

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER

They're late, they're late, and on January 27 they've got a very important date. (Because that's the day that the re-formed '70s boogie quartet TEN YEARS AFTER play London's Hammersmith Odeon). But naff White Rabbit jokes notwithstanding, it's been 15 years since the last 'official' album, so 'tis apt indeed that the new LP title proclaims prophetically: it's 'About Time'. PAUL HENDERSON (the only man on the Kerrang! staff old enough to remember the first time) catches TYA in New York and finds ALVIN LEE and company still boogiein' on down with the best of them...

TEN YEARS AFTER are in the middle of a US tour, with all the attendant hustle and bustle schedules of TV, press and radio interviews to clog up the 'free' time.

It's their 29th such jaunt, and round-the-table banter is regularly punctuated with intimate, time-acquired knowledge of the various hotels they've stayed in and the venues they've played at on previous visits; the relative merits of domestic beers and the good places to eat...

Understandably, after visiting the place so often, they feel quite at home in America.

For the four members of Ten Years After (guitarist Alvin Lee, bassist Leo Lyons, drummer Ric Lee and keyboardist Chick Churchill), sitting in the bar of yet another New York hotel must bring on a collective and vivid case of *déjà vu*. More strangely, although this is their 29th tour, it is something like 15 years since the 28th!

Now, a decade-and-a-half after their last 'official' new album ('74's 'Positive

Vibrations') and two decades since the cameras recorded their epic, electrifying version of 'I'm Going Home', played to an audience of almost half-a-million at '69's Woodstock Festival - Ten Years After are 'doing it' again.

Although they never officially split up, the original line-up are back, with a new album, 'About Time', on Chrysalis. They've now completed this tour of the US, and dates in Britain are imminent as you read this, following a spell in Europe.

BY ANY standards, Ten Years After's 'lay-off', 'rest', 'inactivity period', 'sabbatical' - call it what you will - has been a lengthy one.

Touring America together again after so long, with a new album to promote, does, they will agree with a smile, "feel a bit weird".

"But in another way," says Ric Lee, "it's like we haven't been away, really. It feels kind of like picking up where we left off."

Leo Lyons, fingering his elegant 'Wing Commander' -style waxed moustache,

