

## Wednesday June 28th 1978

friars aylesbury phase three - maxwell hall, civic centre, market square, aylesbury  
the specials inducted into the friars heroes hall of fame in 2003  
[exclusive friars aylesbury interview with roddy byers](#)

# THE CLASH

Coventry Automatics (The Specials)

[related friars history \(click on date\)](#)

The Clash Friday December 22nd 1976 Saturday January 25th 1978 [Globe Mandeville Stadium](#) Monday July 12th 1980

The Specials Thursday June 12th 1978 Friday may 3rd 2003

Roddy Radiation and The Teapickers Friday November 5th 1982

[setlist](#)

### band line up

#### THE CLASH

Mick Jones (guitar/vocal) Joe Strummer (guitar/vocal) Paul Simonon (bass) Topper Headon (drum)

#### THE COVENTRY AUTOMATICS

Terry Hall, Jerry Dammit, Roddy Radiation, John Bradbury, Horace Gentleman, Lynval Golding, Neville Staple

[gig poster and flyer \(click to enlarge flyer\)](#)

[ticket](#)



[memories](#)

Thanks to Andy Bean who sent this in November 2021

So, the Clash's first Friars show in June 1978. There was obviously some trepidation about having them play especially after the Dunstable show in January, which ended in chaos a riot in the support band's dressing room while cans and bottles rained down outside! Hence the leaflet given out to the audience as they went in, asking them to behave themselves. The show was amazing, but fortunately untroubled. Me, I thought it would be funny to get the Clash to autograph my leaflet after the show. Not at all funny, in retrospect, but a nice little memento. Here it is!



Garry Bushell, Sounds, 8 July 1978

FOR PEOPLE who like to put things in neat little pecking orders - and because of our conditioning there's a lot of them - the Clash are the Big Boys now. THE punk establishment, 'Well, the Damned have split; the Stranglers aren't cool, are they? and with Johnny in cold storage the Ex Pistols are nothing more than Uncle Maizie's marionettes, maintaining on the punkie publicity of negative outrage. Jolly stocking, what?

Saddening more like. So the mantle of 'leadership' falls unwelcome on the Clash, which naturally makes them an easy and obvious target for the facile bitching that often passes for 'informed comment' in certain sections of the music industry. Pete Dinklage highlighted it all a fortnight ago, that not seeing them and the wait for the album had nurtured all that 'they were never that good' bullshit. So this, the first of the tongue-in-cheek Clash on Parole tour, was a chance to prove that all wrong.

And the message to the slick men and women in Aylesbury Friars' only looking for fun (and everybody else out there) is: don't believe the media hypebole. Forget the 'fame', any group are as good as its play. Do they make you dance? Question? DO something?

SURPRISE number one last Thursday were support group The Specials (as they'd been known for four whole hours, were formerly the Automatics which was very confusing for the other Automatics, you know, the tanks rolled over Poland ones). The Specials are a five piece multi-racial punk reggae group from Coventry, and the two cultures don't do so much clash as entertainingly intermingling. Whereas Clash play punk songs and reggae songs, The Specials' ditties combine elements of the two.

Yeah it sounds a phoney not to say disjointed formula but, surprise, surprise, it worked. Song titles that stuck in mind included 'It's Up To You', 'Dawning Of A New Era', 'Wake Up and Concrete Jungle' which give an idea of stance even though I couldn't make out the lyrics from where I was standing.

They finished on a nifty nostalgic version of 'Liquidator' and encored with 'Naked' which sounded uncannily like 'Big B' before racing up to an accelerating pogoable pace and the final frantic finish. Oh dear, that ought to appeal to your sense of heritage. The Specials have been playing the West Midlands for a year. The vocalist sounded like Pete Shelley, the bassist's movements were a bit ruff, but what the hell? They're competent, and enjoyable. Check 'em out.

THE KIDS had come for the Clash tho', and no one should have been disappointed. Tonight they were the best I've ever seen 'em and this was my fourth time, twice before at the Finsbury Park staling with its security goons and flood seats, and once at Vicky Park where the sound system sabotaged the set. This time there were no goons, no chairs, an also capacity crowd and dynamic sound. They kicked off with 'Complete Control'. Strummer as ever shaking like a lunatic, and then it was a marching drum burst and into the first of the unrecorded songs, 'Tommy Gun'. Christ, no wonder they call Topper 'the rhythm machine', his drumming gets better and better, solid, sharp building blocks for the others to construct the choones over. There were 18 songs tonight, half of them unrecorded, none of them substandard. In fact the only shadow over the set was the crowd's conservatism.

A lot of the kids looked like last year's media images, right down to the sweaters, safety-pins, and spitting, and it was obvious they really wanted the records, chummed out, and consequently didn't give the new songs the reception they deserved. I didn't get all the titles but new ones on me were 'Cheapskates' and 'All the Young Runkers' (This song is for punk rock which is the only thing that's happened in this country in living memory). Loud cheers. 'The English Civil War' is instantly accessible, based on the American Civil War song 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again'.

Only this time Johnny's come on the bus and the tube, and this civil war's already started, see Gramsciks, Lewisham, Brick Lane. Sure Clash are political, but there's a false dichotomy between their politics and fun. Clash politics aren't about being Boyson, Tynesall or Tony Benn, they're about living. Living is about surviving and having fun. Not about any electronic god or walking the dog. Not about passivity and acceptance.

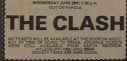
That's why their politics are more convincing than Uncle Tom's. And that's why they hit me so hard 18 months ago when I was living on the sprawling wasteland the GLC call White City Estate just a gobaway from the thro, thro, thro, thro of the West. Way Clash have always been best when they're trading on raw anger. Songs like 'London's Burning', 'Complete Control', and 'Capital Radio' are vitatic power bursts seeping with gut conviction. 'Capital Radio' was probably their finest moment tonight. 'White Man' (This one's no.32 in the charts - I'm so excited!) is a really powerful anthem line, specially as Mick's solo was five times better than the studio version.

That 'Bunton suits/rebellion into money/Hater' bit is a mighty two fingers to all that Thame-rbest media powerpup. What else? There was Paul at his best on 'Police and Thieves' (with last year's backdrop which succeeded in turning the crowd into one heaving, seething slow pogoing mass. Mick over vocals for 'All Guitars Down' and 'Garageland' still sounds convincing even though the equipment shows they've long abandoned working in carbon monoxide fumes.

There were three other new songs which indicate there'll be no softening up on the new album either musically or lyrically. And finally the crowd pleasing encore: 'I'm So Bored', 'Jane Jones', and 'White Riot'. All this and only the first night of the tour fool enough to invalidate any lingering misgivings, as long as they still generate the sort of buzz of excitement you get when you skip off school for the first time at 13 they'll still be the Clash we know and love.

What more can a poor boy say? Capt perhaps to warn them not to play any more open air gigs. I hear there's a bunch of loose-bowled pigeons from High Anxiety just dying to get their own back.

© Garry Bushell, 1978  
[press cuttings](#)



Thanks to Graham Gitten for the NME cuttings



[what happened next](#)

The Clash effectively imploded after the final Cut The Crap album by which time Jones had been sacked from the band. After The Clash, Jones went on to successfully form Big Audio Dynamite. Currently he is part of Carbon Silicon. Strummer formed and toured with The Mescaleros. Simonon went into art and came back into prominence in 2007 with The Good, The Bad and The Queen, a project also featuring Damon Albarn. Topper is believed to be living and playing in the Dover area. Joe Strummer died in 2002.

Jones and Headon reunited for the first time on stage in 25 years in January 2008 at a Carbon/Silicon gig (Jones' current band)

The Specials The Specials within two years were one of the UK's biggest bands. They reformed in 2003 without Dammers to rave reviews and very sold out venues. They return to Aylesbury in 2017 breaking box office records and playing an amazing gig

[odds and trivia](#)

[official web presence](#)

The Clash Official Site [Blackmarket Clash](#) (who kindly allowed some cuttings)

[sound and vision](#)

The Clash - What's My Name



The Coventry Automatics - Too Much Too Young



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