



### Issue <1> November 2004

We have been online now for just over 6 months since being launched on April 15th. We thank you for your interest and taking the time and trouble to register for membership and thank all of those who have taken part in the Forums.

**For those who may be interested in statistics;** dont let websites 'hit-counters' fool you if we had one here, it would be telling you that we have very nearly made a million 'hits'!, in reality we have recieved just under 15.000 visits who read nearly 300.000 pages, not bad!

The overall trend, as they say, is up!

### Exclusive to UK Decay Community' members only!

**Mick Mercer** said when we first got this website together in April that the the biggest single question that folk using this site would ask would be "*when are we going to see UK Decay released on CD again?*" He turned out to be right! UK Decay are currently in the proccess of turning this into a reality!

So hopefully the spring of 2005 should see the long awaited release of the provisionally titled '**UK Decay- Alive and Undead**' which will be the 'Seminal' collection of UK Decay's classic album and singles. In the meantime however, UK Decay Communities are proud to present an exclusive to members only production. Titled '**Nights For Celebration**' this exclusive production will be a stricktly limited edition, **not available** to the general public!

**UK DECAY**

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# UK Decay Today

UK Decay Communities Newsletter

## UK DECAY

Issue <1> November 2004:: Contents of this newsletter

### News and Events

News flash!!  
Spon and The Captain  
meet Abbo  
Spons report



UK Decay Community News....



Rodney from Only fools and  
Horses wears **UK DK T-Shirt** and  
rare Steve spon photo..



Final Words



Contact

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Or

[Werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:Werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk)  
[frankf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:frankf@ukdecay.co.uk)

### Articles and Tributes

News of CD release! 

Special Members Limited Edition!

Available December 10th 2004!

UK Decay tribute to the late 

John Peel

by Steve Spon

Ian Lees's

LU7 Perspective 

Damaged Goods 

A short extract from a book by Julian  
Wolfendale

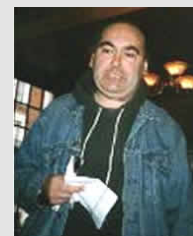
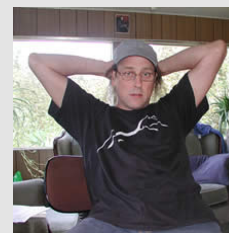
NME goes Goth... Scary! The

New Musical Express attempts to 're-  
write Goth history' A view by 'Paul Rab  
John'

The Captain's Tales pt1

Question: "So what was it like going  
on tour with UKDK"?

## UK DECAY





# Classic UK Decay Live



**UK Decays last  
ever Concert. Recorded  
at the Klub Foot,  
Clarendon Hotel, Hammersmith,,  
London December 30th 1982.**

*Nights for Celebration*

Special Members  
numbered edition



# Classic UK Decay

*Live*  
**plus!**

Excerpts from the  
City Hall, St. Albans  
UK 27th August  
**1982**

## **Special Members Limited Edition! 'Nights For Celebration'**

UK Decays last ever Concert! Recorded at the 'Klub Foot',  
Clarendon Hotel, Hammersmith, London December 30th 1982.

Full of power and emotion.

This seminal recording, captures the last moments of UK DK in all its  
rugged glory. 14 of the Classic UK Decay Anthems including  
Unwind, Werewolf, Dresden, Barbarian, Barbarians, Sexual,  
Stage-struck, Rising from the Dread, Twist in the Tail, Unexpected-  
Guest, Testament, Black Cat, UK Decay and For my Country.

The recording is sourced from a crisp digital audiotape and has been  
Mastered with contemporary state of the art sound editing tools.  
Also included are 4 tracks from UK Decay's gig at City Hall, St. Albans UK.  
27th August 1982. Another Classic UK Decay (Hometown) concert.

Included are Shattered, Jerusalem, Duel and Mayday Malady.

This unique collection is an absolute must for those seeking  
the definitive UK Decay live

The Special Members Limited Edition is presented by UK Decay Communities,  
and will be Limited to 100 Hand crafted High Quality rugged CDR's, label-  
printed and presented in a neat DVD style box with Inlay. Each copy will  
be uniquely numbered and signed by Spon from UK Decay and will be  
exclusively available to members of UK Decay Community Forums only!

*Nights for Celebration*

Special Members  
numbered edition



# Classic UK Decay Live



Nights for Celebration: Front  
**Special Members Limited Edition.**  
**'Nights For Celebration'**



Available Late November 2004




Nights for Celebration: Rear

**Only £10.00 plus postage and packing!**

Details of how to purchase this unique Collectors item can be found in the 'Members-only' forum, on the UK Decay Communities site. You must be a registered Member and 'signed-in' to access this product. (membership is free)

Interested?

[Sign in](#) first, then [MoreDetails](#) 

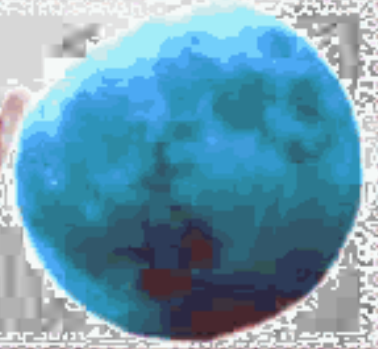
*Nights for Celebration*

Special Members  
numbered edition

# UK Decay Today

UK Decay Communities Newsletter

**UK DECAY**



From the Start to where we are now

**With the opening of the Forums, Galleries and Website, UK Decay Communities officially launched 'The Ultimate UK Decay Web Resource'!, on April 15th 2004.**

**Although** it has only been 7 months, it seems a very long time ago already. Many of the initial website missions have been accomplished. many folk have re-established contact with 'lost' friends and acquaintances or have picked up on news (in some cases sad), of others. The 'scope' of the website has far exceeded the strict confines of UK Decay with developing areas that now include Furyo, In Excelsis, Pneumania and other Luton and 'Home Counties' based bands from the late 70's early 80's.

In our articles and forum postings we are building up a genuinely viable historical archive of those life and times. Of course many of our users have contributed and continue to contribute facts, views, photo's, tapes, CD's, fanzines etc and memories which all contribute to the wealth of material that makes this website what it is...a big thank you to all!

**The primary** original aims of the website were to re-empower the band with a World Wide Web presence and to get UK Decay's music re-released. The first of these aims have been firmly achieved, and the release of the bands material is now on course.

There have in these few months been many 'twists and turns' in the design and look of the website, in a way we have been learning the art of web design as we go along but we hope we have been evolving in the right direction. We always welcome feedback and will take on board any reasonable request but miracles will have to wait!!

Much respect and thanks for Web services to '[SDZ](#)' and '[Tribal-editor](#)' and to Paul Rab John, Ian Lee, Julian Wolfendale, The Captain, Steve Spon, Frank F and Werewolf, for helping to get this all together.

[UK Decay team](#)   [Contact](#)   [Forum Admin](#)

## Where from here?

**Although UK Decay** as a band finished nearly 22 years ago we hope to bring all those that are around today a genuine perspective of the life and times of the band as well the people it affected. In view of UK Decays arguably perceived historical position in the 'Post-Punk and Goth' musical cultures it seemed both natural and logical that a WWW. Presence was in order.

**The Forums** go from strength to strength we find it fun and extremely interactive process, you never know what's going to be posted up next! We will be looking at maybe adding new categories from time to time and adding new feature stories eg. "Some notorious Luton [Punk venues](#) from the 70's and 80's." and the ever-popular [Clophill Church](#) articles.

**We look forward** to more shared memories from our current users as well as attracting new active members. We are also looking at adding more functionality to the forums maybe even a chat-room. The really great thing about the forums is that they become a sort of 'ever-expanding' online wealth of facts and our users recollections, continually growing! They're to be referenced or to be interacted with by all.

[illegible]

## UK Decay CD

**The ball** is now rolling and on course for a scheduled spring 2005 release. The long awaited re-release will consist of, *Rising From The Dread*, *For Madman Only*, *For My Country*, *Unwind*, *Twist In the Tail*, *Dresden*. At the moment this project has the working title 'UK Decay, Alive and Undead', although this may change on release.

**We are** still unsure what label will host this release, keep watch on the, [.ukdecay.co.uk](https://ukdecay.co.uk) or [ukdecay.com](https://ukdecay.com) website for regular updates.

**In the meantime** don't forget the Special Members Limited Edition mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

## UK Decay Communities Links

UK Decay Home

## Contact

Forum Admin

## About

## Community

# Introduction

## Press archive

## History

## Links

## Discography

# Furyo

## Media

## Pneumonia

## Gallery

# Nostramus





## Luton and Local Alternative Music

**For those** seeking more information on Luton's (and area) 'Punk and Alternative' musical history should visit Roger Holdstocks fantastic "Cocksure punko insanity" website, [The Friction.co.uk](http://TheFriction.co.uk) . With Rogers's humorous style and good eye for detail, this is a good place to go! Recommended! Whilst there take a look at the ['Luton Punks'](#) page.

['Click Click'](#) have recently revamped their website for those with an 'Industrial'-'EBM', 'Goth' disposition. For those who are into this legendary Luton band, presented are the entire known fact files of 'C.C', with all the releases listed and new and exclusive products for sale, as well as free downloads. Recommended!

[The Kindred](#) have just finished recording their first Album. They are one of Lutons best up and coming young bands, with a lively looking website." Very entertaining, lively youthful thrash" Go check them out!

[Otis](#) Have sold over 100 of their EP on their website, which also has a useful forum. [Weak](#)

[Schema](#), 'Nu-Metal', are working very hard on their next recording.. [Moja](#) are from Hertfordshire with Goth Post punk and Tribal influences, worth checking out!

Another interesting historical note; many of the 80's Luton bands feature in the [Anti-Nirex](#)

feature with MP3 streams on the [UK Decay](#) website. Other bands feature on UK Decay

Communities are, [Furyo](#), [IN Excelsis](#), [Pneumania](#) and [Nostramus](#)

On The Underground Party tip those interested should check out [Kacchina](#) and [Level one](#) as well as our own [Underground](#) websites and forums for the latest sound system and party news.

If you are in a band and into the 'Left-Field' musical direction and want to be included in future newsletters or to have links posted to your Website from here. Please start by posting your details up in the [Other websites](#) forum, we welcome your postings there, also it's worth posting up any news about forthcoming gigs as well. Or you could e-mail [frankf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:frankf@ukdecay.co.uk)

## Events

**Last August** saw the [Pokers](#) making an appearance in Luton at the venue formerly known as The Grapevine (now The Cork and Bull). Blink from the Pokers lived in Luton in the early 80's and is now living in Leicester. Through the UK Decay website he managed to re-establish contact with many friends and furthermore book his band for a show at The Well.

**At the last minute** the venue changed and there was a flurry of activity on the forum where the news was announced. This was a good job as there were so many folk planning to 'meet-up' at the gig. Good use of the Forums heh!

**On the night** the venue was packed with lots of faces, and much exchanging of telephone numbers as The Pokers 'Punk'n'Rolled' the joint! There was talk of The Pokers returning to Luton and also of more 'Punk-reunions'...keep your eyes on the UK Decay website for further details.

[Visit](#) the UK Decay Communities

**Gallery**



## Luton and Local Business, Crafts and Individuals

**For your** printed T-Shirts, Baseball caps, Slipmatts or whatever, visit [skunk-clothing.com](http://skunk-clothing.com) good value and any reasonable job is considered

**If Stained Glass** windows, gifts and custom designs tickles your fancy, then visit the world of [Smurfglass](http://Smurfglass). don't forget to mention you heard about it here!

**Not exactly** Lutonian but [Mick Mercer](http://Mick Mercer) 's website is definitely 'local' in our view, with regular downloaded PDF zines hours of reading from this world authority on 'Goth'.

[Reasonable Ray](http://Reasonable Ray) Is a well-known Northampton chap who has 'crewed' and 'driven' many a fine band around on various tours. He has a very witty and entertaining website. Good for a laugh!

**If you are a craftsman or woman**, or maybe have an interesting website that you would like including here or on our website, please don't hesitate to contact us at [frankf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:frankf@ukdecay.co.uk), our aim is to help the 'underdog' If you are an 'ethically-sound' larger business, we offer extremely competitive rates

## UK Decay Communities Personnel

**We recently** have 'lost' 2 of our female staff (sob sob!) [Dharma Sister](http://Dharma Sister) is currently living Stateside where she is studying for her degree and [Ella Jo](http://Ella Jo) is currently touring India where she is researching for her book on Tarot. Ella Jo has recently recorded a 6 track EP of which we will be hearing more about in 2005.

**PJ** has moved up to Lincolnshire and is currently without a PC!

However [Paul Rab John](http://Paul Rab John) who joined the team in July is now contributing some great articles.

Frank forthright and Werewolf, continue to Administer and maintain the main website with the help of [Steve Spon](http://Steve Spon)

## UK Decay Community Forums

### Forums

[Forum Index](#)  
[UK DK Today](#)

[News](#)

[Gothique](#)

[Freinds](#)

[In Excelsis](#)

[Furyo](#)

[Forum Links](#)

[Music Production](#)

[The Underground](#)

### Members

[Register](#)

[Sign-in](#)

[Quick Forum Index](#)

**You can use the forums to, Gossip, share memories, re-unite with long lost friends, to fact-find and research, to entertain and to be entertained, to advertise your future event or events, to add your own links, to create your own articles, to send and receive private messages, to add your own opinions and thoughts, to review live music, to review albums and other media, to publicise news, to keep in touch and up to date, to make things happen, to be spontaneous, to check out the nightlife, to consult on music production, to network, to check out on local history and mythology, to download and stream media and most importantly, to be part of UK Decay Communities, the Ultimate UK Decay Web Resource!**



## Steve Spon pays a special UK Decay tribute to the late John Peel 1939-2004

**I am deeply saddened** by the tragic loss of John Peel, 'Peeley' as he was affectionately known. I remember being totally awestruck one day on answering the phone in our 'Welly' st. HQ. It was unmistakably the legendary Peeley himself on the other end of the phone and I was now speaking with the great man himself. "Is that Spon from ukay decay?" he asked. It took a few moments for me to gather myself to answer I knew instantly who it was as I uttered a very nervous "yes it is".

**The Peel Show** was like a beacon of light, bringing exciting new music to the nations listening public against a background of bland 'pap' and 'dinosaur' ethics, prevalent in the music scene in the late 70's. Peeley was the first DJ on the BBC at a time when there wasn't any real competition, to broadcast Punk and New Wave. I would record his shows onto cassette and play them back on the cassette whilst driving round the midlands doing my van-driving job. I recall driving round the industrial ruins of Corby whilst listening to The Falls Industrial Estate or the Human Leagues Circus of Death at full volume, these tunes and more made me feel alive and relevant and I probably wouldn't have left that driving job and form a band, had I not listened to the rich variety of music that Peeley played on his show.



Steve Spon today

"I gather that you will playing up at my mate Bobs in Woollaston on March20th" Peeley uttered in his familiar dry/jovial tone.

"Yes that's right" I timidly squeaked "In view of you doing a session for us, I am just letting you know that I shall be coming up to see you at that gig" 'Peeley' replied. Oh my God, I thought "Nice one fantastic" I said.

**Peeley went on** "We will see how you get on, but I can't promise anything yet mind you". All sorts of thoughts and emotions were going through my head "Of course, I understand". Peeley went on to say that it wasn't just up to him to make any decisions and that he had to convince his producer John Walters and the rest of the BBC. As we were winding up the conversation and almost as an afterthought I asked him "Are you going to be playing as well"? In his ever-modest way he replied, "Yes I would have thought so".

**Well that was it**, I am sure from that moment on we were all convinced that we were going to be doing a Peel-Session. We had been 'pestering'

his office with phone calls and letters and had sent them copies of our early releases. I think he had played the 'Black cat' on his show in early 1980. In all, this phone call was the result of months of campaigning and at last we had got a result. To bands like ourselves, aspiring to gain a Peel session it seemed the ultimate attribute on our paths to obtaining musical glory..

**We had to pull out all the stops** to make this gig happen for us, we upped the rehearsal rate, new strings, skins and clothes, I think we arranged a coach to take up as many supporters as possible. The John Peel session became the focus of our lives.

The 'Nags head' in Woollaston was small live music venue owned by Bob, a mate of Peeley and the man himself would often use the opportunity to view up and coming bands in a discrete low-key fashion as well as spinning a few tunes. What was he going to make of the 'Decay' experience?

**It was a pretty daunting experience** but we managed to focus somehow and when the big night came I remember the surreal atmosphere in that small venue when the coach turned up with masses of Decay supporters, others arriving on foot or in cars, that tiny Northamptonshire village was under siege! We set up the equipment and had sound tested earlier and were chatting to folk from Luton, Leighton, Bedford and all over that had turned up to the gig which was by now packed. When Peeley came over and introduced himself. He said a few unassuming words and wished us good luck and said we would speak after we had played.

**I don't remember** too much about the actual performance apart from the again surreal experience of seeing our usual mob of supporters like Dave Mad, Ian Lee and friends from LU7, with a large contingent of Luton in the 'Mosh-pit' down the front and behind. Higher up by the mixing desk one very fascinated looking Peeley. I wondered what he was making of this, as I caught the occasional glance. With the help of our friends in the audience, we soon established our confidence and played our hearts out, and eventually after a couple of encores we left the stage. We thought we had played pretty well, no major fuckups we felt we had gone down with the audience but what had John Peel made of it?

We couldn't find out straight away because he was Dj'ing right after our set so we waited with in trepidation, there were rumours going round which said he was tapping his feet along, a good sign maybe.



John Peel at the Nags head  
Woollaston 1980  
snapped by Ian Lee ©

**Eventually**, after winding up a great evening Peeley left the turntables and came over to speak to us, "I really enjoyed your set" he said "can I buy you a drink"? He went on. With his ever cautiously optimistic manner he went on to say that the "I think that with passing a few formalities it should be possible to arrange a session but I have still to convince John Walters" his producer.

**He said** that he would phone up in the next couple of weeks and to be ready to go, in case of short notice. We got the phone call dully on time; this time someone else picked up the phone and it was John Walters on the other end. The news was good although there were





contracts to be signed and the session, which was to be recorded at the BBC's Maida Vale studios, was booked, I can't remember the actual date but it was only a few weeks away.

Abbo singing to John Peel and the regulars pic by Ian Lee ©

**So there we were** a few weeks later arriving at the massive studio complex wandering up and down the bunker-like corridors in awe, the room on the left was the Beebs famous electronic music workshop where the sound effects for 'Dr Who' and all that stuff was put together. On the right was a massive hall, looking through the windows it reminded me of a large school hall with the most monstrous microphone stands I had ever seen. There was a large banner with 'The BBC Symphony Orchestra' written on it. Our Studio was at the end of the long corridor and on entering it we were greeted by our producer for the day. I think it was John Walters, I could be wrong though. We already knew that this whole thing wasn't cut and dry yet, there had been bands that had got this far and for one reason or another had not ended up being broadcasted. There was a final decision to be made on the finished recording and worse still; the decision might not be made for a few days afterwards! All bands had from midday till midnight to record, overdub and finish mixing approximately 4 songs or 15 to 20 minutes of music in that 12 hours, that was no mean feat.

**With the help** of a small army of assistant engineers and lavish cheap food in the luxurious BBC canteen, getting funny looks from some of the 'regulars', we 'lorded it' up and set to recording the songs we planned to do. The recordings were in the tight control of the producer sitting in the spaceship looking control room, we just had to make sure we were in tune and play the songs to the best of our ability. With the producer always moving us on I remember it being a really hard days work and being totally knackered afterwards. At the end of the session the tapes were wrapped up and taken away, I don't think they even allowed us a cassette to take home, the next time we would hear them would be if and when they would be broadcast.

**The producer** said we would get a phone call in a few days letting us know if and when we would 'pass the scrutiny' and when it would be broadcasted. So cruel I thought, we were to be left hanging without knowing one way or another whether we had been successful or not. Furthermore we couldn't even listen to our new recordings



Wheres Abbo? another shot of the Nags Head gig snapped by Ian Lee ©

**We would just have to be patient!** Finally just under a week later we got the good news and a date for the broadcast, we were both relieved and elated. On the day the Session was aired, we had every man woman cat and dog with their tape recorders to capture it and with a few beers and spiffs (not Abbo though!) and I can say for myself I was the most chuffed I have ever been in my life We partied.

**We went on** to do a second session a year later for Peeley after our return from the USA, which had its memorable moments, but by that time we were continuously on the road and in the studio and I guess had become somewhat 'older and wiser'.



Abbo with Martyn 'Dill' in the centre.

snapped by Ian Lee ©

**After Decay folded** and with my new band IN Excelsis, It again became the mission to gain a Peel Session this time the strategy was to 'bump into him' on the way out of the BBC buildings in Portland place, and to hand him the latest release and to ashamedly hassle the poor man for a Session. This actually paid off because on at least a couple of occasions we were successful in 'bumping into him' and we chatted with him on a personal level on the way back to his car. He was just an ordinary fellow, approachable and friendly and god knows, with millions of bands trying to talk to him all day how he kept his sanity, but he did.

**He seemed** to take a liking to us and before long we had booked an IN Excelsis 'Peel Session' he even invited 2 of us (the broadcast studio was small!) to sit in! We drew lots and I think Mark Bond and Colin Rocks won so they sat in, whilst Myself and Errol Blythe sat at home listening to it!

**In my opinion the guy deserves a State Honoured Funeral**, not only has the man gone, but a whole musical culture has gone with him. It is indeed the end of an era in British Musical culture. Speaking to a guy who runs a record label in Los Angeles only a couple of weeks before his death, he said how lucky we were to have the BBC and the likes of John Peel to broadcast 'daring and radical' music. For out there in the 'endless city' with 'endless AM and FM radio stations, there is not one drop of anything other than the mundane dross to listen to!

**John Peel RIP you will always be loved and remembered**

Written by Steve Spon

### **Further memories of the UK Decay/ John Peel gig** by Ian Lee

I'll take you back to Sunday 2 March 1980. The Nags Head, Wollaston, Northants.

UK Decay did this gig in front of Peel, who was DJing that night. I think this pub in a small Northants village was owned by friends of Peels' at the time, and UK Decay were there to try and get a session on his show (someone correct me if I'm wrong). Well, the band did get the session-



UK Decay at the Nags Head  
Woollaston 1980  
snapped by Ian Lee ©

broadcast on Tuesday 29 April 1980, repeated on Wednesday 27 August 1980- and a second one at a later date. There was a coach trip from Luton organised to the event. I went there with 18 others from LB (my diary says !)

During the course of the evening I went up to Peel and asked him to play a record by The Fall- on hearing this, he said "ah, The Fall- most certainly" or words similar. He then, as well as playing The Fall's latest single (Fiery Jack) gave me half a bottle of white wine to finish off.  
(Despite meeting him twice again, briefly, the last at Glastonbury Festival in 1997, I never did get round to giving him a drink in return!)

**More Tributes**

*Smurfglass...*

*Well i cant say anything  
that has not been already  
said,i am absolutly gutted i  
have listened to peely  
since the Perfume Garden  
days and he more recently  
converted me to radio4  
LOL everything i listen to  
is as a result of J.P some  
of which i may well have  
never ever heard of  
without his influence bless  
you Mr Peel and thank you  
for the tunes were all  
gonna miss you.*

A number of people- uh, including me- had their name read out on the John Peel Show the next night after the gig. UK Decay played the same venue on Sunday 18 May (without Peel; the day Ian Curtis died). I travelled to this gig with the band in their van ! (I went over to Luton a lot during 1980- slept overnight at John Street a number of times after missing the last bus - thanks, folks !)

**"The best. Ever. A TOP HUMAN BEING...it's like losing a close friend"**

*Paul Rab John...*

*that's so sad. saw him doing a dj set this springtime and he looked really well. really depressing news.  
**And Finally**.....sent in by a 'Guest'.....*

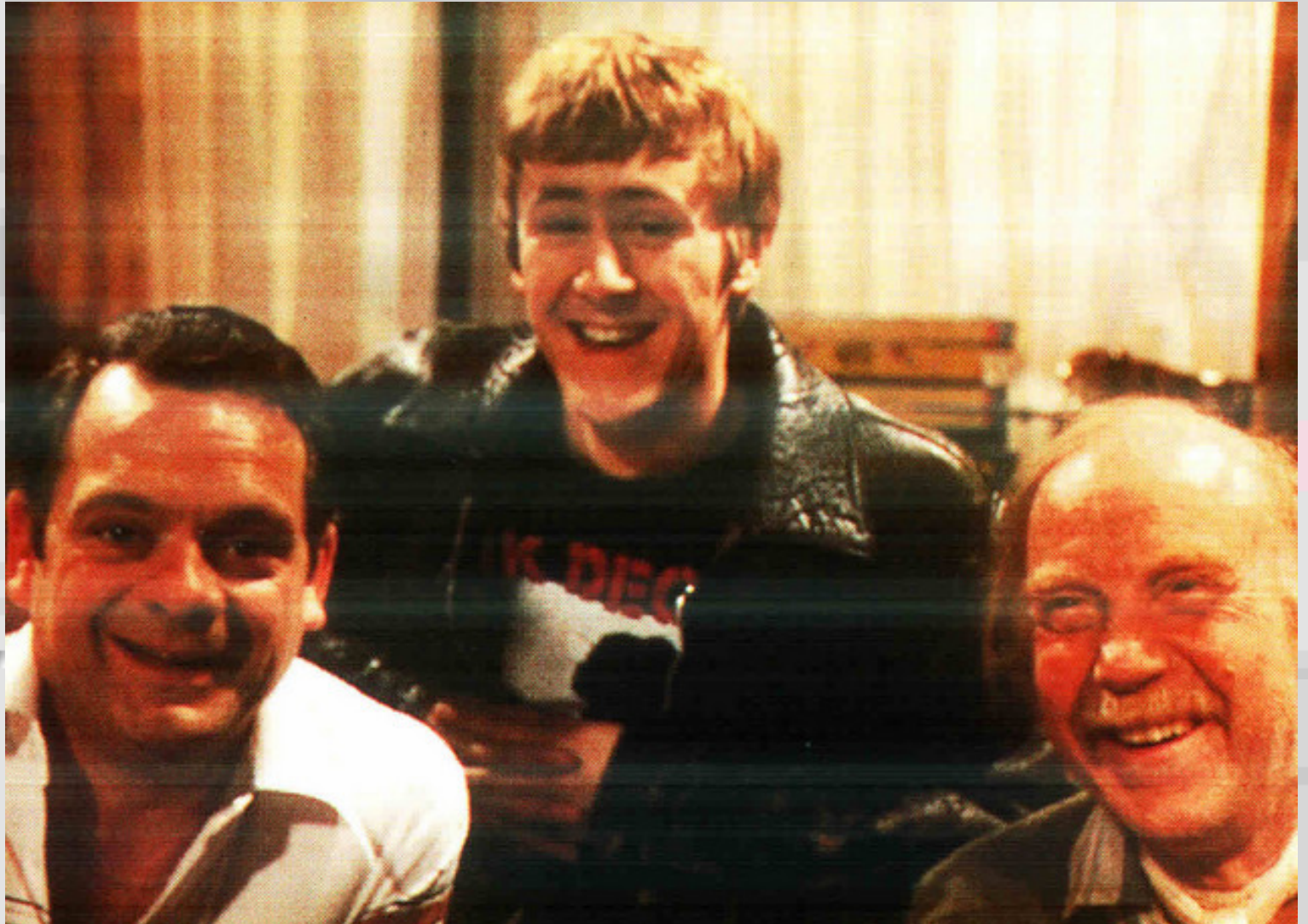
*Just to let you know that the Nags Head is now called the Wollaston Inn, and if you fancy a decent meal then you'll be looked after. It's not the same as it used to be though ....*

thanks to Steve Spon, Ian Lee, Smurfglass, PRJ, 'Guest' and of course, John Peel.

© [UKDECAY COMMUNITIES](#) .....Read more John Peel [tributes](#)



**Only Fools and Horses**



**Del boy, Rodney and Grandpa (pic©BBC)**

**Spot the T-Shirt!**

During the early Eighties, the Berlin Wall had yet to fall and Orwells nightmare future, "1984", was just around the corner. The music reflected the times and so to did Television. The BBC hit comedy featuring two wheeling-dealing Cockney brothers had an episode called "The Russians Are Coming" featuring the pair building a nuclear-shelter on the roof of "Mandela House" their housing block! Young Rodney sports a rare UK Decay "Unexpected Guest" teeshirt as they plan their Survival strategies!



**Spon with 'Unexpected Guest' T-Shirt.**

November 2004

## NME goes Goth... Scary!

The New Musical Express attempts to 're-write Goth history'

A view by 'Paul Rab John'



### NME Originals Goth Special

#### WHAT IS GOTH?

Debate this question and others  
in our Matters '[Goth](#)' Forum

#### View digitised Press Images

In our Image [Gallery](#)

#### Read Text Transcriptions

Of some of the image scans in our  
[Press and Review](#) section

Well I'd hardly recommend it,

If you go take a look in your local newsagent you'll see the latest pricey "Collector's Edition" that the likes of Q and NME keep pumping out, this one's called "Goth"..... Well I wasn't exactly expecting a mountain of stuff on UK Decay. A mention would have been nice, but you don't even get that. Instead you get a huge load of pretty pictures of all the big label acts; Banshees, Cult, Bauhaus and (particularly) Fat Bob and his Cure. Stadium Goth, don'tcha just love it.

Err, no. I don't like it very much at all and I never did. There was a great scene going in 80-84 but the NME wasn't there at the time and it certainly can't look back at it now. As I recall it was far too busy writing about Blue Rondo a La Turk to get its sad arse anywhere near what was happening outside London nightclubs. But maybe I'm just biased. Whatever, I thought it might be nice to give another view on early 80's Goth. Not the nice Top 40 singles, big label deal, sit-down gigs at Birmingham Odeon world of Siouxsie and Bob but something a lot more memorable and a lot more intense to those who knew. Let me take you back.....





Paul Rab John dresses up for the 'Sisters'

**Then** things sort of changed in 80/81 and a lot of “punk” acts went pop or New Romantic, or went back into horrible sub-Sham pogo music. I was still looking for something with some power, and for me there was a scene of 4 bands that actually took the “Punk” ideal but pushed it on forward into something fresh and exciting. Musically I guess they were pretty different, but they shared a following and all made some fabulous music.

**First** (and maybe best) were Killing Joke, who completely blew me away as maybe the most powerful live band I'd ever seen. Just brutal, and the records were superb too. Bauhaus were also a superb live act. Much more theatrical but still with amazing energy, Theatre of Hate were stylistically really different with their cod-rockabilly gear and psycho Billy following, but got really popular with the post-punk crowd. And, slightly later, of course there was UK Decay who were in the middle ground between KJ and Bauhaus (the power of the Joke but with some of the showmanship of Murphy and co.)

**Somebody** was trying to convince me the other day that “Bela Lugosi's Dead “ was the first Goth single (Sept 79). I can see his point but, to me , I think you have to say the first Goth act of this type was the Banshees. They had a fully formed image and sound well before then, that was a huge influence (both musically and fashion-wise) for decades after. I know they got stuck in a rotten rut in the 80's & 90's (in fact they're still there last time I looked) but the first 2 albums really set out the stall for all the Gothness that followed. So credit due and, even though nobody used the word back then, they were the pioneers.



Andy from 'Sex Gang Children'  
Birmingham 1983 © Paul Rab John





Rosie from the 'March Violets'  
Birmingham 1983 © Paul Rab John

**These bands** all played together and helped each other, whipping up a real storm and releasing some amazing records. I loved them all in different ways, don't ask me who was the best as they all had their strengths. By the end of 81 Bauhaus, KJ and TOH all had big label deals whereas UK Decay went it alone which probably explains why they're not in glossy NME supplements these days. However the big labels seemed to destroy the other acts in different ways. KJ flipped out and went to Iceland to wait for the world to end. When it didn't they carried on, but it was never the same without Youth. Bauhaus released the appalling "Ziggy" cover and lost the plot completely. TOH turned into Spear of Destiny and failed to be a commercial rock band.



Gary Marx 'Sisters of Mercy'  
Birmingham Jan 21st 1983 © Paul Rab John

**Thankfully UK Decay** did it differently, gigging through 82 with a succession of bands who became the “third wave” of Goth. Abbo himself became the first to use the G-word to describe his band’s music, what an epitaph for the poor bloke. But in summer 82 a superb set of new bands emerged, first breaking cover around the time of UK Decay’s classic ZigZag Club appearances; Southern Death Cult, Sex Gang Children, Danse Society, Sisters of Mercy, Gene Loves Jezebel. Names to strike fear into an NME sub-editor. Suddenly there was a real scene, a real buzz in the air again. It was a fabulous year, as UK Decay helped and pushed all these acts with support slots and mutual name checks. Things seemed to be going from strength to strength as great records were followed by bigger and better gigs.

**83 carried on** much the same, only the captain didn’t want to sail the ship no more. I guess they had their reasons, but it was so sad to see UK Decay split just as they seemed to be peaking. The other acts all carried on and that was another great year as a clutch of brilliant debut albums hit the shops. The 2 splinter groups from UK Decay never got enough momentum going to succeed, which was a shame as the records really were worthwhile.

**And then, Oh God, the NME** woke up and realised there was a scene going on. Sadly most of the great bands were up and running by this point so they grasped Brigandage and Blood and Roses, stuck them on the cover and tried to call the movement “Positive Punk”. A nation yawned and the whole thing became a laughing stock in short order. They weren’t the worst bands in the world, but neither had much profile then and the silly article killed them both off and made sure nobody wanted to be associated with it all. Amazingly this tale does not feature in the latest magazine, I wonder why?



Dave 'Sex Gang Children'  
Birmingham 1983 © Paul Rab John

**The big problem** all Goth bands seem to have is where you take it , there's loads of great debut albums but not many great second ones. The bands either split rapidly or just kept making the same album again and again like the Cure and Banshees, or turned into heavy rock acts like the Cult / Mission. None of which really interested me and I moved into different things. But 81-84 was a superb era and I've got some amazing memories of those times that don't quite agree with the way certain folk tell the tale.

**So if you were there**, do keep reminding people and maybe we can change a few minds. You know it makes sense really...



Rosie gets down! 'March Violets'  
Birmingham 1983 © Paul Rab John



'Sisters of Mercy' at the 'Fighting Cocks'  
Birmingham Jan 21st 1983 © Paul Rab John

### Paul's Goth Mix

UK Decay; Stage-struck  
Killing Joke; Wardance (LP Version)  
Theatre of Hate; Legion  
Bauhaus; Stigmata Martyr  
Sex Gang Children; Killer K  
Southern Death Cult; The Crow  
March Violets; Strange head  
Sisters of Mercy; Adrenochrome  
Danse Society; Belief  
Gene Loves Jezebel; Psychological Problems  
UK Decay; Sexual  
Ausgang; If that's Your Bat , I'm Leaving  
Town.....

© Paul Rab John -Formatted: 'Werewolf'

Links.....  
[Sisters of Mercy](#)  
[March Violets](#)  
[Sex Gang Children](#)  
[Killing Joke](#)  
[Ausgang](#)

[Danse Society](#)  
[Southern Death Cult](#)  
[Gene Loves Jezebel](#)  
[Theatre of Hate](#)  
[Bauhaus](#)  
[UK Decay](#)

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The NME we accuse is re writing history from the major label point of view and ignores the true roots of the scene!

Debate [this article](#) in the Forum

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Ian Lee's

## LU7 Perspective



**The punk scene** in South Bedfordshire in the halcyon days of 1979/80 saw an explosion of bands, fanzines, punters and gigs. Luton saw such bands as UK Decay, Pneumania, The Friction, and The Jets etc. and there were many events and happenings in town.

**Many came** from the surrounding area including a large contingent from Leighton Buzzard environs. Quickly establishing a rapport with each other, the Luton and the Leighton Buzzard (LU7) Punks would fill out the venues and at times ally themselves in various battles, as punks generally were often at times a 'soft target'.

**The LU7 punks** became firmly established within a hardcore UK Decay following from the earliest of times to the end of the band in 1983. Within Leighton Buzzard itself they would promote their own concerts, produce their own fanzines and of course there was the Chronic Outbursts, LU7's own top band whose leader also doubled as the probably the most hardcore Decay fan of all, Dave 'Mad' Barr. Dave sadly passed away in 2003 as did Wayne Twigg in 2002, so before it is too late, in setting up this website and forums we hope to get the 'untold story' told.

### In the words of Ian Lee:-

*"Thinking about it, UK Decay, the music, the gigs, were the backbone of what really mattered to all of us in those late 1970s/early 1980s days- being with like-minded people, of a similar age, with a likewise viewpoint on things, at that particular time of our lives. This, I feel, was so IMPORTANT, although we didn't realise it at the time."*

**The LU7 would often travel** into Luton (about 13 miles away) for a gig on public transport. Of course no problem getting there but after the gigs finished, there was absolutely no 'Bus home'! So getting back could be a nightmare...

After the UK Decay gig with Crass and Poison Girls at Marsh Farm Community Centre, Luton, on 14 December 1979..

*"Someone- I can't remember who- said me, Dave Barr and others could stay at their place in Luton overnight. Strangely- and of course, I regret this now- both Dave and myself said we'd walk back home to Leighton Buzzard. 13 miles, in mid December- what were we thinking? So off we set. Along Leagrave High Street, then at the end turned right into Poynters Road. . North towards Houghton Regis- along there, where the houses back off from the pavement a bit, I tripped, with my right elbow taking all my weight against the pavement.*

*Never had I experienced such excruciating pain. I was rolling around in agony. (I later found out that I had broken my arm). Eventually, I got up, and with Dave, continued our walk home. Daves' famous words to me were "never mind- you can walk it off "!!!!*

*We were stopped in Houghton Regis by 2 coppers, pulling their car up next to us, after noticing me holding my arm awkwardly. After satisfying themselves that we hadn't committed a crime, they allowed us to go on our way. What seemed a good hour later, we were heading north along the A5, north of the cutting, when a car stopped and gave us a lift to Hockliffe.*

*We still had to walk along the dangerous road from there to LB. Got home at 3.15, a terrible nights sleep, in extreme pain. Went to the L & D Hospital the next day- discovered then that my arm was broken, and it was put in plaster. Had to have an operation to have a pin inserted to join the bone together- 4 days in the hospital.*

*Still, out in time for Xmas, and to go to Watford on Boxing Day to see Luton FC win a now famous local derby match in the last minute. However, ever since, in the cold of winter, I feel twinges in my arm- probably have rheumatism there later in life"...*

**Ouch!!** Poor Mr Lee has become scarred for life for his youthful Punky passions!

**Goodness knows** how Dave Barr found time to spare to do the **Chronic Outbursts** because he would travel to nearly every Decay gig, sometimes hitching, sometimes getting a lift in the van if there was room, or even walking for miles. He even surprised an astonished Decay on their European tours when he turned up at the door! There weren't many Decay gigs that he missed!

**Ian** became an established friend of Decay, and although never a musician, was in true DIY culture a producer of fanzines and promoter of concerts.

*"There was a ban on punk bands (yawn) at The Bossard Hall, Leighton Buzzard- actually, in all probability at all of South Bedfordshire District Council's venues at the time (remember the riots at gigs of The Clash and then – to a lesser degree- Blondie at the Queensway Hall, Dunstable ?)*

*So I used my 21st birthday party at the Bossard Hall on 24/10/80- actually several days after my birthday- as an opportunity to get UK Decay to play in Leighton Buzzard (The Birthday Party- yeah, Nick Cave and all- played at this venue the following June- their first UK gig outside of London). UK Decay were supported by The Statics, Red Star (aka This Dead Plaything), the Woburn Sands boys and the infamous Chronic Outbursts (their first gig ?). So many bands wanted to play that night, it was difficult.... Very memorable though. I have a few crappy photos of the night, and a sound recording on cassette taken from the mixing desk".*

**More** on the Ians 21st birthday and the infamous 'Piano Incident'

*"That was a memorable night at the Bossard Hall (now 'owned' by the British Legion' so another public facility no more..) Jay Wolfendales' favourite UK Decay show, I see. Anyway, two of my mates (I know who they were- it matters not now, of course- 'hehe- what a laugh') nicked an upright piano from the hall, and unseen- supposedly- pushed it through residential streets, ending up in the street next to the one I lived in at the time. They ran off when a resident spotted them. Of course, damage was caused to the piano- it was raining- and I ended up with a bill for £148 (I was on the dole at the time, so that was a bit awkward for a while) and a small piece in the national Daily Mail (about the only near-accurate story they've ever had, I reckon). I still trot out this story to folk on occasion- some to disbelief.*

*After the gig, UK Decay and entourage went back to my parents' house for sandwiches, etc! Bizarre- but great - times! "*



Chronic Outbursts, Leighton Youth Club - May 1981

#### He also added

*"Black Sheep Promotions, of which I was a part, with Andy Shingler and Dave Stubbs (the latter originally from Luton)- also produced the LB fanzine/news mag The Revolution Will Not Be Televised (hey, Gil Scott Heron, take a bow!) and promoted UK Decay at Vandyke Road Youth Club, Leighton Buzzard, on 10/10/81- almost a year later from the Bossard Hall event. This time the support acts were Fictitious, Chronic Outbursts and The Condemned."*

#### On the 3rd Decay gig

*"The first and last UK Decay event in LB was back at the Bossard Hall- a proper gig this time, the 'punk ban' having been overturned, partly to our efforts (ahem)- on 19/10/82- another year later! - When the support acts were The Phallic Symbols and The Friction (what, no Chronic Outbursts? Maybe it was because the Outbursts actually promoted this gig, I believe)."*

**Ah those Chronic Outbursts! What does Mr Lee say about LU7's finest?**

*"Difficult to forget..."*

*I think they had they had their first gig- or one of their first, at any rate- at The Bossard Hall, Leighton Buzzard, on 24/10/80- the first of many support slots to UK Decay.*



The Bossard Hall, L.Buzzard



*"They supported The Birthday Party (!) at the same venue on 05/06/81- much to the annoyance of some of the local lads, who thought it should have been the other way round. So did I, if only because The Birthday Party (who seemed terrified of the audience at their first UK gig outside of London, thanks to promoter Andy Cooper, another local uh, character of the time) - would probably have played for longer had that been the case. (I know some Aylesbury punks were disappointed).*

*The line up of The Chronic Outbursts at one time or other featured most of the main stays of the Leighton Buzzard punx- Dave Barr, Craig Hopgood, Norman Hughes, Keith Minney, Mark Howard (later -or simultaneously- in the Anti-Social Workers), Ian Williams (later in Napalm Tan, who supported the Chronic Outbursts themselves & Conflict in LB, then Cabaret Voltaire in Bedford), Jimmy Yon (later- or simultaneously- in Absent Friends), Sue Limbert ? I'm sure Tim Young and Jay Wolfendale joined them on stage on occasions. The Homeleigh (!) 'Guest house' in Beaudesert, LB, seemed a pivotal building in the town for the band, as several of them seemed to live there for quite a time. Cliche, Sgt Barker and other memorable songs, which I can't actually remember (sic !) right now"...*

*Chronic Outbursts were THE legendary Leighton Buzzard group (fuck The Barron Knights - barren nights? -and Kajagoogoo- dogs' turd- ie necessary for some, but very unpleasant for most).*

**Kajagoogoo!!** They hailed from Leighton! Ian carry's on with some of the legendary Chronic Outbursts exploits!

*"Yeah, I think the Chronic Outbursts stormed an Art Nouveau gig at The Bossard Hall -terrific! They wanted to do it at the Queensway Hall, at a local bands gig, too, (13/06/81?) but were thwarted-shame! And yeah, I think everyone in LB except me was in the Outbursts at one time- Daryl Forstoe (in new band Patron Saints with Craig Hopgood- gig at Leighton Town football club, 31/12/04) Nick Hawkins- yeah, now living in LA (what, better than LB?) Sue Limbert (moved to Middlesborough?), Richard Hart (where now?)- How did I forget? "*



Keith Minney from the Chronic Outbursts

*"Not sure about Nick Beggs- in 1980/81, I lent him the first Killing Joke LP. He wasn't too impressed. Him and his mates were into 'heavy rock, maaan'. So they evolved into Kajagoogoo- didn't make sense. Marc Almond speaks in his earlier autobiography, 'Tainted Life' about how one night Nick Beggs tried to convert him to be a Xian. That's all you need. So saying, a mate and me spotted Beggs was playing in the Howard Jones band (yeah- I know) and had a gig in Birmingham a few years back.*

*We went along, met up with him again after years staying clear of him, and he kept palming full bottles of whisky in our direction all night... how we got home, I'll never know... I'm sure I remember him telling me he only got in a band for the sex and the drugs... or maybe that was someone else? (or everybody else ?)"*

**"Nearby Dunstable in the 70's and 80's** housed two of the biggest venues in the area, the Queensway Hall and the legendary California Ballroom, both sadly gone now. Many of the larger touring bands would play there. The California Ballroom started off as a Dance Hall and open-air swimming pool, situated at the foot of Dunstable downs.

**In the late sixties** it became a full on music entertainment venue specialising in Soul but not exclusively, for in 1977/8 period, the venue hosted many Punk gigs."

*"There is now no public use of the Bossard Hall, no Queensway Hall (the whole bloody world will be one giant supermarket soon), no California Ballroom, (I remember seeing Generation X and The Cure on the same bill there once-older people saw Jimi Hendrix (who also played a 1968 or 1969 pop festival in Woburn Park, apparently) and the Rolling Stones there, among many. Both these two Dunstable venues were classic places... The California site is now a housing estate..."*

*After reading the California website, I now know that unloved Leighton Buzzard record store owner, Dave Holland, was a DJ there for some time. "*

**On the subject of the Leighton record shop...**

*"Then there was the time I asked the band for a box of fresh 7 inch singles to sell- I think it was 'For My Country'- and I stood outside Dave Hollands' record shop in North Street, Leighton Buzzard, all day one Saturday, selling the records at a lower price than what that disliked store owner was (over) charging- much to his annoyance. Word soon got round town that day and I sold most of them, giving the money of course to the band when I next saw them."*

**So that led on to 'agro' with the shop owner then?**

*"Me and the record shop owner- yes, it got a bit out of hand. We once exchanged abuse at each other; another time he physically threw me out of the shop. There is no record shop there any more. Obviously my para-psychic bombardment (playback, in the words of William Burroughs- see [here](#) - worked ! Hahaha !)"*

**Luton was very important at one time musically speaking, where is it now?**

*"We now know that Dunstable was a Rolling Stones town, and Luton, a Beatles town! (Well, at least by who played where). Talking about Luton, just picked up this 2nd hand book- 'Home Truths' by Bill Murphy- subtitled 'A jaunt around the decaying heart of England'. Chapter 27 is about Luton (easy target?) Quote- "It is such a rotten place, whose locals themselves have nothing to say in its favour. .... The only ones to defend the place are local councillors and empty-headed local radio DJs". And later "there's no shortage of village idiots in Luton" and "there really is absolutely bugger all anyone would want to do in Luton except escape". This book reminds me of The Idlers 'Crap Towns' book, except 'Home Truths' is just one persons effort and viewpoint"*

**This has been confirmed recently in Crap Towns 2, definitely a 'Shit Hole'!**

*"Yes, Luton is/can be a shit hole- 'officially the most crap town in Britain', thanks to The Idler magazine. And the football club's been recently voted having the 2nd worst ground in the League (and they lost for the first time in the League this season the day before I wrote this- the rot's set in!) Hell, I was born in Luton- albeit at the L & D Hospital- where, 20 years later, Ian Curtis was diagnosed as having epilepsy (Joy Division travelling back up north at the time from a gig at the Moonlight Club, West Hampstead- hey, I remember attending a UK Decay gig there)."*

**Where are you living now?**

*"Been living in Birmingham since September 1988... well, it's cheaper than London, isn't it."*

**And on 'Absent Friends' and travelling!**



Dave Barr, Chronic Outbursts

*"We all remember Steve Harle, Wayne Twigg and Dave Barr- never forget these great friends of ours..."*

*I spend time travelling to places of great interest around the world these days. I was in India, deathplace of all our three friends mentioned above, in 1994. Glad I got back alive. From what I understand, Steve was terribly unlucky, and Wayne and Dave, both rather mysterious, even though both of them were not in the best of health. I had visited both of them several times in Amsterdam."*

**Ian goes on**

*"Lyndsey Franklin and Sandra Windows- with their sons- came to visit me here back in, oh 1995, as a consequence of me meeting Sandra at Steve H's funeral. Apart from that day, and seeing Roger Holdstock, Daisy and Abbo at various Luton Town matches over the years, that's been about it.. (Oh, saw Abbo when he managed EMF and Pavement- gigs in Birmingham- Pavement all came on stage in Luton Town shirts!) I do go back to LB several times each year still. Were the late 1970s and early 1980s really that good, or have I borrowed somebody's red-tinted glasses?"*

**Hmm! Red Tinted Glasses well maybe! What music is Ian into these days?**

*"Music I listen to these days? Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, New Order- (well, not so much now), Mercury Rev, The Flaming Lips, maybe a little of The Fall sometimes. Perhaps rather mainstream ( ! ) compared to some of you..."*

**Cool that was a real rollicking couple of numbers Nick Cave performed recently on the Jools Holland Later TV thing!**



**The LU7 and Chronic Outburst** threads in the Forums are some of the most popular. The above interview is entirely constructed out of Ian's postings as well as a couple of bits out of his e-mail correspondences! Such is the advantage of using the Forum as a kind of 'Collective Memory Database' for the historical life and times that we experienced.

**So everyone**, Please keep sharing and posting your memories!

[The California Ballroom Website](#)

[William S Burroughs](#)

[Chronic Outbursts](#)

[LU7](#) (1) [LU7](#) (2)

All pics snapped by Ian Lee  
except Keith Minney and  
Dave Barr behind his drum kit,  
David Griffiths ©

Wayne Twigg RIP



[Dave Barr](#) RIP September 26th  
1962-March 6th 2003

© [UKDECAY COMMUNITIES](#)

Narration, typing, and formatting. 'Werewolf'

LEIGHTON BUZZARD:

*"The streets are ill-paved and not lighted with gas, and the inhabitants derive their chief supply of water from wells. The trade consists in corn and timber ; the market-day is Thursday and the fairs are held in February, April, July, October and December."*

[old towns](#)

Not a lots changed then?!

# Damaged Goods

A short extract from a book by  
Julian Wolfendale

....."**Down at the Bossard Hall.** It's Ian's 21st birthday. He's got UKDecay from Luton playing. They're a real popular band. LP and everything. We're all down the front. It's packed solid. The music starts. The singer Abbo's got Tartan punk clothes. Brothel creepers. Big backcombed hair. They start their song 'Middle of the road man'. That intro is great. Spon's crashing guitar. Dave's watching Their drummer, Steve Harle. He's very good. Dave's shadow boxing to the beat. As he would. They're his favourite band. They are very good. Abbo's twirling his studded belt around above his head. What a front man. The audience goes mad. Belts twirling everywhere. It's the Luton Belts. Their own fan club. They follow the band around.

**The music** is putting the hairs up on the back of my neck. I swear. Ian gets up on stage. The Chorus. Abbo's got his arm round Ian's shoulders. Singing 'Do you like Ugg' That's Ian's nickname. Everyone is cheering. What a great party. Seemed to go so quickly. About midnight. I'm walking home. Down Doggett Street. There's two guys playing a Piano under a streetlight in the rain. Laughing. It's Jake and Nigel. They are pissed out of their heads. They wheeled it out of the hall after the gig. Noone said a word. Blimey. That was fun.

**The following week** i went over to Bedford to meet some friends. I was sitting in the Cadena cafe in the arcade, drinking a pot of tea. I used to go up there to smoke when i was at school. Only 4 years earlier but already a lifetime away. On the next table sat a big skinhead and his girlfriend. As i got up to leave he looked at me- "you staring at my bird mate? " No. " why, don't you fancy her then? " No. " What, are you saying she's ugly? "No. "You a queer then?

You fuckin look like one" No. "So you do fancy her then" No i don't, leave me alone you cunt. I turned to go and he went to get up. Oh Fuck. Here we go then. Now or never. I picked up the stool i had been sitting on. I hit him with it three times as he came at me. He lay still on the floor. A little surprised.

**His girlfriend** screamed at me to leave him alone. I was a thin effeminate looking 17 year old. He must have been 2 or 3 years older than me. He was two or three stone bigger. What was i supposed to do, let him hit me first and do me the damage? I always hated bullies. I walked quickly back to the train station with my legs shaking. I expected a gang of skins to follow me any moment. I wouldn't be going back to Bedford again in a hurry.

**The next time** was the infamous riot at the Bunyan centre. The Angelic Upstarts were playing. Backed up by UK Decay, Our friends from Luton. They have just started. Doing their song 'Sexual'. It is blinding. All of a sudden, There's big Aidan Sterling. King of the Skins. Gets up on stage. Topless. Sta Prest and braces. He is covered in blood. He's screaming . The skins think it was the punks . It wasn't . It was the bouncers. Too late. Fuck.

**We are so outnumbered.** Me and Dave standing back to back in the hall. Punching every bone head that-

came our way. I'm slapping them with my belt. Solid studs. Not like the fashion accessory pyramid stud ones. No weight to them. The fuckers won't stay down. There's three out cold next to us though. The hall is full of people fighting. Fists. Belts.

**They've pulled** Abbo off the stage. Steve Spon is hitting skins with his guitar on stage. Auntie Sue is swinging the mike stand. Knocking them over like skittles. Fuckin' ell. Over by a fire exit. Captain Bluett is getting a hiding. Three skins. Me and Dave run out. They run off. Outside it's worse. Everyone's fighting the coppers. One grabs Dave. From behind. I fire a left hook behind his ear. He goes down. That's six years of boxing for you. He never saw me coming. His mate did though. He's coming at me with his truncheon. Bollocks.

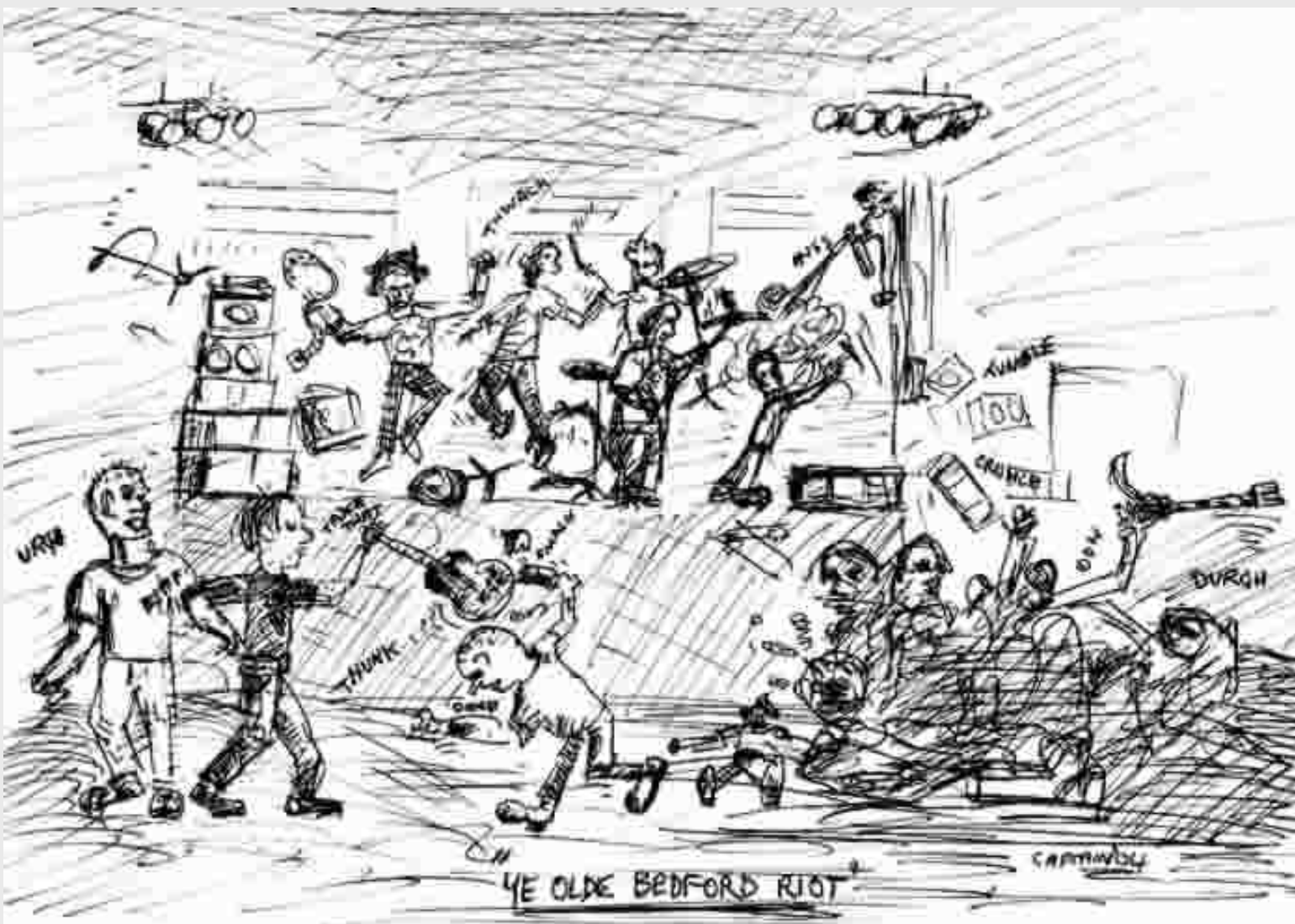


**All of a sudden** there's Aidan. He grabs hold of the copper and picks him up. He throws him against the wall. He's trying to stop the skins from fighting the punks. Fuck it. It's too late. Police vans and cars are getting turned over. It's the wild west. We run back to our van. Loads of Leighton punks piling in. We can hear the dogs barking now. I see Aidan being dragged off. There's five coppers to do it though. He's still trying to fight them. Poor fucker. He'll be receiving some special attention in the cells then.

**We drive out.** Very Carefully. We are waved out by a copper. Dave gives him two fingers. Home James. The riot was on Anglia news the next night. It blamed the punks and skins. It was the bouncers though. Never believe the media....."



The above is a short extract from a 'Damaged Goods', a book by Julian Wolfendale© &(p)  
A fictional story loosley based on real events.



Written by Julian Wolfendale© &(p) 2004

Formatted by Werewolf.

Sketches by 'Captain'

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More on the [Bedford riot](#) in the Forum



## The Captain's Tales pt1

Question put to “the Captain” recently, yes he can still remember something!

*“So what was it like going on tour with UKDK?”*

### So who the fuck was UK Decay and what was I doing there?

Having decided to take a career break from my job driving a breakdown truck for universal salvage (I wanted to be a poet, but they wouldn't let me) I found myself at the wheel of a bog standard diesel transit van, hired from a dubious polish geezer that we knew. The destination was North. Only Geronimo Jeff (resident jester, visionary) seemed to know the name of the first destination.

**We had loaded** the assorted collection of old marshall speaker cabs and the entire lighting rig consisting of various old fixtures purloined from the back of some gig or other and a strobe that ‘just appeared’ one day, plus various foil lined tea chests filled with domestic light bulbs and controlled from a set of light switches nailed to a plank of plywood. It had taken all day and the collection of ‘hobbit’ like straggle haired fans anxious for a lift to the gig to escape their mind- numbing routine of early 80's. ‘Disco Romance’ entertainment, began clambering in on top of the equipment. Then as I slammed the doors (and locked them in for good measure, cant have them escaping can we?), I breathed a sigh of relief as Jeff passed me an interesting ciggy.



**We were nearly ready to rock.** But something was missing, where was the band?

Going back into the DK's record shop 'Matrix', there was Spon hammering at the glass top of the Space Invaders machine as he lost again. Abbo was snoggin Alison behind the counter whilst Segovia and Jane were fighting in the back room. Stevie H was missing as usual he always manage to skip the load ups! So I did my 'Captain thing' and screamed “Lets get the fuck in the van we're late!” I may as well have whistled Dixie, they weren't having it. At that point Jeff appeared in the shop doorway with his usual big grin.

“Tee Hee” he exclaimed “ I have found my Mushrooms, anyone want some, they will go off, if we leave them” I chased him round the room with my belt cussing him to stop friggin about and get on the van. I was ‘overruled’ so a ‘refreshment break’ was taken.



Abbo holding Alison down as

**Finally the convoy** set off towards the M1, Jeff with his antique Rover 3000, Spon at the wheels of a ‘donated’ Ford Capri Coupe and a ‘rag taggle’ collection of vehicles following behind.

I was supposed to lead the way in the van but the anguished cries from our poor ‘passengers’ tumbling about with the gear in the back, each time we rounded a corner, had slowed us to a snails pace.

Finally as we got on the motorway I floored it and somewhere past Watford gap services I caught sight of the first tail ender of our convoy. By the time the van got to Birmingham I could see Jeff's Rover ahead. He and Spon were having some kind off duel to get in front.

he poses in Matrix before departing for Liverpool

Late afternoon we had reached Rochdale in Lancashire, Jeff was gesturing frantically to turn off the motorway (no mobile phones then!) so we followed him through the town centre. Yes, the circus had come to town.

**After our overnight stay** in town at friend's houses, the gig next day at Liverpool was just an hour away. On the way there Spon travelled in the van and I learned of the previous nights adventures. Phil and Martyn Dill', our two self appointed 'shock troops' and some other lads, had gone for a moonlight climb in the nearby hills and collected several bin liners of the local crop of their favourite fungi to take with them to the gig! I silently shivered as my thoughts ran riot. Two-dozen hardcore Decay fans plus the band and crew playing in Liverpool for the first time was hairy enough, but the mushrooms?

Dohhh! This will be interesting. Was it a full moon?

**I looked outside** but the clouds hid the moon's face. A pattern had been emerging in my fevered imagination, ever since the "Clophill" photos I had noticed that the best and worst gigs took place around the time of the full moon. As we flanked the Mersey river and the town was lit up before us I dreamed that I was in a tribal raiding party descending on the town to claim the spoils and 'pleasure their women' then I realised that the tea Jeff had made me earlier, may have been more than just PG Tips!

**Brady's club** was opposite the car park where the famous 'Cavern' club once stood. This place was similar in that it was dark, cramped and sweaty. It was the basement floor of a big building, a kind of matt black labyrinth of concrete pillars with a bar at one end and a stage to the side. The 'dressing room' was an '8 by 10' room with a WC at one end. Ah well, it was better than nothing, somewhere to escape the sweating crowd out front.

**With the usual pre gig hubbub**, people of unknown origins came and went while the band tries to get sorted for the entrance to the "Arena". It is a scene that cannot easily be described, nerves and sweat, cussing, joking, tension in the air. The one thing I can say is that the Liverpool crowd were a good bit "cooler" than around our hometown. Something about the historic significance of live music in Liverpool meant that though the place was buzzing with electric energy this night, it seemed that no major riot would kick off, but you never could tell.



**Eventually** with a little gentle persuasion from the "boys", we cleared out the little dark room and Spon begins to look manic as he restrings and tunes his axe. Abstinant Abbo is shrieking demented opera in the corner as he surveys his men with a curious expression of dismay and disbelief at the state of some of them. His voice is hoarse, he squirts local anaesthetic onto his vocal chords and disappears out front into the crowds to get into the vibe. He looks the part, in black and tartans. Soon engulfed in the dark he disappears and I check for Stevie Harle our drummer. "He's out there somewhere" giggles Jeff as he is drying and sorting out his stash.



**“Maybe the whole gig’s high,”** I thought as I looked out front.. It seemed that a bag of the mushies had been distributed to any willing connoisseurs passing by the door. My crickey, I decided to go and look for Steve. He was very emotional that night, as his real Father had turned up at the Gig to meet him for the first time since he left for America, years back

**I saw them and Steve** was well lagged and certainly upset but happy nonetheless for the surprise reconciliation. “Come on mate, it’s getting close” I had to get him back, the crowd was restless and we could lose them if we didn’t start. Back at the stage, Spon was there in the darkness plugging up and checking, Jeff had headed for the Mixing –desk at the back and Abbo had not returned, then he runs in and grabs the set-list, heads for the stage and Seggy starts a low bass rumble with Steve settling in and tickling the ride cymbals then Spon lets loose a great shrieking guitar feedback and they are off. Crunching into the thudding bass and drum riff as they launch into “Unexpected Guest.” Wow, it never ceased to amaze me, the sheer raw energy of UK Decay live. If you weren’t there you can’t get the sheer thrill of this powerhouse of sound. Strobes flashing out of the dark, the eerie chords crash on and Abbo is suddenly illuminated from the shadows, his hair singeing against the lights as thrusts to the stage front.



**Boy**, what front he needs. He’s’ throwing the heaviest rawest sound at the Liverpool home crowd. It was like 1967 Velvet Underground in Warhol’s New York-basement. The front row goes mad as he swings the mike stand backwards, skimming past the drum kit and Steve, slap into roadie Welsh Ron’s legs. He swears and cusses and returns it to the boards with equal force. The heads are spearing upwards as kids throw themselves with abandon, like they are football heroes’ nutting one into the back of the net.

**The Luton had arrived.** I’ve seen many bands in my time, from The Doors and the Greateful Dead, to Clash and The Pistol’s,..... but UK Decay were fuckin serious.

**Take no prisoners!**

Eds note...captain has volunteered to undergo experimental brain surgery to extract further revelations from his poor addled brain cells!

'The Captains Tales' was written by the 'Captain', additional typing 'Werewolf' Sketches also by 'Captain'

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Do You have tales of life on the road with UK Decay? If so why not share them! [here](#)



# UK Decay Today

UK Decay Communities Newsletter

**UK DECAY**

In the early 80's 'Decay' Played as many gigs in Berlin as they did in Luton. In January 1981 as 'Decay' were making their way through the West Berlin 'Corridor', they took a wrong turn...



The 'Welly st crew' Spon left, Steve Harle, the Captain and Martyn Dill Survey the latest edition of the 'Suss Fanzine' in 1979..The Captain looks horrified!



# UK Decay Today

UK Decay Communities Newsletter

**UK DECAY**

**Does anyone remember this?**



## **The Classic 'For my Country' T-Shirt 1980**

The above T-shirt was UK Decays first official shirt, brought out in 1980 to coincide with the release of the 'For My Country-Unwind' single release and the tour with the Dead Kennedy's. Many were sold world-wide, and were 'well-seen' in a crowd! This one shown above belongs to Steve Spon and he says it is the last one he has of any of the 'UKDK' shirts, that is in reasonably good condition. He also said that he wore this actual shirt on many of the gigs, he added that he is not selling it!

We have had many e-mails and questions in the forums asking if we are going to be bringing out any T-Shirts. Therefore, early in 2005 UK Decay Communities will be presenting for sale at a reasonable cost, a number of the 'Classic UK Decay' designs.

The design shown here, and of course the Classic 'Unexpected Guest' T-Shirt (as worn by Rodney in 'Only Fools and Horses'). The two 'For Madmen Only' shirts (the Skeleman and The Album cover), and a couple of Brand new designs that will reflect the forthcoming CD release!

The T-Shirts will be of the finest quality and screen pressed with a variety of sizes. We are in the process of designing a really cool looking baseball cap with a 'UK DK' logo Plus skate wear for the Skateboarders!!!

So keep your eyes on the Website for further details and announcements.



## Steve Spon and the Captain Meet with Abbo

report by Steve Spon

Thursday 18th November 2004

**"On this evening**, through freezing rain we drove 35 miles up the M1 to Northampton. Meeting Abbo on tour with one of the Artistes he manages. He would be in Northampton to promote one of his acts, and this could be the only chance to meet up this year. It was a bit hectic, but Abbo was genuinely warm, friendly and looking good but as always, busy! So we had to be on the case with precious little time.

**We had questions** about Publishing and Record contracts and it seems Abbo has become something of an expert in this area and his memory was really sharp on events and happenings. Furthermore he exhibited a genuinely warm attitude to the question of re-releasing the music. There are obstacles to be overcome but not insurmountable ones, we started putting together a plan of sorts. We gained a better understanding of both the Publishing and Record company aspects and talked about the form the Album might take.

**I asked him** which way he felt would be the best way to go forward. I can't go into the details here, because we will have some careful negotiations to go through first, however Abbo did seem flexible and we arranged a discourse of communication by e-mail and meetings that should be structured accordingly. We also arranged to meet-up again in the New Year.

**Also we spoke** of other plans that we have of which he gave us a cautious blessing, including plans for the 'Special Member Edition' of 'Nights for Celebration'.

**After watching the show** we chipped out to the pub next door for a swift pint.: We had a beer and revived a few old memories, had quite a few laughs joked about reforming the old band! and Abbo spoke about some archive stuff that he had but would not get a chance to look at until he returns to the UK in January 2005 He asked what was going on in the old home-town and if there was any talent worth looking at. We suggested, that providing he gets the Time, Abbo contributes something to the website and he seemed only too happy. Then we shook hands and he wished us luck, and we arranged to meet up again in January.

**It was nice** meeting up with an old friend again; true we had been through so much together in those few years Now after working on separate projects for quite a few years the possibility of working together again and re-establishing our musical history is very exciting.

I really look forward to doing business with Abbo again"

This is excellent news, Abbo is a very busy man and he is going to find time to dig through his archives to see what he can find for future CD and maybe even DVD presentations Its great to have you on board Abbo!

## Final Words

### Still Missing!

**We are still** trying to track down Eddie Branch, bass-player for UK Decay 1981-1982. If anyone has any information leading to the arrest and conviction of this 'dangerous Bass player'....we would be real happy to know!

**Seriously**, we love him really! But can't track him down! We have tried the obvious web-site's and things but so far he has managed to avoid detection...



**sorry**...I mean we have drawn a blank!..If anyone should know how to get in touch with him or knows of his whereabouts' could you please pass him our information to contact us

[werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk)

## Final Word

**Since the site** came 'online' in April, this virtual world has come alive, literally! There is talk of books, Film scripts, Merchandise and even the re-union of UK Decay itself! Whether or not any of this will ever come to pass remains to be seen, but such is the enthusiasm and interest that this website has generated, it now seems that that anything is possible. Maybe even probable, we have read the draft of Julian Wolfendale's 'Damaged Goods', which turns out to be a dam good, read Good luck with that Jay!

Having re-established contact with Abbo we can now go forward with confidence and expect 2005 to be a very exciting year!

### Thanks to all that have contributed!

**A big thank you** to all those that have contributed material to making this website The Ultimate UK Decay Web Resource! There are to many to mention in this space and if we were to, we would probably forget someone! So thank you all, you know who you are!

### The Next Newsletter?

We are not sure yet when the next 'UK Decay Today' will hit your 'readers' but April 2005 seems a likely candidate. If you wish to contribute an article or something to the next issue please feel free.

In the first instant contact

[werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk](mailto:werewolf@ukdecay.co.uk)

Finally a rare pic of UK Decay

