

## Instant Interview

We've tried to round up the questions we get asked most often, so that you don't have to ask them and we don't have to answer them again...

### *Why a tribute to The Eagles?*

Singer, Garreth Hicklin: The songs, obviously - and the fact that nearly everyone you meet, no matter what age they are, always knows more of the Eagles repertoire than they think they do. It's funny. You meet people after a gig and so many of them say that they came thinking they'd only recognise Hotel California, but ended up knowing half the set.

### *How did you pick the name?*

Guitarist, Colin Moore: It was a long and painful process. Seriously. We must have gone through hundreds of different names. In fact sometimes I was sure we were going back to names that we'd already rejected. We felt it was important to have the word 'Eagles' in the name, but that something like 'bootleg' was just too obvious. In the end, a couple of guys outside the band heard the latest batch of suggestions and gave The Alter Eagles a solid thumbs up, and after that it picked up momentum until we were all behind it.

### *Who are the current members?*

Garreth Hicklin - lead vocals, acoustic and electric guitars, MIDI guitar and mandolin; Colin Moore - electric and acoustic guitar, MIDI guitar, pedal steel and backing vocals; Jay Stezaker - electric and acoustic guitars and backing vocals; Alan Tomkins - keyboards, electric and acoustic guitars, backing vocals; Rob Beattie - bass and acoustic guitar, vocals; Paul Thompson - drums.

### *How do you choose which songs to play?*

Alan Tomkins, keyboards: Obviously there are some songs that pick themselves and you've just got to play - California, Desperado, Lyin' Eyes, Take It Easy, that kind of thing. After that, we've picked the ones that show the band's range - everything from major ballads like Wasted Time to outright rockers like Life In The Fast Lane. We've probably got a list somewhere of the songs we still want to do, so let's hope they don't bring out that new album just yet. Gives us a chance to catch up.

### *How long does it take to learn a new number?*

Rob Beattie, bass: It depends. When we choose a new song, there's a period where everyone goes away and works out their part and has a practice along to the original. Then we get together in a rehearsal room and have a run through. Colin and Al are the tricky chord men - if there's anything particularly complicated, they'll sort it out. Then we'll work on the harmonies at a separate rehearsal, just sitting around in someone's front room with an acoustic guitar. We ran Please Come Home For Christmas through three times at rehearsal and gigged it a couple of days later; other songs take a lot longer.

*What's your favourite moment in the set?*

Garreth: Got to be when the "ooh's" and then the "aah's" come in the middle eight of Wasted Time. How To Lift A Song To A Climax In One Lesson, by Mr Henley and Mr Frey.

Col - Waiting for the repeat echo to kick in the intro to Victim Of Love. It makes me smile.

Al: Hotel California. Apart from the spectacle of the guitar solos, even in the smallest of venues I usually manage to get off my stool, venture to the front of the stage and pretend to be a guitar hero.

Rob: Just after Jay's done his big intro to Get Over It and Paul whacks his sticks together for the count to bring the rest of us in. I like the anticipation.

*What's your favourite Eagles' story?*

Garreth: It has to be when Joe Walsh was living in Irving Azoff's car for a while. But he says "Then a third person moved in and it got kinda crowded, so I moved out".

Al: The fact that they practically stole Take It Easy from Jackson Browne. They added one or two words, claimed a songwriting credit and used that song to launch the band. The rest, as they say...

Rob: Walsh taking his chainsaw on tour.

*Where's the fun in trying to sound just like the record?*

Garreth: There's a reason the Eagles have survived so long and that's because of the material and the way it's performed. Even the simplest-sounding songs have got real intricacies and that makes them a challenge. And when you really nail it, there's a tremendous feeling of satisfaction. In the end they're just classic songs.

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