



Crewperson:
Adam 'Clem' Bennett

Age: 37

Job: FOH engineer

Recent Activity: Funeral For a Friend, Arch Enemy, Bullet For My Valentine.

Worthy Past Glories: Fightstar, Dragonforce, The Horrors, Dropkick Murphys, Boy Kill Boy.

Why are you what you are? After bumming around in bands for years, I realised the only bloke going home with money in his pocket was the sound guy. I always had an interest in sound, it was a natural step, and a way to stay involved in music.

Three best things about your job? Traveling around the world a few times every year. Never making the daily commute that city workers endure. The excitement of the big shows.

Three worst things about your job? No superannuation, holiday pay, sick leave or job security. Being self-employed, therefore finding your career not taken seriously by financial institutions or anyone else. Missing important family milestones.

Detail the equipment you use in an ideal world? Midas H3000 or XL4, TC Electronics D2, SPX 900s, DBX 160A comps, Meyer Milo PA, Sennheiser vocal mics, good old Shure SM57s. Beyer M88. Simple gear that works first time and doesn't need a load of programming should you be short of time.

Most crucial invention since you started, that's improved your job? Multipin cables. They were uncommon when I started and almost ubiquitous now. And line arrays.

What do you never leave home without when working? Sharpies, white PVC tape, a maglite. My passport.

The Shend interrogates FOH man Adam 'Clem' Bennett

Suggest a candidate? E-mail: crewcuts@isionline.co.uk

Proudest moment? My first show for FFAF was at Download 2005. I just got off a plane from Italy, had never heard the band, arrived during changeover, and miraculously made it sound half-decent. Band and management decided to keep me on after that.

Best gig while working? The best moments, when I think, "I can not possibly mix better than this" are normally not Donnington or Reading, but some gig in Wolverhampton on a Wednesday night. Santiago, Chile, with Arch Enemy was magic because the audience was absolutely over-the-top crazy.

Best gig as a punter? Kiss, Sydney Showgrounds, 1980. My first rock show. I was 10 years old and actually believed they were superhuman, God-like creatures.

Biggest nightmare on the job? A digital console going bluescreen mid-set for Bullet For My Valentine at Hammersmith Apollo, saying, "A problem has been detected and Windows has been shut down to prevent damage to your computer. A process or thread crucial to system operation has unexpectedly been exited or been terminated" - with all the UK rock press and management, record company people etc in attendance.

Most irritating request from a member of the public? Newcastle University union - a bow-tied professor storms in to sound-check, demanding we halt our "noise", because there is a maths conference half a block away.

Artist from the past you'd most like to have worked for? AC/DC with Bon Scott on vocals.

What phrase sends a chill down your spine while working? "There's an office above the venue so we have a noise curfew until 5pm. And doors are at six".

What invention would make your job easier / better? Inflatable, fluffy audience members to fill a room during soundcheck.

What other member of the crew would you least like to be? Tour manager. Their life is absolutely crap.

Which other member of the crew do you take your hat off to? The tour manager. And the bus driver - he drives all night without killing us.

Name three best sounds and three best videos on the crew bus? Van Halen, Malmsteen and Queen, for air guitar. *The Office*, *Extras* and of course, *Spinal Tap*.

Most irritating thing on the crew bus and why? People who can't be bothered bagging up their dirty laundry, so the whole bunk area smells like a teenager's bedroom.

Best hotel you've stayed at while working? Observation City, Perth, Australia, because it has a guest laundry, and is right on a beautiful beach, so you can go swimming in the waves whilst your socks are drying.

Like all music journalists, are you really just a frustrated musician? Yes, of course. Who isn't?

Any artist you'd happily swap places with if you had the talent? Dave Grohl, because he seems so chirpy all the time. And his bands have done alright.

Members of the audience you loathe the most? The guest who stands side of stage all night and then complains (on the band's web forum) that the mix was nothing but bass drum.

Any artists you'd happily spend time with socially? Michael Amott (Arch Enemy), he's always good company and a classic metal encyclopedia, Matt Davies (FFAF), because he's quiet, sensitive, and a considerate roommate. Howard Jones (Killswitch Engage) because he is a real gentleman and not as scary as he looks on stage. Ronnie James Dio - I met him once and he spent all night telling entertaining stories about Ritchie Blackmore.

Bizarrest sight you've ever seen at work? A totally naked lead vocalist punched

unconscious by an audience member, who was then set upon by the crowd and thrown through a window.

Favourite artist to work for? Arch Enemy, because I get to chase guitar solos on the desk.

Favourite food and drink? Sushi! Even airport sushi. Spicy food - Malaysian, Thai, Mexican Vietnamese. Anything foreign and new. Stinky French cheese. I love buying random snacks from hole-in-the-wall take-away joints in Japan, or from street markets. I can't stand American food - pizza or burgers - as it's so easy to get fat on the road, although San Francisco garlic fries are pretty good. I'll try the local drink, Pisco Sours in Chile, Singapore Slings, Sake in Japan, Australian red wine, French Champagne. I could go on . . .

Favourite / Most hated venue? Favourite is Pageant Theatre, St Louis, Missouri. It was designed from the ground up to sound great, and it does. Least favourite, The Creepy Crawl, St Louis. It is the worldwide benchmark for a bad show. "At least we're not at the Creepy Crawl" is a common catchphrase.

Open air or under a roof? Open air. At least you don't have to tune for the room.

Best festival? Wacken Festival in Germany, because the VIP area is full of people who love music, rather than themselves (try Reading Festival for that).

Best item of clothing when working? A Hawaiian shirt. In a sea of black t-shirts, people can always find me if they need to. And a cowboy hat, because sunburn isn't worth it.

Closest you've come to death whilst touring? Using the portaloos on Warped Tour.

Most outrageous thing you ever did on tour? Said yes to mixing the support band.

Most sensible thing you ever did on tour? Said no to mixing the support band.

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