

## memo

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

To: Various Heads

From: One Behind the memo Guy

Re: From the set of books *The New A Historical Personages, vol. III, Ka-Ka-Ka-Ken to Owlman, The*

**Obtund Mess:** (1968-1972) Formed spontaneously on an acid trip gone somewhat awry in early 1968, the band became quickly famous for their impenetrably loopy psychedelic music.

On February 29, 1968, in Normal, Illinois, Bob Navigably, Earl Fundy, Arin Zaddick and Saul Vent all bought LSD from the same dealer, a man known only as Stoned Bums. The four men did not know each other at the time, and although the story is apocryphal, it is believed that at exactly 4:22 p.m., all four men ingested five hits of acid each, and that at exactly 9:37 p.m., they all found themselves at the intersection of Locust and Fell: Navigably at the northwest corner, Fundy at the northeast, Zaddick at the southeast, and Vent at the southwest. According to the story, they all looked at each other and simultaneously said, "Do you hear that music, man?"

And so the band was formed. It took them most of their brief career to come up with a name for themselves (they went through Bunted Moss, Mounts Debs, Dumbo's Nets, Dumb Stones, Numbest Sod, Best Mounds, and Modest Snub before, in December of 1971, deciding upon Obtund Mess), but what *was* clear from the moment of the band's inception was how they would sound—with Navigably singing lead and playing guitar, Fundy on another guitar, Zaddick on bass, and Vent on drums, they each attempted to play the music they were hearing on the night they met. The music was, of course, different for every member.

Success quickly followed, and after playing three or four abortive shows at local college bars, the band was signed to a major label (who, for legal reasons, has asked to remain unnamed in this book). They recorded their first album in about five hours, and called it *A Gnome Catches 5.14*. Several more albums followed in rapid succession, the most famous of which was 1970's *Nott a Geotechnic N<sup>th</sup> Unit*, which featured the hit single, "Harvesting Mimsy Powns," a song which was described by at least one critic (who has also requested to remain unnamed) as "very likely the last song played by the dance band on the Titanic."

Sometime in late 1971, each band member (under the supposed influence of his favorite groupie) began insisting that the music he heard in his head was the one true music the band should play. Fights broke out and were duly recorded (see the 1985 release: *Crzyshaxarcsh!*). Death threats were typed up and never mailed. Stoned Bums was called in to negotiate, but to no avail. Things went downhill just as quickly as they had gone up, and on February 29, 1972, the four members of Obtund Mess returned to the intersection of Locust and Fell in Normal, Illinois, went to their respective corners, each dropped five hits of Stoned Bums' acid, and forgot the whole thing had ever happened.