening that sound he got was absolutely fantastic. We had a really good night and what the audience lacked in size they made up for in enthusiasm.



Hammer of Doom Wolfsburg Germany 17th October 2009

Line Up Terry Jones, Alan Jones, Diccon Harper, Andy Green & Luke Hunter.

This was Luke's first gig with us and he couldn't have picked a bigger venue. We have always loved going to Germany. It was the first place we played outside the UK and it is the Country we have played at the most. At the hotel me, Andy, Diccon and my dad thought we would have a look at the venue while Luke wanted to take a shower and stayed in the hotel. When we got there our eyes nearly popped out of our heads. This place was Hugh. When we got back to Luke we told him that the place was so small, once you got the drums on the stage none of us would have any room to move. We got to the venue and Luke still never realised that this enormous building we had gone in was the place we were playing. It wasn't until he walked past an upstairs window and literally run back to look at a band playing downstairs did it dawn on him what was going on, which prompted him then give us a few choice words about our parentage.



The gig itself was quite hard work. The onstage sound wasn't that great because unless you are the headline band you get just a line check which is a quick run through then you're off. It normally sorts itself out by the second or third song but this time there was an awful booming sound that seemed to be set off by a note, then it was all over the stage. I found out later that a few of the bands suffered the same thing. Even so I did enjoy this gig.



Metal Forces Lorrach Germany November 28th 2009

For some reason I have no photos for this gig at all. The one thing that really sticks out in my mind was Luke's amp catching fire and everybody running over to try and put it out. We had been having a bit of trouble with the amps going off in the sound check and we were both a bit worried that by the time we got to the stage they would be knackered. One of the guys from one of the other bands said I could use his Marshall just before we went on and that really saved my bacon because I had no trouble. Luke on the other hand had a lot of trouble with his amp going off completely in one song. We finally changed the amp to a spare and that started going wrong as well and in the end caught fire. This festival was in Germany but it was also on the border of France and Switzerland and on the way to the show we crossed three countries in ten minutes.

This was Andy's Last gig with us. Moving to Wiltshire, having a young baby and not getting anything out of the band was just too much for him and he reluctantly had to leave. He was one of the few people not to get the black spot.

2010

We now had the problem, how do we get another Drummer in the same class as Andy. This was pretty hard because I consider Andy as a world class drummer. We asked our friend Ian Winters who I had known since I was a kid and our dads used to work with each at the GPO (British Telecom) did he know any drummers that fitted the bill. We knew that Ian was already doing music with his own band Kill the Machine which was going well at the time so we was quite surprised when he said he could play with us and do the Kill the Machine stuff as well. I have played in bands with Ian and once again I consider him as world class. He is a very different style of player to Andy but one that can fit into Pagan Altars music very well so I was over the moon to be playing with him again.

Finland Mini tour Turku, Oulu, Jyvaskyla, Helsinki 1st to 5th April 2010

Line Up Terry Jones, Alan Jones, Diccon Harper, Luke Hunter & Ian Winters.

This was our mini tour of Finland which started in Turku, went North to Oulu then down a bit to Jyvaskyla and finally back down to Helsinki. On the tour with us was a nice bunch of lads from Sweden called Isole.

The first night we stayed at the promoter's house and I think his wife was not keen on the idea of a bunch of foreigners sleeping on her living room floor if their heated discussion in Finish was anything to go by. The next morning we had to wait at a parade of shops for our tour Bus. The coach that was standing at the stop was like Pink Floyd's tour bus, it was fantastic. We started to put our guitars in the bus when we heard a voice from behind us say "that is not you coach, that is your coach", we looked behind and this bus from the late 50's early 60s emerged out of the smoke. I didn't think it would even get to the end of the road let alone hundreds of miles away. To all our surprise it did actually go and as long as it stayed at a steady 50 MPH nothing fell off.



Our first stop was Turku where we visited a Castle during the daytime. It was a fascinating place and looked more like a stately home with a dungeon. Both bands had some photos taken in some serious poses and then had some taken with all of us together.



Although this was our first gig together it wasn't as bad as I thought at the time. I never enjoyed this one much because the stage guys put the two guitar amps at the front of the stage and pointing across the stage. I don't know who came up with that idea but it is complete nonsense and it just blew everybody's ears out. We only got caught out the one night and insisted they go behind at the back.



Back on the road the next day and we had a long drive up towards Oulu which was probably further than the whole length of England and Scotland combined. The whole of Finland seemed to be frozen but we stopped for a break and it felt so warm we went outside in our t-shirts.

We stopped off at a few service stations along the way and at one I had the biggest burger I have ever seen. This was a Man V food size burger. I shared it with Ian because there was no way I would have done it on my own.

When we finally got to the small town of Oulu it felt like we were at the North Pole. None of us had been this far North before. After we got our gear safely in the club the guys from the club took the band out for a meal at an Indian restaurant (of all things) a couple of hours before we went onstage which could have been dangerous, but thankfully none of us had any trouble.



One of the guys that was something to do with the gig at Oulu worked in a funeral home and knew where he could get hold of a spare coffin. My dad straight away wanted to be brought onto the stage in the coffin through the audience. I really didn't like this one bit, but my dad being my dad just went with it regardless. The only problem was that the coffin was a lot longer than my dad was and when they picked the coffin up, they never picked it up evenly and my dad shot forward inside the coffin. When they got to the stage and to the steps he went backwards banging his head and when they finally stood the coffin upright and opened the lid he fell forward out onto the stage. I really enjoyed this show. It was a tiny club and the atmosphere was great and very loud. I think we played really well that night helped by the audience.

Back on the road and towards Jyvaskyla. This was not as far as the first journey to Oulu so it wasn't that bad, and the scenery out of the coach window was stunning. Once we got to the venue we had to take the gear in a very slow lift. Ian and the guys from Isole went up first and we waited until they came back down. After a couple of minutes we could hear the lift slowing coming back down. All of a sudden we could hear a commotion and a lot of agonised shouting in Swedish. The door of the lift opened and the guys from Isole ran out of the lift holding their noses and I think cursing in Swedish followed but Ian sniggering. It was a funny sight; Ian had farted in the lift which I know from experience is not a pleasant thing.

This show was a strange one. Most of the night it was absolutely empty with the odd person bobbing his head around the corner. Then about five minutes before we went on everybody seemed to come out of the woodwork and the place seemed to fill up. We played the gig and ten minutes after we came off the whole place was deserted and seemed like no one had been there.



The two bands stayed in what was like a school dormitory upstairs from the stage area. That night it was like animal farm with two bands half cut snoring like there's no tomorrow. It was a very long night. The next morning we were off again to Helsinki. This journey seemed to take longer than

the others put together, probably because of the lack of sleep the night before. It was quite a relief when we finally got to Helsinki and arrived at the venue. We had a little look around the city for a while and got something to eat then returned in the afternoon to get ready. Ian did another one of his famous sound checks by doing a rendition of Shirley Bassey's big spender which made everybody laugh. On the night of the gig there was another band on the bill as well who went on first. They played very well and Isole played the best show out of all the nights I had seen them so we really needed to be on our game that night. This was one of those nights where everything seemed to go right and we had a blinder of a gig. The audience was fantastic that night as well and it crowned a very enjoyable mini tour. We could have done with a few more gigs because we were really starting to jell as a band by Helsinki and could only get better.



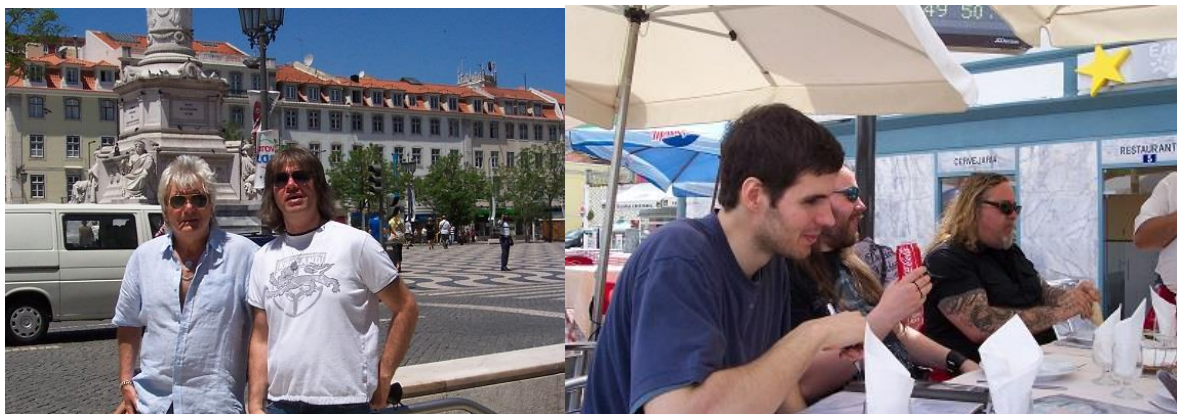
PAGAN Altar Photo shot 2010

Diccon had a friend who was quite a keen photographer who had her own portfolio and lots of experience. We jumped at the chance when Diccon said she was willing to do a shot with us and knew just the place to do it.



Lisbon Portugal 9th April 2010

Back in Lisbon again for a second tour of the city with Francisco and this time in the beautiful Lisbon sun. It was a really nice day and our host was very welcoming and knowledgeable about the city. He had also put us up in a really nice hotel as well and had done all he could for us which we appreciated.



On the day of the gig we had to get a ferry over to the other side of the river which took about half an hour because it was quite a way to the other side. Luckily enough the venue was right

by the river and looked like a little riverside pub. When we got inside it was a lot bigger than it looked.

There were some really good bands on the bill that night including Drakkar who we had played with before the last time we came to Lisbon. I really couldn't work out why they wasn't an international band by now because I thought they were one of the most talented bands we had ever played with.

Like most gigs with more than two bands it over run quite badly and as the night wore on I thought there is not going to be anybody left in the place by the time we got onstage. We went on stage at about 2.30 am in the morning and everybody was still there. It's funny how getting up on a stage can soon wake you up and we played roughly a two hour set. At the end of our set everybody stood there and applauded which had never happened before or since. By the time we had packed away and left the building it was light outside.



Roadburn festival Rotterdam Holland 16th April 2010



We decided to go by ferry over to Ostend Belgium and drive to Rotterdam this time and for once this band we had had a bit of luck. Thousands of miles away a volcano in Iceland had decided to blow its top and was spewing large amounts of ash into the atmosphere and blowing straight at mainland Europe. At first it was not a problem but after a couple of days it started to cause chaos. We had bought a return ticket which was just as well because they were selling tickets at five times the price back to England. Also what happened was any bands that hadn't already arrived from America were not able to come and the ones that were in Holland were stranded there for quite

some time after. We played ok that night but for some reason the spark wasn't there. It wasn't one of my favourite gigs and I was glad to get back home.

Long Live Metal Templeuve Belgium 15th May 2010

The festival was right on the border between Belgium and France. Our hotel was in France and the border was about 500 yards away. The Hotel where we were staying had a great wall around it where the cars parked. It wasn't until that night we all found out why. It seems that that town's national spot was setting alight anybody's car that parked on the road.

The festival was in a converted barn on a farm and a world away from the French town about two miles down the road. Although this festival wasn't that big it had a lovely laid back atmosphere to it and it was a pleasure to be there.



This was five years to the day before my dad's death on 15. 5. 15. You just cannot see anything like that coming and he just seemed so fit and alive back then.

We had a good night and played really well. The double leads sounded fantastic and me and Luke were really on form that night. The atmosphere in that place was fantastic as well and it gave us a big lift.



We was a bit late getting back to Ostend and had to watch the ferry sailing away in the distance as we pulled into the port. We had a couple of hours to wait so we had a walk around Ostend which is a lot nicer place that it sounds. The ferry finally arrived and we got home safely back to England.



Leaving Belgium for England

Muskelrock Sweden 16th June 2010

This festival was in a converted amusement park from the 60s very much like Margate from when I was a kid. I knew this one was going to be fun. Our flight was quite a late one this time and it was quite a few miles from the airport so we was still driving as the sun was setting at midnight. We finally got to the house we were staying at in the middle of a wood. The guys that brought us from the airport left us there and said they would be back the next day at some point. This house was out of the Blair Witch project; in the middle of nowhere and no signs of life around (except the eyes looking at you though the trees) Diccon was the only one who seemed keen on the Deliverance Idea. It wouldn't have been so bad if there would have been a bit of food in the fridge. Well there was of sorts, about a thousand sausages for the festival and no way to cook any of them. When the guys came back the next day everybody was hungry tetchy and demanding to go back to their trailer if they didn't get a hotel.



Diccon doing his best Burt Reynolds pose

Civilisation

Sweden in summer seems to be plagued with millions of insects that seemed to be dive bombing everybody at the festival. We were onstage in the daylight again and without any atmosphere it felt a bit dead and hard work. Samhein got counted in very slow and it sounded like a 45 single played at 33rpm. (Vinyl to anyone under 30).The best bit was when we came off stage and enjoyed the rest of the festival. I had a great time at the festival I just was not that happy how we played, but sometime it happens like that.



The festival in Sweden was to be Ian's last show with the band. His other band Kill the Machine had a date in England the day after we had the next show in Finland and he was quite willing to go out with us and fly back home the next day. This never happened and we managed muddle through, but at a price.

Ian managed to get the black spot without even knowing about it and under the pretext of not being well enough to carry on and go to the states for a festival. Diccon was not happy with this and had the luxury of being able to leave because he knew what was going to happen. For me it was hell of a lot more complicated.



Ian (The Bear) winters

2010 -2013

We carried on for a further three years but the band was never the same and although we played in places such as Montreal, Baltimore USA, Dubai Rome Malta and many more, it always felt to me like we were living off our name. There were some good players that come in and out of the band but it could not solve the fundamental problem. Our last gig was in Portugal where we played in the hills near Porto. My Dad had been struggling to breathe a bit while we were there and we just put it down to their being slightly less air up in the hills. On the night of the show while playing the Sentinels of Hate he just stopped near the beginning and we thought he had just forgot it and went around until he came back in. We never knew at the time he couldn't breathe. Shortly after coming back home we found out he had got terminal Cancer.



Barcelona



Malta



Montreal



Baltimore USA

Other Band members between 2010 and 2013 were Manny Cooke (Bass), Marcus Cella (Bass), Dean Alexander (Drums), Vince Hempstead (Guitar), William Gallagher (Bass) and Russell McQuire (Bass) who took over after Diccon and played three gigs with us in London Dublin and Barcelona.



Rome



The Catacombs Montreal



British Steel London



Barcelona

Recording the Room Of Shadows

2013-2015

There are no photos of us in the studio while my dad was doing the album because he didn't want anybody to see him without his hair and did not like any photos being taken of him.

From the years 2013 - 2015 we attempted to record the new album which was originally called Never Quite Dead. Firstly at the studio at my Dad's house at Gravesend which was initially built for the project and then at Banana Road Studios with Ani. We spent a lot of time and effort on it but it just lacked any drive or power and just sounded mediocre. Neither of us was happy with it although we did everything we could to make it work.

On the 15th of May 2015 my dad lost his fight with Cancer and the album got shelved. I had really had enough of it by then and never listened to it for a long time after.



2016

Wiltshire July 2016

I have always stayed in contact with Diccon and we have been friends for years and live quite close so we have been able to visit each other on a regular basis. Me and Diccon decided to visit Andy in July 2016 for the first time in seven years and took our guitars for a jam in a studio he had booked nearby. Considering the three of us had not played together for seven years it sounded great.



Studio in Wiltshire July 2016

I still had no intentions of even listening to the album at that point and it wasn't even mentioned at our stay at Andy's. It wasn't until after a jam with Diccon at my place did I put the album on for Diccon and said I wished I could get you and Andy to have a go at the album from scratch. That is the point where the second half of the album started.

We got in touch with Andy and at first he was not sure but it did not take that much persuading in the end to get him on board. This was the line-up that actually started the album on my 16 track portable in 2008-2009 with Andy's electric drum pads to use as a demo before starting it properly



We contacted Ani again and had a look at what we had to do but it was getting late in the year and none of us was too keen to start this properly until the New Year. The album did not start for real until January 2017.

As this was starting to happen in late 2016 our friends from Canada Annick and François were in England on a tour with their band Cauchemar. They were in London for a couple of days and I had the chance to meet up with them and take them on a tour of sunny Greenwich then back to my sister's house in the evening. I knew they were just starting up their new label Temple of Mystery Records and thought I would be cheeky and I asked if they would like to bring the album out.



Down by the Catty's Sark

Middle of the Planet

Rock older than Pagan Altar

Banana Road Studios - January to June 2017

Starting in January had also given Andy a bit more time to rehearse the songs. Andy started with three songs Rising of the Dead, The Portrait of Dorian Gray and the Ripper. As the tracks were being recorded it was so nice to hear them come to life at last. The drums had drive attack feel and most of all class. I knew after that first song we were going to have an album worth listening to.



The plan was to get three songs recorded on the drums, put down the guitar and bass while Andy rehearsed the other three songs at home.

I was the next to put the rhythm down on the tracks Andy had started about a week before. I thought I would start with the easiest track Dorian Gray and do the harder ones after. It never quite worked out like that. Banana Road for about eight months of the year is like Narnia (Bloody freezing) and I just couldn't warm my hands up. It took a good half an hour before I could string two chords together. I gave up with Dorian Gray and started on the harder two and did them in one take each then went back to Dorian Gray and did that in one take.



Diccon came in to Banana Road in February and worked on Dorian Gray and Rising of the Dead. I think Diccon had the hardest task on this recording because he had listened to every phrase Andy had done and worked the bass in accordingly. Once again he did the same thing as I did and chose to record Dorian Gray first being the easiest song to do, and once again he could not get his fingers going straight away and had more trouble with that song than the rest. After Dorian Gray Diccon flew through Rising of the Dead and finished both songs in a couple of hours. The tracks were really starting to sound how I imagined they could sound when I first wrote the music.



Diccon showing off playing with just one finger

Andy was back in Banana Road around about March to put down the final three drum tracks. Putting the drum tracks down at different times can be tricky because no matter how you try to get the microphone's in the same place it never sounds exactly the same. It took Ani a bit longer to

fiddle around with the sound until we were happy we had got the sound right and then we were ready to go.



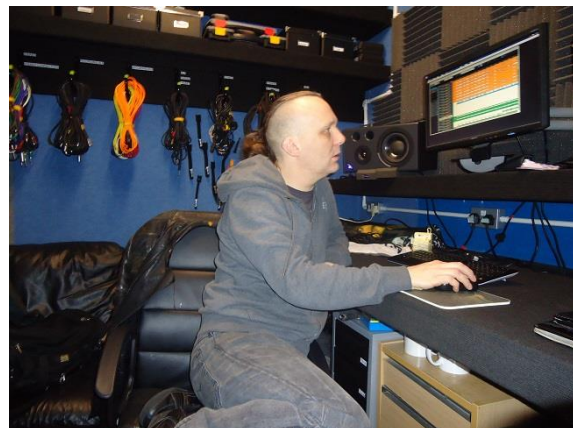
Andy warming up before we had got the mic's set up

Dance of the vampires, Dance Macabre and the Room of Shadows did not take long to record at all. Andy had changed the drums on The Room of shadows and I loved what he had done with it. It just drove the song so well. All three songs sounded great even though we had not put our parts on yet we could tell how it was going to sound.

It was my turn to come in the studio and it was towards the end of March early April. We had to work it around when we could get in the studio and when Ani had any space for us. Sometime it was a few weeks before we could get in the studio to do anything but that meant we had a few weeks to really nail the songs we were working on. I managed to get the songs down in one or two goes but we had all done that. It made them sound a lot more live. I also re-did a couple of the double leads I wasn't happy with and tidied up a couple of leads. The majority of the solos I left from the first attempt because they were fine.



Can I do that just one more time



Ani hearing the song for the 8,000,000,000 time

Diccon was back in the studio late April maybe early may to work on Dance of the vampires and The Danse Macabre. Thankfull the studio was warming up slighty and you didn't need snow boots to get to the door of the mixer room. I know it sounds a bit boring but it never really took that

long before Diccon had recorded the tracks. For Danse Macabre Diccon had put a great bass line in that weaved in and out of the rhythm and transformed song and really highlighted my guitar solos.



Diccon came in again at the start of June and we were running out of time a bit because we had set a release date with Annick for the 24th of August (my dad's birthday). He had the Room of Shadows and the Ripper to do. For the demo for the Room of Shadows I had imitated Diccon's style at the beginning of the song and he really liked what I had done so he copied what I had done. (So he was ripping me off ripping him off.) The last two tracks went down in a couple of hours and they sounded fantastic even before they had been mixed. We had now finished the recording side of the album.



Banana Road 2017

Mixing the of Room of Shadows

Battery studios June-July 11th 2017

While we were finishing the recording at Banana Road Andy had mentioned he knew a friend who was in the industry that had worked on an album with him in the past with another band. He also knew him from when he lived in South Africa who and was now mixing at the highly prestigious Battery studios near Wembley. Andy asked if I would be interested in Rohan Onraet doing a final mix of the album for us. Andy gave him a ring and he had given Andy a great rate which was well worth doing and one we couldn't refuse. We went into Battery studio three times to mix the album and it was a sharp learning curve for all of us. On the first occasion Rohan had showed us around all the studios and had shown us the room in which ACDC had recorded Back in Black and Iron Maiden and many more had recorded albums.



We went into another room and there were reel to reels of the Who, Eric Clapton and Phil Collins and many more just lying around all over the place. It felt like being in Santa's grotto.



Andy arrived a little later and we started to do the job in hand. We had all the files what we had done at Banana Road on a memory stick and that took much of the first night sorting out what files we needed to use even though Rohan had done a lot of work on that before. We had a big scare

a few weeks earlier when Ani had a problem with file corruption on his computer and our tracks had gone tits up for a while but he had managed to sort it out for us. Doing the mixes with Rohan was the best part of the album for me. It finally felt like fun and we had a great laugh together and just seemed a bit more detached from the first few years watching my dad getting worse and struggling to get through the songs. I don't know how Rohan did it because while he was recording with us through the night and not finishing until about 3am in the morning, he was then recording with an orchestra for Gary Barlow in the day. By about 12.30am I would start to wilt and I wasn't doing anything.

The last session we did and what would be the final mix was on my 55th birthday on the 11th of July. This meant the album would be finished on my birthday and released on my dad's birthday 24th of August which was quite a nice touch.



After Rohan had done some final touches on the mix he sent it to Bart Gabriel for Mastering. If it wasn't for him this album would have probably taken another six months or more to have come out. He has done a fantastic job and we are all very pleased with it.

Annick had been working really hard on her side of things and had commissioned a work of art from the artist Adam Burke. It had been taken from some pictures of potential covers we had given Annick of my niece (Terry's Granddaughter) Ellie in Victorian dress that related to the songs. Annick had liked the one that eventually ended up as the cover.

The original Photo



Adams painting



I don't know how we managed it but after 5 years the album finally came out on time and was released on my dad's birthday on the 24th of August. I couldn't have been happier with how it has been received and am really proud of the final result. I think all the right people were involved at the right time and I think my biggest achievement on this album is what I managed to keep off of it.

2017

Montreal Canada 5th to 10th 2017

I was talking to Annick on the phone around about the time we were recording the album and I may have dropped in a hint or two that I wouldn't mind playing a one off gig if we could find someone who knew the songs and could sing. It wasn't long after that my sister got an email from Annick asking us if we were interested in playing the wings of metal festival in Montreal. She also sent a link on YouTube to a band called Magic Circle and asked if I thought the singer Brendan Radian (who she knew) would be suitable to join us in Montreal and if so would I like to contact him. I thought Magic Circles album sounded great and I thought Brendan's voice would be perfect for Pagan Altar. (I didn't think I would ever think that about any singer). We both emailed each other and it looked promising. I never like to count my chickens so we kept a low profile about it. I had also asked Annick if François would be interested in playing guitar as well. I think François is a really underestimated guitarist and would not have had any trouble with the songs. Unfortunately he did not have the time to fully commit as much as he would have liked and suggested the multi-talented Andres Arango who played bass in Cauchemar. Now we had established a line up Rehearsing was going to be somewhat of a problem considering half of the band lived on a different continent. The idea was to stick as close to the CDs as we could. I sent Andres Al's Pagan Altar play in a day DVD which would speed things up a bit as well. This was a big risk we were taking but I had faith it was going to be ok. The months rolled by and all of a sudden the gig was a couple of days away.

We thought it would be a good idea to stay at the Travelodge the night before we flew. It was five minutes from the airport and took all the stress out of rushing around trying to get to the airport at the last minute like headless chickens. It worked a treat and we met up at the Travelodge and had a relaxing night. The next morning we got a hopper bus that went from the Travelodge straight to the airport with of time to spare



Heathrow Airport

We had to go to Paris first which was odd because we were going in the wrong direction. Then pick up a connection flight to Montreal. The Flight to Canada was with Air France and we all got a glass of Champaign on the flight, it felt like we were in first class.

The last time I had been to Montreal airport there had been some sort of cock up with the work permit or something like that I am not really sure but we got pulled into Immigration for about 2 hours while our guitars were going round and round on the conveyer belt for anyone to pick up.

This time thankfully it was a lot more straight forward although waiting to show our passports I was thinking to myself "don't happen again, don't happen again".

Annick had arranged for us to meet her friend Sandi who would pick us up at the airport and take us to her place where we would be staying for the next few days. We met Sandi as we came outside of the airport and crossed the road to the indoor car park where her car was parked. Unfortunately Sandi had forgotten where she had put her car and that's when it started to turn into a sitcom. We were walking up and down the car park for ages looking for her car. I thought it was really funny and the longer it went on the funnier it got. We started to wonder if the car had been stolen when she finally found it right at the front of the car park not far from where we had first walked in.

We stayed at Sandi's for a couple of hours and freshened up, and then we all went over to Annick and François house. That is when we got a look at the finished CD of The Room of Shadows for the first time. When we got to their house I thought we were just meeting Annick and François .As we entered there were a lot more people there than I was expecting which was a nice surprise. Brendan was there but Andres had to work that night so we would not meet him until the rehearsal.



Annick and François small CD collection in the background

While we were there we signed some posters, had a look through the art work on the album, listened to Rush, did a lot of talking and generally had a good time.



The next day we were off to rehearse for the first time. I think we were all a bit apprehensive to how it was going to sound and we hadn't even met Andres yet. Funny enough the room we were rehearsing in was the same room as I had rehearsed in seven years before. Well if it wasn't the same room it certainly looked like it. Brendan was already there as we got there and Andres arrived shortly after. We took about 10-15 minutes setting up and chatting to get to know each other then decided to go through the set in order. I was expecting to go through the songs one at a time and stop it when something was not right. A few bars into the song I knew it was going to work and we played through the whole set and I never had to stop it once. I was so impressed with Brendan and Andres they had learnt the songs to the letter. My dad always liked a lot of words and if you don't know what you are doing vocally with our songs you can find yourself at the end of a line with two words you couldn't fit in. They sound easy when you are singing along to the record but try it without the vocal line on and it is a different matter. There is also a guitar section in the middle of Sentinels of Hate that although other guitarists have played that bit only Andres has got the timing right without me having to go through it with them.

We came back to the rehearsal room the next day and it wasn't just a fluke the first time because it sounded just as good the second time. We had a guest Sarah that sat in at the rehearsal on the second day who works for a magazine and had been trying to interview me for quite a time. Having no internet myself I had to go over to Diccon's house and go onto his computer and his Skype account. The time difference made it really awkward and we kept missing each other but eventually she managed to do the interview with Me, Andy and Diccon together so it worked out well in the end.



That night we went to the festival and watched one of Andres's bands who were on the bill that night. This time he was playing drums and he really impressed Andy who said he had a great technique. We also popped out and went to where Sandi worked at a pinball bar quite close to the venue. That was great fun although Me Andy and Diccon was absolutely useless at pinball and the more we tried to keep the balls from going down the hole the more colourful our language got.

Our stay with Sandi had really put the three of us at our ease and she had really looked after us. When we first got to her flat she had asked us what food we liked and what food we didn't like. I had lost a bit of weight recently and didn't really want to go on a eating a drinking binge while I was away and I think Andy and Diccon felt the same so we plumped for more healthy options. She did some lovely meals for us and I think we felt better for it.





Wings of Metal 9th September 2017

Time Lord Tribute to Terry Jones

We had one last rehearsal on the day of the gig and that went well so we were all fired up and ready to go for the show in the evening. We went over to the venue in the afternoon for a while then came back to the flat to relax before going back for the rest of the evening. Sandi had quite a large collection of vinyl records of bands we all loved like Mountain and Nazareth and a lot of stuff from that time.

We went back to the venue with about an hour to spare and caught a bit of Diamond Head's show but we were on directly after and I don't like watching a band before we go on.

Soon enough it was our turn to go on and I don't know about the other guys but I was a bit nervous of how it was go. After the first few chords the adrenaline takes over and you start to enjoy it. I cannot remember too much about it, I never can but I remember thinking my dad would have loved all of this and what a great job Brendan and Andres were doing with our songs.







Brendan checking for woodworm

Before I knew it we were playing the last song and then we had finished. A while after we had come off stage a guy comes up to me and starts chatting about the show and how he had enjoyed it. He said he was something to do with a radio show and could I do a jingle for his show on this little tape recorder he had with him. My dad was always the one for these sorts of things and I am not. All I had to do was remember my name and the name of the show and the frequency and I couldn't do it. I think I even forgot my name at one point. In the end I had to say look I'm sorry but I cannot do it.

We stayed at the club until it finished at about 3.30am in the morning then we all went to an all-night cafe where we had this strange meal at about 4.00am. I am not sure but I think it was rat on a stick. We got back to the flat and got up late the next day. We got to the airport and made our way home. There were no interesting events on the way back and we finally got back to London the next morning and went our separate ways.

Pagan Altar 2017



After the success of the Montreal show in Canada founder member of the band Alan Jones along with 2008 members Diccon Harper (Bass) and Andy Green (Drums) along with Magic Circle's vocalist Brendan Radian and Cauchemar bassist Andres Arango (Guitar) are planning to play some selected dates in 2018 as Pagan Altar in conjunction with the bands 40th anniversary and will include songs from the new album The Room of Shadows. There may be dates after 2018 depending on commitments and whether the band wishes to carry on or not.

Hammer of Doom

Wurzburg Germany 18.11. 2017

After the great time we had in Montreal it was going to take something special to get anywhere near the high that lasted for quite some after for all of us.

Diccon had now moved over to Ireland so we were even more spread over the globe than before so rehearsing for this gig consisted of playing along to the CDs and having a rehearsal on the day before we played the show in Wurzburg.

The best thing for me was to go to Wiltshire and stay at Andy's house overnight so we could go together from Bristol Airport the next day which would take all the stress out of rushing to the airport. As usual I managed to get to Clapham Junction in London two and a half hours early for the train to Wiltshire and waited in the waiting room for what seemed like forever.

The train finally arrived at 5.55pm and it did not seem long before I was in Salisbury where I had to change for the short journey to Trowbridge .I got to Trowbridge in Wiltshire at about 7.15 pm where Andy met me at the Station. Just before that I thought I was at the Station and tried to get off the train and could not get out the door. After a small panic I realised the train was still moving and had not yet got to the station. We arrived back at Andy's and relaxed for the evening and had a lovely meal which Michelene had made.

The next day was quite an easy day for us because the flight wasn't until the early evening and we could take our time. We set out at about half two and met with a bit of traffic on the way but had plenty of time to spare. We had to travel to Amsterdam first then get a connecting flight to Frankfurt. This is always risky because of delays. Luckily for us we had a big gap between flights because we had a 55 minute delay and many people on our flight missed their connections. When we got to Amsterdam we had to run from one side of the airport to the other carrying our luggage on the moving walkways bouncing people out of the way as we went. When we got to our gate the woman on the desk told us" this plane is going to Bolivia, your plane has been moved to another gate". It was only two gates down so we were o.k. We got into the queue and Diccon appeared behind us. He had been waiting for hours.

Once we arrived at Frankfurt we had an hour and a half drive to Wurzburg. Because Germany is two hours in front of Britain in the winter it was about midnight when we finally reached the hotel. There was a bar just around the corner and we had a quick nightcap before the bar shut.



Brendan arrived at the hotel around about lunchtime the next day and we caught up over coffee before going to the venue. We had a Rehearsal booked in one of the rooms inside the complex. The plan was to meet Andres at the rehearsal after he got to the hotel and freshened up, but unfortunately it took him about two and a half hours to get from the airport through traffic and he had to come straight to the rehearsal. Considering Andres must have been absolutely knackered he played great and the rehearsal went really well and it gave me a lot of confidence for the next



Day.

Denis Schneider popped into the rehearsal as well to meet the band and hang out with us. We haven't seen Denis for quite a few years and it was great to see him again. He is also an important part of the new Pagan Altar set up.



Denis on the right

After we had finished rehearsing, the bands had already started playing upstairs so we had time to go and see some of the bands on that night. On the bill was a band called Lucifer's friend where the singer was ex Uriah Heep member John Lawton. He had long white hair, sun glasses and a black shirt and was the double of my dad. From off of the stage the likeness was uncanny. All of his mannerisms were the same as my dad and it was quite a spooky experience for me. At certain times he just

seemed to have morphed into my dad. With my dad's voice on some of our intros and someone who looked just like my dad onstage it really did feel like he was there in spirit ,and had turned up at his own tribute.

At the end of the night we watched the headline band Warning and that felt like old times as well. It was nice to catch up with Patrick again after the show.

We headed back to the hotel and ended up in that little bar around the corner from the hotel again with about 10 minutes before it shut. I think the girl working in there was starting to hate us because we kept the bar open an extra half an hour for the second night in a row.



Lucifer's doppelganger

earlier on our day

The next day Brendan and Andres needed to catch up on some much needed sleep, so me and Andy and Diccon had a walk up to the venue to sort out the merchandise and just to have a look around before the evening. When we got to the venue we went around the back where on a previous occasion we had got in. The door was locked so we tried to find another entrance which turned into another Spinal Tap moment. We spent about 20 minutes getting lost and turning up in the same palace as we started. We found an open door and went upstairs only to find ourselves outside a Tattoo parlour with a guy needles in hand waiting for the next customer. We decided to give up and go back to the hotel before we both ended up with a Tattoo.

Later we all went out on a quest for schnitzel. (When in Germany)We found a little restaurant that had mainly schnitzel on the menu and shared a table with a bemused German family who wasn't quite sure what to make of us. After the meal we had a look around Wurzburg and looked at some of the beautiful churches that were scattered around the town that all seemed to go off at the same time every hour.



Just try to look natural

Brendan and Andres

waiting for schnitzel

It feels like I have known the new guys in the band for ages and we all get on great. I think that it is starting to show when we play live now as well because I can feel an energy that hasn't been there for quite some time and it feels like there is no weak links in this band now.

We went back to the hotel and chilled for a while before going back up to the venue. The bands were now playing and people were now in the hall so it wasn't long before I started bumping into friends I had not seen for years. It was lovely see them after all this time and it was nice to hear what they have been up to over the years and that they were all still into the scene.



Chris George and Spiros



Andy from mirror of deception



Leo from Forsaken

We all got to the changing room about half an hour before we were due onstage and prepared ourselves in our own way. I normally have a little go on the guitar but not the songs we are playing because it generally makes my mind go blank if I try to remember the set. Before we knew it we were on the stage getting ready to go. I never remember much about playing onstage, I sort of go into Mr Hyde mode while I am up there onstage my and character changes into a complete show off. I don't know if the other guys go through the same thing but if it goes well like on this occasion it takes quite a time to come back down to earth and change back to Dr Jekyll.

Brendan is so big on that stage and completely owns it. He kept a fine balance between being respectful to my dad's memory while showing everybody what he could do. The other guys just make it so easy for me and also make me sound a lot better. I couldn't stop smiling all the way through.

After the whole night had finished there was a rumour that there was an after show party. We spent a good half an hour trying to find it and in the end gave up and had our own after party in Nina's camper van (our first real Manager) where she introduced us to Rum and apple juice which is a lot nicer than it sounds.



Nina planning our next adventure



Andres finding the JD



Diccons Rose coloured specials

We finally got back to our hotel by about half four in the morning and me Diccon and Brendan thought it wasn't worth going to bed so we stayed in the communal room drinking coffee with some of the Irish that came to the show earlier and were staying in the Hotel. Sleeping really gets in the way for the Irish when it comes to drinking and they were still there when our transport arrived at 6.00 A.M



These photos were taken at about 5.30 am in the morning

When our transport arrived for the airport at 6-00am sharp and we were off on a 90 minute journey. So far so good and everything was running to plan. When we got to the airport the band said our goodbyes and went our separate ways to catch our own planes.

I had travelled to Wiltshire before we had left and flew out with Andy from Bristol airport so we were going back home together as well. We first had to catch a plane to Amsterdam then fly to Bristol from there. The flight to Amsterdam wasn't too bad and it was going better than when we flew out. Getting to Bristol was the turning point because when we got to the conveyer belt for our luggage, about 4 bags came out for the whole flight. There had been a massive computer failure and most of the bags were still in Amsterdam including my Guitar. We had to stay a while to fill in forms so that they could return them to us when they eventually found them.

Michelene picked us up from the airport and Andy drove the hour drive back to their house in Wiltshire. We got back by about 3.15pm and I had just over an hour to wait for my train. This was supposed to be a straight forward journey from Trowbridge to Clapham then a train home to New Cross. When we got to Trowbridge station there was no sign of any train going anywhere near London. We found out from the information desk that quite a bit of track was out of order and no trains were going the straight route. I had to get a train for three stops then get a coach the railway had put on to Salisbury. That coach took an hour to get to Salisbury through pitch black country lanes and little villages. If I wasn't so knackered and panicking about picking up the connecting train at Salisbury I probably would have enjoyed it. When we finally got to Salisbury station I had about 5 minutes to get to platform 3. When I got to the platform the notice board said the train had been delayed for an hour because of more trouble further up the line. After about 20 minutes and a lot of angry people standing in the freezing cold trying to find what the hell was going on a train arrived from the depot especially for Waterloo. After an extra 30 minutes which wasn't too bad because at least it was in the warm. The train finally going and we got to Clapham junction after about an hour and a half. Once at Clapham I tried to find the right platform for new cross. There are 17 platforms on Clapham Junction and by the time I found the platform that went straight to new cross I had just missed it. I then had to wait another half hour for a train to Crystal Palace. Once I got to Crystal Palace I had to run to another platform to just catch the train for new Cross. Once at new cross it

didn't take too long before the 53 bus came along and a ten minute trip to Deptford Bridge where I got the Docklands railway one stop to where I live. I started the day at 6.00am in the morning and got home at 9.30pm most of that either hanging around or travelling. All I can say is it was all worth it.

Discography

THE ROOM OF SHADOWS



Released 20th October 2017 (Vinyl)

Rising of the Dead
Portrait of Dorian Gray
Danse Macabre
Dance of the Vampires
The Room of Shadows
The Ripper
After Forever

TEMPLE OF MYSTERY

THE ROOM OF SHADOWS

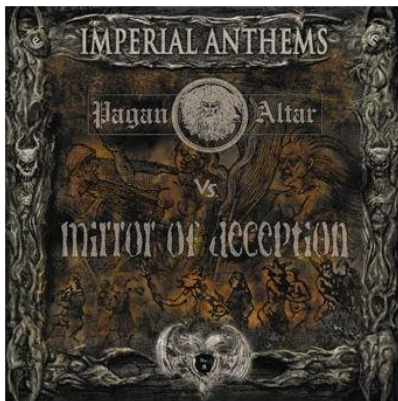


Released 24th August 2017 (Compact Disc)

Rising of the Dead
Portrait of Dorian Gray
Danse Macabre
Dance of the Vampires
The Room of Shadows
The Ripper
After Forever

TEMPLE OF MYSTERY

SPLIT SINGLE



Released October 2011 (Vinyl Single)

Pagan Altar - Portrait Of Dorian Gray

Mirror Of Deception - Beltaine's Joy

SPLIT SINGLE with MIRROR OF DECEPTION

SPLIT SINGLE



Released October 2007 (Vinyl Single)

Pagan Altar - Walking In The Dark

Jex Thoth - Stone Evil

SPLIT SINGLE with JEX THOTH

MYTHICAL AND MAGICAL



Released November 2007 (Double Album Vinyl)

Samhien
The Cry of the Banshee
The Crow Man
Daemoni na hOiche
The Sorcerer
Flight of the Witch Queen
Dance of the Druids
The Erl King
The Witches Pathway
Sharnie (Instrumental)
The Rising of the Dark Lord
Oracle Records

MYTHICAL AND MAGICAL



Released November 2006 (Compact Disc)

Samhien
The Cry of the Banshee
The Crow Man
Daemoni na hOiche
The Sorcerer
Flight of the Witch Queen
The Witches Pathway
Sharnie (Instrumental)
The Rising of the Dark Lord

Dance of the Druids

The Erl King

Oracle Records

THE LORDS OF HYPOCRISY

Released February 2005 (Double Album Vinyl)



The Lords Of Hypocrisy

The Witches Pathway

Satan's Henchmen

Flight Of The Witch Queen

The Sentinals Of Hate

Armageddon

The Interlude

The Aftermath

The Masquerade

March Of The Dead

Miskatonic

JUDGEMENT OF THE DEAD

Released December 2004 (Vinyl)



Pagan Altar

In The Wake Of Armadeus

Night Rider

Judgement Of The Dead

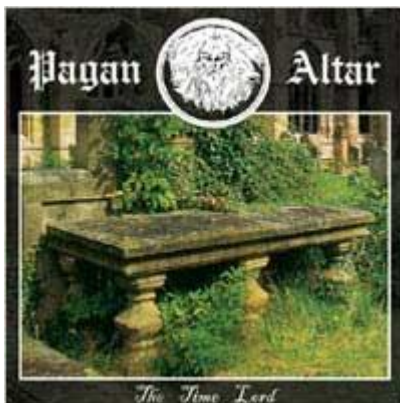
The Black Mass

Reincarnation

Black Widow Records

THE TIME LORD

Released December 2004 (Vinyl)



The Time Lord

Highway Cavalier

Judgement Of The Dead

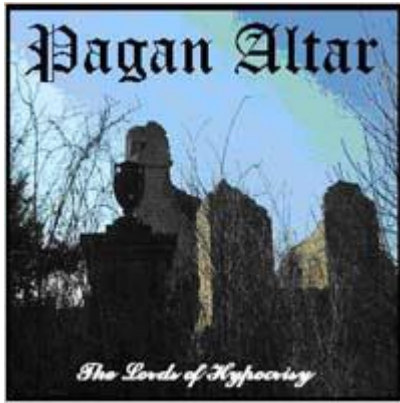
The Black Mass

Reincarnation

I Hate Records

THE LORDS OF HYPOCRISY

Released October 2004 (Compact Disc)



The Lords Of Hypocrisy

Satan's Henchmen

The Sentinals Of Hate

Armageddon

The Interlude

The Aftermath

The Masquerade

March Of The Dead

Oracle Records

VOLUME 1

Released February 1998 (Compact Disc)



Pagan Altar

In The Wake Of Armadeus

Night Rider

Judgement Of The Dead

The Black Mass

Reincarnation

Oracle Records

PAGAN ALTAR

Released December 1982 (Tape Cassette)



Pagan Altar

In The Wake Of Armadeus

Night Rider

Judgement Of The Dead

The Black Mass

Reincarnation

No Label

THE AFTERMATH.

*Screaming, awful screaming the smell of carnage fills the air.
Then silence, complete silence, death and destruction everywhere.*

*Nothing, there is nothing, nothing at all left alive.
Annihilation, complete annihilation, the angel of death has arrived.*

*Cities turned to ashes whole Continents have died.
The mushroom clouds still linger on
Blackening the skies!*

*Charred trees, reaching skywards, like hands held limply in the air.
Scorched fields, barren landscape, no one left alive to care.
Now that the fires have gone
There's no one to right all the wrong,
No one to right all the wrong!*

*Warning after warning but still they took no heed.
Thoughts only of the power, Ideology and greed.*

A & T. Jones 1980.

IN THE WAKE OF ARMADEUS.

*Covens have gathered frozen in time,
Ageless figures are linking their minds.
Circles of power drawing them near,
Calling the infernal ones to appear.
Legions of witches meeting on Candlemas eve,
The Dark Age has ended surrendering down on its knees.*

*Circles of witches chanting his name,
Calling the damned one to rise once again.
The blood of the sacrifice darkens the floor,
The gateway is open they've unlocked the door.
Legions of witches meeting on Candlemas eve,
The Dark Age has ended surrendering down on its knees.*

*Look into the North, in the light of the candle.
The form that's taking shape within the triangle,
Feel the power that's growing in the darkness,
The evil stench of Hell, Behold Armadeus.*

*Crumbling Religions subside into dust,
And retreat into obscurity.
The Tower of Babel rises again,
In the path of his Majesty,
Behold Armadeus.
Behold Armadeus...*

A & T. Jones 1981.

The resulting aftermath, (good or bad depending on your point of view), of an invocation to the daemons. The Incubus, Theutus, Asmodeus and their kindred Armadeus. All are vessels of wrath as depicted in the Cabala section of the Magus. The power generated by the linking of witch covens at a given time on a certain date in the year, along with the appropriate preparation being sufficient to upset the equilibrium of natural forces.

ARMAGEDDON.

*“It has been predicted there will be three world wars, two have already past”.
“The third is to be the end of life on this planet as we know it”.
“The place or battle site for the final conflict between good and evil is called,
ARMAGEDDON”!*

*People are coming from all over the World heading for Armageddon,
Building themselves a ‘man made Hell’ starting at Armageddon.
They don’t know that their time is running out’
Can’t they see it’s the Worlds lifeblood that’s comming out!*

*Warlords are plotting all over the world, planning for Armageddon,
Waiting in trenches for the opening bell, rung out at Armageddon.
They don’t know that their time is running out’
Can’t they see it’s the Worlds lifeblood that’s comming out!*

*Good and evil all over the World meeting at Armageddon,
But you won’t need heaven and you won’t need hell after Armageddon.
They don’t know that their time is running out’
Can’t they see it’s the Worlds lifeblood that’s comming out!*

*I can see the fire of hate in their eyes,
The Sunset of this World is drawing near.
The Erl king doffs his hat in mock affection,
The moment he has prayed for is now here!*

*It's no good you hiding in the subways,
The end of mankind has just begun.
The hand of death will reach you where you're hiding,
Perhaps in a million years we'll live again!*

“Down through the centuries man has had his warnings, but still he took no heed”!

A & T. Jones 1980.

THE BLACK MASS.

*Through the corridors of darkness, on the wings of man's desire,
Conjured by the soulless ones at the everlasting fire.
Borne on waves of insanity from man's primeval past,
The mantra of the tumult has awakened him at last.*

*Drawing near in the gloom comes the twilight of all shame,
The ravens of night have flown away to set Valhalla aflame.
For too long now the right hand gods have fought between themselves,
With paths that lead to paradise from this demented world.
This is the age, the age of Satan, now that the twilight is done,
Now that Satan has come.*

*Blue velvet shrouds the altar, black candles pierce the dark,
The skulls of the unbelievers peer sightless, bleached and stark.
The inverted cross of burnished gold the burial urns of light,
The pungent smell of incense wafts out into the night.
This is the age, the age of Satan, now that the twilight is done,
Now that Satan has come.*

A & T. Jones.1980.

Although the black mass received much notoriety due mainly to the outrageous antics of the French aristocracy in the 17th century, it is, as it always has been to the true follower, one of the highlights of the Satanists calendar. Anything else, although largely exaggerated, is common knowledge. Except to add that the third verse of the track describes the bands own altar as used in the stage act.

THE CROW MAN.

**“Beware the Raven that stands alone, the one that watches and waits,
Beware that unguarded moment, that subtle twist of fate.
It may just be the eyes of the Crow man”.**

*You see a group of dancers in the street
Dressed up to look like chimney sweeps.
But under the feathered hats and ragged clothes
There hides the Crow man.*

*Faces blackened out so you cant see
The colour of the soul that lies beneath.
Behind the painted masks that hides their faces.
There hides the Crow man.*

*People gather round to cheer them on
And laughing joins in the dancing throng.
Unaware of the dark side behind it
They don't know what's really going on.
It's part of a ritual from the past
The dance of the Crow Man*

*Down through the ages down through the years
At springtime the crow man will always appear.
To feed the earth with the blood of the chosen
To ensure life's circle for the following season!
To replenish the earth by the taking of life
In the Crow mans ritual blood sacrifice!*

*In the crowd he'll see a person all alone
And point with an ancient Runic stone.
The spell is cast and only death awaits them
No one to miss them when they're gone
With no family to mourn or to care
They're now part of the Crow man.*

A & T. Jones 1980.

THE CRY OF THE BANSHEE.

*Over mist covered hills and valleys, across lochs and lonely shores.
Through fields and rain drenched forests and dark and desolate moors.
Screaming.....
A keening wailing cry
No living soul ever made that sound, stalking those about to die!
The cry of the Banshee*

*Her fleeting shadow in female guise cloaked in darkness and mystery.
With wind tossed hair and sparkling eyes, she cries out in misery.
Watching.....
With eyes that are full of tears.
And a cry that rips your soul apart and herald's death is near.
The cry of the Banshee!*

*The glimpse of a wraithlike figure that resembles female form
Silhouetted in the moonlight to disappear before the dawn.*

*Some say the living cannot hear her, only those about to die,
But many swear upon their lives, they've heard that mournful cry.
The cry of the Banshee!.....*

A & T. Jones 2004.

DAEMONI NA HOICHE. (DEMONS OF THE NIGHT)

*Moonbeams chasing moonbeams moving pillars of living light,
Spectral shapes that glisten showing Demons of the night.
Knight errant on headless horses hunting vainly for their souls,
Shapeless forms of darkness that are illuminated cold.*

*Trees like old men stand and stare and reach towards the sky,
Faces that are etched with age where time has passed them by.
Branches argue with the wind and juggle with the light,
Ghostly mental cages that play havoc with your sight.*

*The Black mass holds no fears for those who don't believe
And of the dark side that lies beyond.
But this leaves them no protection to the terrors of the night
When all faith in their beliefs has gone!*

*Pagan minds conceived the night to use it as their own
A mantle made to cloak the mind and foster the unknown*

*Imagine the countless phantoms in those dark secluded holes
But they're inward turning mirrors they're reflections of your soul!*

*The Black mass holds no fears for those who don't believe
And of the dark side that lies beyond.
But this leaves them no protection to the terrors of the night
When all faith in their beliefs has gone!*

A & T. Jones 1978.

DANCE OF THE DRUIDS.

*Like ghostly phantoms on the wind, they glide across the mire.
Their white hair flows like silver webs, framing eyes of fire.
The gentle throb of an ancient drum, no human ever made.
Music only gods should hear, no human ever played.*

*This ritual of the druids has been, the saviour of mankind.
Unknown to them the price was paid by personal sacrifice.
For all the wrongs that man has done, the piper must be paid.
So he can sleep eternally peacefully in his grave.*

*From where they come and where they go, or why they have to be.
Mans mind cant hope to comprehend the sheer complexity.
Stonehenge has been their meeting place, as far as man can tell.
Birth of myths and legends, the gateway to Hell.*

*Man has always thought of them as priests or holy men,
Mortal beings that live and die never to rise again
Unknown to man their astral form still haunt the ancient ruins*

No one ever understood the power of the druids.

I'm standing by the Altar stone, standing here all-alone.

Who can I turn to where can I run to.

I watch them slowly walk away as night turns into another day.

No one to turn back, no one will come back for me

Take me if you want to, take me if you need to,

Take me if you have to, take me.

Dawns light on the altar marks, the end of another rite.

Their spaceship glistening in the sun slips slowly out of sight.

Mans fate assured his conscience clear in the eyes of other men.

His slate is clean the bill was paid by the death of one of them.

Guide me and lead me help me through this night,

Take me and show them but let them see some light!

A & T. Jones 1977.

THE ERL KING.

FATHER

There can be no dark force in this world,

That could take the soul of a child.

No spectre so grim would dare to be heard,

No beast could be so wild.

So rest my child and save yourself,

For the journey we must undertake.

I've done all I can but I need to get help,

And soon your fever will break.

SON

Father, dear Father the Erl king is near,

I can see the fire in his eyes.

I can hear his voice whispering in my ears

Like a million children's cries.

FATHER

*My Son, My Son you have nothing to fear,
And the stars are the only light you see.
The wind in the trees is the only voice you hear
And the crying you hear is me.*

SON

*Father, dear Father surely you can see
That beckoning figure standing there.
His bony hands are reaching out for me
And he's running his fingers through my hair.*

FATHER

*My Son, My Son your illness will not last
And help is just over this rise.
Those hands are just branches
Brushing us as we pass
So please can you open your eyes!*

A & T Jones 1978.

HIGHWAY CAVALIER.

*I ride the highway of life and I'm living carefree
I'm Going down lifes backstreets being what I want to be
And I'm meeting people, people like me
Everyone who feels the need to be free*

*No authority can check me on my crash course to hell
Nobody needs to save me, don't wanna hear that bell
I'm living free and easy thats how it's gonna be
Oh, free, free- free to be me!*

*I am moving so fast, you'll never catch me
I'm just a blur before your eyes, I'm sailing on the breeze
Living free and easy, that's how it's gonna be
Oh, free, free- free to be me!*

A & T. Jones 1979.

FLIGHT OF THE WITCH QUEEN.

*From a Castle high on the top of a hill
I can hear the Witch Queen laughing still.
As midnight chimes and the moon is high
The Witch Queen prepares herself to fly.*

*She stands on top of a tower of stone
And sneers at the sleeping earth below.
Unsuspecting in their beds
Of the gathering of Witches above their heads.*

*In silent flight across the sky
All ranks of Witches flying by.
Paying homage to their Queen
At their yearly meeting on Halloween.*

*I can see her.
I can see her standing there
I can see her she's poised and ready
Moonlight on long black hair.*

*Her laughter breaks the still of night
Music to match the awesome sight.
In ghostly silence they follow their Queen
Like dead leafs blowing in the wind.*

*I can see her.
I can see her standing there
I can see her she's poised and ready
Moonlight on long black hair.*

*I can see her.
I can see her standing there
I can see her as she gracefully rises
A death like hush as she takes the air.*

A & T. Jones 1977.

THE INTERLUDE.

*A World stripped of its colour devoid of love and hate.
There's no one left to stand before St Peter's pearly gates.
To see the chaos man has wrought,
Brings havoc to his brain.
The few that's left on judgement day,
Have been acquitted as insane!*

*A silent World of shapeless things, of torn and twisted form.
Man sits amid the wreckage waiting vainly for the dawn.
The glory of man has come and gone,
A broken shattered dream.
The only sound to rent the air,
Is a stifled choking scream!*

*Blindness follows darkness man awaits impending doom.
His mind lies dead, to arise no more, no awakening from the gloom.
Lost amid the twilight world
Of never ending night*

*He needs no more his senses,
Least of all he needs his sight!*

*The chariots of fire rode roughshod through the World.
Men of vision stood ridiculed, seen but never heard!
Cries of disillusionment,
Drowned by mans desire.
The need for mass destruction,
Fuelled the raging fire!*

A & T. Jones. 1980.

JUDGEMENT OF THE DEAD.

Galleries of dead are smiling,

*Candlelight is shining,
Judgement of the dead.*

*Hooded corpses form the jury,
Point with pent up fury,
Judgement of the dead.*

*A courtroom filled with the dead.
Judge Satan sits at their head.
A cloak of black, that hangs to the ground.
Sentence is passed without even a sound.*

*Torn soldiers stand in the aisles,
War heroes or fools, yesterday's child.*

*Dismembered limbs that are lost to deaths glory,
Each to his own, the same stupid story.*

*Politicians standing in line,
Generals following behind.
Chained to the dock with the leaders of religion,
Heads bowed low awaiting the decision.*

*Galleries of dead are smiling, candlelight is shining,
Judgement of the dead.*

A & T. Jones.1979.

The return of the soldier, or cannon fodder, resurrected from the dead by Satan to pass judgement on the religious leaders, politicians etc, past and present, who over the centuries have for their own glorification or beliefs, needlessly ordered their supposed inferiors to their deaths. The sentence after conviction is the eternal damnation of their souls into Satan's own keeping. The pious righteous ones, who throughout their own useless lives, although powerful in a material sense, brought nothing but pain and misery to the rank and file while improving their own status, The courtroom setting is the tombs and catacombs of a cemetery. The staccato riff in the lead breaks represents Satan's hammer bringing the court to order. The track ends fading into the distance, depicting the return of the jury and gallery members, their need for vengeance satisfied, to their own respective resting places.....

THE LORDS OF HYPOCRISY.

*Figures of Religion that preach to society, standing upright and tall
Screaming from the pulpit on Sunday morning
To save you from the fall
Can you hear them?
Can you see them?
Don't believe them; don't believe what they say!*

*Tales of heaven and life everlasting fear of the eternal fire,
Preaching lies of death and damnation,
Whilst lifting themselves ever higher.
Can you hear them?
Can you see them?
Don't believe them; don't believe what they say!*

*Death will come to even the righteous only the good die young.
So live your life the way that you want to,
Don't let them think they've won!*

*Can you hear them?
Can you see them?
Don't believe them don't believe what they say!*

*Unlock their minds and read their desires,
See them in a different light.
Pious figures reverently mumbling
But where did they spend last night?*

*They're creatures of the night,
They're creatures of the shadows,
That haunts the dark recesses of your mind,
They turn you from the light to live in a nightmare
Into souls that are mentally blind!*

A & T. Jones 1983.

MARCH OF THE DEAD.

*Hooded figures dressed in black, drifting through the night.
Chanting softly moving slowly bathed in moonlight.
Arms outstretched with fingers groping, walking all in line
From gaping coffins emerge these shadows, awakened for all time,
Witches and Warlocks rising from the grave,
Vampires and sorcerers, from a bygone age.*

*Up in front the awesome creature marching at their head,
Satan beckons ever onward his army of undead.
Charred limbs heave their mindless bodies through the mists of time.
Sightless sockets follow blindly their leaders pointing arm,
Burning and torture these beings had endured,
Drowning and stoning for reasons now obscure.*

*From every graveyard pour the hordes to strike before dawn
A thousand years of deaths carnage gathered 'fore the morn'.*

*Their vengeance turned against mankind's unsuspecting head.
There's no defence, there's no escape, you cannot kill the dead.*

A & T. Jones.1978.

THE MASQUERADE.

*Think of the people you meet every day,
Think of the characters they try to portray.
They hide what they're thinking hide what they feel,
In an age of hypocrisy nothing is real.
Faces are just curtains of stone,
That hides their true feelings 'till they're alone.*

*Who can you say that you really know?
You see only the façade they wish to show.
Is it that they are weak or afraid?
They live out their lives in this masquerade.*

*They are all clowns behind a painted smile.
They tried to enchant, persuade or beguile.*

*Faceless with no thoughts or ideals,
Transparent reflections, nothing is real.*

*They cling to their idols echo their lives,
But it's only a front, a place they can hide.
Their own minds suppressed from birth to the grave,
Enacting their lives in this masquerade.*

*I look at myself am I the same,
I try to find out if I play the game.
Which side of my soul does everyone see?
The face that I show is it really me?*

*There's no way of knowing if I play a part,
Is my true self left in the dark?
Am I for real, or what I am made?
Or am I just part of this masquerade?*

A & T. Jones.1981.

NIGHT RIDER.

*Standing high on a pillar of stone,
Persephone stands all alone.
A figure unravaged by time,
Waiting for midnight to chime.*

*Her Hair flows caressed by a gentle breeze,
A rustling like the wind in the trees.
Her arms slowly point to the sky,
It's time for Persephone to fly.
Night Rider, casting her mystical spell,
Night Rider delivering you into your Hell*

*Streaming miles of flowing shrouds,
Mingling in with the clouds.*

*Riding the moons silken beams,
Delivering out all your dreams.
Night Rider, casting her mystical spell,
Night Rider, delivering you into your hell.*

A & T. Jones. 1980.

The goddess Persephone, usually depicted riding through the night on a great black stallion, the bringer of dreams, the dealer in nightmares. She exchanges a daytime hell into a nocturnal one. Beautiful in the extreme matched only by her cunning, in as much as she can play on the slightest deficiency or flaw in a person's mental or physical make up and by the medium of sleep, turn it into a chasm a mile wide....

PAGAN ALTAR.

*Dawning of a brand new day,
lighting up the way,
with something new to say,
From beyond the stars.*

*A warning of the times gone by,
No tears left to cry,
Just a mournful sigh.
From beyond the stars.*

*Spawning from an Astral grave,
No souls left to save,
Floating on a wave ,
From beyond the stars.*

*Burning life's eternal fire,
Dictated by desire,
A Pagan Altar high,
From beyond the stars.*

*Morning of a Pagan reign,
Nothing is the same,
Scream out Satan's name,
From beyond the stars.*

*Dawning of a brand new day,
Lighting up the way,
Something new to say,
From beyond the stars.*

A & T. Jones 1980.

As the title suggests the bands theme song and opening number to the live set. It describes the end of religious hypocrisy and the beginning of an age of enlightenment. The breaking down of inhibitions brought about by centuries of moral dogma. Paganism rising to the fore and the return to all, the mental and physical freedom they were originally endowed with at their conception by the elemental forces from beyond our galaxy.

REINCARNATION.

*Time on the world had just begun
The earth's lost its role as the Universe's Sun,
Storm clouds build for impending rain,
The birth of the Earth begins again.*

*Just like before in the distant past,
The hand of the sculptor begins to cast.
Shapes of lands, islands and seas,
Mountains and valleys, flowers and Trees.*

*Dawn!, surging light, brightening up those darkened hills,
Bringing life, to the charred remains,
A long dead Sun now alive again.
A long dead Sun, now alive again.*

*Trees!, once stark and bare, now spread their wings high in the air.
A sea of green over rolling plains,
The chain of life begins again,
The chain of life, all over the World.*

*Shapes, Astral forms now roam the earth, implanting gold.
Eternal greed and selfish minds,
Leave the seeds to tempt mankind,
Leave the seeds, all over the world.*

*Life awakes again, evolving through endless sleep.
The fires of Hell, the eternal flame,
Started it up to begin again,
Started it up, all over the world.*

A & T. Jones. 1978.

The story of the rebuilding of the Earth after Armageddon, when the forces of good and evil meet for the final conflict. The earth being turned into a sun to give life to other planets after its destruction by the nuclear holocaust that followed. The immortals, during their reconstruction of the world, bury gold and other precious mineral deposits in the hope that man, after his rebirth, will withstand the temptations that were his predecessors undoing, resist the temptations that material wealth offers and concentrate on cultivating a spiritual awareness or inner strength, without the option to choose, man cannot shape his own destiny, so becoming a mere puppet to be guided at every turn instead of being the master of his own fate....

THE RISING OF THE DARK LORD.

*The beasts of Hell just lick his hand
All creatures from forgotten lands
Long lost worlds with spires of gold
Where the land was cleft and auroras rolled.*

*Purple skies all streaked with green
A landscape fit for a thousand dreams
Seas of fire with sulphur spray
The Dark Lords labyrinth hide away.*

*From long dead Charne or ancient Mu'
His army comes in search of you
Dead or undead cant eternal lie
With passing eons even death may die.*

*Crushing what he caused in play
The chaos would blow earths dust away
Mutants would roam the desolate sphere
Haunters of the dark all men would fear*

* * * * *

*And so the Dark Lord legend goes
But what form he will take no one knows.
It may be in mans image who can say
This master of the Machiavellian ways*

*Look to your heart to what you hold dear
The last ring is trust so keep it near.
Don't let him have the last ring.
Let Mordor keep its shadowy king*

*Don't let him have the last ring.
Let Mordor keep its shadowy king
Don't let him have the last ring.
Let Mordor keep its shadowy king*

A & T. Jones. 1981.

SAMHIEN.

*Samhein, the night of the dead
When they can reach out to touch you again.
On Samhein, the dead walk free
To roam the earth
On this October night
They call Halloween.*

*Samhein, when the veil is thin
You hear your name carried on the wind
Dark fleeting forms on creaking stairs
The door knocks loud but there's no one there!*

*Memories of the past arise
Of souls you thought long dead
They beckon you to follow them
And put voices in your head*

*Ghosts Whispering enchantments
From beyond the grave
The veil is rent asunder
On the night of Samhein.*

*Beware those whom you wrong in life
And those you seek to harm
Deaths memory spans a thousand years
And on Samhein the dead return.
Faith will never save you
From what lies behind the veil
And revenge can take so many forms
From far beyond the pale!*

A & T. Jones. 1981.

SATANS HENCHMEN.

*Dark riders with flowing robes, the power of death within them flows.
Riding out across the sky
Satan's henchmen flying by.*

*Black stallions with silent hooves glide gracefully across the roofs.
Flared nostrils and fiery eyes,
Satan's henchmen ride the skies.*

*Spread out to all four winds, to leave their curse wherever they've been.
Nightriders hunting souls,
Satan's henchman, Witches dolls.*

*Horse and rider appear as one, to disappear before the rising sun.
Fading shadows in the morning light,
Satan's henchmen rule the night*

A & T. Jones. 1981.

THE SENTINALS OF HATE.

*People often now stand and stare and wonder who could they be,
That would leave such a lasting tribute to their lives.
But they never look down in the undergrowth at the pile of broken stone.
Or spare a thought for all the young men who have died.*

*Ruined Chapels and neglected graves have masked the truth for years
Only mangled limbs bear witness to their pain.
Their lord and masters pampered lives are marked by a granite tomb,
But in death the bones will always look the same.*

*The hooves of black plumed horses are silent on the cobbled streets
And a rusty lock secures the cemetery gates.
The age is long since dead and gone when they ruled in our domain
All that's left are these sentinels of hate.*

*Stone and marble pillars reaching higher, pointing ever upward to the skies
Looking down on the rank and file beneath them in the cold dark ground,
As they'd done throughout their selfish lives, all through their lives!*

*Evening falls to cast shadows ever longer, to slowly move across each soul again.
As if to say look up to me I'm still your master as I'll always be
Even in death our roles are still the same, they haven't changed! Ashes down to ashes, dust
down to dust,
It was the children born with a silver spoon and dealt the kind hand of fate,
Created these monoliths to power, built these sentinels of hate!*

*Their pious names cut deep into the marble, clear for all to see down through the years.
The means to their success lies buried in crumbling vaults with broken headstones,
No reflection left of all the tears, shed down the years.*

A & T. Jones 1983.

THE SORCERER.

*Darkness like a cloak of saffron velvet surrounds him
Stark trees of stone support the moon and stop the sky from falling in around him.
He stands upon his mountain throne
his arms held high he's all-alone.
Ashen face turned towards the sky
His eyes reflect a tormented soul
Endless years have took their toll
His mind too troubled to let him die.*

*Lightning, swift and dazzling as it flashes silhouettes him
A gnarled old man of ageless time his bony fingers draw his cloak around him
He slowly bends his weary frame
Picks up his lamp adjusts its flame
Secrets of the night to unfurl
He walks away with laden tread*

*Slowly turning his grey old head
Briefly looking back at the world.*

*Visions of the ages that have passed fly before him
Memories of kings and queens, long since dead their ghostly forms surround him
But soon these figures start to fade
They're only dreams an old man made
A wish that is borne of despair
There is no one left to take their place
No Arthur now to save our face
No leaders who seem as if they care*

*Oh where are we going to
What is there left for me and you?*

A & T Jones 1976.

THE TIME LORD.

*I am the Time Lord
I can take you to places you'd never dream
Freedom is my world
Through time and space where no man has been.
Climb aboard with me
and together we'll fly in my astral machine
we'll conquer infinity
with ten times the speed of a laser beam
Yeah, ten times the speed of a laser beam.*

*We'll journey through space
to the end of the furthest galaxy.
To the time and the place
of future dreams, forgotten reality.*

*No distance is too far
out in the stars we can make it with ease
Time can hold no bars
To someone whose as free as a cosmic breeze
barriers crumble we go where we please
rocketing free as a cosmic breeze.*

A & T Jones. 1978.

THE WITCHES PATHWAY.

*Fire- burn in Hell,
It's a cry that we know so well
Fire- to cleanse your soul
But you know that's the way you've gotta go.
Passing through the barriers of time
Forget the pain think only of your line.*

*Fire-opens the door
It's a gateway to life forever more.
Fire- burning bright
Wont you show me the pathway with your light.
Passing through the barriers of time
Forget the pain think only of your line*

*Showing me the way to live another day
In a future that soon will be mine.*

*Fire– cast your spell
You were spawned in the very bowels of Hell.
Fire– Witches bane.*

*They don't know they're starting it again.
Passing through the barriers of time
Forget the pain think only of your line
Showing me the way to live another day
In a future that soon will be mine!*

A & T. Jones. 1981.