

# TO HERE KNOWS WHEN - GREAT IRISH ALBUMS REVISITED

## *Churchtown* by Into Paradise

**Into Paradise's** second album - *Churchtown* - was named for the Dublin suburb where the band members came from. Dave Long had played in **Amuse** with friends Shane O'Neill and Dave Clarke. When Amuse ended the lads formed **Blue in Heaven** and Dave formed **Backwards Into Paradise**.

The band were Dave Long on vocals and guitar, Jimmy Eadie on guitar, Rachel Tighe on bass guitar and Ronan Clarke on drums. They released a few demos and gigged throughout the late 80s. Dave put a compilation of their demos on sale in Dublin's Comet Records. Keith Cullen of Setanta Records bought the tape and offered the band a deal, he also suggested that they should shorten the name to simply **Into Paradise**.

The band recorded their debut album *Under the Water* with The Sound's Adrian Borland producing. Long was a longtime fan of Borland and of The Sound's From the Lion's Mouth so this was a perfect match. *Under the Water* was released in 1990 to some great reviews.

A deal with Ensign Records followed and their second album *Churchtown* was recorded with Adrian Borland returning to co-produce alongside mixing engineer Chris Sheldon.

The darkly atmospheric single '*Burns My Skin*' was well received by the music press. New York's influential CMJ New Music Report awarded the track their 'Single of the Fortnight' describing it as, "a caustic roller-ride - guitars peal, drums pummel - reminiscent of Great British Raincoat Rock, circa 1980 - the Bunnymen/Sound/Magazine - with a thrilling Pixie-ish abandon."



In his glowing Select magazine review for the album, David Cavanagh wrote that, "it's sometimes not clear whether Into Paradise are into cauterising wounds or just rubbing salt up and down them. It's beyond doubt, however, that Into Paradise will leave people breathless and shaking with Churchtown."

Melody Maker were no less effusive writing that with Churchtown, "it seems that Into Paradise are even closer to their original vision: music that runs cold through the veins."

In spite of the great reviews the big break didn't materialise. When Ensign let them go, Into Paradise found a welcome home back on Setanta and released two more fine albums.

"I just keep on doing it, there's something inside you," says Dave about his creative impulse. "I can remember coming from my granny's house and sitting at a bus stop down by The Dropping Well pub waiting to get the bus home and just making up songs in my head. That's all I wanted to do, make up tunes. That's what I've been doing forever. I don't know if it's worthwhile, but sure it keeps me going. You keep on making music for as long as you can. It's in your DNA."

That it's worthwhile is beyond doubt. In recent years Dave has released two incredible albums with his old friend Shane O'Neill. They're currently recording their third album together - to be released later this year.

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Paul McDermott (@learnandsing) Dave Long revisits Churchtown on To Here Knows When - Great Irish Albums Revisited, available on all podcast platforms. Episode notes and further information: <https://www.paulmcdermott.ie/podcast>