

ISSUE #38

American Music

The Blasters/Dave Alvin newsletter

APRIL 2003

BLASTERS shows

(Phil, Dave, John, Bill, Gene)

7/20 Peer Belgium at R & B Fest

7/15-30 Possible european tour. For updates check BlastersNewsletter.com

BLASTERS shows

(Phil, John, Jerry, Keith)

4/18 Las Vegas NV at House Of Blues

5/16 San Pedro CA at Ports O Call

DAVE ALVIN Shows

With The Gully Men

4/26 Houston TX at International fest

7/6 Irvine CA at Hootenany

8/23 San Francisco CA at Slims

10/4 San Francisco CA at Strictly Bluegrass

Dave acoustic band (Rick, Brantley, Chris)

6/21 Big Bear lake CA at Open Sky Fest

6/27 Davis CA at The Palms

6/28 Laytonville CA at Kate Wolf Festival

6/29 Marin County CA at Rancho Nicasio

Dave solo acoustic

4/30 Alexandria VA at The Birchmere

w/ Tom Russell

5/2 Cambridge MA at Club Passim

5/3 NY City at The Bottom Line w/ Russell

5/16 Baltimore MD at Tattoo

5/17 Arden DE at Gild Hall (rescheduled)

7/10 Annapolis MD at Rams Head (resched)

7/12 Phil. PA at Tin Angel (rescheduled)

Blasters West Coast Reunion tour Coverage



Photo: Billy Davis

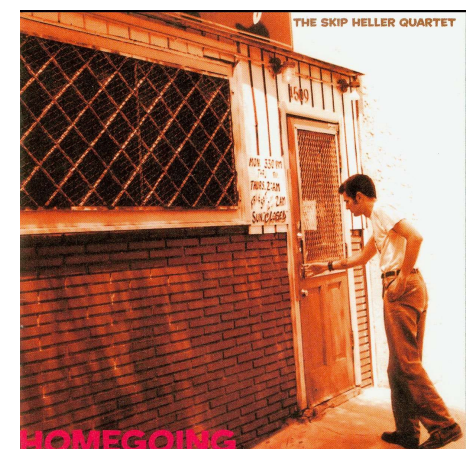
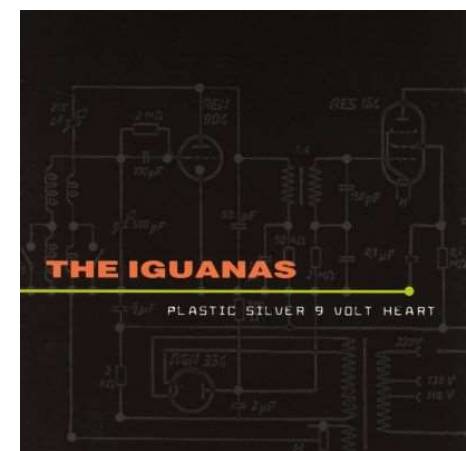
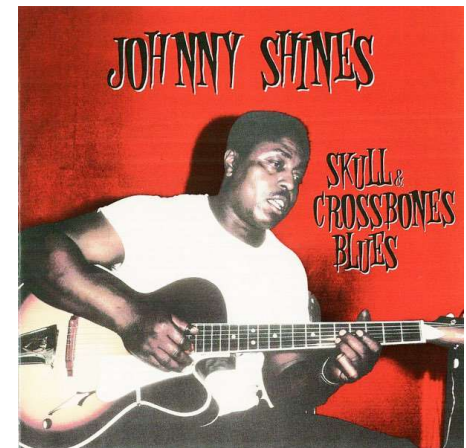
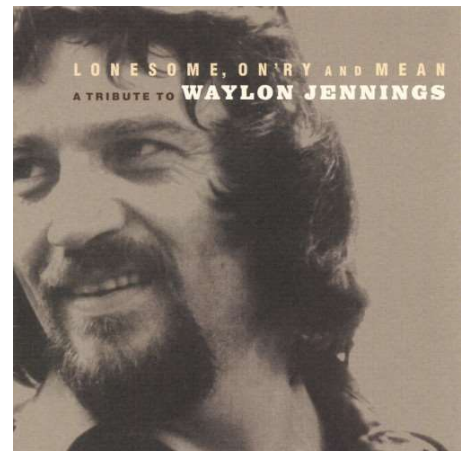
Latest news -- An "Original Five Blasters" DVD is in the works which will contain newly recorded live

footage possibly with some of the Blasters influential blues and rockabilly musicians. A companion CD release is also expected. No official news of this project is being made public yet. - Dave has signed on with '12 Gauge Press' to release his next book of poetry. Its release will coincide with Dave's next studio CD. -- Dave Alvin's poem 'Spiderman VS The Kachina's' has been released in a book called Poems For America: 125 poems that celebrate the American Experience. Edited by Carmela Ciuraru and published by 'Scribner Poetry.' -- Dave Alvin just finished recording 6 songs with rockabilly legend Wanda Jackson for her new album on CMH Records. -- Dave traveled to Chicago in February to play on an "Anti-Death Penalty" various artist compilation CD. The Pine Valley Cosmonauts backed up Dave as he sung one

Inside this Issue: Reports on the 'Original Five' Blasters reunion tour on the west coast and the new Blasters playing a Buddy Holly tribute.

song and played lead guitar on seven others. It will be released on Bloodshot records. -- A tribute album to Waylon Jennings called Lonesome, On'ry, and Mean is due out on April 15, 2003 on Dualtone Records. Dave sings a song called AMANDA. Joining Dave on the recording is Greg Leisz, Chris Gaffney and Don Heffington. -- Dave Alvin and Hightone records have joined forces to release a compilation album by blues man Johnny Shines. Dave picked all the songs and wrote the liner notes. He also provided two photos taken by himself when he was a kid of Johnny Shines. Skull And CrossBones Blues is due out in March. -- Dave co-wrote the title track of the new Iguanas CD Plastic Silver 9-Volt Heart. It's due out on Yep Roc Records on March 25. Dave wrote the song with Rod Hodges of the Iguanas. -- Tom Russell's next HighTone CD due in April called Modern Art, will feature a version of Dave's BUS STATION. -- Dave Alvin sings a song called POPPIN ' N BUMPIN' on Carlos Guitarlos new CD called Straight From The Heart due out in April on Nomad Records. Dave says, "The funny thing is there is a photo of Carlos with Phil inside the album, where Phil looks really bad and tired, like after a show - and he isn't even on the CD and I am. Everybody is gonna think Phil is me (Laughs)." -- Gene Taylor is currently working on a solo album and piano instructional DVD. -- The Skip Heller Quartet has put out a new album on Innova Records called Homegoing which features Dave Alvin singing two songs. Dave, "It's really cool. I'm singin' old Jazz stuff - something I've never done before and it came out pretty good." -- In May Dave will record a song (possibly '11 Months, 29 days') for Robbie Fulks' Johnny Paycheck tribute/benefit CD. -- In December of '02 Dave played on the new REM album. Dave doesn't know the song title but says it's written about Muhammad Ali. (((Continued page 2))))

(((Latest News Continued from page 1))) -- Dave just played guitar on Stan Ridgway's (of Wall Of Voodoo) latest album. -- Dave will be recording a song soon for a CD benefit for Parkinson's Disease. - Dave has written an introduction for a book being released by Tom Russell called Letters From Tom Russell and Charles Bukowski. -- Dave Alvin was interviewed by the Discovery channel for a show called Temples of Rock. He was asked about physical landmarks in music history. They asked him about The Whiskey and Sun Studios. -- Dave Alvin plans on spending September and October in the studio recording his next solo album. --**AM**



Original Five Blasters US Reunion Tour Western Leg Nov. 30 - Dec. 18, 2002

11/30/02 -- Petaluma, CA at The Mystic Theatre



-- Set list: red rose / trouble bound / too tired / never no more blues / long white cadillac / I'm shakin' / crazy baby / help you dream / blue shadows / common man / no other girl / hollywood bed / tag along / hear me cryin' / border radio / dark night / so long baby good bye / american music. Encore: santa fe / one bad stud / marie marie.

This was the first date of the western leg of the Trouble bound tour. The band had been off for 11 days and decided to use the set list from their last show, which was at

BB Kings in NYC. The band, minus Phil Alvin, met in town for sound check and just basically tested their sounds but didn't rehearse anything. They were tired from the travel up from L.A. earlier that day. Earlier, the reunion tour made a stop here in March on the first set of reunion dates in Calif.

A real treat tonight was seeing the Blue Shadows band open up the show. The Blue Shadows blues band features John Bazz and Bill Bateman of the Blasters, along with a great singer named Jake Matson (AKA Javier Matos). Jake plays slide on a National steel guitar while singing original old-style blues songs. And rounding out the four-piece is a harmonica player named Jack Rudy. Great band! Please check them out when you can; they are on their way up.

The Blasters walked on the stage and Phil Alvin had to slow the start by requesting the monitor man to turn up his volume. Dave meanwhile leaned up against his amp patiently waiting. They started the set but everyone was tentative because it was the first night of this west coast leg. The Blasters typically have been rusty in every opening night show of a tour this year.

Bill Bateman again was hitting the drums hard. In 'Trouble Bound' he lost a stick but still instinctively crashed a cymbal with his bare hand and used his other hand to grab a spare stick. Phil's voice sounded good



Photo: Billy Davis

but there was a raspiness. Phil seemed well rested, which made him more animated tonight. In 'I'm shakin' he sings a line "Along came Delilah and clipped his wig..." Phil reached around his mic stand and made a chopping motion with his one hand into the other. He got a little violent, almost knocking the mic over and falling forward a little. Everybody in the band smiled a little and Phil even grinned back down at the people in the front of the audience.

After Gene sang his song 'Tag Along,' Dave tuned his guitar as Phil started an old Blues song called 'Keep it Clean.' He only sang one verse and cut it off for the next regular set song. At the east coast shows, there were several times when Gene Taylor made use of John Bazz's custom bottle opener, which is mounted right on the body of his bass guitar. Well tonight he tried to repeat the joke. Gene handed his bottle of Budweiser to Johnny expecting him to use the bottle cap opener. Instead Bazz just twisted off the cap with his hand, laughed, and passed the bottle back to Gene. Gene was busted! It was a twist off.

'American Music' was a great finisher as always. Dave had a lot of space on his side of the stage. There was a stationary spotlight on his area and the surrounding lighting was very dark in his section of the stage. It was cool to see Dave, jumping in and out of that spotlight as he played his outro solo. I don't know if he did this consciously. In the encore, Gene Taylor sang 'Santa Fe' as Phil waited off stage resting his voice. It was a good idea to give Phil a chance to catch his breath. It was a great help because of the following song, 'One Bad Stud', Phil really belts it out.

For the last song, 'Marie Marie,' Dave tried playing a little intro using his beer bottle as a slide. It didn't seem to work so he went right into the song.

It was another great Blasters show. The attendance was light, maybe because it was a Sunday night, but the draw was respectable. Dave was a little tense before the show and some fans said it showed on stage a little.

12/1/02 -- Santa Cruz, CA at The Catalyst



This hall, located on the main strip in Santa Cruz, is a cool place. The venue has a high stage, 6 feet off the floor with balconies along the sides running right to the stage side. There are great sight-lines all over this club. Sound check today was very short. The band seems to want to stick with the same set list every night. Then later in the tour they'll start throwing in some rarities.

Set list: Same as Petaluma.

The Blue Shadows opened up and are making lots of new fans around these places where they haven't played before. Back stage Phil and Dave sat calmly (yes, even on the same couch next to each other) discussing the set list and in particular the song 'Too Tired' (Phil usually leaves a



Photo: Billy Davis



Chris Gaffney with Phil, and Dave backstage.

The crowd was an energetic one in this so-called “hippie town.” There was lots of dancing and jumping up and down. Very few people sat and everybody crowded the stage. There were a lot of people in Santa Cruz here who hadn't seen the Blasters in many years, so it seemed to be a bigger than life event for them. I think the Blasters fed off that energy, making it better than the last show.

Tonight Dave was really loose, moving around the stage, smiling at the audience and completely enjoying playing the songs. Dave sometimes might say, "I'm not in this band." But tonight he definitely was. They seemed to be playing to each other and just having a great time. He even did a few guitar player movements different from his usual style. He was walking to the side of the 6-foot high stage and playing down to the audience, scanning the people with his eyes. Also instead of just staying

back playing the guitar, he started resting one leg up on the monitor wedge speakers and again scanning the audience along the back of the club. Actually, with Dave being this loose and having fun, it made this one of the best Blasters shows I've seen so far this year. Phil wasn't prepared with his harps for the song 'Crying For My Baby.' He looked back on his amp before the song and saw his harps weren't even on the stage. He sang the opening line "Wooo. Sometimes I get a little lonely and I think about what my baby said to me." Then he continues under his breath in a spoken work phrase, "She told me not to forget my harmonicas." Then he launched into the song with the next lyric line. It was interesting to watch and wonder what was going to happen when it came time for his harp solo. Just before the solo, the Blasters road manager, Mick Wieck, brought the harps on stage, so Phil didn't miss a beat and played a great solo.

Phil had some more trouble in 'So Long Baby Goodbye' when he started the opening riff in the wrong key harmonica. The band looked over to Phil and he just continued in the opening lyric line, holding the mic, singing the lyrics and turning to his amp to pick out a different key

verse out and throws the band off a little). Dave had listened to the record earlier that day to check the lyric and then told Phil what it was. Phil remembered and added it in the appropriate spot. In the set list discussion, Dave asked Phil if his voice was up to the task of yodeling, so Phil gave him a little sampling on the spot. No problem! So in the set they did 'Never No More Blues' which sounded exceptional. Phil sang it perfectly, Dave's guitar was meshing nicely with Gene's piano playing, and the whole band grooved.





Photo: Billy Davis

harp (he lays out all his harps, each a different key, on top of his guitar amp). Phil was missing a pair of glasses that he uses to read the tiny engraved key letter on each harp. With no glasses and bad lighting at his guitar amp, he returned to his mic, which is under a bright spot light to read the key on the one he randomly picked up. Of course with Phil's luck, out of the 6 harps he had, it took him about 4 trips back and forth before he finally found the right one. It was critical too because that song features Lee Allen's sax solo played note for note on Phil's Harp. Phil got out of a jam and played a great solo. These challenges for the Blasters make things exciting for the long-time fans, and maybe the walk long the edge is what makes it a great show. Adding to that, Phil's voice was in top form. Just perfect.

'Dark Night' was a stand out song tonight. They pushed a little harder to build that big wall-of-sound finish. Dave can't help gearing up for a big leap in the air when the intensity builds like that. It's fun to watch John Bazz, who knows when it's coming out of Dave. Bazz just fixes his

eyes on Dave and watches him go up and down. Then he can't help a smile mixed in with a grimace of pulling the bass strings harder. Bazz really has to watch because you never know where Dave is going to come down. To see how far off the ground he jumps, just check out the cover of the new Trouble Bound live album. The small photo right on top (by photographer Josh Lewis) shows how high he gets airborne. The show was intense. Another great one in Blasters history.

12/2/02 – The Boardwalk, Sacramento CA

This venue in Orangevale (a suburb of Sacramento) was so far off the interstate, people were wondering if it was the right place. It was one of those local route bars with a porch in front and a slew of neon beer signs. It seemed too small for the Blasters, but I hear it's a favorite place that a lot of big name artists play. What could be better than to see the Blasters in small, out-of-the-way, roadside bar? By show time, the small place looked packed, but only 250 people filled out the crowd on this, a Monday night. *Set List: Same as Santa Cruz and Petaluma*

The Blue Shadows opened up the show and won over the crowd. These guys are well on their way and you'll be hearing a lot from them.

The advertising for this tour lists an opening act called Laura Minor along with the Blue Shadows. Laura is a HighTone artist who opened the Blasters east coast tour. Her band broke up just two days before this leg of the tour was to start, so the Blue Shadows took the whole opening slot. The Blasters came on to a small stage and they were loud. Dave could be seen during 'Red Rose' looking up in the air, scouting out his leap headroom. Right above his head was a big red spot light – Dave would have to be conscious of it all night. He made a few jumps but less than he normally does and he had to move to center stage to do it. Phil dedicated the next song to Rick Estrin of Little Charlie and the Night Cats, who was in attendance. Bill

was having some trouble on the drums hearing through his monitors and Phil took the opportunity to rib Bill a little while also hinting to the monitor man. Phil: "My voice is killing the drummer in his monitors. He loves my voice so it must be very loud." Phil turned to smile at Bill, and then continued, "He is not a complainer - he is a true and tried journeyman - a guerilla musician." He then yelled loud in the mic "How's that Bill?" with a laugh and a spin towards Bill. Phil dedicated 'Help You Dream' a little differently but still made reference to his old routine dedication, which was "This goes out to my brother David who is lying to a girl in a bar." Today he said, "This goes out to some other place in Sacramento." (Dave always reminds Phil of old venues they played in each town but Phil forgot the one Dave wanted him to mention.) Dave yelled over to Phil what it was and Phil continued, "To Slick Willie's and the night I saved my brother from two girls; he was talking too good (laughing)." Dave started laughing. That response tells me this must be a true story.

Quite a way through the set Phil blew hard in the mic and said "How's that Bill? (laughing)." He was still trying to give Bill the business. Phil was really having fun tonight. But believe me, the other guys get plenty of opportunities to pick on Phil as well. When they tease each other like this, it's a sure sign the boys are getting along. I've been watching closely and these guys say right now it's even better than old times (because they aren't fighting). That's what we want to hear - right?

The set has been exactly the same for the past three nights, but the Blasters are trying to have the set down perfect for the big gig on the first half of this tour leg - The Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. They want to make a good impression this time as opposed to what happened at Slim's in March (read the Blasters reunion tour diary, March 2002 for details).



Dave Carroll and Phil.



'So Long Baby Goodbye' was exceptional tonight; Phil really sounded good and played Lee Allen's solo perfectly. Jake Matson, the singer of the Blue Shadows was in front of the stage and was yelling and jumping during the song. Again 'American Music' finished the set and Dave did his wild solo to finish the song. While Dave is grabbing all the attention, it's interesting to watch Phil. Typically when Phil is not singing and just chugging away the rhythm on his guitar, he takes his signature stance - with grimaced face - and turns his head

to his left. But more recently in shows, he will turn the other way for Dave's solos and he peaks out from the grimace just to enjoy watching his brother take the solo. As Dave splits lower and picks faster, Phil starts hitting his guitar harder and jumping off his heels. It's great to see the Alvin brothers feeding off each others energy. It just raises the whole level of energy coming from the band. In the encore something funny happened. Gene Taylor was singing 'Santa Fe' and Dave's guitar went completely silent. He threw his hands in the air like "It's not me," but it was his cord that had come out of one of his effect pedals. But in the mean time, Gene took the lead and played a little piano break and called for Bill to take a drum solo. The solo only went about 20 seconds and Dave's guitar came back right in time to take a solo that Gene called out to him to take. It worked perfectly. Again, the Blasters were confronted with a technical difficulty and made it work in the context of improvising on a song. If you didn't see Dave throw up his hands in panic, and you were just listening to the song, you would have never known there was a problem happening.



Lately, Phil has been backstage during Gene Taylor's vocals on the first encore song, just in order to catch his breath. As 'Santa Fe' finished, Phil returned not knowing what happened as the Blasters manager was jokingly yelling to the stage: "Bass solo!" Phil said, "I missed the bass solo." Then he proceeded to tell a joke to the audience: "There is an old story about a guy who went to Africa for the first time and the drums were beating and beating for two days. Then they finally stopped. He said 'Oh thank god. What could be worse than hearing those drums beating.' A trooper said, 'It could have been worse. It could have been a bass solo.'" The crowd "ahhed" and lightly booed. It wasn't even a good joke (Sorry Phil!) and it took away time from our life that we'll never get back, but Phil himself was amused. He said to the crowd, "Hey come on. That's a \$7 joke."

The show was great. How many more times can I say that? You can ask anyone who sees the Blasters on a given night and it turns out to be one of the best shows by any band that they have ever seen. These guys are just consistently good.

12/4/02 - San Francisco at Great American Music Hall

Soundcheck was very interesting. The Blasters minus Phil and Gene did great versions of 'Rock N Roll Will Stand' and 'Barefoot Rock.' Wow! Wouldn't it be cool if they played those in the show? The Blue Shadows opened the show and were introduced by Carlos Guitarlos who also intro-ed the Blasters. The Blasters played the same set as the previous shows on this tour with the addition of 'Matchbox,' the Carl Perkins song placed right before 'Marie Marie.' 'Cryin' For My Baby' is turning out to be a highlight of the show and a favorite among the band members. Normally the set list says "Big F chord or harp" which means that they play 'Cryin' For My Baby' (Phil calls it 'The Big F Chord'), or a harmonica song of



Phil's choice, but 'Cryin' is working so well lately. The band even has some fun with it when they hit the big F chord at the beginning, followed by a big pause waiting for Phil to start the lyrics. At that pause, Dave walked up close to Phil to look at him, waiting for cue. Phil just gave Dave a funny look and started the lyrics. Dave tonight has found another spot to do one of his trademark leaps - just as Phil finishes the harp solo. That's unusual for Dave; he usually jumps only during one of his solos.



Another regular in the set lately is 'Never No More Blues' which features some yodeling by Phil. In the middle of the song there's a yodeling part where Phil has to hold a long note, and tonight he hit it perfectly. The previous nights, he was breaking the note in the middle to catch



his breath. During 'So Long Baby Goodbye' Gene does his organ grinder mime on Phil. Today he brought a beer across stage and used John Bazz's bass-mounted bottle opener to open the beer and then he handed it to a fan in the front row. It was cool to see an extra unusual song tonight in 'Matchbox.' That's one that they have pulled out on rare occasions over the years, and it's a jam type of song that doesn't need much rehearsal. Dave fin-

ished off the end of each encore with some comments to the audience. First he said "From Downey, CA..." and introduced the band members. Then on his second pass by the mic he said, "I'll see ya in 20 years. . and I mean it this time." If I had to come up with a reason why he said that, it's probably because Dave was a little disappointed in the size of the crowd. The 'Original Five' Blasters had been here earlier this year. Was that too soon for another Blasters gig in San Francisco?

A lot of people ask about what the Blasters are like after the show. Phil Alvin gets totally drained of his energy. A show is really hard on him. He plays guitar, blows harmonica and sings his heart out. He says on a bad night, he can't half sing it. It has to be full tilt or not at all. I like that in him. But because of that and the low amount of touring over recent years, he isn't in top road shape when playing so many shows with so few days of rest, like on this tour. So if you wait for autographs, and Phil isn't there because he left early, that's why. But we're thankful that he's giving us his all. You'll always find the rest of the Blasters hanging out after the show meeting the fans.

12/5/02 - Santa Ana, CA at The Galaxy Theatre

-- Set List: *red rose / trouble bound / never no more blues / long white cadillac / i'm shakin / crazy baby / I don't want to / help you dream / blue shadows / common man / no other girl / hollywood bed / tag along / cryin for my baby / border radio / so long baby / american music.*
Encore: *don't lie to me / one bad stud / matchbox / marie marie.*

The Blue Shadows opened the show and Jake Matson told the crowd right away, "We've had the privilege of touring with the Blasters for the last few dates and that's like going to the University of Rock N Roll. They sound better than they ever have, and that's damn good."

Another act on the bill was blues harmonica and singer James Harman. This famous L.A. bluesman goes way back with the Blasters. He recorded the band's first demo. He played in a trio tonight with a guitar player named Nathan James and Gene Taylor on piano. Harman later said to me, "It was great to see the guys from the old days again." This show for the Blasters is the closest to home. A lot of the band's family and friends were there. One of the Blasters former drummers, Dave Carroll, showed up.



Photo: Mick Weick

The highlight of the night was that the band threw in a surprise song from their Rollin Rock album - 'I Don't Want To.' I have never heard them do it live. After the song Dave yelled excitedly to someone in the crowd, "We haven't done that in 22 years!" They didn't have it written on the set list and it must have been a last minute addition. I never heard a word discussed about it at sound check or backstage. They came out of the song with a nearly missed ending. The band stopped but John Bazz's bass kept going in a descending riff and they bailed out by all hitting the same finishing chord. That was great and once again they made it sound like they intended it that way. In the encore, Gene Taylor sang 'Don't Lie To Me' with James Harman joining the Blasters on harmonica. Dave introduces Harman to the stage saying, "Ladies and Gentleman of OC (Orange County), a million years ago this guy, one of the world greatest har-



Photo: Mick Weick

monica players, singer-song writer, entertainer, dancer, BS artist; bought me my first electric guitar - James Harman." They played a great version of the song with Dave and James each taking solos. As James Harman walked off the stage, Phil passed him and kissed him. Harman just doubled over laughing and scrambled quickly backstage. Phil went to the mic and said. "There's

nothing like a wet kiss from James Harman (laughing).”

Phil's dedication on 'One Bad Stud' was prompted by an inside joke. Chris Gaffney, working as Dave's guitar tech, had someone offer him money if he could get Phil to dedicate the song to "Boom shaka laka laka boom." Chris said he would cut Phil in for half. So Phil made the dedication last night in San Francisco and then tonight again. But this time Phil said in the mic, "Do I get paid twice?" as he looked over at Gaffney on the side of the stage. So that's some of the hijinx behind the scenes going on. Dave and Phil had a moment of clowning when Dave started teasing the audience with noise on his guitar as everyone expected the first chords of 'Marie Marie' to start. Dave was looking over at Phil and Phil started looking back with some guitar sounds in return - some great fun. They seem to have their show so fine-tuned now that each one has that same level of intensity.

12/6/02 – Ventura, CA at Ventura Theater

This town is about an hour north of L.A. up the coast. The theatre is located in the middle of a nice downtown area. The front of the venue has a lit marquee that had “The Blasters” in big letters. Inside it's a very big venue, with levels for good viewing and a large balcony (closed tonight) with seating. In front of the stage is a pit, which to everyone's disappointment, was filled with tables for the dinner crowd. There were big empty spaces on each side, but security wouldn't let the dancing fans go down there. Later on, security got tired of holding people back and a bunch of fans were allowed to go down there to give the Blasters a little of that energy back.

The size of the crowd was a little light tonight, or the place was just too big. Maybe having three Blasters shows in the L.A. area might be too much and the fans feel they can see the reunion Blasters anytime. The Blue Shadows opened up and played a solid set. The pairing of these two bands has been perfect and because of it, the Blue Shadows have been winning over fans each night. Throughout the tour a lot of the sound checks have been interesting because the two bands play similar music and have cross over band members, there have been sound check jams with different member configurations.



Photo: Billy Davis

Earlier today, Dave Alvin sang the Mississippi John Hurt song, 'Make Me A Pallet,' with Jake of the Blue Shadows playing rhythm guitar, and Bazz and Bateman behind. The Blue Shadows also do that song and Dave does it in his Avalon Blues (Dave, Peter Case, and Tom Russell) acoustic tour shows.

Set List: red rose / trouble bound / too tired / no other girl / I'm shakin / long white cadillac / crazy baby / help you dream / common man / border radio / hollywood bed / tag along / cryin' for my baby / dark night / sadie's back in town / so long baby / american music. Encore: santa fe / one bad stud / marie marie.

The Blasters changed the order of the set list just to make it interesting for themselves and they added one bonus rarity – Sonny Burgess's 'Sadie's back In Town.' They only did this tune once on the east coast leg, and before that, it was done at the 6/11/02 House of Blues show that was recorded for the

Trouble Bound live album. The song went pretty smoothly and there are some odd length parts to it that sometimes throws the band off. Dave almost started his solo early, but then caught himself and the song went off with out a hitch. Thanks, Blasters, for that one. It's one of those high-energy songs that you'd think



they must have written – its perfect for them. After the first three songs, Phil took his jacket off to cool down and confessed to the audience while pointing to Gene, "He slept in my bed last night and I didn't. I slept on the toilet (laughs). So let's see if I can wake him up." Phil was referring to the next song: 'No Other Girl,' which features some excellent Gene Taylor solos. I'm not sure what the story is on that confession, but I guess Gene and Phil stayed too long at the same party after last night's Santa Ana show.

'Long White Cadillac' has been a favorite to see performed on this tour. They have been playing it with the ferocity of the first tour when it was introduced in 1983. Bill Bateman beats the snare drum so hard you can see his stick raising high over his head for every down beat. Dave's solo has expanded lately. He usually finishes with a long-sliding, fast-picking riff up the guitar neck. Lately he has added another part after it – like a surf song riff – but it's been different each night. John Bazz always smiles and looks over at Dave. Bazz is a big surf music fan and loves to play it. In earlier shows this year there had been some dispute between Phil and Dave over who would start the guitar riff on 'Dark Night.' In the old days Phil would start it on guitar with his very percussive-bare-fingered-picking style. When the reunion shows started earlier this year, not much care was being taken to make sure Phil's guitar was in perfect tune. Also the rest of the band couldn't always hear Phil's guitar in their monitors. That would make

it very difficult for the band to come in at the right time and for Dave's always-tuned guitar to pick up the rhythm. So for a while, Dave took the opening part, though Phil really needed to play it to feel the way the lyrics go. With many shows now under their belt, Phil is playing the part again and it's sounding real good. This is really the only time in the set that you hear Phil's guitar. Dave usually dominates the sound. Just recently Dave has added something different to the beginning of that song.

While Phil is playing, Dave hits a deep F note, which drones behind Phil's guitar and vocal. One simple note adds a lot of depth to that part. It sounds cool.

Phil always needs a lot of water on stage because he sweats so much. Tonight for some reason the venue didn't provide small bottles of water, so Phil had to pick up a gallon jug with two hands and drink out of that. During 'Hollywood Bed,' Phil knocked it over under Gene Taylor's piano. Phil said seriously to the audience after the song: "I caused a flood up here. I don't want to see Gene Taylor get electrocuted." Gene said, "It's alright, Phil." Then Phil changed to joke mode and said, "Because you know he'd look so good to eat (laughing)." In the first encore, Dave came out to say something to the audience: "We don't play together very often - once every 17 years, and this is fun for us. I hope you're having a good time. Because it's fun, let's have Gene Taylor sing a song." Gene responded saying: "Dave, I thought you were having a moment there. That was very touching." Then Gene sang the rare blues song 'Santa Fe.' Then the house lights came on as the band played 'Marie Marie' to close the show. They have been doing this with the lights since the last show of the east coast tour in NYC. It always picks the crowd up and gets them jumping into it during 'Marie Marie.' Dave went to the mic after the song and said "Hey that's Johnny Bazz and Bill Bateman, That's Gene Taylor and my little brother Phil. We'll see you all in several years. See Ya, Bye."



12/9/02 -- Vancouver, BC, Canada Commodore Ballroom

The Blasters were well rested after having 2 days off and flying from L.A. to Vancouver. Meanwhile, the road crew drove 1300 miles straight to Vancouver right after the Ventura show. Whew!

This historic venue was once an old dance hall. The House of Blues bought the place and refurbished it only a few years ago. They say that the old dance floor was cushioned with horsehair to minimize the vibration of many people dancing and that when you walked on it, it was like walking on springs. The outside decor features an old neon sign that says 'The Commodore.' It's a beautiful club. Everyone was wondering how the Blasters would do playing in a big hall like this on a Monday night. Will the crowd be there? Yes! The Vancouver audience was the biggest the Blasters have had on this leg of the tour. The people crowded against





the stage, danced, and acted crazy as expected when a favorite band returns 17 years later.

Set List: Same as the previous night in Ventura.

The Blasters came out to a cheering crowd. The Vancouver fans are great. Everyone in the band was having a good time, too. Phil did a lot of talking to the crowd. At one point someone yelled asking about his guitar and he said, "This is from the 'I Am Jimmy Reed' album. So I am Jimmy Reed." Phil has been using that as his main guitar now for 10 years, which is the longest he has used a main guitar. 'Help You Dream' has been an interesting song to watch. Gene Taylor uses that to showcase his playing. There is a middle instrumental section where the band plays at low volume and Gene takes over and plays solos and other melodies. Lately, the band has been loosening up and seems to be playing to each other. In 'Help,' Dave Alvin moves all the way across the stage to step next to Gene and watch him play. John Bazz, who never moves from his

spot in front of his amp, even moved across behind Dave to get closer and watch what Gene was playing. In a few songs in the set Dave has been walking with his guitar all over the stage - sometimes even behind Phil.

Tonight one of my favorite moments was watching Phil taking his harmonica solo in 'So Long Baby Goodbye.' Dave walked right up to him, still strumming his guitar and smiling, but watching Phil's face as he blew the harmonica. Phil with clinched face and his eyes closed, opened his eyes every once in a while to look at Dave - maybe checking to see what he was doing or to acknowledge he was there.

When the band started 'Long White Cadillac,' Phil was caught off guard and didn't have time to make his routine dedication. So he just grinned back at the band like he had a clever thought and spoke over the music: "This goes out to everyone who has not been through a rehabilitation program, unless it was court ordered." It's funny to watch Phil at the beginning of 'Cryin For My Baby' (Hear Me Cryin). Phil calls the song 'The Big F chord,' only because it has a big F chord in the beginning. For the last few shows the F chord that Dave has been playing isn't big, but instead a lead riff. So tonight Phil counts "One, two, three, four" and then he yells "F." It still didn't work and he just shook his head, laughing that it wasn't big enough.

Phil's best dedication of the night was for 'One Bad Stud.' Phil always dedicates the song to a boxer. For many years it was Mike Tyson, then Evander Holyfield and for the last 5 years it's been Roy Jones Jr. Tonight Phil said, "This goes out to the former welterweight champ Chris Gaffney." Chris Gaffney was a boxer in



In the van: Phil, John, Billy Davis, and Rick Brown.

his early years and he'll tell you that after a long string of being undefeated, it took getting knocked out only once for him to give it up. Over all, this was the best show of the west coast tour. The crowd was great, the band played perfectly, the sound system and lighting was top notch. Thanks, Vancouver Blasters fans.

12/10/02 - Seattle, WA at The Crocodile Café

We left Vancouver, Canada in the morning - Seattle bound - but not before Phil Alvin went guitar shopping. He is considering getting a new guitar after using the current Kay guitar over 10 years in his Blasters shows. He couldn't get the right deal and came away empty handed. Dave Alvin and acting guitar tech Chris Gaffney were traveling in car separately. Dave had to make a stop at a studio this morning to play lead guitar on the new REM album, so Dave will have a platinum album on his wall sometime next year for sure. In the van were sound engineer Rick Brown, tour



manager Mick Weick, me, Phil, John Bazz, Bill Bateman, and Gene Taylor. We made it over the USA border but not before being asked to leave the van and see the immigration officials. You know, a rock band traveling in a van is always suspected of trouble. Rick Brown is the driver, so someone else in the van told Phil to let Rick do the talking - believe it or not, Phil kept quiet, but not without a few jokes under his breath. Those border agents are tough. They can detain you for hours if they don't like you.

The rain-all-the-way ride in the van was a lot of fun. Phil and Gene went at it, making fun of each other, telling old road stories, and Phil entertained everybody playing the harmonica and listening to some old gospel records on CD.

At sound check, Gene Taylor didn't show up but Dave and Phil were there, so it turned out to be the 'Original Four' Blasters. Phil as always pulled out some rare songs. With gospel in mind he sang 'Hush Hush' and 'Glory Glory Hallelujah.' Phil then sang an old Blasters cover song called 'Cat Squirrel' and also 'Tiger Man.' Next to test the harmonica sound, they played 'I'm Glad You're Dead You Rascal You.' It was a great sound check chock full of rare songs.

The Crocodile Café is a very small club at about 400 capacity and by the looks of it, it was sold out or very close. In preparation for the show, one very important stage prop is what we call 'Taylor's trough.' Gene requires a tub of beer on ice behind his piano. Just before show time Chris Gaffney brought out the tub of beer and he got a big ovation from the waiting crowd. I guess they like beer here - Ha Ha!. Set List: The same set as the last two shows.

There was no opening act tonight because of the cancellation by Laura Minor and the Blue Shadows were only scheduled for the California portion of the tour. When the Blasters came to the stage, Phil still in good spirits from the day and said: "Good evening ladies and gentleman. We would like to thank nobody for opening for us. We ought to do that more often. They are a pleasure to be on the road with." Then they launched into the opening song of the set.

The Blasters played the same set as the last few shows, mainly because it's been working so well. After a few songs a fan yelled, "Thanks for saving Johnnies Broiler." The fan was referring to the benefit concert the Blasters did in Downey, CA on 10/30/02 to try and save an old 50's

style drive in restaurant that they grew up going to. Phil responded jokingly, "Oh yeah, I saved it - I fixed his toilet." The Blasters did help. The concert raised awareness and soon after the organization to save Johnnie's succeeded in getting the building listed in the California registry of historical places.

The Crocodile Café has a small stage, which kept the band in close quarters. It was fun to watch Phil and Dave standing close to each other and they were both having fun with it. In

one exchange, Dave tried to start the next song with a count and Phil stopped him and said, "I was just gonna take a breath before we started." Dave in fun said, "No breath!" Phil came back with, "Alright, you're the boss." Then they started the song.

Halfway through the set Phil said, "Thanks for paying your money on a Tuesday night. I know there's a lot of good TV on." Phil may have said that because the Tuesday before in San Francisco was an off day and I think Phil spent his whole night in the hotel room resting and was probably watching TV. Also Phil and Gene were fooling around on stage; Gene said, in making fun of Phil's mathematics background: "What is the proximity axis?" Phil, in trying to get Gene to start singing his song 'Tag Along,' said "Get your axis together"

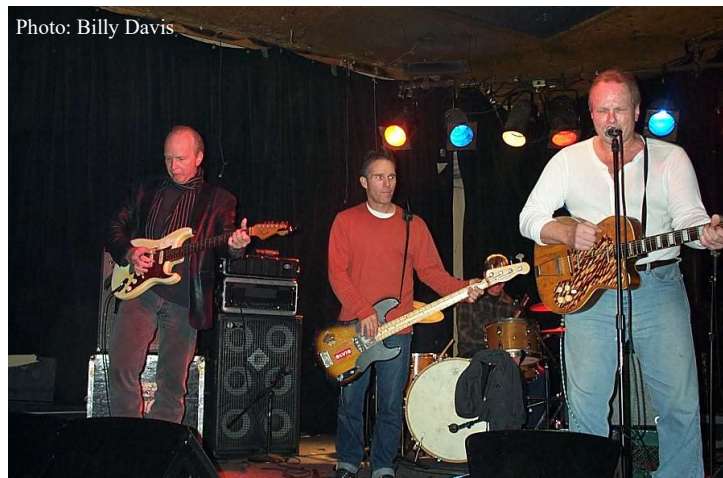
There was some more comedy between Dave and Phil when Phil sang 'Cryin' For My Baby.' Phil sang the first line finishing with: "and I think about what my baby said to me." Then everything goes silent waiting for the song to restart. Dave yelled, "What did she say?" Phil said: "You don't really want to know, do you?" The crowd started yelling "Yes! Yes!" As Phil started rolling up his sleeves, Dave yelled "Did she say to roll up your sleeves. . . and is that a new shirt?" Phil's shirt had rips across both elbows. Phil said: "Yeah, I got a new shirt today. It said 'do not bleach.' That's what she was talking to me about." Then he went into the song.

Phil had a fun dedication for the song 'One Bad Stud.' He said, "I would like to dedicate this song to our body guard Chris Gaffney, who was the junior lightweight golden gloves



Dave and Phil horsing around at the hotel.

champion. But he won by multiplicity. He doesn't need strength. He's corn fed." Sounds like some more inside jokes there. They played a fast version of 'One Bad Stud', which got the crowd going. As Dave finished the song, he paused to throw his pick in the air. Phil, jokingly imitating him, threw his recently opened can of coke up in the air. When it landed back in his hand, it started foaming all over the place. Phil just laughed at himself and started shaking the sticky liquid off his hand but still not missing saying good-bye to the audience as he walked off the stage. But while passing Dave, Phil kissed his cheek. There was a lot of interaction between Phil and Dave,



Soundcheck

and it's obvious the boys have never gotten along as well as now.



Coming back out, Dave played a bunch of odd guitar licks while the band waited for him to cue them into the song. Phil, with his hand cupped on the side of his face, looked over at Dave with a funny look that was just priceless to see. But as soon as Dave struck the guitar next, Phil jumped full force into 'Marie Marie.' When the set finished, Dave went to the mic and said "'Mean' Gene Taylor, Johnny 'No good' Bazz, Bill 'M.F.er' Bateman, and my little bitty big brother Phil Alvin. This has been a Downey, California family reunion. Thanks for coming."

12/11/02 - Portland, OR at The Aladdin Theatre

This old theatre was once a XXX theatre in the 70's, but now is one of the best music venues in Portland. The outside of the place has a cool neon marquee. Richmond Fontaine opened the show, and the place was jam packed with people. Set List: The same as the last three shows except for Gene Taylor's song in the encore. Tonight he played 'Don't Lie To Me.'

The crowd was really receptive because this was the first time in 17 years they are seeing the original Blasters. Someone in the crowd yelled very loudly, "We love the Blasters!!!" Phil joked, "They'll be up in a minute. We're just the heat-up band for them. For Phil's dedications, there were a few good ones. In 'Help You Dream' Phil said something different. He said, "This goes out to everybody who came out here alone tonight. . again." Somebody else close in the audience said "I love you." And Phil said, "I'm lovin' you too. But don't make it too easy. I get nervous" Dave added behind Phil, "You get jittery." Phil countered, "I get fidgety." Then they started the song. For 'So Long Baby Goodbye,' Phil said: "This goes out to the greatest Blaster: Lee Allen who passed on." They played a great version of the song and Gene Taylor initiated the crowd clapping during the song, which was the most audience participation I've seen yet on that song this tour.



In the last few breaks between songs, Dave kept playing the riff to 'Rock Boppin Baby' hoping Phil would want to play the song. Phil wasn't interested. The Blasters continued the horsing around. In 'Trouble Bound' Gene Taylor was leaning his head over his keyboard and Phil spotted him while singing. Phil kicked his leg out trying to knock Gene's hat off. I don't think Gene knew that he tried that. In the encore again Gene Taylor sang a song with Phil staying back stage to catch his breath. Dave said, "My brother got a long distance phone call and while he takes that call, Gene Taylor will sing a song." For 'One Bad Stud' Phil said, "I always dedicate this to the guy I'd like to fight least. That's Roy Jones Jr. Boom shanka lanka lank Boom shanka lanka." That end part goes back to the bet that Gaffney made with somebody to try and get Phil to say that on stage. I don't know if that was Phil's way of hinting that he didn't get paid on the bet, or he was just having more fun with it.



Photo: Billy Davis

The performance was great, the crowd being so big was exceptional. Phil's voice had some hoarse spots due to singing three days in a row. At the end of the show, Dave said to the audience "Let's do this again in another 20 years or so."

12/14/02 -- House of Blues in West Hollywood, CA

Mark Linett was set up to professionally record the show (He recorded the earlier HOB shows for the Trouble Bound Live album). The rumor is that it is a back up audio source for a Blasters DVD. The show was not professionally video

taped though. The Blue Shadows opened the show once again to a big crowd. Hey everybody! The Blue Shadows are a great band that has a unique style that's different from "regular blues." Harmonica player Jack Rudy has described them at times as "Somewhere between Muddy Waters and Slayer." If there is an exact middle, yes that's them. They are in the planning stages for their debut CD. You can see them play every Monday night in Hollywood at the King King club (at Hollywood Blvd. and Whitley). They are my favorite new band. Check 'em out.

While the Blue Shadows played, the Blasters gathered back stage. Because of the volume of people backstage on the band's guest list and the House of Blues foundation members who have all access, the last few times at the HOB, the band was overwhelmed and couldn't even prepare comfortably for the show. So tonight, Phil and Dave had a separate room

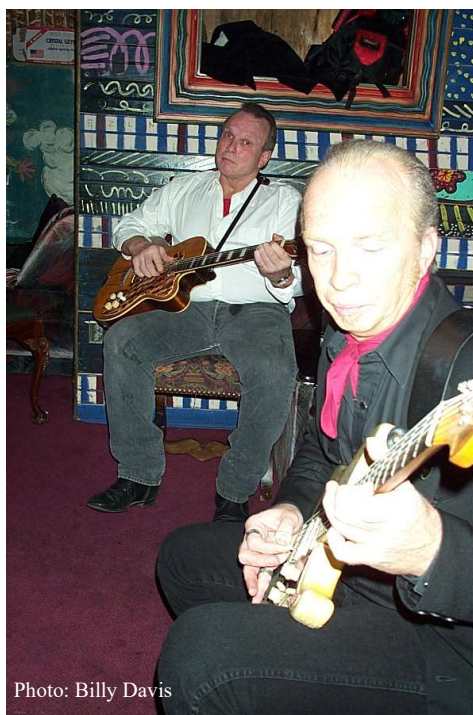


Photo: Billy Davis

Phil and Dave prepare for the show



where that they could sit and relax in. Just before going on, it's important that they have the privacy to discuss the set list and to get their performance-head on. Each of the brothers has distinct personality changes while waiting to go on stage. Dave gets a little nervous and has to warm up on his guitar, getting those fingers loose. Phil gets very mellowed and speaks softly and slowly in a way that he seems to be relaxing himself. He drank a cup of hot tea for his voice. It's nice to see the brothers sitting together in on the same couch, getting themselves mentally prepared for the big show of the tour. It's not like the old days where the manager insisted they be kept separated. In fact I observed that, although these two brothers are very different in every way, they seem very alike in their actions when preparing mentally to hit the stage.

There was just once crisis going on. Dave's girlfriend Mary was arriving late and Dave's superstition is that if she is at the show, he has to get a good luck kiss before going on -- or else it won't be a good show. Dave kept asking for Mary but nobody saw her yet so close to show time.

Dave made up three potential set lists for Phil to choose from. Each had different orders of songs,

one had "Never No More Blues" which requires some serious yodeling by Phil. Phil went for #2 with the fifth song listed as "yodel."

As we waited for the Blasters to come on, there was great anticipation to see the last Blasters reunion show of 2002. But at the same time we were sad that it was all coming to an end. The Blasters sound engineer Rick Brown played some old time gospel music over the PA as we all looked at a big red curtain covering the stage. The gospel music faded down, but the big curtain remained closed. This was the big moment. Oh, and the news came down to the soundboard (from Dave's roadie Steve), that Dave got his kiss from Mary. It should be a great show.

We could hear the Blasters behind the curtain tuning up their instruments. The familiar sounds of Dave's unique guitar and Gene Taylor's piano and then Phil reciting Edgar Allen Poe: "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary, over many quaint and curious volumes of forgotten lore. While I'm nodding, clearly napping, suddenly there came a



tapping, as of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door. 'Tis some visitor I muttered, tapping at my chamber door. Only this and nothing more. Ahh, I remember, it was in bleak December. . ." Behind that last line you could hear Dave Alvin yelling "One, two, three, four," and whole band started 'Red Rose' as the curtain retracted with all the stage lights blinding the audience out of the darkness. What an opening! The crowd went crazy.

Set List: red rose / trouble bound / too tired / no other girl / never no more blues / I'm shakin / long white cadillac / crazy baby / help you dream / common man / border radio / hollywood bed / tag along / cryin for my baby / sadie's back in town / dark night / so long baby goodbye / american music. Encore: santa fe / one bad stud / I love you so / marie marie.



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

It was a solid Blasters show in front of a nearly packed house. Phil dedicated 'Trouble Bound' saying, "This goes out to all you guys who would have been in Hollywood anyway." Phil may have been referring in some way to a guest list that totaled up to and possibly above 70. Phil sounded absolutely great yodeling on 'Never No Blues.' For 'I'm Shakin' Phil said, "This goes out to a girl named Anna Statman who gave me this record a long time ago."

In 'Help You Dream' Gene Taylor took his solo in the middle as Dave walked over standing right next to Phil, yelling to cheer Gene on. Gene stopped to enjoy the crowd applause and took a bunch of swigs from his Budweiser bottle. Dave has become very mobile, the last half of this tour. He has spent a lot of time coming across the stage standing next to Phil.

'Common Man' was intense tonight. During Dave's solo Dave bent backwards, swung the guitar neck around and moved all over the stage. The rest of the band fed on that. In

Dave's solo, John Bazz turned towards Dave, playing to him, Bill Bateman threw in extra rolls on the drums, Phil chugged even harder on the rhythm guitar, and Gene pounded the keys. It was a moment where the band seemed to be multiplying their intensity every time they looked at each other.

'Dark Night' followed the same pattern with a high-energy solo section. Tonight something happened that I've never seen before. Dave leaped up in the air, came down on his heels and fell right down on his back. He lay there for about 3 seconds, still playing the solo and didn't miss a single note even on the way down. He stood back



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

up, played another blazing lick, and then leapt in the air one more time to redeem himself. None of the other band members even reacted. I'm not sure if Phil even saw that it happened. Dave later said, "It was a little embarrassing when I fell. When I laid down in bed that night, I felt it alright."

One of my favorite Blasters cover songs is probably the most straight forward rockabilly song they have ever done - 'Sadie's Back In Town'. It was originally recorded by Sonny Burgess on the Sun Records label. The Blasters used to play it in their shows about 10 years ago and finally tried it again in June of 2002 at the HOB when they recorded the Trouble Bound album. They took a chance on it then because they wanted some rarely recorded songs on a new live album. In that show they messed up some of the changes, and it only made it on the live album because of some slick editing done in the mastering. Tonight they wanted to do it perfectly and they did. In starting the song, Phil and Dave had an interesting back and forth discussion about who should count out the start of the song. They each politely yielded to each other to let the other start it. Dave smiled back at Phil; then Phil said in the mic, "You have my permission and my blessing." So Dave counted it off and they played the best version of the song on the tour.

After the regular set Dave approached the mic and said, "Gene Taylor, Johnny Bazz, Bill Bateman and my little baby brother Phil. And this wraps up the Blasters reunion year. We should do it again sometime - maybe in a couple of years or so. Good-bye."

The Blasters came out for a final encore and they started a with a real surprise, the Bo Diddley song "I Love You So" which they rarely play. It's also one that Phil has to reach high to sing. He did it perfectly. Then came 'Marie Marie' with the house lights coming on.

As everyone walked off stage for the last time, Dave stopped at the mic and said, "This has been a great year. It's great to play with these guys again. We'll do it again in a couple of years or so. I hope you had fun. Thanks for sticking around. Goodnight." What a show it was. I consider this the best show of the whole reunion year. The band was at 100% on everything and the



Photo: Kurt Mahoney



Photo: Kurt Mahoney

crowd was totally into every second of the show. Dave looked back at the whole tour and said, "Without Lee Allen, this is the best 'The original Blasters' have ever been. If we were this good in the old days, we would be millionaires by now. I enjoyed the tour so much, I'm saying what can I do next year with the Blasters? A DVD or something makes sense."

What a show! What a tour! What a year for the Blasters. 2 CD releases and a tour. What more

could we ask for?

Special Note: These reviews came from my daily tour diaries posted on www.BlastersNewsletter.com. Thanks, It was great to meet so many of you out on the road. Thanks to my wife Triss and my brother Steven for handling the [BlastersNewsletter.com](http://www.BlastersNewsletter.com) web site while I was on the road. Thanks to the Blasters and manager Greg Lewerke for letting me travel with the band, work as roadie, and enjoy the time of my life with my favorite band. Thanks to the rest of the road crew: tour manager Mick Weick (also for providing photos) and sound engineer Rick Brown for those wild rides in the band van. Those guys will remain life long friends. Thanks to Javier (AKA Jake) and Jack from the next big band, The Blue Shadows. And thanks to the great guys who are the Blasters: Phil, Dave, John, Bill and Gene for everything and then some. Many years ago, when I started the Blasters Newsletter, Phil saw me travel 3000 miles for one Blasters show and said, "You must be crazy for following the Blasters all over the place." After this House of Blues show I asked Phil to sign my Trouble Bound CD and he wrote, "Billy, Thanks. As always, You must be crazy. - Phil Alvin." He still remembers, and he is right. I am crazy! —Am

The Blasters - Buddy Holly Tribute Surf Ballroom, Clear Lake, Iowa 2/1/03

Review by Rich Lynn

The show started at seven, and the place was packed with what must have been 1,000 patrons all listening intently as Nelson (yes, THAT pop-metal hair band Nelson) rambled endlessly telling stories



about growing up with dad Ricky. Marshall Crenshaw came on next accompanied only by a standup bassist and lead guitar player. He made some respectful comments about Buddy Holly but the stage was plagued with sound problems. He played one Buddy Holly song at the beginning, then focused on his own material during the middle of the set. The 'Over 50' audience clearly expecting a Buddy Holly tribute show, began chanting "rock and roll" between songs. Of course Crenshaw reacted by NOT playing Buddy Holly songs. He definitely had a more appreciative portion of the audience, but it was starting to get tense.

So by the time the Blasters were ready to take stage, the audience was wanting something good. This guy called 'Wild Mike' came on stage to introduce the band. He's known by the older crowd and must have been one of the event organizers. He yelled, "Alright, you want to hear some ROCK AND ROLL!" They wanted rock and roll; they got rock and roll like a mallet over the head. The Blasters blew the roof off the place. This isn't the Origi-

nal recipe Blasters that are getting all the attention this year, this is "The New Blasters" consisting of Phil Alvin, John Bazz, Keith Wyatt, and Jerry Angel. They started with a scorching version of 'All Your Fault,' that was just about perfect. That set the tone for the evening. I had just seen a reunion tour show last year and the difference in band styles is noticeable. This version of the Blasters definitely has a harder roadhouse style. I saw the original line-up at the HOB in LA last March. After that show, I didn't think the new line-up could do the Blasters legacy justice. I was shocked how great Keith Wyatt was. He really gave it his all. I wondered if this was maybe a reaction to the positive press on the original Blasters line-up and if he had something to prove. Keith was so musically and physically into the music, that it made for a great sounding and visual show. I thought James Intveld was a hard guitarist to replace, but Keith adds a whole new dimension to the Blasters music.

All the band members were in top form. Some young girls wriggled their way in front of the stage where Phil stood and provided inspiration. They blazed through 'American Music', a surf instrumental that was fantastic, 'Big F Chord'... Just song after song of pure energy. An audience member put a note in front of Phil Alvin that basically said there was a young Elvis impersonator in the audience that wanted to sing a few songs with the Blasters backing him up. Phil read it, laughed, and ignored the request. They put out so much sound it scared the older audience members right out of the Surf holding their ears (not kidding, I saw several silver haired couples covering their ears as they raced for the exit). There was a big enough fan contingent and recent converts to keep the Surf jumping, but about 1/2 the audience bolted from Nelson's set. During the intro of 'Slip Of The Tongue', Phil lit up a cigarette and had a short smoke before the first verse. After the song, a security guard walks onstage and whispers something to Phil that irritates him. Phil then points in to the mic and says, "You tell 'em." The security guard shakes his head no. Phil then says to the audience, "I'm supposed to remind you that smoking is not allowed in this facility... Not that I have an opinion one way or the other."

When we were trying to get the Blasters out for a second encore, a little old lady came up to me and send, "Hey, let's quiet down so we can get this band off stage and get Nelson back up there." All we could do was laugh. The Blasters did come out for an encore, Nelson decided not to stick around...

We walked into their dressing room after the show (as the security was swarmed around Nelson). We shook hands, got autographs, Phil held court telling stories... Really great guys... After the Blasters, the Elvis impersonator jumped on stage and started singing with no backup. The remaining audience ate it up and a pick-up band started accompanying. We left at this point as the show was definitely over. Fair bet neither Marshall Crenshaw nor the Blasters will ever play 'Legends Fest' again. Buddy Holly is still dead. Rock and roll will stand. --~~AM~~

AMERICAN MUSIC –editor/writer: Billy Davis editorial assistant: Craig Frischkorn
format and layout: Tristan Currie-Davis

SUBSCRIPTION INFO: Publishing 4 issues quarterly. Send \$10 for 4 issues (worldwide).

If paying by check, payable to **BILLY DAVIS**.

Mail to: **PO Box 210071, Woodhaven N.Y. 11421**

e-mail: davistb@aol.com **BACK ISSUE COPIES:** \$2.50 per issue worldwide