

**Never surrender : that s Franang zine motto when I want to track down a band and get an interview. The following interview you re about to read was previously planned for the 10<sup>th</sup> paper issue and Algy was supposed to answer it on time. But when he got the interview, there were so many questions that he decided to unfortunately drop it. Algy should probably answer some of the questions and send them one day or another. But, that wasn t enough for me, I clearly wanted to support this excellent band. Indeed, TANK has been a major influence for many combos and was one of the unholy trinity gathering Mot rhead, Girlschool and TANK. Their discography is simply amazing and tunes such as Turn Your Head Around, When Hell Freezes Over , Heavy Artillery , TGNID are simply hits. After many delays Cliff Evans (guitar) finally sent me some answers that concerns his period in this legendary combo. Franang zine s team will eternally be grateful to Cliff for his time and precisions about TANK s story.**

Hi Cliff, before everything, I want to thanks you thousand times for your feed back TANK s rules . Choose the best beer and records then let s go !!!! First of all, do you remember your first step in Metal as a fan ? Who introduce you to this new musical genre as NWOBHM was nearly none existent when you were teenager ?



According to you, what failed in this record ? Do you think it lacks of memorable songs ? The album was full of great songs and we were very happy with the way it sounded but unfortunately we had absolutely no backing from the record label and our manager was useless. This made things very difficult for us.

Led Zeppelin was the first band that really did it for me. My sister bought Zep 1 when it came out and it was constantly on the turntable. They ve been my all time favourite band ever since.

Graeme Crallan didn t last long as he was replaced in 85 by Gary Taylor. You were not under a label contract anymore, but you managed to tour in America , and it seems you were well received during this tour, weren t you ?

How long have you been a guitar player ? When did you started playing this instrument and have/had you any famous guitarists you wanted to copy ?

Again we had the same problem with the label and management. We were playing some great shows and working very hard but they didn t give us any backing and just left us to starve. It s very difficult to try and break into a new market with nothing supporting the band.

I started playing when I was about 13/14. Obviously Jimmy Page has always been my number 1 influence but I m also heavily into Kossoff, Peter Green, Jeff Beck and I love to listen to Zakk Wylde. He s a great player.

**Why did Mick Tucker leave the band ?**

There was a bit of friction between Algy and Mick during the recording of the "Tank" album. This led to Mick leaving the band for a short while. Their differences were soon overcome and Mick was soon back on board.

In 1984, you released the a strong LP with Honour And Blood and supported Metallica on their Ride The Lightning tour, what are your memories of this year ?



1987 was the year of a new deal with EWR Records and the new LP Tank That album contains traditional TANK songs but also more accessible songs, giving the impression TANK was turning from a Heavy Metal band to a mainstream Hard Rock band. Do you think this LP hurt the band ?

Metallica were such a cool band to tour with. We didn t really know much about them before the tour. They asked for us to be their special guests which was a real compliment. When we arrived at the sound-check for the first show they were playing "Creeping Death". We had never heard anything sound like this before. They just had that classic Metallica wall of sound. The tour was great fun and we all get very drunk on several occasions.

We had many problems during the recording of this album which made things very difficult for us. I have a lot of bad memories from that time and I was never happy with the way the album turned out. It s been very hard to find a copy of this album which has made it very collectable. Listening to again recently, it actually has some good tracks on it.

Honour And Blood didn t get the success Algy was expecting. As it was an album you played in, did he tell you something about his disappointment back then ?

Did TANK split in 1987? And then the inevitable question: what have you done between 1987 and 1997?

TANK have never actually split up. We just have long periods of inactivity. TANK will never split up. It will always be around in one form or another. In 1991 I put my own band together called Killers. I was living in New York at the time. I brought in Paul Dianno on vocals, John Gallagher (Raven) on bass and Steve Hopgood on drums. We signed a \$250,000 deal with BMG and recorded the "Murder One" album at the power station studio in NY. We then took the band on the road and toured the world for the next few years.

In 1997, TANK returned with you, Mick Tucker, Cliff Evans and new member Steve Hopgood. It was an excellent news, but what motivated TANK comeback? How did Algy got back in touch with you and were you pleased he contacted you? The demand for TANK was on the rise again so we didn't want to disappoint our fans. It was nice to play together again after such a long break.

Were you satisfied with the 97 CD releases of This Means War and Honour And Blood by German label High Voltage?

I guess it did help our profile a bit but we were never consulted on the release and certainly never received any money.

That same year you were busy with live activities as you did two German tours, one with Sodom and the other with Raven, plus you played at Wacken, do you have nice memories from these gigs? What were your reactions/feelings to be again on stage, perhaps some apprehensions at first? I think that fans didn't forget you and everything went well for you. It was the first time that Steve Hopgood played live with TANK, he was good during that first tour?

It was so great to get TANK back out on the road again. The first show was the Wacken festival where we were billed as special guests. We only had time for a quick rehearsal so Steve was still trying to remember the songs. With the help of a few hand signals on stage he did a great job. That show is my favourite TANK show. The rest of the tour was fantastic. TANK were back in action.

In 98 a live album titled The Return Of The Filth Hounds Live was out, it was at last the time for an

official TANK live album. Was any label interested to release a live DLP in 1986?

We were never approached by any label to put out a live album in 1986.

In a German magazine, TANK announced signing for three albums with Rising Sun Records, but they only released the live CD with studio demo songs as bonus, so what did it happen with the deal?

During the Bang Your Head festival in Germany in 1998, Algy got extremely drunk and seriously offended the guy who owned Rising Sun records. End of deal.

I don't understand why you released the live CD War Of Attrition twenty years after your performance?

Why did you wait such a long time whereas a live album was officially out on Rising Sun Records 3 years after? It was perhaps the clause of your contract with Zoom Club records before the Still At War album be done?

Algy didn't realized he had a tape of that '81 show. I think he stumbled across it by accident one day. Then decided to release it.

Japan has always been a land where the NWOBHM scene is very famous and popular. You played in 1999 at the 20th Anniversary NWOBHM festival with Samson and Praying Mantis in Tokyo. How did Japanese Metalheads react during your concert, were they wilder than the Europeans according to you? I know TANK is rather respected in Japan, what does it mean for you?

That was a great show. We have a lot of die hard fans in Japan so it was a real pleasure for us to go and play for them. The reaction we got was fantastic and easily blew the other bands away.

Still At War was only released in 2002. what was the reason of such delay? And are you satisfied by Zoom Club, because that label seems to do not care about the distribution out of England

Zoom club was a waste of time. They paid us a good advance for the album but did nothing with it.

Still At War being a great album, I would like to know how it has been received Did you tour for that album?

We were very pleased with the way the album sounded and the



reviews we received were all really good. Unfortunately again for us without label support touring is very difficult and we couldn't get back out on the road to promote it.

Regarding back in time and being objective, would you briefly comment each of your studio and live albums please? For instance, tell me what is the best/worst song, the conditions in which you were during the recording sessions, critics of your fans and magazines etc...

Honour And Blood (1984), Tank (1987), The Return Of The Filth Hounds- live (1998), War Of Attrition- live 81 (2001), Still At War (2002)

"Honour And Blood" - This is my favorite TANK album that I played on. Great songs, great sound and happy memories. Best songs on album "War Drags Ever On" and "WMLA". "Tank"- This album has mixed feelings for me. I don't have favorite song but I do have a least favorite song "March On Sons Of Nippon". "Live" - It's a good sounding live album and captures a lot of raw energy. "Live 81"- You can really hear Algy's punk influence coming through. Great stuff. "Still At War" - A great sounding honest rock album. I don't have a favorite song on this one. I like them all equally.



I heard a new album called Sturmpanzer will be out soon, so can you tell more about it? We are in the studio now working on this album which should be ready for release later this year.

Do you know who got the idea of releasing Dogs Of War box

set? The CD box set contains bonus while the vinyl edition hasn't any of them, how does it come? I've to

congratulate all the TANK team for this present as it's a fucking great collector !!!

It was Tommy at Metal Mind Records in Poland who put the idea together. We helped him to get all the information together and supplied him with bonus tracks and DVD footage. He did a great job on it and the fans have loved it.

Are you interested in nowadays Metal scene and which are the bands you like the most? How wide is your musical approach and your tastes since all these years you're listening to Metal? Which are the albums, Metal or not, that gave you the more thrill and feeling in your life?

There aren't any new metal bands around now that really do anything for me musically. I still go back and listen to all my favorite albums from the early/mid 70's. Bands like Zep, Free, Mountain etc. I still love the sound of vinyl and albums from that era had great production and interesting recording techniques.



Do you recall how was Heavy Metal scene in the 80's? Was it difficult to get a name in the scene and to get recognize by Metalheads? How do you see the evolution nowadays? The metal scene in England in the 80's was great. There were so many good bands and plenty of venues to play all over the country. It was an exciting era for Metal. The level of musicianship was excellent and the bands worked very hard. A lot of classic songs came out of that scene. I can't really see much of a metal scene happening in England at the moment.

What is your vision on French Metal scene from the 80's up to now? Do you like some bands? I suppose you've known Blaspheme, Demon Eyes, Trust, Attentat Rock, Sortilege, Vulcain, Adx etc. Have you heard about the new one such as Lonewolf, Maledicton and so on? I must admit I don't really know much about the French metal scene. I know Trust but that's about it. Shame on me.

Thank you Cliff for the answers and I wish you the best with the new album! If you have a last comment, feel free.

Hammer On! You Filth Hounds of Hades and unleash the Dogs of War!