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DECEMBER, 1963

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The Redcaps in festive mood with Father Christmas at the B.C.S. High Street store, Birmingham

Photo: Jim Simpson

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MIDLAND BEAT

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WHY?

Why? That's what beat groups throughout the Midlands are asking. Why has the Brum Beat failed to gain a place in the Top Twenty?

It's no longer because the record companies are neglecting the beat scene in England's second city. Indeed, a dozen Birmingham groups now boast disc contracts.

At least half-a-dozen records by the city's groups have been released — without one managing to make headway in the charts.

It is disappointing when one considers the success of Liverpool and, of course, Manchester, a city with groups like Freddie and The Dreamers and The Hollies in the hit parade.

True, fans of Brum Beat can get some satisfaction from the Top Fifty success of The Redcaps and The Bruisers, but it is a Top Twenty place that is needed.

It is surely only a matter of time before a Birmingham group produces a record that proves popular enough to send it rocketing up the hit parade.

Perhaps this group will do a great service to all the other groups by breaking the ice and providing other Brum Beat outfits with a ticket to chartsville.

The exploitation machinery of the big record companies is behind several new releases by Birmingham groups this month. Let's hope it helps one of them to enter the Top Twenty.

A Brum Beat disc in the hit parade at Christmas would undoubtedly make our recording groups' prospects for 1964 a lot brighter.

The Groups Have Enthusiasm In Leicestershire

writes FRED LEE

THE City and County of Leicester are well supplied with rhythm groups — in fact, they have numerically doubled this year.

There are at least twenty-five local semi-pro groups operating in clubs and dance halls in this district, and a few full-time professionals, notable amongst which are the Peter Smart Three and The Rockets.

Some of the semi-pro's are regularly booked, especially ones like The Classics, The Mavericks and The Fenders. Although just a duo, Tony Avon and Roger are also tops wherever they go.

It could be easy to get discouraged in this crowded field, but there is no sign of this at all. Enthusiasm is one thing they all have in plenty.

The equipment that most groups have is really first-class, as it should be. Local suppliers offer a very wide selection of quality instruments and accessories and they know their business, too.

One or two groups must have reached the stage where the difficult decision must be taken — when to make the transition from part-time pro to full-time.

There are some who could "break-through." They have the main ingredients and, given correct management, they could go places. But that seems to be the big thing lacking in this area — proper experienced management.

The basic formula for success is good equipment, skilful instrumentals and attractive vocalising, whilst the remaining essentials can be listed under the heading of good management.

Most home-based outfits do not fully appreciate the value of this, but is quite apparent with the visitors.

Showmanship, rehearsals, bookings... all these things are so important that they must be well done. These are kindly-intended remarks, and do not detract from the fact that the audiences are impressed by the performances of local groups, which compare favourably with those in other areas.

There are frequent occasions when the country's best can be seen and heard, as one hall regularly has leading bands even twice a week. Several halls in City and County stage "class" artistes, and the De Montfort Hall is the venue for all the big names, The Beatles and all.

Great opportunities are there for any and every group and beat unit that can supply the evident demand.

Where is the "Leicester sound"? Let's hope that "Midland Beat" will help to discover it, and the groups to create it.

ON THE BEAT with Bo Berry

Brum Beat all the rage in Ireland — sparked off by visit from THE REDCAPS...

Birmingham's CARL WAYNE AND THE VIKINGS recording for Pye... Rumours suggesting that CARL may leave THE CHEETAHS are denied...

MIAR DAVIES, songstress from A.T.V.'s "For Teenagers Only," signed by Decca...

Big offers made to Solihull's AL JACKSON AND THE APPLE-JACKS following national press publicity...

B.B.C. TV's "Scan" planning programme about the Brum Beat for mid-December...

Scotti Wood Combo changing name to THE MOUNTAIN KINGS...

Solihull-based MARK TIME AND THE DOWNBEATS (three members still at school) first preliminary heat winners of Mecca's national beat group contest at Gay Tower Ballroom, Birmingham...

Letter received from Prague, Czechoslovakia, requesting copies of "Midland Beat"...

THE SHERWOODS RHYTHM GROUP hoping to sell 250 tickets for their own Christmas dance at the Royal Oak, Stratford Road, Birmingham, on December 13th...

Four Leicestershire lads, THE MATADORS, celebrating first month as professionals...

"Have Beat Band Will Travel" is the motto of Kettering group BOBBY LEROY AND THE FREEMEN...

Disc company interested in tunes written by Solihull group MARC STACEY AND THE SILHOUETTES...

MICKY LANE features own songs with Oxford's THE MYSTERY MEN...

Fan club formed for Birmingham group TREVOR BURTON AND THE EVERGLADES...

Three promoters holding sessions under the name DERBY BEAT CLUB.

Henley-in-Arden group KEN JACKSON AND THE STRANGERS pay return visit to Granada, Rugby, on December 8th...

Ex-FIREBIRDS rhythm guitarist RAY BRIDGER joins CARL AND THE CHEETAHS...

BEACHCOMBERS' MELVIN EDWARDS seriously considered to replace BRIAN (LICORICE) LOCKING in SHADOWS — job given to Birmingham-born JOHN ROSTILL...

Midlands' all-girl group THE SENORITAS appearing in A.T.V.'s "For Teenagers Only"...

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ASTRONAUTS FOR GERMANY



MARK FAYNE (inset) AND THE ASTRONAUTS

Turning professional at Christmas are the Nottinghamshire group, Mark Fayne and The Astronauts, who will be off to Germany for a month in the New Year. Vocalist Mark Fayne (17) comes from Shirebrook, near Mansfield, whilst the remainder of the boys live at Hucknall, Notts. The line-up of The Astronauts is Phil Beaumont (17) (lead guitar), his brother Mick (19) (bass), John (Willy) Willmott (19) (rhythm guitar) and Barrie (Griff) Griffiths (18) (drums). "In June, Mark's old group, The Tornados, disbanded, so my brother (ex-bass player with The Tornados) and I were looking for a new group for him," says Mr. Jeff Kemp, who has been Mark Fayne's manager for two years. "We found a group in a club at Hucknall. Their equipment was poor and their performance was also not very impressive. The group had no vocalist and on

their next engagement Mark went with them. "We decided to give them a chance. After a couple of rehearsals, Mark Fayne and The Astronauts went out on some of the previous group's bookings. "The boys 'pooled' their money and have purchased new equipment worth over £600." After 12 weeks together, Mark and the group auditioned for A.T.V. and they subsequently appeared on "For Teenagers Only." The date: Thursday, October 3rd. On Tuesday, November 5th, they cut a demo-disc at Northampton, recording "I Believe," featured by them on television, and their own arrangement of "Some Enchanted Evening." "They have worked very hard in the past and, if they continue to gain popularity at the rate they are doing now, they should go a long way," maintains Jeff Kemp.

SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE NEWS

by Dennis G. Morgan

THREE "INDIVIDUALS" JOIN THE BERRIES

Warwick group, The Individuals, have decided to split up. But three of the former members are included in the line-up for a Warwick-based group making a name for themselves in Coventry called the Berries. John Steed, who played lead with The Individuals, moves over to rhythm in The Berries, his brother Frank remains as vocalist and bass player Mac Erskine also continues. Several important bookings are helping to put them on the map, and the lads reckon they have found a winning combination. They can be heard regularly at their own club in Longford at the New Inn . . . * Hinckley's Matadors near enough said goodbye when they appeared at a local dancing school beat night recently. . . The lads tell me they intend to move out of the Midlands' scene—they have

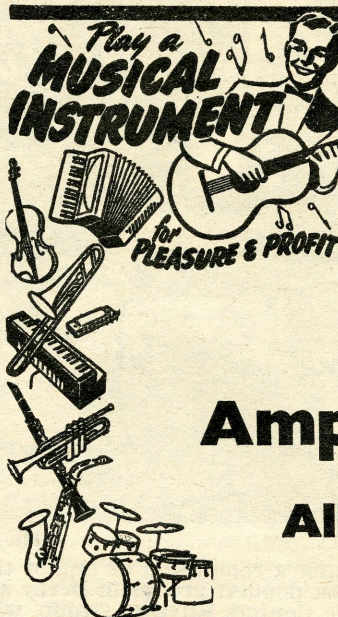
been tagged the Midland Beatles—and make a name for themselves further afield. They hope to make a tour of Devon soon and also Germany in the new year. The group turned professional two months ago. Looks like they will follow in the footsteps of The Beatles, Hollies, etc., who starred in Germany then hit the scene here like a bomb . . . * John Strom, brilliant lead guitarist with The Challengers, had to spend a couple of weeks in hospital for a minor operation recently—only a few days after he acquired a brand new short scale jazz guitar. But his absence did not affect the group as much as it would some groups. For second lead guitarist Bob Saunders can double on John's part and vice versa —handy when one of them breaks a string in the middle of a tune . . .

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HERE AND THERE

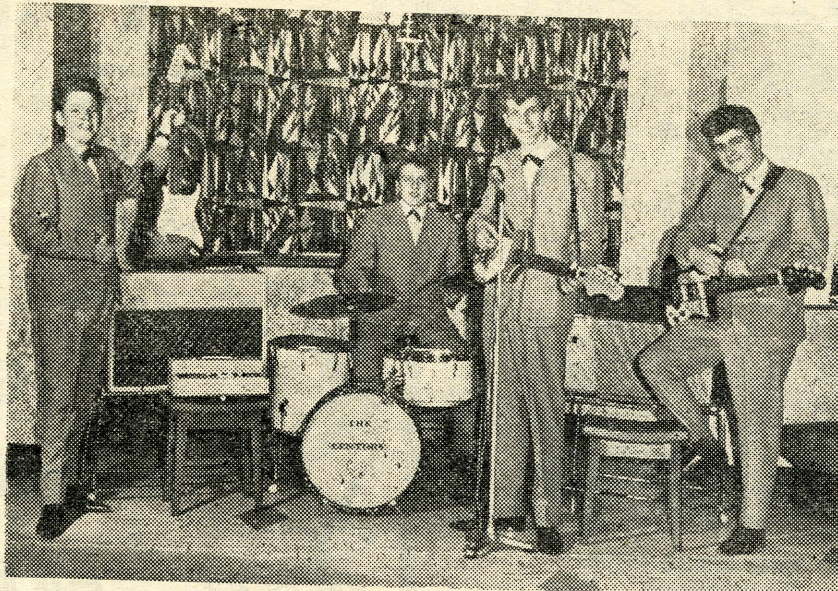
A talented Derby group, Roy Chantell and The Sapphires, have a novel means of transport—an ex-Surrey C.C. Daimler ambulance! They have travelled 2,000 miles in four months.

"Derby is not a good town for groups," remarks manager W. Gillard, "so we travel all over the Midlands. We always get repeat dates, too."

During the three years the group has been together, they have appeared with such stars as The Searchers, Temperance Seven, Bert Weedon and the Brook Brothers.

"We have a Derby sound," claims Mr. Gillard. "It's the big guitar sound of The Sapphires and we are confident of shortly being able to turn fully professional."

"We have already won the first heat in Mecca's national championships and I have been assured personally by a Birmingham talent scout that the group will go far."



THE CENTORS

Earning a reputation as one of the most popular groups in Derby are The Centors Rhythm Group, who have gone from success to success since their formation at the beginning of the year.

They have had two television auditions and a result of the second was a series of engagements to play in the Birmingham area in November and December.

The boys have written some of their own numbers and have been asked by a recording company to submit a tape with a view to a recording contract in the near future.

The Centors have been booked every week-end since their launching and they have helped to raise money for charity on a number of occasions.

Members of the group are Brian Buxton (16) (lead guitar), David Buxton (17) (rhythm guitar), Bob Jones (19) (bass guitar) and John Bednall (16) (drums).

At the moment, The Centors are attracting the fans to various venues in the Derby and Nottingham areas, including the Blue Peter Hotel, Alvaston, Derby.

"They are waiting for the break that will help to put Derby on the map in the field of entertainment," says their manager, Mr. K. Buxton.

They have also travelled to outside towns for engagements and they have earned an enthusiastic reception at Skegness, Bedford, Nuneaton and elsewhere.

"The Sabres are a group of youngsters who give a powerhouse performance and in my opinion are a sheer delight to watch," writes one of their admirers, Paul Grainger, of 144 Telfor Road, Radford.

The line-up of the group is Q Martin (vocals), Steve Jones (lead guitar and vocals), Terry Wyatt (rhythm guitar), Gray Amos (bass) and Paul Wilkinson (drums and vocals).

*

Fans of The Emeralds, a group based at Higham Ferrers, Northants, are kept informed of the outfit's activities by a monthly review.

It is widely read and each month a copy goes to New Zealand. Another is sent to pen friends on Gan Island in the Indian Ocean, where it is read with much interest.

Personnel of The Emeralds: Malcolm Mann (lead guitar), Keith Plummer (bass), Philip Watts (rhythm guitar), Keith Ward (drums) and Jimmy Smith (singer).

Parents of members of the group have welcomed the stencilled bulletin because it is keeping them informed of the boys' activities.

"One family learned ten times more of the group's activities from reading an issue than they had been told by their offspring since the group was formed 18 months ago," says Miss R. S. Mann, the review editor.

*

Congratulations to The Trellions on winning a "Band of the Year" competition, held to celebrate Grantham's Quincentenary.

It's not surprising if the Rockin' Berries, the popular Birmingham group, sound as if they were having a ball on their latest Decca disc, "Itty Bitty Pieces" and "The Twitch."

When the numbers were recorded, one of the technicians was celebrating his 21st birthday and the recording engineer had just heard that "Do You Love Me?" recorded by Brian Poole and The Tremeloes at one of his sessions, had reached the top of the charts.

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Leslie Law

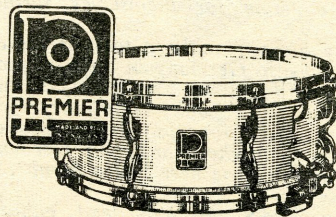
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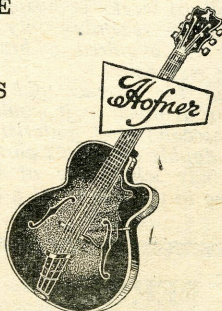
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FROM THE EDITOR'S POST BAG

Challenge

"Midland Beat" states that Liverpool started the ball rolling and Birmingham aims to take over. Don't think that Birmingham is second to Liverpool. Before you can even think of challenging Liverpool's supremacy you have got to beat other cities like Manchester, Sheffield and London. Even if you do manage to beat these cities you will have to produce groups as good as the Beatles, Searchers and Pacer-makers to beat Liverpool.

KENNY JONES
36 Wilburn Street, Walton
Liverpool, 4

Danish Scene

I'm writing in hope you might find my letter interesting for your readers of "Midland Beat." I've been here in Copenhagen for about one week, otherwise I'm living in London. I'm a great beat fan, but my profession is a journalist, so that's why I by a chance snooked this up while I was having some fun in Copenhagen.

Scandinavia has got their first and only Merseyside group. Right now they're playing in a teenage dancing hall in Copenhagen. They are a true "imitation" of the Beatles, Searchers and the others. Their name: Kliff Hillton and The Merseys. The Merseys are all Danes. Kliff is English and was born in Liverpool. He is 18 years old. The others in The Merseys are between 17-19 years old.

Such numbers as "Twist and Shout" and "Do You Love Me" has roaring success among the teenagers, when Kliff and his boys plays and sings them. A number Kliff has composed himself is "Come On, Get Her" and is their greatest success. In an interview to a leading Danish paper, Kliff said that his greatest wish was to appear in the Cavern Club in Liverpool. Right now the group is touring Sweden, Germany and Holland.

Believe me, this group you'll hear a lot about soon in England. They are really fab! In the same style as The Beatles. See if I am right.

KLAS NICHOLLSON
Brydesen Ave.
Espergaerde
Denmark

The Editor does not necessarily agree with opinions expressed in this column.

The Staggerlees

We would like to congratulate you on a great newspaper. There is a lot of talent in the Midlands and your paper introduces new and established groups.

We have been formed about two years and turned pro just over a year ago. The group, although based in Sheffield, is Cornish—the only Cornish band recording or even professional.

We record for Oriole and although our first record, "Dance Dance Dance," didn't set the world on fire, it sold very steadily. On the flip was one of our own compositions, "Love Me."

Our second disc is to be released around Christmas and we are all pleased with it as it is more in our style. It is also arranged by us.

In June of this year, we did a month at Hamburg's Top Ten Club and we return to Germany in February when we go to Frankfurt and Cologne.

DAVE LEE
(Dave Lee and
The Staggerlees)
4 Taptown House Road
Sheffield, 10

Girl Guitarist

Thank heavens there's another girl (other than singing) in a beat group. Although I don't play bass guitar I do play rhythm for an Oxfordshire group called The Secrets.

People seem to think a girl can't play the guitar as good as a boy, but Megan Davies has obviously shown them how wrong they can be. Good luck to Megan.

Yours sincerely,
SUSAN WHEELER (15)
Harcourt Arms
Stanton Harcourt, Oxon

"Derwent-Side Beat"

My grievance is that we in Derby do not seem to be going places. This Derwent-Side Beat doesn't seem to click anywhere else but Derby and District. Here in Borrowwash we have a group which is reputed to be Derby's top group—but even their future seems to be in the balance.

In Derby, there must be as many groups as Brum and "The Pool" put together. A lot have tried for fame but just have not managed to click. Thank goodness they have enough pluck to keep the Derwent-Side Beat going.

JOHN G. CHURCH
7 Gordon Road, Borrowwash
Derby

From Brighton

I am writing to tell you my newsagent has managed to get me "Midland Beat" and to say how pleased I am with it. I wish we had fabulous groups down here.

I wish your magazine and all the beat groups in Birmingham success in the future. I am training to be a pop singer and I hope to make the grade like most of your groups.

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Borderland News

In a promotion named "Teen-beat," artistes from A.T.V.'s "For Teenagers Only" show appeared in Llandrindod Wells at the Grand Pavilion. Joining Steve Brett and The Mavericks and Miar Davies were Brian Gulliver and The Travellers, who went down well.

Booked for an appearance at the same venue on November 15th were Carl and The Cheetahs and Lee Stevens and The Satellites. They had strong competition that night due to the Billy Fury/Tornados/Freddie and Dreamers package being at Shrewsbury.

Sharing the bill with the very popular Four Aces at Rhayader on October 30th were Lee Starr and The Astrals. This venue is becoming more and more popular and November 6th saw The Cadillacs from Kidderminster there. Denny Laine and The Diplomats were there in October. Crowds of 400-500 are the average with bigger attendances when a local group plays.

Local groups whose discs are being considered at the moment are Mark Antony and The Senators, whose demo is with Ember, and Lee Starr and The Astrals, who have been in the studio with RGM producer Joe Meek.

AUSTIN POWELL

"LITTLE PEOPLE" ESCAPE INJURY

On their way to appear with Houston Wells at the Wharf Hotel, Holt Fleet, near Worcester, on Saturday, November 9th, "The Little People" (from Great Barr, Birmingham) had a miraculous escape when their van hit a kerb in Droitwich and somersaulted twice.

But talking to "Midland Beat" correspondent Graham Jones a few minutes after the accident, the group insisted they were more concerned about their slightly damaged equipment than their own bruises and shock.

There are four Little People. Mike Clifton plays lead, Mike Avery's on bass, Paul Simms is the organist, and drummer is Dave Potter. Average age 17.

Though the lads have been together for three years, it was only last Whitsun that the present line-up emerged. Previously they boasted a vocalist and rhythm guitarist, and were known as Jeff Keene and The Ramblers, but marriage intervened.

Managed by Bruce Jordan of Midland Scene Productions, the boys—who have just started a fan club—have played in Kidderminster, Tamworth, Uttoxeter and near Worcester, besides their usual Black Country dates.

WORCESTERSHIRE WHISPERS

by GRAHAM JONES

With lead guitarist John Smith's virtuoso passages, the BASKERVILLES have become Worcester's only true Rhythm and Blues outfit. After only a handful of practices since reforming, they won second place in the October heat of the Malvern group contest . . .

Will the COSSACKS turn pro soon? They have just secured a club booking in London, but were beaten to the Metropolis by the CHEROKEES of Bredon, who early in October became the first local group to play in the capital . . .

Promoting seems to be the ambition of one Worcester drummer. He aims to match the city's RENEGADES with the COURIERS of Rednal . . .

VAMPIRES will retain their name after investing in a set of scarlet and black cloaks a la Count Dracula! They had planned to become the SEVERN BEATS . . .

SAINTS bass John Spicer joined WHIRLWINDS on October 5th—for half-an-hour. He deputised for late arriver Malcolm Lewin . . .

Fan club for RENEGADES recommended in certain circles. Hundreds of signatures petitioned A.T.V. to take them on to "For Teenagers Only" . . .

MAVERICKS now the FOUR-TUNES. Leader Louis Pidgeon broke arm during a Rugby match, but it mended in time for their first out-of-town date at Stourport . . .

Malvern's SUNDOWNERS have not cut a record, but may be on radio again soon . . .

CLIFF WARD and the CRUISERS (Kidderminster) — Mecca Ballroom Midland Group champions—unplaced in Malvern contest heat . . .

A Worcester guitarist married recently—only to lose a wheel from his car in Broad Street the same day, while on his way to play at another group member's wedding! . . .

JAYS leader John Fisher was to have taken the group to the Liverpool Cavern last month. Term-time intervened . . .

Malvern INNOCENTS now the EXPRESSO FIVE . . . Promising new Worcester group: the HELLIONS . . .

Reigning Evesham outfit are the WAVELENGTHS . . .

VINCE and the VALIANTS are now attached to Comer Gardens Youth Club. Plan big publicity drive . . .

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Ralph Horton

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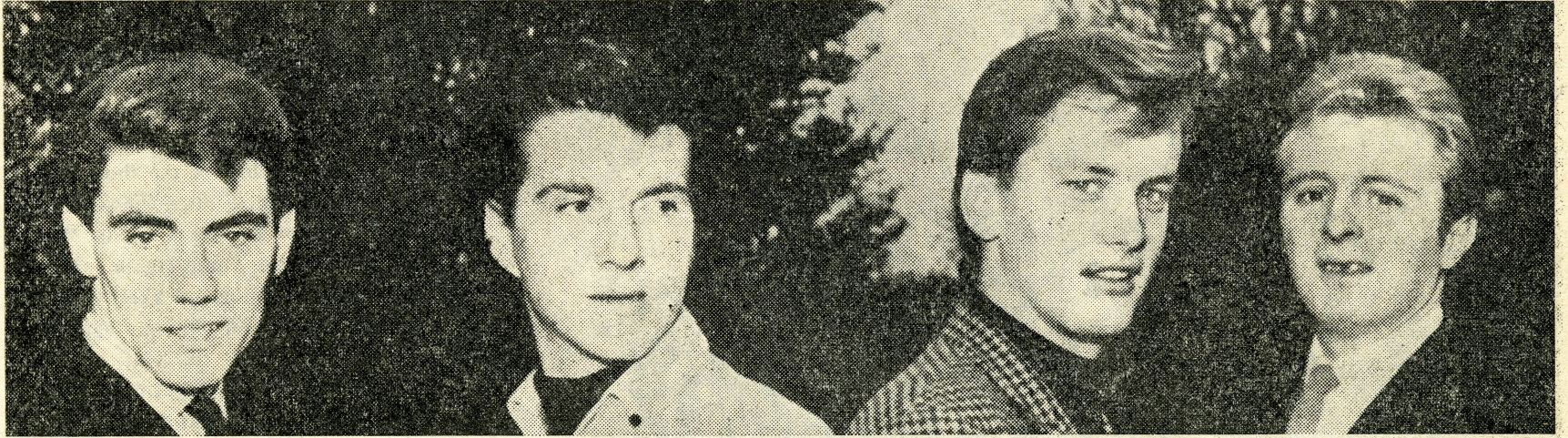
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MEET THE GROUP—No. 2

Mal Ryder and the Spirits



Mal Ryder

Birthdate: 27th February, 1944.
Birthplace: Newport, Monmouthshire.
Height: 5ft. 10in.
Weight: 10 stone.
Colour of eyes: Blue.
Colour of hair: Brown.
Parents: Arthur John, Elizabeth.
Family: Diane (15), Carol (16).
Home address: Official Fan Club, 13 Wolvercote Green, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford.
Instrument played: Guitar.
Education: Wolvercote Secondary Modern, Oxford.
Musical education: Self Taught.
Age on entering show business: 16.
First public appearance: Youth Club dance.
Biggest break in career: Cutting disc for Peter Sullivan of Decca.
Present disc company: Decca.
Recording manager: Peter Sullivan.
Personal managers: John Allen, David Stones.
Biggest influence on career: Mother.
Former occupation: Apprentice electrician.
Hobbies: Swimming, judo.
Favourite colour: Blue.
Favourite singers: Ray Charles, Harry Secombe, Mahalia Jackson.
Favourite actress: Brigitte Bardot.
Favourite food: Anything home cooked.
Favourite clothes: Smart suits.
Favourite instrumentalists: Chuck Berry.
Favourite composers: Duke Ellington, John Merry.
Most thrilling experience: Being a Decca guest at the All Stars Charity Gala, Battersea.
Taste in music: Swing, R and B.
Personal and professional ambition: To be known as a successful entertainer. To be in films.
Previous groups: None.

Wishing my boys—
Keith Powell and The Valets
 a Merry Xmas and a Prosperous
 New Year, and thanks for a
 successful year.
 Their manager, Jim.

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Mal Ryder and The Spirits are four very professional young entertainers living in Oxford. They have performed from four miles south of John O'Groats to the south coast and have toured Scotland three times. The boys have appeared with most of the big names in the business and appear regularly in the Midlands. Their last record "Cry Baby" impressed Decca so much it was made their "Record of the Week."

Mich Charleton

Birthdate: 16th March, 1944.
Birthplace: Oxford.
Height: 5ft 11 in.
Weight: 10½ stone.
Colour of eyes: Green.
Colour of hair: Brown.
Parents: Gerald, Winifred.
Family: Margaret (27).
Home address: Official Fan Club, 13 Wolvercote Green, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford.
Instruments played: Drums, clarinet, piano, piano accordion, mouth organ.
Education: Wolvercote Secondary Modern, Oxford.
Musical education: Self taught.
Age on entering show business: 10.
First public appearance: A London strip club.
Biggest break in career: Joining the Spirits.
Present disc company: Decca.
Recording manager: Peter Sullivan.
Personal managers: John Allen, David Stones.
Biggest influence on career: Himself.
Hobbies: Photography.
Favourite colour: Lilac.
Favourite singers: Ella, Roy Orbison, Mahalia Jackson.
Favourite actress: Brigitte Bardot.
Favourite food: Fried cornflakes with eggs, steak and chips.
Favourite clothes: Anything comfortable.
Favourite instrumentalists: Joe Morello, Johnny Dodds.
Favourite composer: W. C. Handy.
Likes: Girls in jeans and sweaters, long hair.
Dislikes: Bad musicians, bad sports.
Most thrilling experience: Driving in an open 1934 car from Oxford—Lands End—John O'Groats—Lands End—Oxford.
Taste in music: Trad jazz, classical.
Personal and professional ambition: To be married and have everything that will make his wife and himself happy.
Previous groups: Don Cambell Jazz Band, Eddie Turton Dance Band, Teenbeats, Alphabeats, Mich Bell Combo.

Vode Chequer

Birthdate: 30th January, 1945.
Birthplace: Oxford.
Height: 6ft.
Weight: 12 stone.
Colour of eyes: Blue.
Colour of hair: Blonde.
Parents: Leslie Ronald, Rose.
Family: Vera (33), Margaret (25), Ann (23).
Home address: Official Fan Club, 13 Wolvercote Green, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford.
Instruments played: Guitar, drums.
Education: St. John's, Oxford.
Musical education: Self taught.
Age on entering show business: 13.
First public appearance: Abingdon Corn Exchange.
Biggest break in career: Making first recording.
Present recording company: Decca.
Recording manager: Peter Sullivan.
Personal managers: John Allen, David Stones.
Biggest influence on career: Meeting John Allen.
Former occupation: Apprentice stonemason.
Hobbies: Drinking, building model vintage cars.
Favourite colour: Black.
Favourite singers: Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Howlin' Wolf.
Favourite actress: Brigitte Bardot.
Favourite food: Steak, mushrooms and beans.
Favourite clothes: Bell-bottomed jeans.
Favourite instrumentalists: Wes Montgomery, Charlie Byrd, Stan Getz.
Favourite composer: Gustav Holst.
Likes: Long hair, wild parties, drinking.
Dislikes: Laddered stockings, hair-cuts, sleeping.
Most thrilling experience: Meeting Bo Diddley.
Taste in music: Way out modern jazz, blues.
Personal and professional ambition: To be married happily and to be a successful showman.
Previous groups: Peter Cox and The Beatniks.

Tony Merry

Birthdate: 15th August, 1943.
Birthplace: Oxford.
Height: 5ft. 2in.
Weight: 8 stone.
Colour of eyes: Blue.
Colour of hair: Blonde.
Parents: Lillian.
Family: Gillian (8), Christine (15), Ken (23).
Home address: Official Fan Club, 13 Wolvercote Green, Upper Wolvercote, Oxford.
Instruments played: Guitar, electric bass, mouth organ.
Education: St. Clements, Oxford.
Musical education: Self taught.
Age on entering show business: 15.
First public appearance: Oxford Town Hall.
Biggest break in career: Meeting John Allen.
Present disc company: Decca.
Recording manager: Peter Sullivan.
Personal managers: John Allen, David Stones.
Biggest influence on career: Mr. Laishyle, Boys' Club Leader.
Hobbies: Experiments in sound, driving.
Favourite colour: Red.
Favourite singers: Sonny Terry, Brownie McGhee.
Favourite food: Bread and jam, milk.
Favourite clothes: Casual wear.
Favourite instrumentalists: Eric Ford, Tim Bell.
Favourite composer: Franz Lizst.
Likes: Cinemas, children's T.V.
Dislikes: Ill-mannered people.
Most thrilling experience: Visiting Venice.
Taste in music: Classical, Blues.
Personal and professional ambition: To be successful in life.
Previous groups: Peter Cox and The Beatniks.

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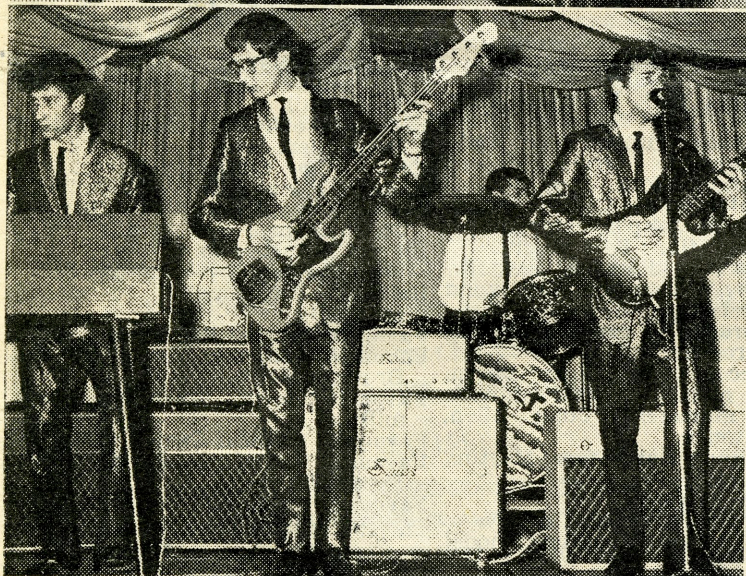
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 members a very Merry Xmas
 and a Prosperous New Year.

IS THIS YOU?



MIDLAND BEAT AT THE BRUM KAVERN

Are you one of the thousands of fans who have attended sessions at the Brum Kavern Club in Wordsworth Road, Small Heath? In fact, if you are a girl, are YOU the pretty lass ringed on the photograph on the left? If so, you will earn yourself a month's free admission to the Brum Kavern Club if you will identify yourself at the box office. On the stand in the photograph, by the way, is The Redcaps' Dave Walker. Other groups photographed by "Midland Beat" photographer Jim Simpson at the same session were the resident Kavern Four (middle left), The Blue Stars (bottom left) and The Black Diamonds (bottom right).



Dennis Detheridge interviews another Beatle

SUCCESS HASN'T COME OVERNIGHT

says *George Harrison*



D.D.: Any tips to aspiring lead guitarists?

G.H.: I think that they should have a tremendous interest in the guitar. It's no good picking up a guitar just because it happens to be the instrument at the moment and thinking so many people can play guitar and so can we—and then just bash away at it. I've a great love and interest in the guitar and I admire some of the top exponents such as Segovia. In fact, I'm hoping to meet him very soon. The best tip I can give any aspiring lead guitarist is to get to know the instrument, have a feeling towards it and leave the tricks and gimmicks to develop in their own good time.

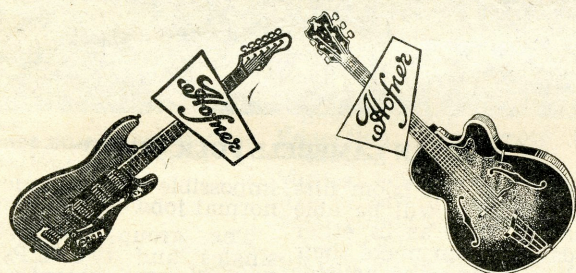
D.D.: It has been suggested that success has come too quickly to you. Do you agree?

G.H.: I think I can answer that

very quickly by saying the nucleus of the Beatles existed as far back as 1956 and I came on the scene in 1958. I joined John and Paul rather spasmodically at first with the Quarrymen Skiffle Group and eventually, in 1960, we became the Beatles. Nearly four years have elapsed since then—you can't call four years an "overnight success." I think our success would have been too quick had we no experience of playing and performing to different audiences before the success of our records. But we did have this vital experience and we can call upon it now to hold us in good stead.

D.D.: Girls hound you wherever you go. Has it altered your opinion of femininity?

G.H.: No it hasn't. I still like them all. Naturally, when I see



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huge crowds of them dashing around and trying to break through police cordons, I worry. But nothing will change my opinions of the birds. They're lovely.

D.D.: Police have to be called out to control crowds at your shows. Do you think it a waste of public money?

G.H.: No. I don't think the football teams consider it is a waste of money when police are called out to control football crowds and so forth. These are the things that the police are there to do.

D.D.: What is your idea of getting away from it all?

G.H.: To get away quietly, probably with the rest of the boys, and sit and listen to our favourite American records.

D.D.: Why has Liverpool produced so many groups?

G.H.: Possibly because there are so many working men's clubs and also teenage clubs in and around Liverpool. It's an accepted thing for young people to learn to play an instrument because they are then able to earn a quid or two a night playing at the various functions held at these clubs. The incentive to learn to play is there.

D.D.: What is your personal recipe for success?

G.H.: Determination to stick at it and plenty of practice. I also think that good management is essential and we all agree about this.

Remember, that but for Brian Epstein, the Beatles might never have been nationally known as they are today.

D.D.: Who are your three favourite entertainers?

G.H.: Well, that's a difficult one to answer because we admire so many. We like Anthony Newley and Sammy Davis Jr. and lots more. We wouldn't like to have to pick out just three.

D.D.: What has financial success enabled you to buy for yourself?

G.H.: Much better instruments. Lots of excellent clothing.

D.D.: What are your pet likes?

G.H.: Well, we like a lot of things, but I think we all really enjoy our recording sessions. These are great fun.

D.D.: Is there anything you would still like to see the Beatles achieve?

G.H.: Yes, success in America. I have a married sister living there and I've been over to visit her just recently.

D.D.: You have worked a lot in Germany. Do you recommend groups to gain this experience?

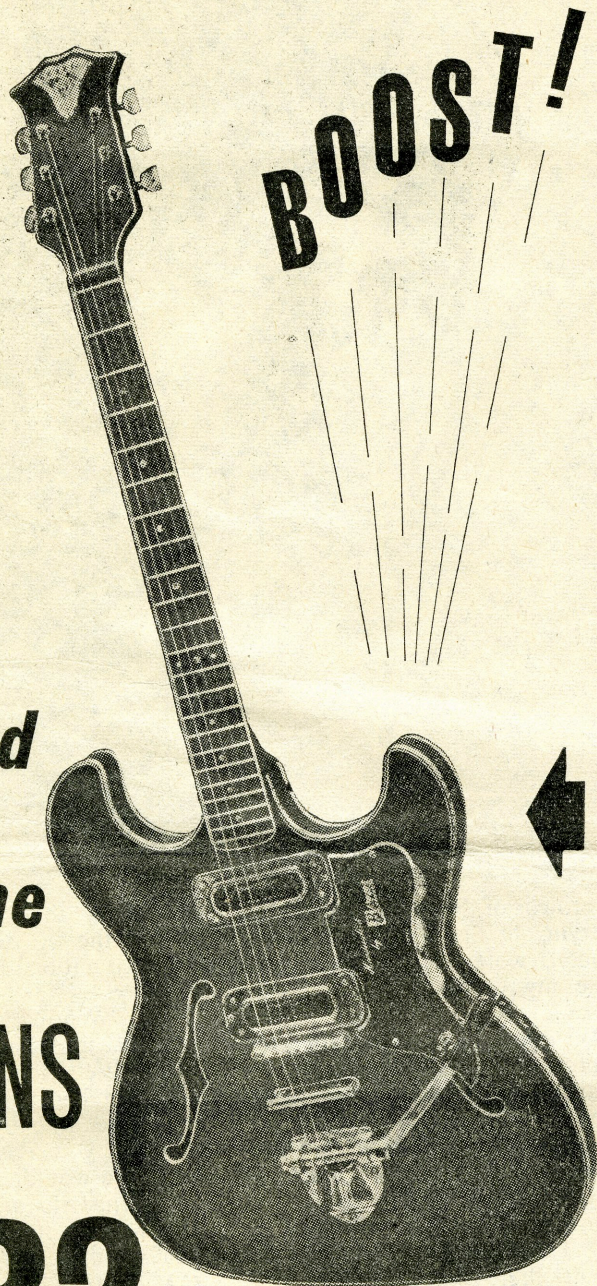
G.H.: Yes, it gives you stamina because you have to work hard. Anything seems easy after playing in Germany . . .

D.D.: What faults should groups try to avoid?

G.H.: Copying other groups. They should develop originality.

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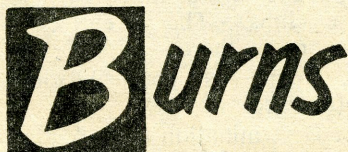


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FOLK FAVOURITES



THE IAN CAMPBELL FOLK GROUP

If and when the folk boom hits Britain, the Midlands will be able to show that in this, as in other musical fields, they can make their presence felt. Among the artistes heading the race for popularity will be Birmingham's own Ian Campbell Folk Group.

Although this group are now becoming familiar to Midlanders through their regular appearances on A.T.V.'s "Midland Montage," they have long been established as "the greatest" among serious folk music fans all over the country.

They topped the bill at a recent Celebrity concert in London shortly after successful appearances at the Festival Hall and the Albert Hall, and about their fringe show at the Edinburgh Festival this year the critics in the Scottish press used such glowing terms as "fabulous" and "all are brilliant." Their recent appearance on "Hullabaloo," ABC Television's Late Saturday Night folk show, was so successful that ABC hurriedly booked them for further shows.

Through all this the group remain unimpressed. They have never employed an agent and have never taken any of the normal steps to promote themselves. In fact, they did not intend to become professional entertainers, and only took this step recently when the number of engagements made it

impossible to continue with their normal jobs.

The group has recorded two singles and two E.P.s for Topic Records, and recently an LP for Transatlantic Records, called "This is the Ian Campbell Folk Group," with another single due out soon. One of the singles out on Topic is a song called "The Sun is Burning," written by Ian himself, and claimed by Topic to be the best selling record they have ever produced. Ian's song writing talents have proved very useful on "Midland Montage," where he is sometimes asked to compose a topical song at very short notice.

Sharing the vocals in the group with him is Ian's sister, Lorna, She often broadcasts on sound radio in her own right and has a solo record due out soon. Dave Swarbrick plays fiddle and mandola, a sort of overgrown mandolin. He has frequently broadcast on radio and TV, and is in great demand as a session man for records, as he is thought to be the finest young folk fiddler in the country today. The rest of the line-up is John Dunkerley on five-string banjo, and Brian Clark on guitar.

* Ian Campbell begins his own column on the Midland folk scene in the next issue of "Midland Beat." Don't miss it.

Around and About

Profits from the "Twist 'n Jive Nights," organised by the Kingswood Youth Club, of Wollaton, at the Rainbow Rooms, Broad Street, Nottingham, go to a fund for building the Kingswood Methodist Church.

Sessions are held every three weeks on Friday nights with two groups sharing the stand. Admission is only 2s. 6d. and the fans have been turning up in force since the "Twist 'n Jive Nights" were launched.

After presenting jazz for nearly five years, promoter Tom Duckett has switched to beat music at his Monday sessions at the Perry Hall Hotel, Bromsgrove.

First group to introduce rock were Cliff Ward and The Cruisers, who took the stand on November 4th. The attraction the following week: Mark Stuart and The Crestas.

Three regular bookings within two months of the formation of the group came the way of Neil Morris and The Rockin' Chevrolets, one of the latest Birmingham groups.

The group has been taking the stand every Friday at the Dog and Partridge, Yardley Wood; on Saturdays at the Midland Red Club, Digbeth; and every Sunday at the Bolton Arms, Small Heath.

Neil Morris, 21-year-old leader of the Chevrolets, who have also started Monday sessions at the Bear, Smethwick, is a Dublin-born despatch clerk.

Bass guitarist Dave Wadley (18) has worked with The Planets and Rockin' Aces whilst The Pursuers are among the outfits with which rhythm guitarist Allan Meredith has worked.

Fifteen-year-old lead guitarist Tony Iommi played alongside Allan in The Pursuers, which disbanded when the two boys left to join The Chevrolets.

Completing the group — it was formed by inserting a newspaper advertisement for musicians to back singer Neil Morris — is 20-year-old drummer Patrick Pegg, formerly with The Sundowners.

One of Burton-on-Trent's most travelled groups are Rhythm 'n Blues Incorporated, who have played in such towns as Sheffield, Lincoln, Crewe, Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Rugby.

Among the well-known artistes with whom the boys have appeared are Gene Vincent, The Springfields, Danny Storm, Lee Curtis and The All-Stars and The Mojo's.

The group comprises Rob Smith (leader/guitar/vocals), Mick Payne (guitar/harmonica/vocals), Clive Johnson (drums) and Andy Clarke (bass vocals).

Rob and Mick are founder members, Clive having joined to replace Don McGinty, who left about a year ago to join The Bruisers; Andy joined during November, from Mike Everest and The Alpines, replacing Brian Hallam. Previously known as The Atlantix, the boys decided to change to their present name during September, as there were several groups with similar names working in their area.

Ever seen Prince Nikki in action? Information supplied to us by the Nite Life Special Agency, of Stanwick, Northants, indicates that he gives a sensational performance.

"Prince Nikki is what we grade as a Midlands Houdini, Chubby Checker and Screaming Lord Sutch all rolled into one," writes a spokesman for the agency.

"Three of his highlights are a gallows scene in which he 'hangs' himself; a burning in which he quite calmly lies and sings three numbers; and a dance barefooted on broken glass!"

The group backing Prince Nikki hail from Peterborough and were known until recently as the Westonians Plus II. They are now likely to appear as The Executioners.

Although they are a Birmingham unit, the former Mark Allen Group, now known as The Shouts, have become accustomed to appearing outside the city since they began touring professionally twelve months ago.

The boys have worked as far afield as Scotland and Cornwall.

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CLUB NEWS

New Year's Eve will see a horde of unkempt and unwashed individuals descending upon Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. But it will not be a meeting of the Tramps' Union. It will be the New Year's Eve celebrations of the Midland Jazz Club.

By popular demand, the night's session—with a bar extension until midnight—will be a Tramp and Beatnik Ball. Two bands will be playing from 8 p.m. and there will be a host of unusual attractions.

*

A jazz club boasting more than 3,000 members is the Northside Jazz Club, meeting every Sunday with the Northside Jazzmen in residence at the Roebuck Inn, High Street, Erdington.

Members of the band are Tony Robinson (trumpet, leader, vocals), Laurie Walsh (clarinet), John Kiernan (trombone, vocals), Ian Wyatt (guitar, banjo), Tom Peace (bass) and Percy Cottrell (drums).

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Jazz at the Town Hall? Tut! Tut!

I AM often asked: "would you do it again?" That is, put on a jazz concert . . . nothing strange in that, you may think, but it was seventeen years ago.

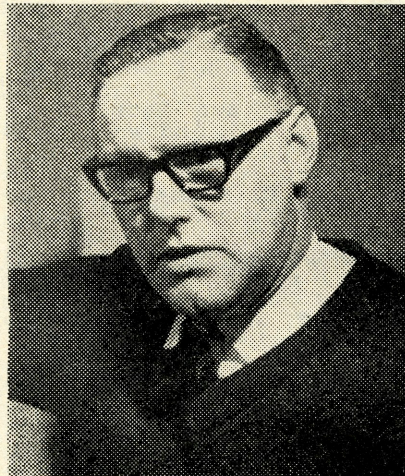
In 1946, the year after the end of the War, I left the Navy with every intention of foresaking Jazz. Having visited the U.S.A. during the war years and seen and heard many famous jazz musicians in many equally famous clubs, I wondered: what could jazz offer in Britain. Where was the British equivalent to Eddie Condon's series of New York Town Hall Concerts? Who else could outrage people like the "new" boy "Dizzy" Gillespie and his sidekick Charlie Parker?

Compared with these glittering facts, the jazz life of Britain appeared to be very bleak in '46—possibly four new jazz discs a month, few clubs . . . none in Birmingham, and the once-weekly Jazz Club on B.B.C. But I had not realised that once one becomes interested in jazz, it is impossible to let go. The Birmingham Town Hall Concert of December 13th, 1946, came about because of an idea, and if you have an idea, the only way to satisfy yourself is to try it out!

Britain '63 abounds with jazz bands. In 1946, we had one—George Webb's Dixielanders—and they had never been the sole attraction in a theatre (if they had appeared in a theatre at all!) the size of the Town Hall. When they were booked, together with pianist Tony Short and compere James Asman, they had no idea that they were expected to draw a full house of over 2,000 people—an unheard of figure in those days. That they achieved this is history . . .

Booking the Town Hall proved a problem. "A Jazz Concert at the Town Hall, indeed! What impertinence; an outrageous suggestion!" said Authority. "Why, the place will be wrecked." But, opposition was overcome and in the end, Friday, 13th was booked. Then, for the first time in Britain, Jazz hit the concert stage. The thrill and excitement, coupled with the naivete of myself and the musicians, made that historic night what it was. Not only was concert history made, but an industry was also created and any industry seeking financial stability must, sooner or later, be a commercial proposition.

We, the few who have been in Jazz so long—I myself celebrate 25 years in jazz in the New Year—enjoyed jazz, for its music. Now the music is still important, but the commercialism conditions "fans" to a particular band or musician. For example, if you are new to jazz and are told often enough that Miles Davis is the world's finest jazz trumpet player, you will believe it. Entering the world of Jazz in 1963, surrounded by so much music and pressures, with the choice of commercially created names for the different ways of playing, like "Trad," "Mainstream," "Soul," etc., it must be extremely difficult to start somewhere, although it is possible that you may have become interested because you like the sound of a certain style.



Seventeen years ago, on Friday, December 13th, 1946, **LOUIS D. BRUNTON** made jazz concert history when he presented jazz for the first time at Birmingham Town Hall. Here he recalls this momentous occasion.

If, instead of sampling the whole wide range of jazz, you stick to one small piece, you will miss a great deal. The sound of the young Louis Armstrong is vastly different from the 1963 "Dizzy" Gillespie, but remember that the 1943 "Dizzy" sounded rather different, too. You can learn from all musicians.

In the 1946 December issue of "Pick Up," Britain's only jazz magazine at that time, a collector advertised for sale a Coleman Hawkins record at £5. This was a "Parlophone" 78 r.p.m. recording, 3 minutes per side which, at that price, worked out at almost a pound a minute, yet it was sold in five days. In the same magazine, there were many, many 78 r.p.m. records for sale or "wanted" at prices between 15/- and 30/-. Even in 1947, when "Esquire" Records started with issues of the Birmingham Town Hall Concerts, their new 78 r.p.m. records were priced at 15/- each. In contrast, what can be said about today's record scene? Believe me, you have never had it so good!

Jazz in '63 gives me great pleasure. I find that everything musically popular today has ties with jazz. The line between the "Beatles" and early negro string bands is very thin: replace the "beat" with "swing" and who knows . . . The vocal efforts of many popular singers bear a close resemblance to Urban Blues singers of old. Even Joe Brown's acoustic guitar is reminiscent of famous guitar players of another era. The greatest difficulty facing jazz today is that it is taken so much for granted. It is heard everywhere, it is available at home; it is played, by experts and expertly, yet it is rarely heard in the sense that it is absorbed.

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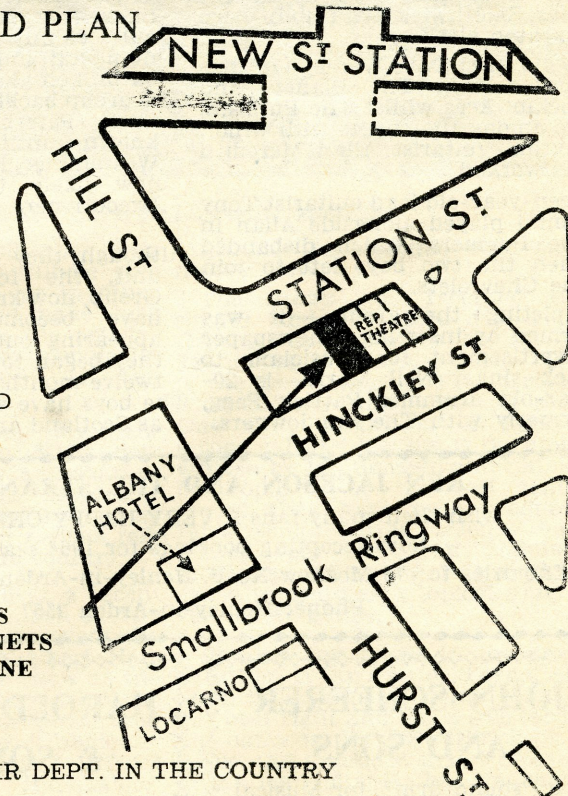
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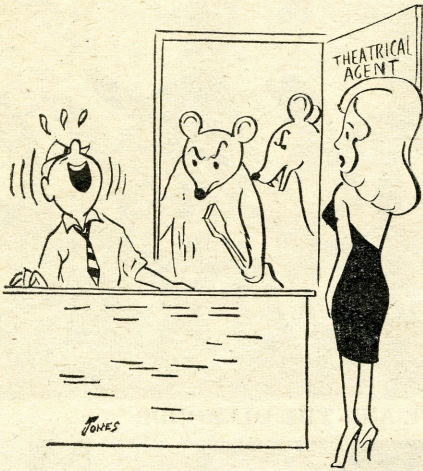


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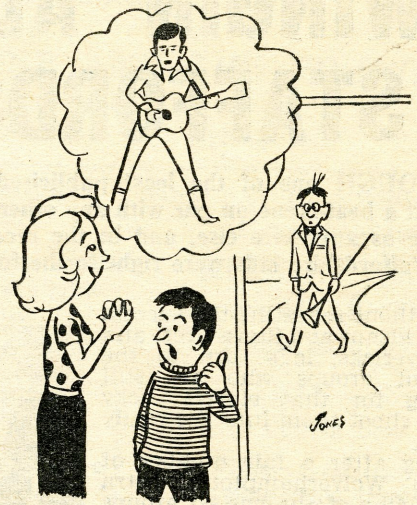
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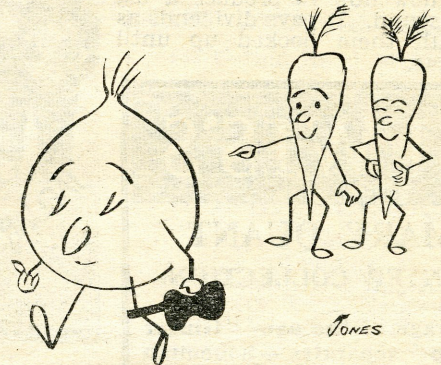
"Big brother Bert has been practising with the group. Here he comes now"



"My guitar !!!"



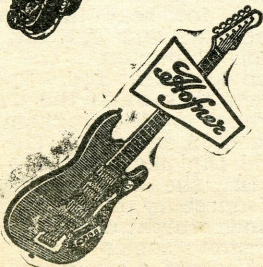
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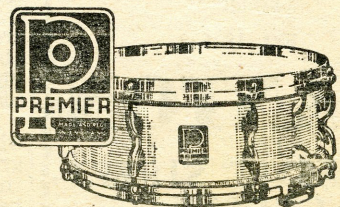
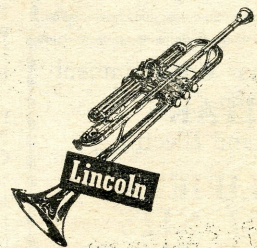
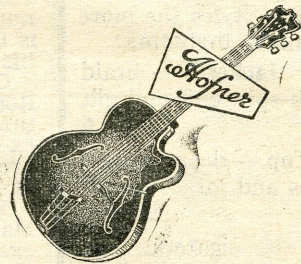
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SPECIAL SURVEY by Roger Bennett

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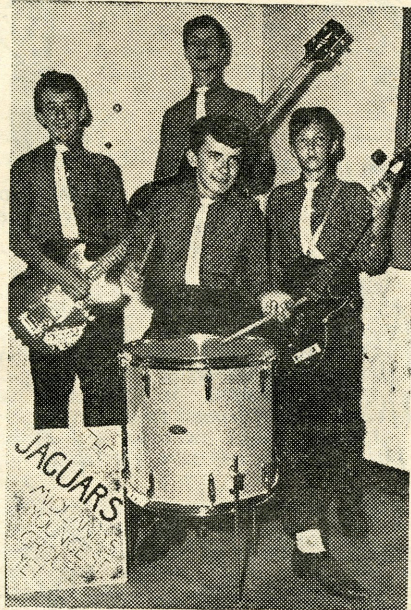
ALTHOUGH one of the least publicised counties, Staffordshire can boast a beat-scene on par with any other. The group fever is just as wild here as anywhere else, and in the recent Midlands assault on the charts, Staffordshire lads were right to the fore.

But without repeating the success of The Redcaps and Steve Brett and The Mavericks, let's turn to the dozens of groups who are still searching for that elusive lucky break to shoot them into the really big-time.

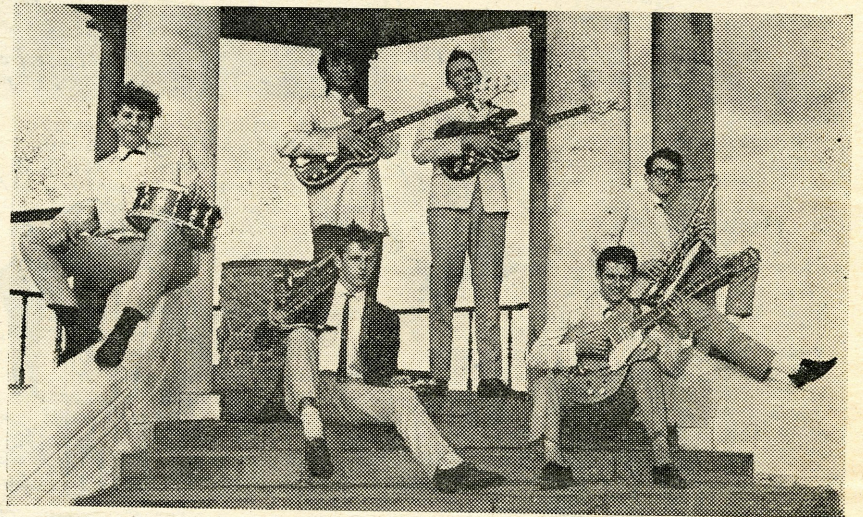
Looking after a fair number of them is Wolverhampton's Astra Agency. One of the busiest groups on their books are Johnny Washington and The Congressmen—three musicians and a singer who really know how to produce a big driving sound. It pays dividends as well with them booked up until Christmas.



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Thirty-two-year-old Len Rowe, one of the three active partners running the agency—the others are well-known bandleader Stan Fielding and his son Peter—speaks very highly also of Roy Grant and The Strollers. Roy sings Roy Orbison numbers but the saying goes that it is Orbison who copies Grant! For his voice is considered to be fab.

Others in the agency include Roger and The Dodgers, who hope to turn pro shortly, and the Midbeats, ex-the-Vikings. The latter group are now settling down after a spate of line-up changes.

The Astra Agency, formed in March of this year, sets a fine example to other such organisations. They refuse to take on no more groups than they can find work for. Len told "Midland Beat" that this was their main policy and they would never exploit any group.

It is this agency who have been responsible for starting the popular Monday night beat sessions at the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, in partnership with the council. On the opening night 900 teenagers took the floor and now a regular 600 odd attend. When I called the place was really jumping to the sound of the Mountain Kings, from Walsall, and the Bluetones, from Kingswinford. The former group, along with the Nite Riders, also played at the recent opening night of the new Saturday rock 'n twist dances at the Bloxwich Baths.

Walsall agent Maureen Hillback, who has been associated with local groups for over two years, praises the Nite Riders for the fact they have never let anyone down, and they can always be called upon to help a promoter out of a tight situation. They are also one of

Walsall's oldest groups and their line-up has only changed very slightly since they started.

Adding a welcome touch of glamour to the Staffordshire scene is a 19-year-old Brownhills girl, Tania. This young Miss had only been singing two weeks and she signed professional forms. Since that day—18 months ago—she has really hit the high spots. Two weeks ago she returned from a tour of Israel where she was on the bill with Del Shannon. In Germany she has been backed by The Beatles, The Searchers and Gerry and The Pacemakers. Tania belts out real solid rock, specialising in Chuck Berry numbers. She has been described as a "a man's rave act."

But back to the groups and we come across a group of 15-year-olds from Bloxwich called The Jaguars. All still at school, one of their highlights was appearing on the A.T.V. Midlands show, "Up and Doing." Another young group are The Skyriders from Pleck way. Also they have a 13-year-old girl singer, Brenda, who has been going for nearly a year.

In the Johnny Dean Combo, another one of those extremely popular groups, there is an 11-year-old drummer! The youngsters really get a chance to show their paces in Staffordshire and hardly any of them are at a loss for bookings. Some of them play the Gaumont Theatre, Walsall, at the Saturday morning children's matinees.

And when talking about Staffordshire it would be fatal not to mention Wednesbury's own Janice "O'll give it foive" Nicholls, who is in constant demand for personal appearances, and has even had a

try at making her own hit record. Recently, 17-year-old Janice got engaged to Brian Meacham. Brian who used to sing with the Mark Dean Combo, now has his own group, Brian Gulliver and The Travellers, and he produces a sound with which he could really go places.

Over Cannock way we find The Blue Stars who won Walsall's Top Pop Contest a year ago, also The Telstars who have a television spot in the offing, and a group formed just seven months ago, Vince and The Diamonds. The latter group are booked right through until the new year with an average of three or four dates a week.

Midway between Cannock and Wolverhampton is Brewood. A popular group centred around this small country village is The Tradewinds.

Yes, it is certainly a swingin' Staffordshire scene and half the groups have not yet been mentioned. Recently Walsall's New World Coffee Bar opened new extensions and introduced groups to the bar for the first time. Those who have now made the place a must for beat fans include The Belmonts and The Big Beat, from Wolverhampton, The Sherwoods and also Beat Ltd. Another lively place in town is the Casino where several top Birmingham groups are featured including The Astonaires and Diplomats.

In the surrounding districts Wednesbury offers The Trailblazers, Vince Knight and The Sonnets and Bilston comes forth with The Cellarkats, a group who wear masks and black sweaters creating quite an impression on stage, and also the Tommy Burton Combo, who are some very busy boys indeed.

ROCK 'N TWIST GUIDE

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