

INSIDE:—EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE BEATLES

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BRUM BEAT HITS CHARTS

MIDLAND GROUPS ON RADIO, TV, TOO

THE Brum Beat is in the hit parade! The Bruisers and The Redcaps have been leading the way with their "Blue Girl" and "Shout." Both have made progress in the "Melody Maker" and "New Record Mirror" Top 50.

And other towns and cities in the Midlands are also looking to their favourite groups to enter the hit parade with debut discs. Pride of the Potteries at the moment are The Marauders, whose "That's What I Want" on Decca has been enjoying healthy sales.

Now the North's supremacy in the Top Ten is being challenged by a string of Midland combos, five of them guided by Columbia recording boss, Norrie Paramor, the man who has helped stars like Cliff Richard, The Shadows, Frank Ifield and Helen Shapiro into the charts.

As a result of an intensive talent-spotting campaign in the Midlands, Mr. Paramor has signed five top Birmingham beat groups to recording contracts—Danny King and The Royals, The Beachcombers with Pat Wayne, Keith Powell and The Valets, Carl and The Cheetahs, and Mike Sheridan and The Night Riders.

Spearheading the Paramor bid to put the "Brum Beat" in the Top Ten are Keith Powell and The Valets with "Come On and Join the Party," Pat Wayne singing "Go Back To Daddy," and the Beach-

By Dennis Detheridge

combers' instrumental, "Mad Goose."

Other Midlanders on disc include Tipton born Nicky James singing his own composition, "My Colour Is Blue," on Pye, and Coventry's Johnny B. Great and The Goodmen, whose "School Is In" has been released by Decca.

Strong contenders for chart honours are also likely to be another well-known Birmingham unit, Denny Laine and The Diplomats, who are under contract to E.M.I. They have attended sessions under A & R man John Burgess,

continued on page five



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Redcaps (over) p. 6

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OUR AIM

HELLO. We feel that we have arrived at a most appropriate time. Never before has there been so much activity on the beat front in the Midlands.

Liverpool started the ball rolling. Now the Midlands is ready to take over. We have the groups. Let's hope they have the luck the Merseysiders have enjoyed.

Our aim is to give a comprehensive coverage of the complete Midlands beat and jazz scene. It will fill a gap that has existed for far too long.

Future issues will contain a greater percentage of stories from outside the Birmingham area. We are appointing top musical journalists as correspondents in every Midland county.

We'll not always praise groups. We will never flinch from criticising when we feel that it is justified. That is our duty.

On the other hand, we are not afraid of receiving criticism. In fact, we will welcome it. It will enable us to ensure that "Midland Beat" is the sort of newspaper you want to read.

In this issue, we have an exclusive interview with John Lennon, one of The Beatles, but otherwise the entire content is restricted to Midland items.

That will always be our policy. We want "Midland Beat" to be the voice of the Midland beat scene. We will make it heard throughout the country.

EX-TORNADOS STAR IN THE MIDLANDS

Ex-Tornados pianist and vocalist, Norman Hale, is now leading his group, The Motions, at sessions throughout the Midlands.

Apart from Norman, the group has three other musicians from the Southampton area—Eddie Byrne (lead guitar), Terry Fallon (bass) and George Tuck (drums).

The newly-formed Midland Top Ten Theatrical Agency, based at Murdoch Chambers, Corporation Street, Birmingham, is using the group extensively.

"The girls in the Midlands have taken to the group and we have had lots of 'phone calls asking about a fan club," said one of the agency partners, Mr. Phil Myatt.

CONTEST SUCCESS FOR THE STRANGERS



Victory smiles from Ken Jackson and The Strangers.

One of the beat groups through to the quarter-finals of a "Midland Search for Tomorrow's Stars" contest, organised by the Birmingham Hospitals Broadcasting Association, in conjunction with Ansell's Brewery Ltd., are Ken Jackson and The Strangers.

This Henley-in-Arden group, winners of a heat at the Viking, Ulleries Road, Solihull, comprise: Ken Jackson (vocals), Richard Hodges (lead guitar), John Dwyer (rhythm guitar), David Powell (bass) and Terry Ablethorpe (drums).

Material from the quarter and semi-finals will be used in programmes to entertain patients in hospitals in the Birmingham area and arrangements are in hand for the final to be broadcast "live" to patients.

Registered

The group's manager, Mr. A. J. Shellard, told "Midland Beat": "The group is a registered company, with each member equal partners. Takings have gone through the company to pay for electronics and our own mini-bus.

"The lads are ready to step into professionalism but two things are holding them up. They must wait until Richard and Dave finish further education courses and an income of £300—£400 a week must be guaranteed.

"We have played in Birmingham, Solihull, Plymouth, Bournemouth and many other places—but at the Memorial Hall, Henley-in-Arden, half the money taken at our Saturday night dances is given to the hall committee for improvements to the building."

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WELCOME BACK, ROCKIN' BERRIES!

Home From Continent



The Rockin' Berries—(left to right) back, Bryan "Chuck" Botfield, Clive Lea, Geoff "Red" Turton; front, Terry "Nippa" Bond and Roy Austin.

BACK in action in the Midlands, after appearing in Germany almost without a break since April, 1962, are the Rockin' Berries.

Despite this long period abroad, however, they still managed to achieve the distinction of becoming the first Birmingham group to have a single issued on a major label.

In fact, their debut disc, "Wah Wah Wah Woo," backed by another of their own compositions, "Rockin' Berry Stomp," was released while they were still in Germany.

How did their introduction to Decca come about?

Well, when they sent home to the mother of one of their members a tape of a German concert they had just completed, she immediately sent it on to Decca producer Peter Attwood.

An audition was arranged and, when the boys returned to Birmingham for a brief holiday, they were told to report at Decca studios in two days' time.

With borrowed equipment (their own was in Germany) and five new songs written in the 48-hour spell, the Rockin' Berries entered the studios.

They came out a few hours later with a recording contract and their first disc, "Wah Wah Wah Woo," taped.

The Rockin' Berries (named after their idol, Chuck Berry) were

originally formed in 1959 at the Moseley School of Art. They broke up when leaving school but reformed in 1961.

Then they turned "pro" and went to Germany in 1962. They have been appearing there ever since, working seven days a week.

The parents of the group take a keen interest in their activities and the secretarial work is done by the mother of lead guitarist Bryan "Chuck" Botfield.

Now meet the Rockin' Berries:—

CLIVE LEA, 21, vocalist, is a composer by trade. He won the "Elvis Presley of the Midlands" award in 1959. He enjoys jazz.

BRYAN "CHUCK" BOTFIELD, 19, is lead guitarist and harmony vocalist with the group. He was a trainee commercial artist and started the original Rockin' Berries.

TERRY "NIPPA" BOND, 20, plays drums with the group. He was a hospital clerk before he became a professional musician.

GEOFF "RED" TURTON, 19, is vocalist, rhythm guitarist and pianist. He originally had his own group and was a trainee toolmaker.

ROY AUSTIN, 19, is bass guitarist and vocalist. He was an engineering draughtsman before joining the Rockin' Berries.

Incidentally, Decca solo singer, Jimmy Powell, sang with the Rockin' Berries prior to his launching by Decca.

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SPENCER DAVIES HOLLERS



MIKE BROWN SHOUTS

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NEWS

Diamonds Sparkle in Germany

LOCAL group living it up on the German night club circuit at present are Ray Dane and the Diamonds. They flew over on September 4th, after a successful summer season at Skegness, and were expecting to stay for a month, possibly longer.

Opening with a seven-day stint at the Top Ten Club, Hamburg, they moved on to Hanover and have been there ever since.

"Life is very hectic here and playing in the club is very tiring," drummer Robbie Barnes wrote me from Hanover.

His colleagues in the group—formed professionally five months ago and based in Nottingham—are lead guitarist Birdie, from Linby, bass guitarist Johnny Varno, Mansfield, and vocalist Ray Dane, Eastwood.

R & B seems to be catching on more in Nottingham lately. During the past month Hucknall blues singer Tony Jackson has fronted groups at Nottingham Boat Club and the Town Arms, Trent Bridge.

Both sessions went down well, and more is to come.

Nottingham Jazz Club have the wailing Graham Bond Quartet booked to appear at the Dancing Slipper, West Bridgford, in October, and a date is being arranged for the Manfred Manne Blues Quartet in November.

Rock sessions are still proving popular at the Dancing Slipper on Fridays.

Fourteen-year-old schoolgirl Linda Scott, from Nottingham, has high hopes of a singing future.

Last month (September) she got her first big break with an appearance on B.B.C. Television's "6.25 Show," and sang two numbers—"Momma" and "I Enjoy Being a Girl."

Linda, who lives at 4 Beaconsfield Street, Hyson Green, and attends Scotholme Secondary School, wants to take up show business as a career. She has been singing in local charity shows since she was eight. F.J.

R & B COMES TO BIRMINGHAM

THE first Rhythm 'n Blues club to be launched in Birmingham attracted so many fans to the opening session that the "house full" sign was displayed less than an hour after the first enthusiasts had been admitted. The result was that over 100 latecomers had to be turned away.

"It shows beyond all doubt that Birmingham wants Rhythm 'n Blues," said Brian Allen, one of the men behind the Monday sessions at the Golden Eagle, Hill Street, situated in the shadow of Birmingham Town Hall.

"I must admit that people had told me that there would be no support for the club. The packed crowd at the opening session and subsequent evenings makes it quite clear that there is a tremendous following for R & B in the city."

In the absence of local groups specialising in Rhythm 'n Blues, Brian Allen and his partner, David Postle, started by presenting various Midland musicians at the sessions under the name Rhythm Unlimited.

The outcome was the unusual sight of prominent modern jazz instrumentalists like Johnny Collins, Harry Wilkes and Tony

Peers playing alongside members of The Renegades and other beat exponents.

The most authentic touches of Rhythm 'n Blues were provided by Spencer Davies, whose singing and 12-string guitar and harmonica work brought roars of appreciation from the fans.

Spencer now appears at the club each week with the R & B Quartet—Birmingham's first authentic regular R & B combo.

Spencer said: "I have been wanting to experiment with this type of music for some time. This club has provided me with the opportunity. I think it is a shot in the arm for the music scene in Birmingham."

Photographs by
JIM SIMPSON

MEGAN PLAYS A SWINGIN' BASS!

EVER come across a beat group with a female bass player? Well, you should lend an ear to the Solihull group, Al Jackson and The Applejacks, previously known as The Jaguars.

In 19-year-old Megan Davies, they boast possibly the only girl in the Midlands playing bass guitar with a rock group.

Blue-eyed Megan is engaged to the group's drummer, Gerry Freeman, who is a 20-year-old insurance clerk. He has been playing drums four years.

Vocalist Al Jackson is an 18-year-old hairdresser . . . but the other three members of the group are still at school.

Lead guitarist Martin Baggott (16) and 16-year-old Donald Gould (piano-clavioline) are at Tudor Grange Grammar School and rhythm guitarist Phil Cash attends Lyndon High School.

How do people react when they find the group has a female bass player?

Their manager, Mr. A. D. Smith, commented: "They sometimes think it's a gimmick . . . until they hear Megan play. Then they really listen."

"Base" of The Applejacks is Solihull Civic Hall, where they have been appearing every Monday since mid June. They have also visited such towns as Evesham, Atherstone and Nuneaton.



Megan joins in the fun with The Applejacks.

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from front page

First Birmingham-based group to have a disc to its credit were the Rockin' Berries, who returned from Germany to find their own composition, "Wah Wah Wah Woo," among Decca's current releases. Another original composition, "Rockin' Berry Stomp," is the flip.

And other Birmingham groups in which Decca have been showing a lot of interest are Gerry Levene and The Avengers and Johnny Neal and The Starliners, who have already paid several visits to the company's London studios.

One result of all this interest in the Brum Beat by the recording companies is that local fans now have the satisfaction of hearing the city's top groups on Radio Luxembourg and T.V. programmes like A.B.C. T.V.'s "Thank Your Lucky Stars."

The best opportunity for Midland groups to show their paces on television has been provided by ATV producer Reg Watson through his programmes designed specially for teenagers.

Norrie Paramor is confident that Birmingham still has a big contribution to make to the beat scene in this country.

He told "Midland Beat": "All the Birmingham groups I have signed have a lot of potential. It's my intention to spread their record releases out during the autumn months."

"The beat boom is far from subsiding and I think Birmingham will help to keep it flourishing . . ."

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BEAT ON TELEVISION

ITV BREAKTHROUGH FOR MANY GROUPS

THERE was a time when hardly a beat group in the Midlands could claim to have appeared on television. Now more and more are getting this opportunity—especially in ATV's popular "For Teenagers Only," which presents different groups every week.

The man who is giving the groups this welcome chance is producer Reg Watson, who once gave Midland jazz groups a similar break by introducing traditional and modern combinations alternately in his weekly "Cover Girl" programme.

Mr. Watson told "Midland Beat": "I have received applications from hundreds of groups throughout the Midlands about appearing in 'For Teenagers Only.' Holding auditions has proved a big task.

"But I think that the standard of the groups I have heard indicates that the Midlands has a lot to offer the beat world. Some of our groups most certainly deserve national recognition."

The lucky resident artistes in "For Teenagers Only" are a Staffordshire unit, Steve Brett and The Mavericks. A Worcestershire girl, Mair Davies, also appears with the group in the show.

Of 15-year-old Mair, who lives at Redditch, Mr. Watson says: "She's fabulous. She takes direction well and I think she has a great voice. She is still young but she has a tremendous potential."

His comment about Steve Brett and The Mavericks: "They are all-round family entertainers. We have them to please the teenagers—

but it's obvious that the older folk and children like them, too."

Songs featured by Mair in "For Teenagers Only" include "Lover Come Back," "Up On The Roof," "In Summer," "I Wonder," "I Want To Stay Here," "Da Doo Ron Ron" and "It's All In The Game."

As reported in our front page story, Midland groups have also been appearing in ABC T.V.'s nationally networked "Lucky Stars" show.

But opportunities for local groups on B.B.C. Television remain restricted, apart from "The 6.25 Show," occasionally introducing a group from the Midlands.

Unfortunately, B.B.C. T.V. in the Midlands does not have a show along the lines of A.T.V.'s "For Teenagers Only," otherwise prospects would be a lot brighter.

Nevertheless, the situation has improved. At least Midland beat groups now have some incentive with the knowledge that it is possible to earn a T.V. appearance.

But competition is keen. Hundreds of groups apply for auditions and only a few are lucky enough to be given a spot in a programme.

"That's why groups cannot spend too much time on improving their performance," a T.V. producer told "Midland Beat." "It is in their own interests."



The Redcaps rehearse for A.B.C. T.V.'s "Lucky Stars Summer Spin"—(left to right) Mac Broadhurst (tenor sax), Mike Walker (bass-vocals), Alan Morley (drums), Dave Walker (rhythm guitar-vocals) and Roy Brown (lead guitar-vocals).



Janice Nicholls welcomes another Birmingham group, The Bruisers, to "Lucky Stars"—(left to right) Bobby Corral (vocals), Max Julian (bass), Janice, Don McGinty (drums) and Lee Sterling (lead guitar-vocals).

THE SATELLITES AND MAVERICKS IN "FOR TEENAGERS ONLY"



Stevens and The Satellites appearing in A.T.V.'s "For Teenagers Only"—(left to right) Mike Clifford (rhythm guitar), Tony Green (lead guitar), Malcolm Briddy (drums), Lee Stevens (vocals) and Roger Gauntlett (bass).

Producer Reg Watson (right) and singer Mair Davies during a "For Teenagers Only" rehearsal, with Steve Brett and The Mavericks—(left to right) John Millington (lead guitar), Gary James (drums), Steve Brett (vocal and rhythm guitar), and Dave Holland (bass).

Two "Caverns" in Town!

DOUBLE ANSWER TO MERSEYSIDE HAUNT

LIVERPOOL'S famous Cavern Club, where the Beatles and other top Merseyside beat outfits gained much of their early experience, has inspired the launching of similar ventures in the Midlands. In Birmingham, at least two promoters have begun sessions with a "Cavern" theme.

Opening session of "The Brum Kavern Club," which occupies the premises at Wordsworth Road, Small Heath, featured The Searchers whose debut disc, "Sweets For My Sweet," raced to the top of the hit parade.

"We'll be bringing lots of other top groups to play at the club," said one of the organisers. "But there will be plenty of opportunity for the fans to hear local groups, too. We aim to present the best of the local and national beat scene."

The accent is on Midland groups at "The Brum Beat Cavern," which holds sessions in the basement premises previously occupied by Jazzland, Birmingham's first seven-nights-a-week jazz club.

The Defenders and Danny King and The Royals shared the stand at the inaugural meeting. Other groups featured at the club include The Beachcombers, Mike Sheridan and The Night Riders, The Shantelles, Norman Hale and The Motions, Johnny King and The Diamonds and Keith Powell and The Valets.

Men behind the "Brum Beat Cavern" are Bob Smith, area manager of the George Cooper Organisation; Phil Peters, manager of the club; and Barry Mason, manager of Tommy Bruce and The Bruisers.

"Something that pleases me a lot," said Bob Smith, "is that the musicians who play in Midland

rock groups are looking upon the club as a place where they can meet socially.

"I should imagine at least one member of every rock 'n roll band in town came along during our first fortnight. A hundred left their business cards—all hoping to have an opportunity of playing at the club."

Apart from bench seats in a small alcove, the "Brum Beat Cavern" provides no seating, a deliberate policy by the organisers, who maintain that visitors prefer to move to the music of the groups.

"The idea has gone down very well," commented Bob Smith. "Everyone stands up and moves with the result that they are all dancing whether they like it or not! Fortunately, they all seem to like it."

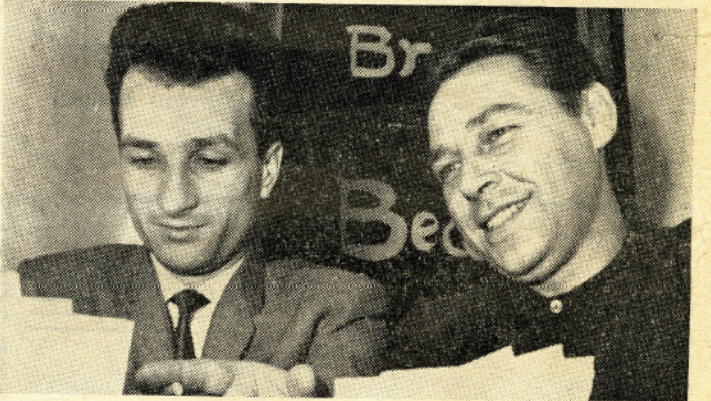
More than 500 joined the "Brum Beat Cavern" in a fortnight. There is a membership fee of 2s. 6d. and an admission charge of 5s. on Friday and Saturday, 4s. Sunday and 3s. mid-week.

One of the local beat group artistes who has visited the club is Lee Stevens, whose group, The Satellites, has appeared in ATV's "For Teenagers Only."

"I think the atmosphere, created by the dim lighting and low archways, is fantastic," he remarked. "I decided that I would enjoy working here with the group as soon as I stepped inside."



In action at "The Brum Beat Cavern," shortly before the disbanding of the group, are three members of The Shantelles—(left to right) Chris Kefford (bass), John "Muggsy" Morgan (rhythm guitar) and Chris Jay (lead guitar).



Smiles from Bob Smith (left) and Phil Peters at "The Brum Beat Cavern" as they read fan mail from visitors to the club.

SO THIS IS WHERE THE BEAT BOYS GO ON THEIR NIGHT OFF!



Members of four Midland groups get together at "The Brum Beat Cavern"—(left to right) Mike Walker (Redcaps), Alan Smith (Firebirds), Ian Mallett (Renegades) and Lee Stevens (Satellites).



Another informal gathering of Midland beat musicians at "The Brum Beat Cavern"—(left to right) Ray Bridger (Firebirds), Mick Smith (Blue Venoms), Tony Cas (Blue Venoms) and Dave Bradley (Spyders).

WORCESTERSHIRE WHISPERS by Graham Jones

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For a cathedral city with an estimated 67,000 population, the Worcester scene is as lively as any other in the country. Sixteen "native" groups work the city, and no less than eight competent outfits are based in neighbouring Malvern.

Behind this vital atmosphere is a small band of promoters, publicity men and R & B enthusiasts, who have really created the scene over the past twelve months.

Previously, there had been small skiffle groups, and a host of nebulous outfits forming and dissolving—very often without playing a single date.

Not one outstanding group has remained intact from those days, but those now operating are determined to stay together and gain recognition.

Which means Worcester is very much self-contained, and constantly suspicious of "foreign" groups. Indeed, a group agency was recently formed with the prime object of stopping Birmingham groups playing at Worcester venues, and the city's beat fans can rarely be persuaded to flock to a dance promoted by an out-of-town agency.

If outside links must be formed, Worcester seems to prefer West Country connections. At least three Worcester booking agents admit they're keen on the West Country sound, and now the city is exchanging groups with Swindon, whose outfits pack the city's halls every time they appear.

Competition's hot for the top Worcester line-ups. Non-one would be foolish enough to put them in order of talent, but certainly the Cossacks, Jaguars and Renegades—listing them alphabetically—are in the running for supremacy.

Continental tours are in the minds of the Cossacks, who probably give the city's most impressive performance, but can't match the Renegades for size, power and punch.

The Continent's also in the mind of the Jaguars, who are booked for an audition for the Star Club, Hamburg, following a successful television audition.

In April, the Jags became the first local group to cut a record. This was "Opus to Spring" c/w "The Beat," issued by Worcester's own Impression label. Though nationwide distribution never materialised, nearly 500 copies were sold in Worcester, and the disc can be heard on Juke Boxes throughout the south-west Midlands.

New E.M.I. signings Denny Laine and The Diplomats, representing Warwickshire, topped the bill in a "Three Counties Beat Show" at

Kidderminster Playhouse on Sunday, October 6th.

Worcester's power-pack outfit, the Renegades, went "a bomb" when they became the first group from Worcester to break on to the West Country scene, at Swindon's Club "X" recently. The six old boys and pupils of the city's Royal Grammar School went south by arrangement with Worcester's Lansdowne Agency, who have now received a string of return bookings for the R & B group, and any other Worcester groups available.

New to the Worcester scene: The 'Ot Spot Club, presenting a different group each Thursday throughout the year. Designed as a rendezvous for groups and their fans, the 'Ot Spot sports a licensed bar, coffee and "coke" bar, record library and lounge area. To link with the city's other rhythm club—the monthly St. John's Rock Club—the two are considering an exchange membership scheme. Any club wishing to join the 'Ot Spot in a similar scheme should write to the Joint Secretary (Membership), 33 Rainbow Hill, Worcester.

Tragedy struck the Worcester Heralds recently. Looking for a new lead guitarist they chose Brian Hymas, a promising 16-year-old.

But Brian never knew his luck. Before the group could contact him he died after a road accident near his Lower Broadheath home.

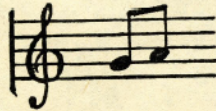
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STARDOM FOR SUNDOWNERS?

LOCAL commentators think
Malvern's Sundowners may be
on the brink of stardom . . .

Why don't the Jaguars take on a singer . . . ?

Rumours say Ollie Bullock—the Cossacks' drummer—is joining a star group. The Redcaps mentioned, but Ollie denies the story . . .

Cossacks made pilgrimage to Merseyside recently. Came back Big Beat fans . . .

Renegades' new suits are very popular . . .

The return of the Jays to the Worcester scene is eagerly awaited. Their new term at the City of Worcester Teachers' Training College starts soon. Leader John Fisher freelanced on Merseyside at same time as Beatles were occupying the Cavern stage; bass guitarist John Murfin was the Hunters' singer before Frank Kelly.

Wild stories fly round about the future of the Whirlwinds, who have lost some of their popularity, it seems, since the Spring.

Rumours of a new singer for the group were not confirmed by leader John Dobson, but later proved true. Also suggested are further changes in the group as at present constituted . . .

Vampires are now the Severn Beats. Their change of name comes as the group makes renewed impact on the Worcester scene. Line-up includes pupils of the city's Cathedral King's School . . .

The Mayor of Worcester, Coun. Mrs. Hilda Lettice, likes the Mavericks—also King's School boys. She says they have rhythm. One

Maverick is Pete Webster, son of the city's Town Clerk . . .

John Smith, leader of the former leading Worcester group Johnny Baskerville and the Hounds, is forming a new outfit simply titled the Baskervilles. They rehearse at the 'Ot Spot, are already being considered for outside bookings . . .

When this paper went to press, the Saints/Pioneers confusion was still unsolved. Who was who and which was which?

Eagles: name of a new group from Warndon, Worcester . . .

News of a Worcester All-Girls group very soon . . .

Freelance drummer Ollie Palmer was originally left-handed. He corrected himself, and now plays equally well with both hands.

Heralds' big advertisement campaign paying dividends . . .

Betrayers' rhythm Len Lewis wed on September 28th. He and his bride are 18 . . .

Drummer Tony Hill of the Spartans was taken ill during a 'Ot Spot appearance recently. Heralds' Tommy Ratcliffe deputised . . .

Mavericks have new drummer . . .

After much effort, the Cherokees of Bredon are now known in Worcester . . .

Questions were asked about the visit to Worcester Catholic Young People's Club of Malvern's Razz and the Wanderers . . .

Where would Bromsgrove's Fairy-boys rank in Worcester? Fairly high, I imagine . . .

Liverpool's Fourmost very popular in Worcester after package show appearances. Will they get bookings in the city?

The Beatles wore Leather Jackets, Jeans and rolled around the Floor . .

We Couldn't Afford Echo!

says John Lennon

"Midland Beat" Editor DENNIS DETHERIDGE conducted this interview with JOHN LENNON, one of THE BEATLES, when Britain's top group visited the Midlands recently for a one-nighter.



D.D.: What sort of guitars do you play?

J.L.: George and I have two Gibson Jumbo's. Paul has an old Hofner bass from Germany. You can't get them over here. I have a Rickenbacker I got in Germany. It's American and I use it on stage a lot. George has just got another Gretsch—that's three he has. I've ordered another Gibson. We sound rich to me. I got the Rickenbacker years ago but I like it. I keep hold of it. I've a Jumbo. It's about a year old so I need a new one. Ringo's playing Ludwig. He got those a few months back. He used to play Premier. The amps are Vox.

D.D.: How do you eat?

J.L.: Well, we're normally on the road. One-nighters, that's the main thing. When we wake up in the morning, we have breakfast. If we are up late, which we generally are for one reason or another, most of us don't feel like eating a proper breakfast. We have Kellogg's and fruit juice and tea, and when we go on the road we catch a coach and stop for lunch. But if we miss the coach, which we sometimes do, we have to go by train, so we eat on the train. Sometimes we starve for about eight hours and then fill up.

D.D.: What type of accommodation do you prefer?

J.L.: Hotels. We try and get them as good as we can. We always try and find one of the best because you get a good sleep. It's usually quiet and the beds are better and you get better service if you want a late call. The crummier the hotel, the less service you get.

D.D.: Do you regret playing only 20 minutes on stage?

J.L.: No. We got into the state before when we could not play less than an hour without getting any feeling. It took us about three-

quarters of an hour and then the last quarter of an hour I suppose was the best and it was a bit dodgy at first. But now it kills me to play over 20 minutes or half-an-hour.

D.D.: Is it now difficult to find time to add to your original material?

J.L.: Yes, but we don't need as much, you see, because we are only playing 20 minutes. Before, we learned new songs every other day as they came out because you need them for an hour. But for 20 minutes you do your own records, a couple of your own songs from an L.P. or something like that and a couple of the ones you like as well.

D.D.: Do your harmonies come naturally?

J.L.: We just find the notes and if we like them we use them.

D.D.: How do you set about writing a number?

J.L.: Paul and I just sit down. Sometimes it's based on an idea or a title. I don't know—there's no set way. I've done it with a mouth organ.

D.D.: You don't write it down, though?

J.L.: No.

D.D.: Have you ever done instrumentals?

J.L.: When we were out in Germany, we played eight hours a night, so we did instrumentals. We did everything.

D.D.: Is there any reason for not using echo?

J.L.: Original reason was we couldn't afford it but we never had a big craze for it. As we went to Germany they were just coming out and we thought of getting one. But by the time we came back, after five or six months, we decided we didn't want it. We got an idea of what we wanted to play and the echo didn't come into it.

D.D.: Do you have cars?

J.L.: We've got cars but we never take them around. Hardly ever. Only if it's near home. We've got a van for the equipment. On these tours, everybody goes in the coach.

D.D.: Has your name ever been on the side?

J.L.: No, never. Well, we've had a few vans. They always get wrecked, written all over and people come to the house with bits of The Beatles' van and windscreen wipers and things.

D.D.: Do you stick to a set type of stage suit?

J.L.: No. Before the records, we wore jeans and leather jackets. They all liked the James Dean kick. Then just a "T" shirt because for a couple of hours it was good and we used to roll round the floor and all that business. The first suits we had were ordinary sort of mohair type. Then we got another with a velvet collar, then those with the round collar.

D.D.: Has your sound changed much?

J.L.: I think it might be a bit quieter. Sounds odd if you've heard us because we probably sound dead loud. But we're just a bit quieter. I think probably we're all slightly better at our instruments, just through time, not through hitting the jackpot or whatever you call it.

D.D.: Have you always been called The Beatles?

J.L.: No. We have had a few names. At one time we were a skiffle group called The Quarrymen.

D.D.: Do you compose your songs quickly?

J.L.: "From Me To You" was about an hour. The "B" side was about two days and we thought the "B" side was the "A" side, but, well, it just happened. So did "Please Please Me." The better ones of our songs just come and the others are just put together when we've thought of it.

D.D.: Do you have any tips to beat groups?

J.L.: I never listened to any of the tips that I read in papers so I don't like giving tips. You just do it your own way. The only thing I can think of is not to necessarily practise because we didn't practise for months on end sometimes, for good or bad. Originality is the main thing and you either think originally or you don't.

D.D.: You've either got it or you haven't?

J.L.: No, I don't think it's as bad as that. You can develop it. We couldn't have been original when we came out. We came out doing Elvis and everybody was the same as everybody else.

The Midland JAZZ Scene *by Dennis Detheridge*

Although Birmingham Parks Department's jazz festival at Lightwoods Park was a big success, the city's first International Jazz Festival flopped.

"The festival suffered an exceptionally heavy loss," admitted promoter John Singer, whose event was staged at Bingley Hall.

THREE THOUSAND were expected for the Friday night session with Kenny Ball, the Dutch Swing College, Clyde Valley Stompers and Ed Corrie. EIGHT HUNDRED turned up.

It was anticipated that Saturday's marathon, which continued from 3 p.m. till midnight, would attract at least TWO THOUSAND. Only FOUR HUNDRED attended.

John Singer was hoping that rock would enable him to recover some of his jazz losses.

But the lack of advance bookings for his proposed Birmingham Beat Festival at Bingley Hall prompted him to cancel the event.

"Birmingham has reversed the trend and proved that jazz festivals are still popular"—that was the comment of a Birmingham Parks Department spokesman after the annual jazz festival at Lightwood Park.

Nearly 10,000 attended the event to hear ten bands, including Chris Barber, Terry Lightfoot, Mike Daniels, Fairweather-Brown, Ken Colyer, Second City, Mike Burney, Ken Ingram and the West Side.

Other attractions at the festival, which cost only four shillings in advance or five shillings on the day, included jam sessions with Kenny Baker and an exhibition in the "Hall of Jazz."

Still going strong is the Down Town Jazz Club, which meets every Monday at the Perry Hall Hotel, Bromsgrove. The club, organised by promoter Tom Duckett, will be celebrating its fifth anniversary next February.

Midland groups booked to play at the club in recent weeks include Nick Williams Central City Jazzmen, Johnny Clifford Quartet, Ken Rattenbury Jazzmen, Colin Willets Trio and Mick Lewis Jazzmen.

Other outfits appearing at Down Town sessions are Delph Quartet, West Side Jazz Band, Bev Pegg Trio, Northside Jazzmen, and Riverside Jazzmen.

★

Personnel changes have been few and far between for the Second City Jazzmen during the seven years that they have been playing together.

So it has come as a surprise to their admirers at Birmingham's Midland Jazz Club to find the band making three changes within its ranks in a month.

First shock announcement was that trumpeter Alan Hewitt was leaving the band to take up a business appointment in Devon. Johnny Richards was signed to take over.

Then singer Val Wiseman, who has resisted the urge to join a name band for some time, took the plunge by accepting Monty Sunshine's offer.

Change number three concerns the piano chair. Promotion at his educational post brought Roy Fisher's resignation and his place has been taken by Ken Freeman.

"We haven't decided whether or not we will seek a replacement for Val," said leader Stan Keeley.

Most popular band on the Worcester Jazz scene are the Ca-er Argo Jazz Band, led by stocky clarinetist Brian Smith. They reside at the Friday City of Worcester Jazz Club in Pierpoint Street—meet extra popularity through the city's Teachers' Training College students.

Ca-er Argo became the first jazz group to appear at the 'Ot Spot Club, Rainbow Hill, on September 26th, when they played the first of the club's planned monthly jazz nights.

On the other side of the city, in St. John's, jazz night is Thursday, when the Easy Riders play trad at the Bush. Guesting on September 12th was Birmingham's Mike Burney. He was given a great welcome by a packed house.

★

Trumpeter Kenny Baker and clarinetist Monty Sunshine were the guest stars with Ted Heath and His Music in a "History of Jazz" concert at the Coventry Theatre on Thursday, October 3rd.

The concert, part of the annual Coventry Festival of Music, included a swing era section featuring the music of bands like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and Woody Herman.

Other sections: cool jazz and bop—Mulligan, Gillespie, etc.; the impact of Stan Kenton and progressive jazz; the flirtation with classical music—Russo, Graham.

Ted Heath provided the narration and Laurie Chescoe added extra percussion to Derek Warne (piano), Johnny Hawksworth (bass) and Ronnie Verrell (drums).

Walsall trumpeter Ken Rattenbury is now working on more ambitious jazz works following the success of his "The Seven Ages of Man" broadcast on Network 3.

For this novel jazz work, Ken took his inspiration from Jaques's soliloquy in Shakespeare's "As You Like It." It was interpreted by some of the finest jazzmen in Britain.

Ken conducted an orchestra comprising Kenny Baker (trumpet), Keith Christie (trombone), Bob Efford (tenor sax), Don Honeywill (baritone), Bill Skeats (flute), Derek Warne (piano), Arthur Watts (bass), Terry Walsh (guitar) and Tony Kinsey (drums).

"I have one or two other ideas for unusual jazz works," revealed Ken Rattenbury. "The problem is finding time to work on them because of my commitments with my band."

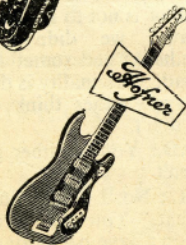
★

The new season at the Birmingham Jazz Record Society—meetings are held every Friday at the Bell Hotel, Livery Street—began with Peter Bright discussing small-band Ellingtonia in a recital titled "Blues A Plenty."

Arthur Hobson gives a talk entitled "Let's Get Organised" on November 1st. Other speakers during the season include Don Rainbow, Dave Crellin, Roland Mason and Barry Seager.

Before becoming a record appreciation circle, the club was known as the Hot Club of Birmingham and the Birmingham Jazz Club. It was founded in 1947 and claims to be the city's oldest jazz club.

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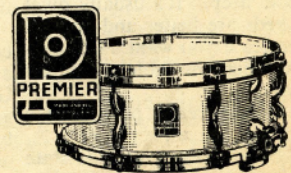


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