

**Edit 2009-03-08: line-up corrected**

- 1) All the line-ups are not confirmed. Maybe John French's book will give us some missing details about this era.
- 2) Following Henry Kaiser John French is the drummer on all tracks. Any drummer who can distinguish the style of Art Tripp and John French?
- 3) Following Henry Kaiser again the Spotlight Kid sessions were finished in early November 1971, no Brown Star sessions happened in summer 1972. Roy Estrada joined the Magic Band in March 1972. That means: no involvement of Roy Estrada here.

- 4) Don's only contribution to 'Well Well Well' are the concluding words "It doesn't taste so well...", no harmonica, saxophone as mentioned before.



24

**Captain Beefheart & The Magic Band  
The Spotlight Kid Outtakes**

3rd Revision

The Spotlight Kid & Pompadour Sessions  
October-early November 1971  
Record Plant Studios, Los Angeles, CA

Acoustic Blues Session, early 1972  
probably Amigo Studios, Sherman Oaks,  
North Hollywood, CA

A friendly DIME fellow who wants to stay anonymous sent his collection of **Spotlight Kid** outtakes.

Every Beefheart fan has its own version, but this time we are talking about a known 2nd gen!

A former band member received the tapes on getting the gig, they were made for him in order to learn the tunes. Our guy got them directly from him, he transferred the tapes to CDR using a stand alone CD burner, no editing or mastering in this step.

What I got are FLAC files directly ripped from the CDR. The sound quality of the tracks is astonishing. You have to hear them!

Some statistics:

- 41 tracks overall. Length: 198:33
- 33 tracks from the 2nd gen in excellent sound quality (1)
- 8 tracks from 3rd gen with improved sound quality (2), (3), (4)

- 2 new tracks: *Circumstances* and a new version of *Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian*
- 2 tracks uncut: *Funeral Hill (Version 1)*, *Low Yo Yo Stuff (Instrumental)*
- 1 stereo upgrade: *Dirty Blue Gene (Version 1)* before only available in mono

Lineage:

- (1) studio->tape 2nd gen->stand alone CD burner->CDR->flac->TLH->wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac
- (2) studio->tape 3rd gen?->Spotlight Kid DVD (from puzzleoyster)->wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac (2nd revision)->TLH->wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac
- (3) studio->tape 3rd gen?->The Spotlight Kid Outtakes CDR (from perebeef)->wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac (2nd revision)->TLH->wav->Wavelab: sound editing->TLH->flac
- (4) studio->tape 3rd gen?->Beefheart Studio Sessions 1970-72 (flac tormented on DIME)->TLH: wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac (2nd revision)->TLH->wav->Wavelab 5.0: sound editing->TLH->flac

Tracklist:

- 1-01 Drink Paint Run Run (7:28:977) (1)  
excellent sound quality
- 1-02 Seam Crooked Sam (Version 2) (2:18:290)  
(1) excellent sound quality
- 1-03 Dirty Blue Gene (Version 1) (2:54:642) (1)  
stereo, excellent sound quality

1

- 1-04 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 3)(4:12:283) (1) excellent sound quality, 4,5% slower
- 1-05 Kiss Me My Love (2:38:779) (1) excellent sound quality
- 1-06 Funeral Hill (Version 1) (6:46:236) (1) excellent sound quality, 2% slower, 0:50 longer (coda uncut)
- 1-07 Harry Irene (2:51:164) jazzy guitar version, (1) excellent sound quality
- 1-08 Open Pins (5:41:854) (3) improved sound
- 1-09 Dual & Abdul (2:44:970) (1) excellent sound quality, 5% faster
- 1-10 Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian (Version 2)(3:05:670) (1) new version, excellent sound quality (different guitar outro)
- 1-11 Balladino (2:27:607) (1) excellent sound quality
- 1-12 Clear Spot (Instrumental) (4:46:150) (2) improved sound
- 1-13 Circumstances (9:09:407) (1) new track, excellent sound quality (marimba, harmonica, different to Clear Spot o/t)
- 1-14 I'm Gonna Booglarize You, Baby (Instrumental)(5:54:142)(1) excellent sound quality
- 1-15 Low Yo Yo Stuff (Instrumental) (6:08:188) (1) uncut, excellent sound quality
- 1-16 Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian (Version 1) (4:11:118) (1) excellent sound quality, 4,5% faster
- 1-17 Little Scratch (Version 2) (2:53:510) (4) improved sound

- Pompadour Session** (1) excellent sound quality, 3,8% slower
- 2-01 Pompadour I (13:54:520) 2 takes
- 2-02 Pompadour II (12:41:308) 5 takes
- 3-01 Suzy Murder Wrist (3:47:285) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-02 U Bean So Cinquo (2:51:291) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-03 The Witch Doctor Life (3:51:869) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-04 Little Scratch (Version 1)(4:48:648) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-05 Flaming Autograph (4:44:098) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-06 Love Grip (4:48:176) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-07 No Flower Shall Grow (5:44:902) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-08 Best Batch Yet (Version 1)(3:40:819) 3 takes (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-09 Your Love Brought Me To Life (4:10:338) 2 takes (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-10 That Little Girl (5:18:342) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-11 Campfires (5:47:664) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-12 Well Well Well (1:57:587) (1) excellent sound quality (Lick My Decals Off Baby o/t)
- 3-13 Funeral Hill (Version 3) (3:55:744) (1) excellent sound quality
- 3-14 Seam Crooked Sam (Version 1) (2:15:360) (2) improved sound
- 3-15 Alice In Blunderland (3:55:727) (2)



blues versions of 'Funeral Hill'; and a medley of non-originals featuring 'Scratch My Back', 'Going To The Bottom (Border or Brazos)', 'Keys To The Highway' and 'Grandpa Don't Love Grandma No More'.

*(Captain Beefheart. The Man And His Music. 1989)*

*Mike Barnes:* 'Sun Zoom Spark' first came into being on a rambling rehearsal demo, with Van Vliet improvising the words over

Harkleroad's guitar lines.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

*Henry Kaiser:* The above is just a blues jam for fun with El and Don. Maybe they thought to get a blues duo jam tune out of 'Sun Zoom Spark' to us as they played it - but they got nothing finished...

3-16 Funeral Hill (Version 2) (3:17:453) faded  
Line-up:  
Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica  
Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
John French: drums, percussion  
Mark Boston: bass guitar  
Art Tripp: piano (?)

3-17 Best Batch Yet (Version 2) (2:14:814)  
different version released on Doc At The Radar Station, begins with, "that is three"  
Line-up:  
Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
Mark Boston: bass guitar  
John French: drums  
Art Tripp: marimba  
Comments: Sounds like take #1 of 'Best Batch Yet (Version 1)' with marimba overdubbed.

3-18 Dirty Blue Gene (Version 2) (3:14:470)  
Line-up:  
Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica  
Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
Mark Boston: bass guitar  
John French: drums, percussion  
Comments:  
*Mike Barnes:* 'Dirty Blue Gene' is another example of material released at last after a lengthy metamorphosis. Its thirteen-year transmutation saw it progress from a good title(which Van Vliet obviously loved) for an instrumental piece recorded in 1967, to completely different music complete with

lyrics in 1971 and then a version close to this one (released on Doc At The Radar Station) from the 1972 Clear Spot sessions. With a few minor changes it became the thunderous song on Doc At The Radar Station.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

**The Acoustic Blues Session:** Don and Bill doing 'Sun Zoom Spark' probably Amigo Studios, Sherman Oaks, North Hollywood, CA., early 1972 (mono)

4-01 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 1) (8:03:536)  
4-02 Scratch My Back (1:51:574)  
4-03 Blues Medley (7:16:838) AKA Pork Chops 'n Beans  
a. Down In The Bottom (Howlin' Wolf, 1961) AKA Going Down To The Border AKA Going To The Bottom  
b. Key To The Highway (Big Bill Broonzy, 1941)  
c. Grandpa Don't Love Grandma No More  
4-04 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 2) (8:28:741)  
Line-up:  
Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica  
Bill Harkleroad: acoustic guitar  
Comments:  
*Colin David Webb:* The musical direction at this time is confusing. Bootleg tapes indicate a range of different approaches - straight blues in three gutsy takes of a totally different 'Sun Zoom Spark'; a ripping blues rendition of 'Seam Crooked Sam'; two heavy

improved sound  
3-16 Funeral Hill (Version 2) (3:17:453) (2)  
improved sound  
3-17 Best Batch Yet (Version 2) (2:14:814) (2)  
improved sound  
3-18 Dirty Blue Gene (Version 2) (3:14:470) (2)  
improved sound

**The Acoustic Blues Session** (mono) (1)  
excellent sound quality, less bass, 2,1% faster

4-01 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 1) (8:03:536)  
4-02 Scratch My Back (1:51:574)  
4-03 Blues Medley (7:16:838)  
4-03a Down In The Bottom (Howlin' Wolf, 1961)  
4-03b Key To The Highway (Big Bill Broonzy, 1941)  
4-03c Grandpa Don't Love Grandma No More  
4-04 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 2) (8:28:741)

*Don Van Vliet:* I was thinking warm and nice when I did that one (The Spotlight Kid) and I feel that it has all come through. Actually, though there are only ten tracks on the album, we recorded thirty-five songs altogether.

*(Roy Carr: Svengali Zappa And A Horrible Freak Called Beefheart. New Musical Express. January 12, 1972)*

*Mike Barnes:* Bill Harkleroad explains the genesis of the mass of unfinished material

from this era: "We had a blocked amount of time (for The Spotlight Kid) and we had an cache of tunes. We just went in there in the typical way that we worked. Just take it, keep it, move on. Don was trying to use the studio more. (He thought) here we are, they're paying for it, let's get the most out of it and put some things down - unfinished licks and riffs that he thought were songs. It was a very incomplete, uncontrolled situation, like "What the hell's going on, what are we playing and where does this go?" Even with tunes that were "done", and that people think are great, a lot of them were unfinished ideas with a part missing here and there."

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

*Dave Lynch:* An incredible quantity of various takes in semi-annotated form, many given different titles; everybody seems to have a different set of these. All in all, they're interesting demos, but not particularly cohesive, with lots of loose jamming and repetition. Quality is mostly clean, although a significant amount of tape hiss mars some spots.

*(Captain Beefheart Tapes)*

*Pete Mulvey:* There are more out-takes for Spotlight Kid than any other album. Well, more to my knowledge, but you're right, that might just be sloppy controls for a brief period in history. There must have been a

large number of demo tapes flying around as Beefheart sought to get out from under Zappa, and as Warners tried to capitalize on their investment. Beefheart regularly used to claim that none of the first three albums recouped their recording costs sufficiently to pay royalties, a wonderful allegation gleefully repeated in acolyte interviews, yet the Captain also claims that the album was recorded in under five hours. Let's say that two and a half days is a more rational estimate. The Record Company would also pay for rehearsals, and the band was not perfect on arrival, but rehearsal space is not the big expense. No, if the man has not been accounted for royalties on 'Trout Mask', it is because there are large cash advances to be deducted, keeping the band in meals, women, socks, drugs and rock 'n' roll. Don't blame them, myself, but there's no substitute for a happy band on the road, getting their material straight in front of people who cannot hear the detail of the difficulties they are experiencing.

So, the band completed the sixties and started touring the more accessible blues approach that would be The Spotlight Kid. The out-takes of the period are an extraordinary bunch. I have heard two C90s, the first of which contains a range of material most of which does not make the album, but gets resurrected on a future release. The second is more extended, instrumental-based stuff, reminiscent of

those tapes of backing tracks that are around for some of the albums. Some are rambling runs, seven minutes of 'Drink Paint, Run, Run' and twenty-five of a blues-based jam which contains the words 'Sun Zoom Spark', along with 'Key To The Highway' and 'Baby Scratch My Back'. Beefheart can be heard referring to the number as 'Sun Zoom Spark', but he kept very little of this Bill Harkleroad performance, the emphasis shifting to that extraordinary rhythm. Hard to hear such work-outs without thinking that if anyone came up with the key phrase, new sound, or decent rhythmic touch, then Beefheart would incorporate it. If not, they take place simply to loosen fingers. If so, the musicians' claims to have had more than a hand in the writing could carry a little weight. Of course, if they can't prove it with their tape collection, then maybe Beefheart wrote the lot. It is just so hard to believe because it is such a varied but excellent body of work, and so hard to imagine someone describing what they want from an instrument they cannot play. There are instrumentals that are part of the development of backing tracks that will one day carry lyrics, 'Best Batch Yet' and 'Clear Spot', and there are instrumentals that will be honed into, well, instrumentals, 'Alice In Blunderland' and 'Pompadour' (which became 'Suction Prints'). These last four are intact, have their key passages all mapped out for them even at this stage. 'Harry Irene' appears for some reason in a

Mark Boston: bass guitar, vocals  
 John French: drums  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Art Tripp: marimba  
 Comments:  
*Mike Barnes*: I still can't find that original fax from Henry Kaiser but he had said that 'Well Well Well' was the only thing from that Decals session which was mixed down for inclusion (onto 2 track from 8 I think) but was rejected. I don't know if this was a rough mix or finished mix but I'm wondering if it was the former. The reason being that there was often a big discrepancy between rough mixes and the finished ones which Don OK'd. Just think of all the Spotlight Kid outtakes (none of which were properly mixed down) and how they differ from the sound of the finished album. They all sound sharper and less muddy and gloomy than the album. Don was notorious for going for a dry, flat sound with little or no reverb and, in my opinion, wasn't too good behind the mixing desk. And all the Decals instrumental dubs sound a lot different to the album, as we said. The only two tracks mixed down for possible inclusion on SK were 'Funeral Hill' (short) and an early version of 'Harry Irene'. Again this comes from Kaiser who I can't think would be anything less than ultra-diligent. Who knows - could Kaiser be wrong? Heaven forbid!

(Fire Party)

3-13 Funeral Hill (Version 3) (3:55:744) abrupt finish

Line-up:  
 Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Mark Boston: bass guitar  
 John French: drums, percussion  
 Art Tripp: piano (?)

3-14 Seam Crooked Sam (Version 1) (2:15:360)

Line-up:  
 Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica  
 Art Tripp?: maracas  
 John French: tap-dance

Comments:  
*Mike Barnes*: a rough sketch... dating back to 1972. The only instrumentation on the spartan original was maracas, harmonica and the clattering of French doing his tap-dancing routine.

(Captain Beefheart, 2000)

3-15 Alice In Blunderland (3:55:727)  
 instrumental, different version with Ingber's guitar mixed low

Line-up:  
 Elliot Ingber: guitar  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Mark Boston: bass guitar  
 John French: drums  
 Art Tripp: marimba  
 Comments:  
*David Lynch*: Ingber's guitar is mixed unreasonably low in this version.

'Life' features 'guitar and marimba' in a much slower piece. A laboured guitar, with the marimba in-filling, then there's a faster brighter section, with the drums more prominent, then back to the laboured 'guitar and marimba' duet. Again difficult to see it standing as a finished piece? Also, difficult to see it standing as an instrumental - on its own ...!?! (but with some cutting down and a second guitar overlay ... ??) It stops abruptly in mid-phrase, then picks up again.

*(Steal Softly thru Snow #7)*

Paul Brown: This is one of the 'guitar and marimba' slower pieces, probably unfinished.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #8)*

Mike Barnes: Tepper looks back with particular fondness on some earlier pieces that never got past the rehearsal stage, which were, in his opinion, some of Van Vliet's most tender and most affecting musical moments: 'Your Love Brought Me To Life' - originally from 1971 - and later pieces like 'Rhino In The Redwoods' and 'Child Ecologist'. The time needed to realize his more complicated pieces, together with the loss of momentum in his career, had left a lot still stuck on the drawing board.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

3-10 That Little Girl (5:18:342) AKA 'Instrumental #9'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb*: 'That Little Girl' starts with some neat guitar picking then continues as a slow-paced number with guitar to the fore again and the marimba occasionally heard in the background. In the middle there's some tentative guitar, trying to find the correct phrase, suggesting another 'work-in-progress,' rather than a finished piece.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

3-11 Campfires (5:47:664) AKA 'Instrumental #1'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb*: 'Campfires' was previously known as 'Instrumental #1' (Brown-Star-fast-ish!). It's a lively piece with a strong drums, bass, and lead guitar line-up again. The guitar has a slightly sleazy feel to it, but again it's the repeated riffs that suggest - It is not a finished piece.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

3-12 Well Well Well (1:57:587) Lick My Decals Off, Baby Outtake

Line-Up:

Don Van Vliet: (vocals)

spacious, lilting, delicate version, close to the final answer, yet a decade away from release. Also sounding very similar to the version that appears in the Shiny Beast sessions, Bill's work presumably considered well worthy of repetition. The boring 'Funeral Hill' is also well represented; if the tapes are anything to go by, they played that more often than anything else. Baffling. As so often, Beefheart has retained the number, certain that it can be something worth having, and has resurrected it in these sessions. It is just possible to believe that it metamorphosed into 'There Ain't No Santa Claus On The Evenin' Stage', but I can put together an argument for 'Glider' as well. He obviously has great faith in both that and 'Little Scratch', although the latter at least changed cosmetically, becoming 'Natural Charm' before it finally achieved release as 'The Past Sure Is Tense', in a much changed format.

While on the subject of alternate titles, I have seen 'Funeral Hill' listed as 'Flat On Your Back', and 'Seam Crooked Sam' as 'Can't Do This Unless I Can Do That'. 'Little Scratch' can come across as 'Sure Had A Real Good Time', and 'Kiss Me My Love' as 'Two Rips In A Haystack'. I could make up a load of them; they have a certain logic, normally the first line of the song. The blues dominate the tapes, though. The acquisition of Winged Eel Fingerling must have been a shot in the bluesman's arm, his guitar blues

education competing with his view of the unstructured potential of the blues and complementing Don's desires to veer off the mainstream blues path. The songs were obviously not created in long jams, but Elliot Ingber must have been taken with Don's music to extend anything to that length. Having said that, there are certain pictures of Ingber that suggest he would have had trouble finding an end to a tune that day at least.

The unreleased instrumentals are intriguing as work in progress. They contain classic sounding Beefheart figures, some just played to death in the absence of further instructions; the musos do not dare to express more than was required of them. Some of the backing track tapes are produced without him, but here one has the feeling of a controlling presence in the booth. The band's line-up identifies the instrumentals anyway; they are Beefheart. His is a unique voice in composition, bringing a different sound out of familiar instruments and writing in a distinctive rhythmic style, colored with that marimba. If only he or Jan could have bolted some lyrics onto these, there would be an unreleased album fighting to get out. As it is, the potential of this twenty-five year old material will never be realized: it will tantalize forever. There are the beginnings of 'Clear Spot' and 'Low Yo Yo Stuff', 'Seam Crooked Sam' and 'A Carrot Is As Close'. The harmonica is featured on

'Seam Crooked Sam' in a terrific introduction to the track. The 'Spotlight Kid' LP is only 36 minutes long; you'd have thought some of these would not have disgraced the finished album. One fears that he is providing a minimum to satisfy a contractual requirement rather than producing value for the fans. Just listening to the twenty-five minutes of Pompadour you can hear pleasure in the band's playing that does not stay the course to the 'Shiny Beast' version. Also you can hear the Rockette Morton bass riff from 'Blabber 'n Smoke' and the Zoot Horn Rollo guitar from 'Booglarize'. Were they created for 'Pompadour'? By whom? This would have edited into an excellent track for the album, and with the references to other tracks, perhaps would have made an overture; revise a few lyrics and stick in a few self-referential solos and we could have had a concept album, and called it Conservation Act 1.

Where is the recognition that Beefheart deserves? His music demands and repays regular listens. Do Blues fans appreciate his work? I suspect not, yet cannot explain their indifference, given his obvious influences. No-one did it like that before him, and no-one could do it like that even after. Only Pere Ubu come near enough to nod in recognition, yet one would anticipate a school of composers exploring the rooms whose doors Don opened. There is no better introduction than the twofer CD Spotlight

Kid/Clear Spot. Cheap to the point of gift, it contains a consistent range of glorious songs, culled from what we now know to be a much bigger bank of material. It may not please the purist, leaning as it does towards accessibility, but it is some of the fruit of a year of hard creative work.  
*(The Spotlight Kid Outtakes. Steal Softly Thru Snow #6)*

*Steve Froy:* As far as I'm aware during 1971 Don had unprecedented access to studio time, presumably courtesy of Reprise, and so a lot of the rehearsals, jams etc. seem to have been recorded. We're talking about the preparations and recording of The Spotlight Kid, Brown Star and Clear Spot albums all within the space of a year. Many of the out-takes appear to come from the Spotlight and Brown Star sessions. They appear (to me at least) to have the same 'downer' feel as Spotlight (if you remember Bill Harkleroad spoke about the band being physically and emotionally drained at this time). I think Don realised that Brown Star wasn't happening and aborted it; had a rest and then had another go which Ted Templeton moulded into Clear Spot. There does exist another bunch of out-takes and backing tracks that are definitely from Clear Spot. Without knowing exactly when each one was recorded it's difficult to give definitive answers about the origins of these tracks. So much of what I've said is speculative. Most

Carrot' or the 'Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian' take - maybe because we know the final versions of them, or maybe because the band pieces tend to be much longer and more in the nature of a jam!  
*Paul Brown:* Beefheart speaks from the control room at the end "Amen!!" - (sarcastic?) Are they taking too much studio time?

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

3-07 No Flower Shall Grow (5:44:902) AKA Instrumental #7, jamming on a section of 'Petrified Forest'

Line-up:  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Mark Boston: bass guitar  
 John French: drums

Comments:  
*The Rollin' Webb:* 'No Flower Shall Grow' is again no stranger, previously 'Instrumental #7' and known by this title, having sprung from that line of the Decals track 'Petrified Forest'. Now if a single line of one song can create a whole new song, what could he have eventually come up with? Basically - lead, bass and drums, fairly jaunty in tempo but again a lot of repetitive riffs. The likelihood that this was more of a jam; comes at the end when a grumpy Captain Beefheart says from the control room "Ahl right ... I don't want you to have anymore fun on that ... That's it!!!"

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

3-08 Best Batch Yet (Version 1) 3 takes (3:40:819)

Line-up:  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Mark Boston: bass guitar  
 John French: drums

Comments:  
*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Best Batch Yet' is the well-known 'early 1970s-version,' with two 'alternate guitar breaks' recorded, (just in case!?). But it was to be some years before the song actually made it to vinyl. This sounds as if it could be the backing track plus two 'possible' solos! ('ready for Captain Beefheart to sing over?')

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

*Mike Barnes:* Another song originating from the 1971 sessions is 'Best Batch Yet'. Again, the rearranged version blows holes in the original rough sketch.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

3-09 Your Love Brought Me To Life (4:10:338) 2 takes AKA 'Instrumental #8', somebody saying "let's take it from there, let's take it from your soul ... and touch it in" "alright".

Line-up:  
 Bill Harkleroad: guitar  
 Mark Boston: bass guitar  
 John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba  
 Comments:  
*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Your Love Brought Me To

John French: drums  
Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Flaming Autograph' is next up, and is the shorter version without the fault on 'one of the channels.' (Fairly familiar stuff, but nice to have the name confirmed!) It's another 'marimba and guitar' piece, fairly languid in performance and also fairly repetitive. It was as yet still at a development stage. The end section of the repeated guitar riff has some 'nifty' marimba work.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

*Mike Barnes:* ... the serene 'Flaming Autograph'.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*



3-06 Love Grip (4:48:176) AKA 'Instrumental #6' "Amen!!"

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: fuzz guitar  
Mark Boston: bass guitar  
John French: drums

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Love Grip' used to masquerade as 'Instrumental #6' with bass introduction followed by a 'fuzz-' lead guitar onto a middle section with some nice climbing 'guitar' notes. Presumably a 'second guitar' over-dubbed, would have made this a rather tasty completed piece!? (It is difficult to tell if these were intended for more work or not, but the band versions don't feel as complete as the duet on 'A

of the Spotlight/Brown Star stuff are instrumental jams although there are a couple of early vocal versions of some well known songs. This was a very productive period and Don would return to plunder it for his last three albums. Although familiar titles are used for many of the out-takes/jams it can get very confusing because Don would reuse the same title for another song at a later date.

*(Fire Party)*

*Henry Kaiser:* Everything is from one session. I have seen all the master tapes and the dates> I know this> John French can confirm. But you'll have to wait for his book. There are finished masters for 'FUNERAL HILL' and 'HARRY IRENE' - They were pulled at the last minute. No other tracks are complete because the \$\$\$ & time ran out for the studio..

Only one session for all. Elliott just comes in for the last few days. All songs, except 'ALICE', 'POMPADOUR SWAMP' and 'BALLERINO' ('CARROT IS AS CLOSE'>>) were meant to have vocals overdubbed. They are all basic tracks for songs> There are no sketches \_ It's just that many songs were never finished> All is late 1971 maybe October or early November. - I would need to go in my vault to check the tapes for precise dates. All is one session. One session.

Who was/could have been the drummer?

What's about John French? It's all John French.

*Gary Lucas:* Don told me the correct spelling of #6 was 'U Bean So Cinquo'--"You've been so FIVE! Hey, Gary, isn't that HIP?" Just what it all meant he never actually said..

I believe also it should be 'Your Love Brought Me to Life', 'Balladino', 'Two Rips in a Haystack' (definitely, recycled as "two tears" (as in tearing a piece of paper, not tears of joy) "in a haystack" in the 'Ice Cream for Crow' lyrics--sublime yonic and anal symbolism here combined, boys and girls. I got most of this music courtesy of Ted "Hey" Laffey, who "liberated" these tracks (with Kaiser I'm told) from the Warner Vaults in '80--Laffey used to be a special projects guy there--also of interest on these tapes is the fantastic 'I Can't Do This, Unless I Can Do This', which features the mic'ed up percussive thump of John French tap dancing as the rhythm track, Don wheezing through his harp in great 'White Jam' ("it's about some white people jamming, Gary"--right, not about cunning lingual mucous mules twat trala trala) style, then reciting the opening lines of Odd Jobs before it thumps to a halt.

I totally agree with that previous remark about Don's feedback harp solo on 'Funeral Hill' being an analog to Hendrix's guitar, exactly what I thought when I first heard this 22 years ago, amazing performance, unbeatable track- "Man, we cut that on angel

dust" --also: "Y'know, Hendrix came to me one time and said 'Hey Don...' (dramatic pause)... 'Your Voice' (pointing to throat)... 'My Guitar (miming air guitar)...he actually wanted me to join him in a new group! Isn't that silly?"

I never knew whether to take him seriously about alot of this...but occasionally, it did check out. sometimes not...

"Man that poor little Marianne Faithfull, did you see her on Saturday Night Live last night? You know, she never wanted to be with JAGGER (disdainful drawn-out sarcastic pronunciation here)...she wanted to be with ME!!"

I scanned Marianne's memoirs once for a mention of this torrid infatuation... but no Don...(he does figure rather comically in Pamela des Barres book, which was actually alot more convincing a tale).

(Fire Party)

### The Spotlight Kid Sessions

October-early November 1971

Record Plant Studios, Los Angeles, CA

1-01 Drink Paint Run Run (7:28:977) alternate 'Run Paint Run Run' (released on Doc At The Radar Station)

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*Colin David Webb:* He also experimented with early versions of 'Drink Paint Run Run' (totally different lyrics, the tune was to be used later as the basis for 'Ice Cream For Crow').

(Captain Beefheart.

*The Man And His Music, 1989)*

*Mike Barnes:* 'Run Paint Run Run' (from Doc At The Radar Station) propagates a germ of an idea from 'Drink Paint Run Run' from the 1971 Spotlight Kid sessions, although the semantic overlap is about the only thing they have in common. ... The guitar line of ('Ice Cream For Crow') originates from 'Drink Paint Run Run' from the Spotlight Kid sessions from 1971, and a few ideas for the lyrics from its contemporary, 'Two Rips In A Haystack'.

(Captain Beefheart, 2000)

1-02 Seam Crooked Sam (Version 2) (2:18:290)

AKA 'Can't Do This Unless I Do That' (recorded for Bat Chain Puller)

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Art Tripp?: maracas

John French: tap-dance

Comments:

*Colin David Webb:* a ripping blues version.

*Pete Mulvy:* The harmonica is featured on 'Seam Crooked Sam' in a terrific introduction to the track.

(The Spotlight Kid Outtakes. Steal Softly Thru Snow #6)

8



Van Vliet working on it then abandoning it over fifteen years. At last it made the grade.

(Captain Beefheart, 2000)

3-04 Little Scratch (Version 1)(4:48:648) AKA 17

'Natural Charm', early 'The Past Sure Is Tense'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*Pete Mulvey:* (Beefheart) obviously has great faith in ... 'Little Scratch', although the latter at least changed cosmetically, becoming 'Natural Charm' before it finally achieved release as 'The Past Sure Is Tense', in a much changed format.

(The Spotlight Kid Outtakes.

*Steal Softly Thru Snow #6)*

*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Little Scratch' follows, always known as 'Little Scratch' and the instrumental version of the out-take 'Natural Charm'. The guitar has a slight 'echo'y effect with a marimba helping out in the background.

(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)

*Mike Barnes:* 'Little Scratch', discarded from both 'The Spotlight Kid' and 'Clear Spot' sessions, resurfaces as 'The Past Sure Is Tense', a much tougher version than its predecessors.

(Captain Beefheart, 2000)

3-05 Flaming Autograph (4:44:098)

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar



(Fire Party)

3-03 The Witch Doctor Life (3:51:869) AKA  
'Instrumental #5'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums, percussion

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb*: 'Witch Doctor Life' kicks in next. Starting with a distinctive riff and a

more up-tempo piece, very firmly 'a drums, bass and lead guitar piece, this seems to have been the middle period of the tune.  
*Paul Brown*: Drumbo recalls playing it in the 'late 60s' and of course it was to appear in a very different format at the end of Captain Beefheart's career.

(*Steal Softly Thru Snow #7*)

*Mike Barnes*: A piece dating back to the Brown Wrapper Sessions. ... 'The Witch Doctor Life' was a long time in the pipeline,

*Gary Lucas*: Also of interest on these tapes is the fantastic 'I Can't Do This, Unless I Can Do This', which features the mic'ed up percussive thump of John French tap dancing as the rhythm track, Don wheezing through his harp in great 'White Jam' ('it's about some white people jamming, Gary'-- right, not about cunning lingual mucous mules twat trala trala) style, then reciting the opening lines of 'Odd Jobs' before it thumps to a halt.

(*Fire Party*)

1-03 Dirty Blue Gene (Version 1) (2:54:642)  
different version released on Doc At The Radar Station

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Comments:

*Scott Hand*: This thing about the later albums being drawn from old material comes up a lot, so I thought I would give my take on it. While there were songs with the same titles and some of the same lyrics laying around for years, they really aren't the same songs. Right off the top of my head, I can remember first hearing the old blues version of 'Dirty Blue Gene', no way i would have if not for looking at the title.

(*alt.fan.capt-beefheart*)

*Mike Barnes*: 'Dirty Blue Gene' is another example of material released at last after a lengthy metamorphosis. Its thirteen-year

transmutation saw it progress from a good title (which Van Vliet obviously loved) for an instrumental piece recorded in 1967, to completely different music complete with lyrics in 1971 and then a version close to this one (released on Doc At The Radar Station) from the 1972 Clear Spot sessions. With a few minor changes it became the thunderous song on 'Doc At The Radar Station'.

(*Captain Beefheart, 2000*)

1-04 Sun Zoom Spark (Version 3)(4:12:283)  
electric version, different version released on Clear Spot

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums, percussion

1-05 Kiss Me My Love (2:38:779) AKA 'Two Rips In A Haystack' (like the painting) AKA 'Two Lips In A Haystack'

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*Don Van Vliet*: "I've gotta hear that thing, man".

*Mike Barnes*: The guitar line of ('Ice Cream

For Crow') originates from 'Drink Paint Run Run' from the Spotlight Kid sessions from 1971, and a few ideas for the lyrics from its contemporary, 'Two Rips In A Haystack'.

(*Captain Beefheart, 2000*)

1-06 Funeral Hill (Version 1) (6:46:236) AKA 'Don't Get Chicken Blues' 'wild version' AKA 'Flat On The Back'

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Elliot Ingber: guitar

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*Pete Mulvey:* The boring 'Funeral Hill' is also well represented; if the tapes are anything to go by, they played that more often than anything else. Baffling. As so often, Beefheart has retained the number, certain that it can be something worth having, and has resurrected it in these sessions. It is just possible to believe that it metamorphosed into 'There Ain't No Santa Claus On The Evenin' Stage', but I can put together an argument for 'Glider' as well. He obviously has great faith in both that and Little Scratch.

(*The Spotlight Kid Outtakes. Steal Softly Thru Snow #6*)

*Gary Lucas:* I totally agree with that previous remark about Don's feedback harp solo on 'Funeral Hill' being an analog to Hendrix's

guitar, exactly what I thought when I first heard this 22 years ago, amazing performance, unbeatable track- "Man, we cut that on angel dust".

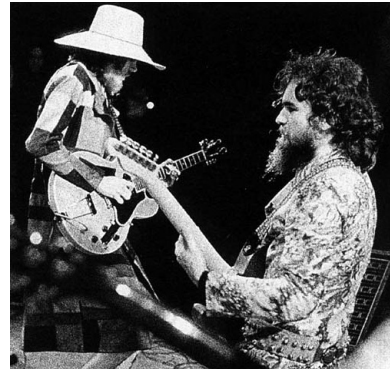
(*Fire Party*)

*David Lynch:* absolutely killer version of 'Funeral Hill'.

*Steve Froy:* As if these 'blues' are not enough Don rubs our noses in it with 'There Ain't No Santa Claus On The Evenin Stage'. I have already discussed this track. I don't see how this fits in with the "warm and nice" feel Don described he had for this album. It is interesting to note that there is one out-take from this time which is very similar in feel to There Ain't No Santa Claus On The Evenin Stage but is even more depressing. It is called 'Funeral Hill' and it is just as well this didn't make it onto the released version or it would have been a real downer of an album.

(*Captain Beefheart. At the Crossroads with The Spotlight Kid. Perfect Sound Forever, 1999*)

*Mike Barnes:* The only tracks that were mixed down to two-track for possible inclusion on The Spotlight Kid but were discarded were 'Harry Irene' ... and 'Funeral Hill'. This uncromisingly grim tune is as slow as the slowest tracks on the album. The railing against mortality, the fist in the face of death that hallmarked 'Fallin' Ditch', is itself ditched as the protagonist of the song is actually deceased. The only advantage of this state is that it avoids life. The boss man



and with the references to other tracks, perhaps would have made an overture; revise a few lyrics and stick in a few self-referential solos and we could have had a concept album, and called it Conservation Act 1.

(*The Spotlight Kid outtakes. Steal Softly Thru Snow #6*)

*Mike Barnes:* The lengthy 'Pompadour Swamp' is a mixture of strictly composed sections with some looser passages, with Ingber again given the nod to blow his own stacks in extemporization.

(*Captain Beefheart, 2000*)

**The Spotlight Kid Sessions**  
October-early November 1971

Record Plant Studios, Los Angeles, CA

3-01 Suzy Murder Wrist (3:47:285) AKA 'Instrumental #3'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*Paul Brown:* another instrumental sometimes performed live pre 1974.

(*Steal Softly Thru Snow #8*)

3-02 U Bean So Cinquo (2:51:291) AKA 'Instrumental #4' AKA 'Obenso Cinco'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: percussion

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Obenso Cinco' was more commonly known as 'Instrumental #4' featuring a 'guitar and marimba' in unison at the forefront. Again it's a 'stopper and a starter' but this time, a much more 'repetitive riff' and lacking the subtleties we have come to expect from Captain Beefheart. (probably, was work-in-progress?).

(*Steal Softly Thru Snow*)

*Gary Lucas:* Don told me the correct spelling of #6 was 'U Bean So Cinquo' -- "You've been so FIVE! Hey, Gary, isn't that HIP?" Just what it all meant he never actually said...



Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*David Lynch:* Loose jamming on themes that would become 'Suction Prints', 'Grow Fins', 'Flaming Autograph'.

*Colin David Webb:* The way in which 'Suction Prints' evolved is also an insight into the way in which the band worked. Bootleg tapes have Winged Eel playing a twenty five minute loose version about 1971. Whether it was specifically written by Beefheart at that length or is Winged Eel experimenting with the basic theme is unclear. The live tours of the post 1972 period begin with a bass introduction that is a variation on the theme. By 1975 it had

become a guitar and trombone showcase and by live shows in 1980 it featured guitar and saxophone. Clearly some material did allow for improvisation or change over time.

*(Captain Beefheart. 2000)*

*The Man And His Music. 1989)*

*Pete Mulvey:* Just listening to the twenty-five minutes of 'Pompadour' you can hear pleasure in the band's playing that does not stay the course to the 'Shiny Beast' version (of 'Suction Prints'). Also you can hear the Rockette Morton bass riff from 'Blabber 'n Smoke' and the Zoot Horn Rollo guitar from 'Booglarize'. Were they created for 'Pompadour'? By whom? This would have edited into an excellent track for the album,

of Plastic Factory is again recast as the "fat man", the oppressor, but he can no longer "spat [sic] in your eye", as you've finally "paid your bill". There are two versions of the track: a shorter, tighter one and an elongated version where Ingber sets off a berserker-style fretboard foray.

*(Captain Beefheart. 2000)*

1-07 Harry Irene (2:51:164) jazzy guitar version, different version recorded for Bat Chain Puller, another version released on Shiny Beast

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, whistling

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: guitar

John French: drums, percussion

Comments:

*Pete Mulvey:* 'Harry Irene' appears for some reason in a spacious, lilting, delicate version, close to the final answer, yet a decade away from release. Also sounding very similar to the version that appears in the Shiny Beast sessions, Bill's work presumably considered well worthy of repetition.

*(The Spotlight Kid Outtakes.*

*Steal Softly Thru Snow #6)*

*Mike Barnes:* The only tracks that were mixed down to two-track for possible inclusion on 'The Spotlight Kid' but were discarded were 'Harry Irene' ... and 'Funeral Hill'.

*(Captain Beefheart. 2000)*

1-08 Open Pins (5:41:854)

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

1-09 Dual & Abdul (2:44:970)

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* 'Dual & Abdul' has been floating around for at least 20 years but always associated with the Decals Outtakes. If it was actually recorded during the Spotlight Kid takes, as seems likely ... (it has a similar feel to many of the above) then there is also ... 'Open Pins' to re-locate to this period.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

1-10 Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian (Version 2) (3:05:670) different version released on Ice Cream For Crow

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* Featuring guitar and

inevitably, marimba.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow)*

*Mike Barnes:* The instrumental 'Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian' is, titlewise, a take on one of Van Vliet's oft-repeated quotes: "Everyone's coloured or you wouldn't be able to see them". It dates back to the Spotlight Kid era and dances like 'Suction Prints', although it is slower and more melodic.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

1-11 Balladino (2:27:607) AKA 'Ballerino', early version of 'A Carrot Is As Close As A Rabbit Gets To A Diamond'

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Comments:

*Gary Lucas:* I believe also it should be ... 'Balladino'.

*(Fire Party)*

Paul Brown: the original title of the piece that was later re-arranged to become 'A Carrot Is As Close As A Rabbit Gets To A Diamond'.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #8)*

*Mike Barnes:* The instrumental ('A Carrot Is As Close As A Rabbit Gets To A Diamond') is a tightened-up version of an earlier piece entitled 'Ballerino'.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

1-12 Clear Spot (Instrumental) (4:46:150) different instrumental version of the song later released on Clear Spot

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba, piano (?)

Comments:

Early instrumental version of 'Clear Spot' based on Bill Harkleroad's guitar.

1-13 Circumstances (9:09:407) new track, different to the 'Clear Spot Outtakes', coming with marimba and different harmonica

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba, piano (?)

1-14 I'm Gonna Booglarize You, Baby (Instrumental) (5:54:142) 2 takes AKA 'Booglarize Jam'

Line-up:

Elliot Ingber: guitar

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* Instrumental Jam. The tape kicks off with a rehearsal/jam that is the basis of 'I'm Gonna Booglarize You Baby'. Yet it is not a backing track awaiting Beefheart's vocals - but it's 80% there!!! (even if parts

of it are a little tentative) Also it has the 1974 'pick-up band's' introduction to 'Mirror Man'. If you listen to the V-Virgin Sampler of the Drury Lane '74 version - there it is!! Not exactly 'note for note' but as near as 'damn-it!!!'

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow #7)*

1-15 Low Yo Yo Stuff (Instrumental) (6:08:188) slow instrumental version of the song later released on Clear Spot

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums, (overdubbed?)

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

Early instrumental version of 'Low Yo Yo Stuff'. Different start, slow.

1-16 Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian (Version 1) (4:11:118) different version released on Ice Cream For Crow

Line-up:

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums

Art Tripp: marimba

Comments:

*The Rollin' Webb:* Featuring guitar and inevitably, marimba.

*(Steal Softly Thru Snow)*

*Mike Barnes:* The instrumental 'Semi-Multicoloured Caucasian' is, titlewise, a take

on one of Van Vliet's oft-repeated quotes: "Everyone's coloured or you wouldn't be able to see them". It dates back to the Spotlight Kid era and dances like 'Suction Prints', although it is slower and more melodic.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

1-17 Little Scratch (Version 2) (2:53:510) AKA 'Natural Charm' AKA early 'The Past Sure Is Tense'

Line-up:

Don Van Vliet: vocals, harmonica

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums, percussion

Comments:

*Mike Barnes:* The material from the Spotlight Kid era work-in-progress sessions was left aside, apart from 'Little Scratch', which was re-recorded and mixed down for inclusion (on Clear Spot), but again discarded.

*(Captain Beefheart, 2000)*

### **Pompadour Sessions**

October-early November 1971, Record Plant Studios, Los Angeles, CA

2-01 Pompadour I (13:54:520) 2 takes

2-02 Pompadour II (12:41:308) 5 takes

Line-up:

Elliot Ingber: guitar

Bill Harkleroad: guitar

Mark Boston: bass guitar

John French: drums, percussion