

## An unforgettable night in 2003

*An emotional tale of an astonishing evening.*

Written by Andy Owen



*This is an email I sent around to selected people, on 14th April 2003. It was the morning after a quite astonishing evening in the company of a genius.*

Subj: Something Wonderful to Share...

Date: 14/04/03

To: andypals@hotmail.com

I wanted to share this with a few of you who I know will appreciate it, whilst it was still crystal clear in my mind...

As you know, I love my music. Music has been so important to me and still plays a major part in my life. Live gigs have provided some of the greatest memories...and still do...which is why I HAVE to tell you about last night...

Macca came to town...after a break of 8 years...

I first saw Paul with the Beatles in '64. Then again in '65.

And, every time he has visited Birmingham since, we were there. With Wings - and on the various tours after that.

But, last night at the NIA, in front of 12,000 delirious fans, he was simply IMMENSE. I have never seen anything like it...

Over the past 30 odd years, I have seen them all.

All the greats. They were evenings I will never forget. But this...well...

Somehow, you knew when you walked in.

There is always an excitement - an anticipation - at gigs. But, you could sense something very different was happening last night...

...but none present had any idea of HOW different...

The lights were only slightly dimmed as the spotlights picked out strange figures walking around the arena. A masked man from Renaissance Venice, A Flamenco Beauty, A Georgian Gent with rather large white wig, a bounding Harlequin, Marie Antionette and a Chinese Princess...

Then a Mandarin with a scimitar. Clowns with massive blue globes and, a rather surreal guy with a bowler, from which a green apple hung from a thread...

This lasted for over 10 minutes at least...then...they were gone...

A massive screen in the centre of the stage was backlit. And the silhouette of Paul with his Hofner bass held by the neck, pointing skywards, was visible...

The screen rose and there he was, magnificent in a red Beatle type jacket, launching into *Hello Goodbye*....

...a moment that none present, will ever forget, I'm sure...

I know I won't...

The sound was the best I've heard since the good old days of seeing quality artists in the smaller cinemas. The band was magnificent.

Behind and above the stage were 40 screens. The big central screen above the stage was flanked by 24 smaller screens either side.

Down at stage level there were three large vertical screens, flanked by 6 smaller ones each side.

Every song had a video playing behind it, interspersed with shots of Paul and the band members. I understand there was over 2,400 sq feet of screens...

The visuals were stunning. The effect was breathtaking.

We were treated to Beatle songs never before played live, including...

*Eleanor Rigby, She's Leaving Home, Birthday* and the one that finally broke my own saltwater dam... *Getting Better*...from Pepper...

Cried like a baby. Crying as I write this now...wonderful stuff...

Over 3 hours of fantastic music. They were all there...*Jude, Yesterday, I've Just Seen a Face, Every Night*...and so many more...

Very moving tributes to John and George, the latter seeing Paul playing *Something* - on a ukelele that George always loved...

We stood up to the opening chords of *Hello Goodbye*.

We were still standing up to the final words, which were so appropriate...

"And in the end, the love you take, is equal to the love you make..."

Amen to that, Pauly. We knew we had been in the presence of genius.

A living legend.

I will never forget last night.

*Ever.*

Keep the faith

Andy

P.S. I am reading this again, nearly 22 years later - and the hairs on the back of my neck are standing up with the memory of it.