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No. 28. JANUARY, 1966.

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ad p.2.

● Ian Campbell on Folk ● Brum Beat ● The Spencer Davis Column ● Jazz by Les Page ● Popularity Poll



Finders Keepers



Pictures — JIM SIMPSON

The Montanas

Something shared by two of Wolverhampton's top groups, Finders Keepers and the Montanas, is the enthusiasm of their manager, Roger Allen, who spends as much time as possible with the groups he represents.

Roger doesn't send his groups off to Germany then sit back in Staffordshire hoping that everything goes off well for them. He makes a point of visiting the venues they are booked into to check on the conditions for himself.

Mr. Allen went with Finders Keepers to Cologne and accompanied the Montanas to Duisburg and Frankfurt. And he was with another of his promising groups, Sheila Deni and the Black Diamonds, in Wuppertal.

THE MAN BEHIND THEM

Apart from sending his own groups to Germany, Roger negotiates appearances for others over there, but any groups paying a visit arranged by his agency have the satisfaction of knowing that he has first-hand knowledge of the venues concerned.

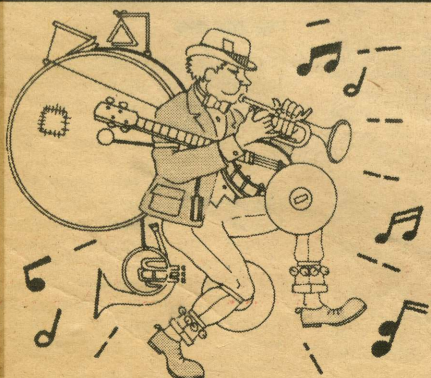
"I would be pleased to hear from any professional groups interested in working in Germany," comments Roger Allen, whose offices are at 30 Merridale Street West, Wolverhampton.

The Montanas record for Pye — their first release was "All That Is Mine Can Be Yours" — and will be having a new disc in the New Year.

Their line-up is: Johnny Jones (lead singer), Bill Hayward (lead guitar), Terry Rowley (bass guitar) and Graham Crew (drums).

So far, Finders Keepers have only had a record issued in France and Germany, but they should have a British release soon.

They comprise: Roy Kent (lead singer), Alan Clee (lead guitar), Jake Elcock (bass guitar), Ralph Oakley (rhythm guitar) and David Williams (drums).



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MIDLAND BEAT

Published Monthly — Price 1s.



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B.B.C. POLICY...

ANYONE with a crystal ball enabling him to discover the next trend in pop music would be able to make a fortune. But no-one has such an aid to making easy money, of course.

Nevertheless, as we begin a new year, one thing is certain — by the time 1966 draws to a close, names will be topping the bill that are unknown at this moment.

It is to be hoped that some of those new billtoppers will be from the Midlands. A little more originality from our groups and singers — a fact we keep emphasising — and it could be a big year for local talent.

Let's also hope that the encouragement from the BBC will continue. Discs by Midland artists are being given a spin in "Midland Beat" and groups are featured in another Midland Home Service programme, "One Night Stand".

Now the BBC should take this policy a step further by giving more scope to local combinations when it comes to being heard on the Light Programme or national Home Service.

After all, we are already convinced here in the Midlands that we have outfits on a par with any anywhere in the country. Listeners elsewhere should get a chance to find out.

Dear Sir...

BEING regular readers of "Midland Beat", we find it on the whole very pleasant and informative, but there is one thing however which continues to annoy us every month.

This is the article "Meet the Group", which is surely meant

to fill us in on the personal details of the groups.

Why then, do they insist on trying to be humorists when giving these details. We find their answers to the questions highly un-funny and would much prefer to have the proper details.

It seems to be the trend for

each group to make its answers even more ridiculous than the one before. When will they realise that they are musicians and their attempts to become comedians fail miserably.

Marina Davies, Susan Smith,
602, Stratford Road,
Birmingham 11.

More names for the Group Register

More and more groups are having their name entered on the "Midland Beat" Group Register. It's one way of guarding against another group coming on the scene with your name. Here are the latest additions: Why? (Birmingham), Reverbs (Coventry), Four Percent Plus One (Stoke-on-Trent), The Apper-Clarse

(Worcestershire), The 5 Degrees (Birmingham) Comancheros (Leicester), Some Other Guys (Sutton Coldfield), The Hangmen (Birmingham), The Mustangs (Lincolnshire), The Odd Fellows (Birmingham), The Nationals (Birmingham), The Closed Circle (Warwickshire), and The Nationals (Birmingham).

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Telephone 25301

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of

THE MONTANAS
FINDERS KEEPERS

SHEILA DENI & THE BLACK
DIAMONDS

THE MOTIONS

THE SOUNDS OF 3

WHO are the Midlands most popular groups? The quarterly "Midland Beat" popularity polls provide us with the opportunity to find out. So if you are a fan of a particular group — make sure you complete and post off the form below.

'Midland Beat' 1965 Winter Popularity Poll

"MB" 1965 WINTER POLL

To: Winter Poll, "Midland Beat", Windermere House, Wake Green Road, Moseley, Birmingham, 13:

I nominate the following group as the best in the Midlands:

Name of group: _____

Town: _____

My name is: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

No-one may vote more than once. Only votes on the above form are eligible. No votes can be accepted after mid-day on Monday, January 24th.



COMPLETELY down in the dumps and seriously thinking of chucking the whole thing in. That was the Sorrows, from Coventry, in the middle of August.

Vocalist Don Farndon was working for a building firm; bassist Phil Packham was doing car spraying; drummer Bruce Finlay was a rep; Wes Price was doing odd jobs, while fellow guitarist Pip Witcher was doing nothing.

Only two local bookings a week kept them active — and all this for a professional group, which had already had two records released by Pye. Both went unnoticed.

Then they decided to make one final effort to achieve recognition. They recorded

"Take a Heart" under John Schroeder's shrewd direction.

The rest of the rags-to-riches is now well-known to most people. Radio London liked the disc, plugged it like mad, and before long the Sorrows had become the first Coventry group to make the Top Twenty.

Says Phil Packham: "We were really fed up and down in the dumps at the time the record was released, and we decided that if this one didn't make it then we would split."

"We thought the record stood a good chance," Pip Witcher interposed, "but we were certainly making no predictions at the time."

All the lads were confident that following their success,

the path was now clear for other Coventry groups to make the charts.

"I wouldn't say there was a "Coventry Sound," but there is plenty of talent in the city," said Phil. "The Matadors and the Mighty Avengers definitely deserve to succeed — they are both top rate."

Wes Price jumped in to pay tribute to the Coventry youngsters who supported their gigs at the Pilot twice a week when things were really bad for them.

"They kept our morale up. If those dances had flopped I don't know what would have happened to us," he commented.

DENNIS MORGAN

JAZZ

by LES PAGE

THIS month has seen some outstanding jazz played by both local bands, nationally-known ones, and visiting U.S. stars.

First, Bud Freeman, a living reminder that the tenor sax is neither Stan Getz nor Emmanuel Paul, and that Chicago jazz swung.

Accompanied by Britain's band that most nearly plays Chicago style, that of Alex Welsh, Bud Freeman quickly showed that he was absolutely at home — in more ways than one, for he likes this country, and our jazz bands.

Since he appeared at the Midland Jazz Club for the club's 18th birthday celebrations, the tumultuous reception by one of the largest crowds to attend an M.J.C. function since George Lewis was there, must have let Bud Freeman see how we like him.

He and the Alex Welsh band swung easily on every number.

ON December 11, "Jazz Extra" in Birmingham Town Hall promised the devotee of classic New Orleans jazz a feast. Unfortunately, I have to report that the star band, the Mike Daniels Big Band, was disappointing.

Anyone who attempts to play jazz in the style of the early thirties big bands — Russell, Henderson, Ellington, is up against it. Any big band today is a labour of love and generally insufficient rehearsal time is available.

A big band should, however, in my opinion, swing

Outstanding month

and roar. "Give Me Your Telephone Number" and "Saratoga Shout" did neither; outstanding was John Chilton on trumpet.

I also thought the Daniels smaller group, the long-standing Delta Jazzmen, inferior to the band which contained Des Bacon, Gordon Blundy and John Barnes. Birmingham Town Hall is not the best place for bands, big or small, to achieve balance and cohesion.

What saved the day for me, and other fans, were two local outfits: the Zenith Hot Stompers, who played classic Morton and Oliver jazz better than Mike Daniels' band.

They also overcame the Town Hall acoustics. Then, making its first appearance on such a show, was the Tulane Brass Band, led by Dan Pawson (who was in fine form), modelled on the marching bands of the Crescent City who played at parties and funerals over 50 years ago when we all came in.

The Tulane Brass Band contained members of the Artesian Hall Stompers, Keith Gerrard's Band and the Zenith Hot Stompers and how the audience loved them!

Rhythm section consisted of bass drum, snare drum and sousaphone, and they had only "Just a Little While to Stay Here."

The Munster Men played jolly Celtic folks songs jolly well.

PIANISTS are thicker on the ground: the Keith Gerrard band now has a fine performer on the ivories; likewise the Zeniths aforementioned.

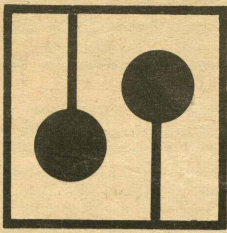
After this we look for decent instruments in clubs. Ragtime will come back? On hearing the Gerrard band at "Salutation Stomp" I remarked how Colyerish they sounded; they retorted that it is the George Lewis-Kid Howard sound to which they aspire.

I like 'em anyway. Alan Elsdon blew some fine trumpet with his band at "Le Metro" club (where Monty Sunshine plays on New Year's Eve). I am glad to see, too, that again jazz is performed at the Moat House Club — Basil Wainwright's Midland All-Stars.

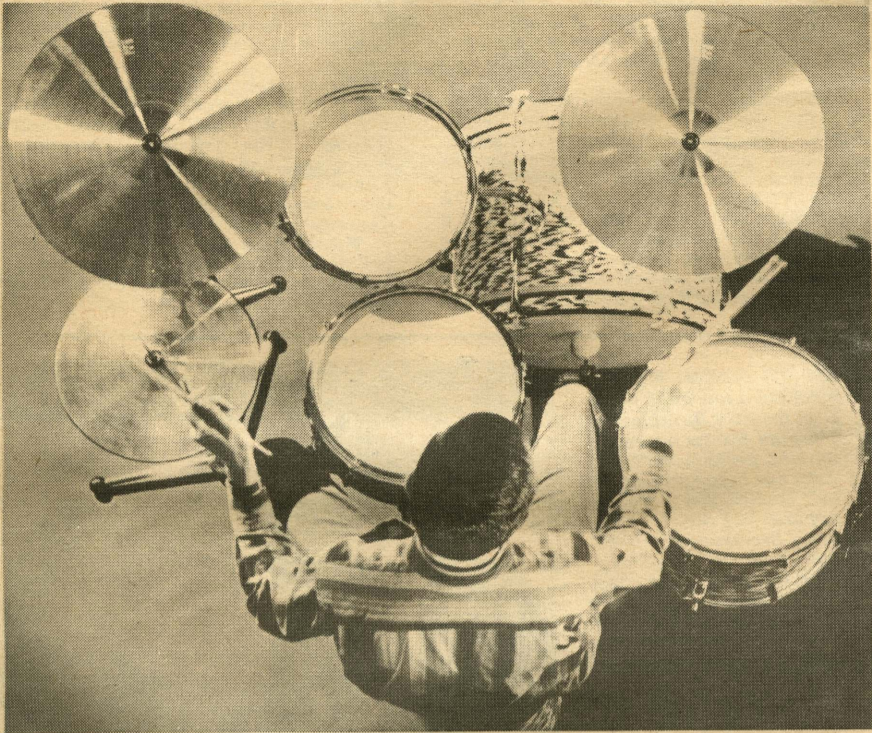
NEW ORLEANS blues and barrelhouse pianist Champion Jack Dupree returned on December 13 — University of Aston (Designate) "Tek City J.C."

Also on the bill: Mike Burney and Diz Dizley. Diz was billed to appear at "Jazz Extra" but couldn't make it. We liked him at the "Grotto" Club in Bromsgrove Street.

With all the fine jazz heard this month, the New Year seems distinctly promising.



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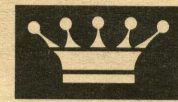


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Jan Campbell

Tells why he's glad his group is not in the hit parade

With groups like the Seekers, and the Silkie enjoying hit parade success, it's only natural that I should be asked about my attitude to the Top Ten when it comes to my own group. We don't want a hit. It's a terrible life in the Top Ten, frantically keeping yourself there, because once you've been in and come out, you're a has-been until you can get back in again. The main bulk of our repertoire is traditional music. It's folk music and we treat it with the respect that we think folk music deserves. When we do a concert, we present as wide a representation as possible of what is going on in the folk song revival today — traditional songs, unaccompanied ballads, swinging group songs that are still traditional, etc. And we also sing contemporary songs, some of them treated as solos and some by the group, even though we do not accept them as folk songs. You see, the revival is producing a lot of contemporary songs, which are not folk songs, but they are not anything else either. They are not pop or beat. They cannot be classified. They are simply contemporary songs in a folk idiom. And we sing them because they are reported songs — they represent what is happening in the folk revival. So we find ourselves making two kinds of records — contemporary songs and traditional music. We don't allow the traditional music to be corrupted and we try to treat the other stuff in a contemporary fashion. If we make any musical concessions in order to achieve wider record sales, it is by making contemporary records, because they are the type that are likely to get wider sales through not being restricted in their appeal to enthusiasts of folk music. I don't see anything wrong with this policy. In fact, I'm quite happy with the situation.

'MB' TEN-PIN LEAGUE

	Won	Lost	Points
1. Tierney's Fugitives	45	3	90
2. Andy's Clappers	26	17	52
3. Tombstones	19	17	38
4. The Hangmen	19	9	38
5. Applejacks	20	16	36
6. Tresspassers	18	10	36
7. Midland Beat	18	12	36
8. John Bull Breed (taken over points from Misfits)	0	4	32
9. The West Side	6	18	12
10. Moonrakers	1	27	2

Hi-game: Tierney's Fugitives 635; Hi-series, Tierney's Fugitives 1732.
Hi-game (individual): Graham Walsh 210; Hi-series (individual), Graham Walsh, 522.
Matches are played at 12 noon every Sunday at the ABC Bowl, Stirchley, Birmingham.

YOU MUST BE ORIGINAL

-says Dave Hale

DAVE HALE has led four groups in 18 months. Here he gives his observations on local groups — based on his own experience leading them.

My main feeling in the business of pop music is the fact that if you want to get to the top you must be as original and commercial as possible.

That is the failing of so many groups from Birmingham and the Midlands, because they just copy certain other groups down to

the last detail.

They copy not only their appearance but also their acts and records note for note.

Instead, they should try to be original and realise, as I do, that a song is a song and it is open to many forms of variation in tempo and the way it can be sung and performed.

Groups just don't realise that they stand a better chance of getting on if they would be original and commercial rather than just copying the Top Ten.

Most groups are just interested in creating a noise instead of having a balance of sound which can be enjoyed by the audience.

And they are also incapable of putting on a show for people.

Another bad point with groups is the lack of keeping up a good standard and trying to improve all the time.

It's a pity that they haven't taken note of the wonderful advice given month after month in the "Midland Beat" leading articles.



It's nothing unusual to come across a beat group at the A.B.C. Bowl, Stirchley — it's where matches in the "Midland Beat" Ten-Pin Bowling League are held — but seeing a group setting up their amps on the approach to the lanes is hardly a common sight.

This is what happened at Stirchley on Friday, December 17, when the Moonrakers, winners of the "M.B." Autumn Popularity Poll, gave their services at a Carnival Christmas Party in aid of the N.S.P.C.C.

'MB' DIARY

HAVE you got your 1966 "Midland Beat" diary? They have been selling like hot cakes — but there is still time to get your copy.

The diary is a "must" for everyone connected with the beat scene in the Midlands.

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THEATRE SPECIAL

looks at 1966 and all that...

by LESLIE DUNN

ALL WHAT? And well may you ask for no fewer than 11 of our Midland theatres offer no change for the merry month of January, and of course, with an eye to emulating last year's boom business, they wouldn't have it any other way.

Much of what was conjecture last month has now become fact, so we'll leave the theatre special in the sidings and merely confirm this year's Christmas time-table starting with a list of theatres where the seasonal offering continues unchanged throughout January.

Birmingham Alexandra, "Robinson Crusoe" with the Barron Knights, Denny Willis and Joy Turpin.

Birmingham Theatre, "Humpty Dumpty", with Ken Dodd.

Birmingham Repertory, "Treasure Island", with Ewen Solon as Long John Silver,

Wolverhampton Grand, "Jack and the Beanstalk", with the Rockin' Berries, Stanley Unwin

Sonny Jenks and Fay Lenore. **Coventry Theatre**, "Tom Thumb", with Jimmy Clitheroe, Nat Jackley, Hope and Keen and Charlie Caironi.

Derby Playhouse, "Red Riding Hood", with the resident company.

Leicester Phoenix, "One for the Pot", the Whitehall farce by Ray Cooney.

Northampton Royal, "Dick Whittington", with the resident company.

Nottingham Royal, "My Fair Lady", continues its record-breaking season.

Oxford New, "Aladdin", with Billy Fury and Lauri Lupino Lane.

Cheltenham Everyman, "Cinderella", with the resident company.

Now for the others. **Coventry's Belgrade** who opened up with "Toad of Toad Hall" on December 14th conclude on the 8th and open on the 10th with the Mermaid Theatre success "Lock Up Your Daughters", a musical play adapted by Bernard Miles from Henry Fielding's "Rape Upon Rape".

The Kidderminster Playhouse wind up Cinderella on the 15th; but have nothing else booked at the time of going to press.

The Nottingham Playhouse plays "A Christmas Carol" and "The Country Wife" until January 8th and then opens on the 12th, with Harold Pinter's "The Caretaker".

The opening of "As You Like It" follows on the 17th and on the 19th "A Man For All Seasons". The last two productions will play for one week each before the company takes them on their West Africa tour for 13 weeks.

Rather part of the company, because the theatre's most active director, John Neville, after helping to launch the tour in West Africa will return to Nottingham to continue with the second half of the season.

The Victoria Theatre at Stoke offers "A Christmas Carol" until January 15th and a first night on the 18th with Pinter's "The Birthday Party".

Jan. 24th sees the last week of Moliere's "Tartuffe" and the 31st heralds the last week

of "Mata Hari".

All that remains now is The Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford upon Avon, which throughout January presents a great double out with the Sadler's Wells Opera Company until January 14th, followed by the Royal Ballet from the 17th until February 5th.

The Sadler's Wells repertoire includes "The Gipsy Baron" by J. Strauss, "Carmen" by Bizet; "A Masked Ball" by Verdi; "The Barber of Seville" by Rossini and "Faust" by Gounod.

The repertoire of The Royal Ballet comprises "La Fille Mal Gardee", "Les Sylphides", "The Lady and the Fool", "Hamlet", "Solitaire", "Giselle", "The Tribute", "Pineapple Poll", "Coppelia" and "Swan Lake" with Margot Fonteyn and Rudolph Nureyev generating their own particular kind of brilliance on January 21st and 24th only.

There's not much point in my urging you not to miss this remarkable phenomenon, I suppose every seat in the place has been sold twice over.



...LY'S success in Australia — their "Wake Up My" reached No. 4 in the Aussie charts — was just the for this photograph when they visited the BEC 2 at the Radio and Television Exhibition at Birmingham Bull Ring Centre. Organist Jimmy O'Neill wasn't to make it — so they posed with the kangaroos to complete the picture!

ROUND ABOUT



DESPITE the fact that she has been a patient in Ward G of the East Birmingham Hospital for the past eight months, pretty Avril "Kim" Betts has been carrying on as co-manager of the popular Size Six. Twenty-two-year-old "Kim" has been working very hard on behalf of the group by writing to promoters and agents after engagements since she entered hospital.

THE first plane-load of sixteen thousand Hohner harmonicas — all types — has arrived in London to be quickly whisked away to music shops all over the Midlands and the rest of the country.

Hohner report a fantastic and undiminishing demand for their diatonic and chromatic harmonicas. About a million have always sold annually here. But the enormous new wave of universal interest in these instruments, created by pop music, threatens to overwhelm the Hohner factory's continuous 24 hour production schedule.

Many music shops are still waiting for deliveries. A further plane-load is expected, in an effort to catch up on the backlog of orders. By flying them in, Hohner helped meet the Christmas rush for their ever-popular harmonicas.



ONE of the first visitors to the Lionel Rubin Drum Center at 12 Moor Street, Birmingham, was Clive Davis, a Birmingham drummer now working at a club in Manchester.

The Drum Center occupies the former Ringway Music premises as their range of band instruments and amplification is now to be found at their new showrooms at 16 Moor Street.

At the Drum Center, Lionel has the complete range of Ludwig, Gretsch, Slingerland, Rogers, Trixon, Olympic and Beverley kits, as well as a large selection of Avedis Zildjian cymbals and all other drummers' accessories.

BIG NAMES IN THE SMALL HOURS

- that's Tito's



Pat Carding — a hostess at Tito's.

THE latest Birmingham night spot to open with a policy of presenting the cream of the Midlands groups into the small hours of the morning is Tito's in Rosehill Road at the junction of Villa Road and Soho Road.

The enterprising young men who designed the club — builders John Weaver and George Shough — must surely be Britain's youngest night club proprietors.

Says George Shough: "It was while we were designing other clubs that we got the idea for Tito's. We're pleased to say that it's a great success and we are about to extend the club."

"We are attracting the type of members we want. They seem to appreciate the intimate atmosphere and the way we always makepoint of mixing with our members."

Among the top local groups to appear at Tito's — the go-ahead Barr Enterprises agency have been appointed booking agents for the club — are Carl Wayne and the Vikings, Sombreros, D'Fenders, Primitives and the up-and-coming Froggy and the Monopoly.

It cost £10,000 to build Tito's and facilities include a restaurant offering good juicy steaks, etc. It is also possible to enjoy gambling at the club.



Tito's co-owners — John Weaver (left) and George Shough. Below: The Staffords' Hugh Stirling and Mal Dean performing at the club.



Tito's

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Dandy

MEET THE GROUP

spotlights THE SOMBREROS

The Sombreros are one of Birmingham's most popular groups and are greatly admired by other groups — a sure indication of their ability.

And they also have the advantage of being under the management of Mike Carroll, one of the most efficient and well-liked personalities on the "Brum Beat" scene.

His ambition to see the Sombreros get to the top in 1966 is one that should be realised very soon.



Name Stan Homer
Birthdate 2-2-45
Birthplace Birmingham
Personal points Age 20, 5ft. 11ins., blond, blue eyes
Instruments Guitar
Educated St. Nicholas Press Ltd.
First appearance George Hotel
Hobbies No time
Previous groups Sombreros
Occupation Printer
Favourite colour None
Favourite food Fillet steak
Favourite drink Gaelic coffee
Favourite clothes Smart suits
Favourite composer Goffin & King
Favourite group Everley Bros.
Likes Money
Dislikes Dishonesty
Tastes in music Most
Pets Val
Personal ambition To succeed
Professional ambition To write chart topper
New Year resolution To make a hit record



Name Peter Smith
Birthdate 16-10-44
Birthplace Birmingham
Personal points Age 21, 5ft. 6ins., brown hair brown eyes
Instruments Tambourine
Educated Turves Green Sec. Mod.
First appearance George Hotel
Hobbies Sleep
Previous groups None
Occupation Pattern-maker
Favourite colour Blue
Favourite food Streak & chips
Favourite drink Brown & mild
Favourite clothes Anything smart
Favourite composer Goffin & King
Favourite group Hollies
Likes Sleep
Dislikes Albert
Tastes in music Assorted
Pets Sam (dog)
Personal ambition Money
Professional ambition To get on
New Year resolution To like Albert



Name Ken Underhill
Birth date 24-12-42
Birth place B'ham City
Personal points Age 22, blond hair, green eyes, 5ft 10in.
Instruments Guitar, piano, bass
Educated In the right things
First appearance Butlin's baby show
Hobbies Sub-Aqua diving
Previous groups Barons
Occupation Shop manager
Favourite colour Blond
Favourite food Chinese
Favourite drink Rum & black
Favourite clothes Low cut dresses
Favourite composer Lennon
Favourite group Dave Brubeck Quartet
Likes Travelling
Tastes in music Very wide
Personal ambition Money
Professional ambition Someone to recognise my songwriting
New Year resolution To work harder (if possible)



Name Grant Kearney
Birth date 17-1-44
Birth place Birmingham
Personal points Age 21, 5ft. 9ins, blond hair
Instruments Guitar
Educated Tinkers Farm Sec. Mod.
First appearance George Hotel
Hobbies Beer
Previous groups None
Occupation Towrag
Favourite colour Red & Blonds
Favourite food Steak
Favourite drink Rhubarb juice
Favourite clothes Zoot suits
Favourite composer Goffin & King
Likes Everley Bros.
Dislikes Shorthand Typists
Tastes in music Hypocrites
Pets Everything
Personal ambition Albert
Professional ambition See Group succeed
New Year resolution To improve



Name Albert Carr
Birth date 16-2-46
Birth place Birmingham
Personal points Age 19, brown eyes, brown hair, 5ft. 5 ins
Instruments Drums, bugle
Educated Don't think so
First appearance Northcross Youth Club
Hobbies Beer
Previous groups Echoes.
Occupation Printing compositor
Favourite colour Blue
Favourite food Streak
Favourite drink Brown & Mild
Favourite clothes None
Favourite composer Lennon & McCartney
Favourite group Everley Bros.
Likes Smart clothes
Dislikes Insincerity
Tastes in music Wide
Pets Grant (The Towrag)
Personal ambition To be a good drummer
Professional ambition To get on

BO BERRY takes you ON THE BEAT

DOES Gordon Andrews go home for lunch?... Spare a thought for the Applejacks' road manager — the one gig he couldn't accompany them on was their week's cruise on the Queen Mary!... Mike Carroll is doing great things for the Sombreros.

APPLEJACKS had to join the Seamen's Union for that Queen Mary job... Latest group to have their equipment stolen — the Brum Beats... It's not true that John Singer applied to Ken Dodd for a job as one of the Diddy Men in the Birmingham Theatre panto...

WHO said that Mark Stuart is papering his walls with back-issues of a certain Sunday newspaper?... Every group should see the Barron Knights in panto at Birmingham Alexandra Theatre...

WATCH out — Charlie's on the Move (Ear! Ear!)... Mike Sheridan's Lot have got the right Mann for the job... Two local groups now taking off Jimmy Saville — who's following who?... It would

be apt if Gerry ("Crossroads") Levene was signed as an extra for "The Avengers"...

VOGUES should have a "liberal" sprinkling of bookings with Den Caney in charge... Success of "Keep On Running" couldn't have happened to a nicer bunch of guys...

LIONEL Rubin described by Norman Vaughan as "the Dave Clark of the Thirties"... BBC can stop looking for a successor to Richard Dimbleby after Mike Sheridan's "ATV Today" interview!... Much concern about our Wally!

CLUB scene in Brum is getting mighty crowded... Did Pete Gittings want ten per cent of the John Gainer-Malcolm Ford pools win?... Drummer Norman Allen (phone: SUT 3727) looking for pianist doubling organ for summer season stint... Cheetahs' "Whole Lotta Love" entered Radio London charts at 35... And they now have a hat-trick of "Ready Steady

Radio" appearances... Ex-Ugly's organist John Gordon now leads the In-Set... Polydor Records showing great interest in Con-Chords and U.K. Bonds.

IRONIC that The Tombstones and Sam Spade and the Gravediggers should both change their name to The T (Tea) Set... T Set lead guitarist Grenville Williamson became engaged to Pat Hearney on Christmas Eve... Oxford's Fables planning to add sax and organ...

SYNDROMES (King's Heath) have disbanded... Plenty of support for the Midlands Beat Group Competition being sponsored by Jones and Crossland, at the Locarno, Birmingham... New Rover for George Clay... NO "TEARS" shed when Diddy Men didn't turn up for Locarno contest... Wolverhampton's Dean King and the Conquests have become Our Generation... Stapleford (Notts) has a group called the New Generation...

Deleted from the Philips catalogue: "Mecca" (The Cheetahs), "Goodbye Baby" (The Cheetahs), "That's What They All Say" (Dave Lacey), "Many Things From Your Window" (Christine Holmes) and "It's Got To Be Love" (Size Seven)...

NO-ONE disagreed when the Fourlanders sang "We've Gotta Get Out of This Place" in Locarno contest... Phil Myatt raving about Ugly's next single... Big Movement in the Nicky James camp...

FORMER members of the Cherrystones and Colebeats comprise Birmingham's Lucky Charms... Ex-Jugs 'O Henry singer Pete Hodges and organist Dave Grounds now with the Blueshounds... Why? to be congratulated on their work for charity...

SOLIHULL group the Tributes the delight of the debs... Lots of signatures on letter to "M.B." asking for feature on Oxford group the Acropolis... The local music scene has a champion in Michael Ford at the BBC...

RAY Willets (Moonrakers and West Side) one of the most enthusiastic managers around... Dhobbies' Paul Sebastian is said to look just like Paul McCartney... Herbie's People can't claim their "You Thrill Me To Pieces" failed to make the grade because of lack of plugs... Bert Weedon "silenced" by the Moonrakers when they "blew up" the Birmingham Savoy's microphone power system while setting up during his act... Moonrakers considering adding a trumpet.



Knak Win Malvern contest

FORMED just over a year ago, The Knak, Pershore's pop quartet, were the winners of the Malvern Young Groups contest.

This was promoted jointly by Malvern U. D. C. and Webber Promotions, the finals being held on Saturday, December 11, at the Winter Gardens, Malvern.

Formerly known as the Swerves, the Knak, under the capable guidance of Mr. Ray Summers, founder and manager, fought their way into the semi-finals, eliminating several older groups in the process.

They entered the finals together with fellow town groups the Tambla Modes and the Ravons, well-known Wores. all-girl group, who had won and retained the Webber Trophy twice previously.

The Ravons did not, however, play off for the prize again since they are now M. U. members. After a tremendous play-off, the Knak were announced as the winners, much to the delight of their many supporters, who included complete families of the groups' members.

Though their average age is now only 15, the lads have gained a good following in their home town. This was their first contest and it seems likely that they will emulate the Ravons example by becoming Worcester's youngest ambassador's of beat.

Line-up is Dereck Felton-lead vocals; Keith Hadley-rhythm vocals; Mike Marshall - Bass; and drummer Mick White.

Their prizes: the trophy and a very worthwhile bonus in the form of a television audition. The trophy was presented by Malvern U. D. C. chairman, Cllr. J. V. Tompkins.

Mr. Tompkins, congratu-

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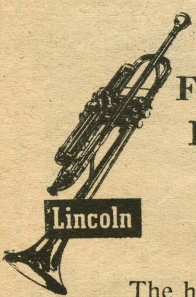
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BRUM BEAT

A BIG shake-up on the Brum Beat scene was taking place as we went to press. It was centred around Carl Wayne's decision to disband his long-established Vikings to form a new group, the Move.

Staying with Carl in the new group are Vikings Ace Kifford and drummer Bev Ralston. John L. Mann moves over to Mike Sheridan's Lot while Sheridan lead guitarist Roy Wood joins the Move.

Another well-known Birmingham group affected by Carl Wayne's new "mod" outfit is Danny King's Mayfair Set, whose Trevor King is leaving to play with the Move.

●●●●● SECOND City Sound make their bow on disc with "Tchaikovsky One" (Decca F.12310), an adaptation of Tchaikovsky's Concerto in B-Flat Minor, Opus 23.

And Mike Sheridan's Lot have another single out on January 7 in the form of a Jackie de Shannon composition, "Don't Turn Your Back On Me, Babe", coupled with "Stop, Look, Listen".

The Ugly's have their third single released a week later. The "A" side is "A Good Idea", an original by Bob Burnett, Jim Holden and Steve Gibbons. Flip-side is another Ugly's song, "Quiet Explosion".

●●●●● STATEMENT from Andy's Clappers: "We are now in a position to give up playing at night clubs. One of the main reasons is that you feel terrible the next day. We vowed that as soon as we were in a position to stop doing them we would do so. Happily, that position has now been reached."

●●●●● TEENAGERS attending the newly-inaugurated Tuesday beat sessions at the Rubery Cinema get value for money with two groups, free juke box and various prizes — all for only four shillings.

The three men behind the sessions are the cinema manager, Mr. Gerry Amdor; Mr. D. Rigby, well-known for his sound equipment; and Mr. Trevor Howells, who is in the amusement machine business.

Groups who have appeared at the sessions so far include Brum Beats, Crescendos, Couriers, Cimarrons, Vogues, U.K. Bonds and Ugly's.

●●●●● Two of the world's greatest female jazz singers — Ernestine Anderson and Dakota Staton — have both been to Birmingham in recent weeks to star in cabaret.

Our picture (top) shows Ernestine at the Elbow Room with her backing group, the Johnny Patrick Trio, comprising Johnny Patrick (piano), Ken Ingerfield (bass) and Lionel Rubin (drums).

The other photograph is of Dakota Staton at the Cedar Club with proprietor Eddie Fewtrell (rear left), his brothers and "Carlos", the popular "Crossroads" personality, who introduced Miss Anderson.

●●●●● WEST SIDE nearly "went west" when they were caught in the floods returning from a venue near Shrewsbury. They pulled out just in time with the water rising to within two inches of van floor level!



Jazz singers Ernestine Anderson (above) and Dakota Staton were both in Birmingham recently. See Cot 1.



IMAGINE asking a promoter the name of the group at his next session and getting the reply: "Why?" He wouldn't be impertinent. Why? is actually the name of a new Brum group.

The group comprises: Dennis (Rube) Royston (lead guitar), Ivan (Rook) Bryan (rhythm guitar), Dave Walker (bass guitar) and Maurice (Jake) Greenburg (drums). Vocalist is David (Ruby) Royston.

After the group's first public appearance at the mobile Radio and Television Exhibition in Birmingham, they were mobbed for autographs by fans who had enjoyed their contribution to the show's talent spot.

by Dennis Detheridge and Pete Gittings

REDWOODS Folk Group is quite a family affair. It's a brother and sister set-up featuring Ann Carr and her brothers Albert and Terry. They live at Lea Hall. Says Albert Carr: "We have been enjoying our appearances at Mrs. Mary Regan's ball-rooms and hope to make a record soon. We write most of our own material."

●●●●● JIM PHILLIPS senior, looks exactly what he is — the tough and determined manager of a beat group. Jim Phillips junior, looks exactly what he is — a young, but competent guitarist with dad's group the Prospectors.

The Prospectors are very much a family concern because in addition to supplying the manager and lead guitarist, the Phillips family also include the vocalist, Alan, and musical advisor, mum.

The group's full line-up is three guitarists, Jim, Pel and Eddie; an organist, Lou; drummer Phil; and Alan, vocals and harmonica.

The group, which has only recently started to accept bookings, has been together ten months.

●●●●● PLEASANT surprise for the Ian Campbell Folk Group on arrival in Belfast was finding two of their records in the city's Folk Top Ten. Their "Boys of Wexford" was at the top with "The Sun Is Burning" in fifth place.

●●●●● WITH Pat Wayne earning plenty of compliments for his recent disc, "My Friend," he has heard that his previous record, "Come Dance With Me," backed with "I Don't Want To Cry," has been released in America on Tower Records.

The review in "Billboard" spotlights it as a Top 60 Tip and comments: "Bright newcomer with a touch of the Presley sound makes a solid debut with this rock dance beat number. Well written and produced."

●●●●● CAN any group member beat this? Graham Amos, bass guitarist of the Peeps, has received six parking tickets within four months. Graham has been given the ticket twice in London and once in Tredegar, Leeds, Carlisle and Morecambe. Any advance?

●●●●● ENJOYING life in Germany are the Birmingham group the Birds and Bees. It looks as though it will be some time before they are back on the local scene because they have just signed a contract guaranteeing them 12 months engagements — including TV and recording work.

●●●●● TWO days after advertising in the local Press, Dave Lacey, who fronts the Corvettes, received 21 applications from drummers wanting to fill the vacant spot.

The new Corvette is ex-Juryman John Dudley, who joins just when the group are looking for numbers for their next record. Chris Hayes left the group because he wants to play R. and B. and the boys are strictly C. and W.



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THE 5 Degrees had plenty to smile about when this picture was taken. They had just heard that they had passed a recording test. The boys are Mike Gazey, Mel Eden, Roger Hopton, Mick Raynor and Bern Simms.

BACK from a month in Germany are the Four Drifters — Tony Lake (lead singer), Graham Swan (lead guitar), Keith Hodgetts (bass) and John Bellison (drums).

"We had a great time and can't return soon enough," report the West Bromwich lads. "One place we played is even thinking of renaming the club the Drifters Club after us."

CAUGHT in action at the Plaza Ballroom, Handsworth, is Ray Bridger, who shares the vocal with Nigel Wright on the Cheetahs' latest disc, "Whole Lotta Love," playing



the part of two brothers who have fallen out over the same girl.

It's not surprising that it's a song with a punch since it was written by the Cheetahs in conjunction with heavy-weight boxer Johnny Prescott. On the "B" side is another Cheetahs-Prescott original entitled "The Party."

The Cheetahs undertake their first national tour in January when they join the Walker Brothers Show. It is their first tour since joining the Maurice King agency.

Spence says

I WOULD like to thank all those who bought and liked our record and made it such a success.

We have been really knocked out by the reaction to "Keep on Running" at a time when we thought we were destined to make number 35's for the rest of our lives!

Anyway, we are very thrilled. Who knows, they might even let us into the Cedar Club!

THERE has been formed an aggregation which must have the longest name in the group business. It is "The Explosive Sound of Jimmy Cliff with the New Generation featuring Ayshea and Pete Hodges." Try and get that on a single! From the sound of the name, you expect something big, and that's what you get. The group actually consists of the old Bluesounds with three singers of widely differing styles and personalities.

It's rather on the lines of the Steam Packet, but with more musicians in the shape of trumpet and saxophone.

Perhaps this could be the start of a trend, a sort of junior James Brown idea with groups instead of the big band.

The big advantage seems to be that a visual act can be presented with a solid bunch of reliable lads at the back and the singers free to move around all over the stage and, in Jimmy Cliff's case, all over the audience as well. Because there are three singers, then each one of them does a short solo spot and can put more into this than if he or she had to carry the whole session.

It seems to be a great idea, more interesting for the audience and less exhausting for the artists. Anyway, the best of luck to Explosive Sound of Jimmy Cliff etc., etc.

DOESN'T Pete Hodges look like Steve, or the other way around. Come to think of it, they do look like one another the other way around.

NEW YEAR Resolutions: Muff has resolved to spend more money — still on himself, but he's going to spend more money.

Pete has resolved not to smoke his cigarettes on stage, only Muff's.

Steve has resolved never to make New Year's resolutions.

I have resolved to change my religion and have five wives. Follow that!

YOU may have read that we are planning to move to London. Everybody seems to think that, as we are now making a good living, we are forsaking Birmingham, the city where we started.

This is not the case. We are buying houses in London as investments and for the convenience of living close to our manager and agent, and, most important of all, the Press.

It is necessary for us to be immediately available for Press interviews, etc., because they don't wait for anyone.

We shall still play in Brum as often as before and continue to feature on the late-night scene, so don't think we're leaving for good. The Watch Committee can't get rid of us that easily!

WE SAW the Berries and the Moodies on "Ready, Steady, Go!" a little while ago. It was a very Brummie show with lots of back-slapping, hand-shaking and cries of "Give our regards to everybody at home."



Spencer Davis

A CERTAIN music shop on Smallbrook Ringway is opening a new drum department to be presided over by the dreaded Lionel Rubin, the Shah of Northfield.

Not many people know that Lionel started his life as a percussionist by playing gong in J. Arthur Rank films. This explains his imposing physique.

Apparently this new drum shop is really for Lionel to have somewhere to practise.

YOU may remember that we played on the Jazz Jamboree lately. We were the only group on the show, the rest being big bands comprising the best jazz musicians in the country.

We didn't expect a great reception but we also didn't expect the complaints in the Press and the cold-shoulder from the musicians.

Some members of the audience objected to having a group on the bill and so did the players.

They may have been justified as it was supposed to be an all-jazz show and a traditional annual event, but we would like to point out to them that we weren't paid even expenses for the performance as it was a charity show, and that we gave up one of our few days off at very short notice.

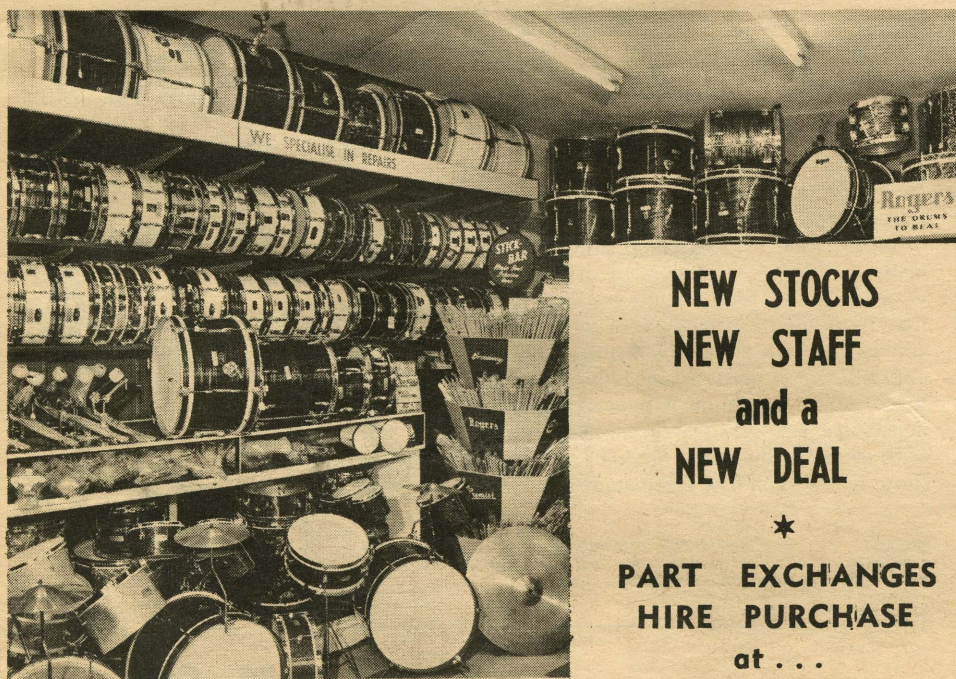
Still, you can't please all the people all the time.

HOPE you had a good Christmas. We had a whole week off.

Steve was given a pair of furlined karate boots and crippled twenty-three over-privileged teenagers at a Women's Institute Rag Ball. Muff was given a statue of the Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, which he worships.

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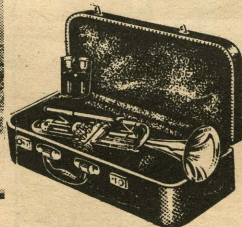
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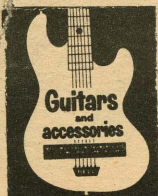
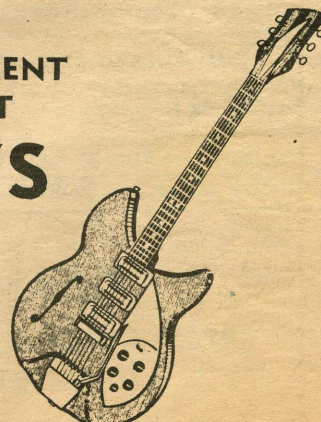
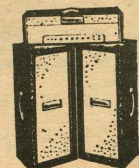


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WHY I HAD TO HAVE AN ORGAN...



The boys don't have it all their own way when it comes to playing an organ with a group. Nineteen-year-old Jan Jeffries is the organist with the well-known Birmingham group, Andy's Clappers. Jan had a classical training and had no difficulty in acquiring the technique of playing an organ. She finds the instrument is ideal for the group's distinctive surfing sound.

MY FIRST beat group instrument was a clavoline and I had no trouble in mastering the technique after eight years studying the piano.

I began playing clavoline with the Vektors, the popular Solihull group.

But I soon found that the clavoline had its limitations, due to the fact that it was not possible to depress more than one key at a time.

I then left the Vektors to join another local group, Syndicate One, taking the clavoline with me, but changing over to the electric piano shortly afterwards.

The immediate advantage was that I was now able to play chords as well as having the benefit of an amplified piano. The chords on the piano I used with the clavoline had never really cut through.

My next move was to my present group, the Moonrakers, my first few months with them being with the electric piano. But I decided the instrument would have to go the day we heard a group called the London Federals in Bournemouth.

They had a Vox Continental organ and I was knocked out by the way he took the lead in an interpretation of "Exodus". He was holding on to his notes in a way that would have been impossible for me on my electric piano.

So I went along to Jones and Crossland when we got back to Birmingham to inspect their range of organs. I wasn't quite sure which organ to acquire and I was anxious to have the best one for the job.

The sound we were after was along the lines of Georgie Fame and Zoot Money—but I knew the cost of the sort of



Here are just a few of the organ-ised groups in the Midlands: Moonrakers, Wes. Side, Ugly's, Blueshounds, Showmen, Andy's Clappers, Hangmen, Ambassadors, Brum Beats, Con-Chords, Freda Pelican Mule Train, D'Fenders, Tommy Burton Combo, Unit I, Modernaires, Johnny Neal Combo, Free-ways, D'Fenders, Five Dimensions, John Bull Breed and Satans.

by BRAM BEERE

Organist with the Moonrakers

organ played by them was out of my reach.

So it was a case of my finding a cheaper type of organ that would enable me to reproduce the same kind of sound. There were a number of alternatives but I finally settled for a Farfisa Compact.

I have now been using it with the Moonrakers for four months and it seems to have brought us luck because we won the "Midland Beat" Autumn Popularity Poll shortly after I bought it.

I have found the organ has been a big asset, particularly when it comes to filling in back-ground, since I am now able to hold on to a note even longer than the saxist.

Now that I have had a chance to play an organ with

a group for a few months I would have no hesitation in recommending the instrument to groups with the three-guitars-and-drums line-up.

I have found it quite easy to graduate to organ because of my studies as a pianist—I actually studied as a classical pianist—but it's a natural step for a rhythm guitarist with some knowledge of a keyboard instrument.

There was a time when an organ was considered to be too bulky to be carried around by a beat group. But there are now a number of excellent portable models.

An organ can be a real boon to a group, providing extra colour and zest to every performance. I have no hesitation in suggesting this New Year Resolution to groups—get ORGAN-ised for 1966!

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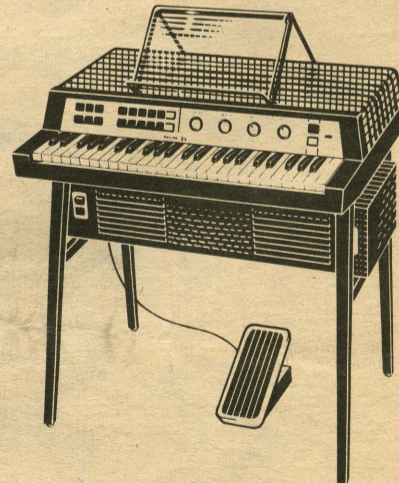


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"OPPORTUNITY Knocks", said Hughie Green, and it certainly did when no fewer than three Notts acts appeared on the same TV show.

Vicky and the Kordettes from Kirkby-in-Ashfield won the studio audience's vote but it was Mansfield's Barrie Brothers who won on the final reckoning.

Worksop's Linacre Brothers had won the previous week's heat. The result of the TV show has soon made its mark for the Barrie Brothers (Barrie Fisher and Ralph Quinby) are due to make a recording and Vicky and the Kordettes have been invited to the Radio Luxemburg studios in London.

All three acts had competed against each other, before the TV appearance, in the finals of the Fame and Fortune competition held at Ollerton when the Linacre Brothers emerged as victors. Groups who also reached the final of the competition which had over a thousand entries, included the Ian Bruce Four and the Stellites.

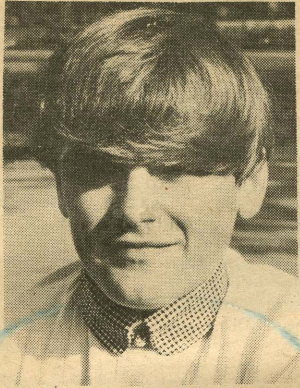
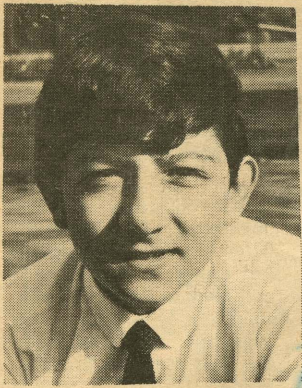
The Birthday Show at the Ollerton and Bevercotes M.W. certainly attracted some business with the Barron Knights and Lulu and the Luvvers topping an all-star bill. Mansfield's Tony Kent had two spots in the show and had interested Duke D'mond in one of his compositions.

Ritchie Satan and the Devils have changed their name to the Cynyx and turned professional to go to Germany. The Electrons are also in Germany but their drummer beat a hasty retreat back home after only three weeks and even left his drums in Germany. The Scott Gibson Four, who were due to go to Japan back in October, have now abandoned the idea due to contractual difficulties.

Several groups have had changes in personnel. Dave Evans has joined the Ashes to replace "Charlie" Waring, on bass, Carlo Kosiog joins the Vigilantes on lead for Alan Dobbs who is forming a new group. Dick Brown is now drumming with the Hornets while new Scott Gibson Four stickman is Cumbrian Ray Kelly.

The Pack have lost "Tiny" Robinson, who after a short stay in the area has returned to Coventry. The group are now performing as a trio.

Drummer Gordon Fisher has left the Handouts and John Booker is now lead guitarist for the Midbeats. Brian Buckley is with Mark Kenton and the Stereos. Nottingham's newest group—the Chippis.



ARE THEY THE YOUNGEST BRUM BEATSTERS?

SURELY the youngest Brum Beat exponents are the Virus. Each of the four lads in the group is only 13. They are: Eddie Golga (lead guitar), Tom Farmer (bass guitar/vocals), David Farmer (drums/vocals) and Phil Smith (rhythm). Tom and David are twins and attend Park Hall Secondary Modern School. Eddie and Phil are at Cooks Lane Sec-

dary Modern School. They formed the Virus three months ago. "They decided on the name Virus because they thought it was catching," explained their joint managers, Tom Farmer and David Lloyd. "The boys are very keen and rehearse every Friday night at Shard End Boys' Club."

WORCESTERSHIRE

B B FINCH,
24 Church Road,
Rainbow Hill,
Worcester

NEW YEAR greetings to all readers. I hope 1966 is YOUR year!

1965 was a year of mixed fortunes. Highlights were discs issued by the Hellions and Martin Raynor and the Secrets, Ravons and Cherokees were on I.T.V. programmes; Klik made the semi-finals of the "Melody Maker" beat contest in London; and Worcester's long-established musical instrument dealers moved into the fine new Allways Electric shop in High Street, Worcester, manager Mr. Wally Exall becoming a director in the firm. Congratulations!

On the gloomier side, popular Worcestershire outfits, the Renegades, Cherokees, Sundowners and Censored! disbanded. Warndon's Lakes' and City Guildhall closed to beat sessions, due to rowdiness making Worcester (itself) a dead scene.

The Flamingo Coffee Bar, late night rendezvous for so many groups, badly damaged by fire recently.

Reports indicated some groups not being paid by promoters, who conveniently leave, with the takings before the end of the dance. Beware — it could happen to you! Could I suggest this New Year resolution ... Join the Musicians Union ... now!

New Exits' line-up includes ex-Kiddy. Strangers drummer, Roger Dalby, and former Suedes rhythmist, Eddie Cartwright.

Managed by Colin Johnson, Redditch outfit the Troils sounded very impressive at a recent booking with the Hellions, at Redditch College's fortnightly students dance.

Evesham's No. 1 group, the Wavelengths returned from German trip. Vocalist Lynda Marsh was too young to go with the lads.

Suedes stood in for Shakedown Sounds — their "pop-art" style proving very with-it. They are now being managed by S.W.W.'s Ray Northover. Reports indicate top local outfit, the "Cossacks" parting and their agent former Klik manager, Paul Alkin, now in London. Other gossip: Lightning Blues' sweaters very snazzy. Halesowen's Czars now "Catch 22". New bassman Tony "Boots" Hollaway's first contribution was — a broken arm.

Vocalist Jim Capoldi back in Drummer's stool for new Hellions disc, due out in January. Drummer Polly Palmer doubling vibes and piano. A name change to the Emotions (their original name) anticipated before release of what they call a real groovy disc which may well hit the charts.

That fab feminine foursome the Ravons were very disappointed at not being allowed to compete for the Webber trophy at Malvern's group contest grand finals, since they too, are M.U. members; so they entertained the audience during the intervals.

Their home town Pershore also provided finalists — the Knak and the Tambla Modes. Others competing were Carol and the Imps (Malvern) and Paul Trapper and Co (Leominster).

The Knak put on a tremendous show to win and it is ironic that their old drummer, who left just before the contest started, was none other than Michael Cant, now the Tambias percussionist!

Apart from the magnificent trophy, which the Ravons have twice won, the Knak get a cash prize, and a T.V. audition. A similar chance is offered to the groups entering the senior (M.U. members) contest. First heat at Malvern, Jan. 29th and eight groups in first heat.

Late entrants — contact me A.S.A.P. please,

Revniks play swing-style jazz and a full range in strict-tempo, ballroom style: this should stand them in good stead.

Plans are in hand for dance quartet (lead, trumpet, organ, string bass, and female vocalist) for mid-week dates, when some of the groups are at college. Watch for the big, big van, with the slogan "Swing Sound, '66".

Lastly, best wishes to all group managers and fan club secretaries. If you have news of interest to "M.B." readers drop me a line — all information welcome.

POTTERIES

AL JACKSON,
34, Grove Road,
Heron Cross, Fenton,
Stoke-on-Trent

AFTER the great local impact of the then newly formed Shandykin Four, came news that the boys had been down to Pye Studios to discuss with Tony Hatch possibilities of recording some new material they had written.

Immediately impressed by the quality of the group, Tony Hatch immediately had them signed on a two year contract as new backing group for Sandie Shaw.

New resident vocalist with Terry King and the Saints is Dave Roberts, who also plays 12 string rhythm guitar and whose vocals are already arousing much interest. Drummer Ewart Bell has retired from the scene, his place with the Saints being taken by George Morris, latterly with the Flings.

Brilliant lead guitarist Chris Renshaw surprised everyone by his announcement that he was joining a business venture and giving up playing. The Marauders with whom he was a great favourite are now looking for an organist to widen the group's sound, with Bry Martin doubling lead and rhythm.

Kris Ryan and the Questions have been signed by local agent Terry Blood.

Once again Roy Grant and the Kingpins have moved to Germany, where they play the Star Club, Wuppertal, in January with another return engagement at the Star Club, Hamburg, for the whole of February.

The very popular young group, the Orbeats have broken up. Terry Denton, formerly rhythm player with the Orbeats has now decided to turn to bass guitar and with ex-Orbeats singer Billy Edwards will be forming a new group with Ray Stirrup on rhythm, Ken Warrilow on lead guitar and drummer still to be fixed.

WARWICKSHIRE

DENNIS MORGAN,
77, Radford Road,
Leamington Spa

SORROWS fly out for television and night club appearances in France and Germany on the 7th — the same day that their third record is released in this country.

The group will appear at the Locomotive Club in Paris and later in two television shows in Germany, where their disc of "Take a Heart" is selling well.

During December, the lads were featured on several bookings with the Walker Brothers and Chris Andrews — even getting bigger billing than the latter.

Titles of their latest disc were not known at press time, but their manager, David Owen says that it would be a double "A" side which he was confident would put the Sorrows in the top ten.

It was panic stations at Bedworth when a member of the Zombies mistakenly placed some equipment over an electric point.

This fused the power supply and Coventry's Chads, who were playing at the time, were completely taken by surprise. But a lengthy drum solo saved the day before the fault was found.

Warwickshire beat fans will be seeing a lot more of the Falling Leaves as they have been signed on by the Personal Management Organisation of Coventry.

With the loss of Bob Hodgkinson, their rhythm guitarist Hells Angels decided to achieve a new sound. The move seems to have worked as many promoters have signed return bookings.

A new venue for beat fans in the Sky Blue City is the Savoy Bowl, where Wednesday evening and Sunday lunchtime sessions have begun.

Matadors have been promised a recording test with Pye after a fruitless term under Joe Meek's direction.

Is Lynne Curtis, the girl from Balsall Common who had one release on Decca called "House for Sale" then faded out of the limelight to make a return to the scene?

Great news for blues fans in Coventry-Marquee Productions, the London promoters, are starting regular sessions at the Walsgrave Hotel on Wednesday evenings, starting January 5. The Steam Packet, Graham Bond, Ronnie Jones, are just a few of the names booked.

Proving to be a big success are the discotheque evenings at the Wedding Hotel, Nuneaton.

New group on the scene in this area — and going down well — are the Debonairs.

BORDERLAND

AUSTIN POWELL,
Station House,
Bucknell, Salop

MOODY Blues went to the rescue of Shrewsbury's Karakters last December when they were sharing the bill at the Severn Club in Shrewsbury.

They've forced windows to get hold of £300 worth of equipment, including two amps and a drum kit! The Moodies lent the group their equipment on stage.

As a result of the break-in the news was flashed on Northern I.T.V.'s "Police Five." Pity that that was the only way the group could make it on the T.V.

Through "Midland Beat" Karakters manager Pete Davis would like to thank the Moody Blues and fellow Shrewsbury group the Astronauts, who also lent the group equipment so that they should not miss bookings.

Severnbeats debut in Shropshire... also new group in Salop Tulsa's Moods from Wellington... Bowling out are Terry and the Golden Stones — a merger with the old Tren-Sets is likely here... After only a fortnight of the road Wellington's Beat "N" Track back on the track with more bookings than ever, stretching from Mid-Wales to Stoke.

Hereford's Buddies back home from Germany have been offered further contracts for overseas work. One is to tour Southern Germany and the other is to return to Konstanz Bodensee next summer.

Bassist Cy Townsend is unable to go with them however and his place is taken by ex-Silence bassist Pete Watts... Also in Hereford the M-Pacs add an organ and boasted over £100 worth of bookings in December.

Applejacks went down well at J. Club in Leominster. They are booked to appear at Regal Cinema, Craven Arms, on January 10. Other January attractions there are Sue Carr, The Mixed Feelings, the M-Pacs and Wrexham's Rory's Gleneagles. Unit Five complete the list there.

In nearby Ludlow young group doing well are the Planets... Coming into the area now are Aberystwyth's Shadracks.

Poll-winners the Moonrakers visit our area, the "1600 Club", Hereford, on the 15th of this month... the Acoustics of Wrexham abroad in Germany and Turkey... Four Aces vacationing too... Tearaways (Newport, Salop) and Greasers (Wellington) are now about the only groups around here billed as R "n" B.

Next month the Shropshire Federation of Youth Clubs sponsor their annual beat contest in Wellington, in conjunction with the "Shropshire Journal". Usually this produces some interesting acts, and I hope this year's is equally good.

Last year's winners were the Midnighters from Market Drayton.

OXFORDSHIRE

JOHN STANLEY,
90 Lonsdale Road,
Oxford

These are trying times for the Oxford group the Falling Leaves. Some weeks ago Neil was involved in a collision with a G.P.O. telephone box. The "phone box was a write off. The van was very bent. Neil was rather knocked about.

I'm glad to report all is well again now. The group lost some of their immediate jobs, including shows at Blackpool, Manchester, and Birmingham.

Neil had his Bass equipment stolen some months ago, for which he is still paying, and on top of this it was his new equipment that was in the van when it crashed.

On the lighter side, the Falling Leaves are still heavily booked and all their hopes are now revolving around the new release. At the time of writing the release date, etc., had not been finalised, but the number is called "Something You've Got" and was an American release by Alfin Robinson.

Managing this outfit must be quite a strain, for when I asked Adrian Hopkins the name of the "B" side track, he couldn't name it, all he could say was that the talented Johnny Bird penned it. He wrote George Fame's "In the meantime."

Still being reserved over their future, Oxford's Vibratoes are still awaiting a decision re their American promotion. They have made the required demo of Dylan's "Walk Through My Window" in Northampton and a series of tapes.

These have been approved in London, but await further material from the States which might be more interesting. Already these Oxford boys have had their share of publicity out there and a good deal of this has in fact been with "Midland Beats".

Yes, that's right, big men both sides of the Atlantic consider that what "Midland Beat" prints are worth using, and issues with the group's picture and story have been sent to interested parties out there.

Mal Ryder's new backing group, the Primitives, is not quite as listed last month. I gather that after my writing last month's column, arrangements with Dave Somner, currently playing lead with the Washington DC's, were stopped and 21-year-old Roger James, the Ex-Preston, signed to the group.

The outfit belongs to the Tito Burns group along with the Stones P.J., the Searchers, Dusty Springfield and others. Bookings have flooded in since the re-forming of the group, and during December they had five days without work.

The manager, Mr. Cipin, from Northampton, tells me that they intend retaining the old name the Primitives because of the intense publicity already given out under that name.

While talking recently with the boys, they felt that such naming as "Mal and the Primitives" old-fashioned. It might be the case, but it's you, the music fans, who decide this, so if you have any ideas, drop me a line.

LEICESTERSHIRE

ARTHUR KIRBY,
24 Tolcarne Road,
Leicester

THE MARTINS are back in town after six weeks in Germany. Verdict from the German fans — "Wonderful."

Brian Henry and the Saints were not too impressive on their recent TV spot, but it's difficult to judge any group on just one number...

Pilgrims are still making progress. They have a very fine repertoire of folk and beat which seems to be just what the fans were waiting for.

Carol and the Electrons are having as much talent as ever, but the fervour of the fans is less noticeable. Familiarity never did breed popularity, but the group deserve better things.

Met Lulu in the dressing room at Greasebrough but found her much more subdued than I ever imagined. Barron Knights did a bomb at this club.

Francis Langford tells me he's looking for a group with a good vocalist to do a summer season at the Skegness Miners Camp. Only stipulations — they must be young and talented. I've referred him to Brian Henry's mob.

X'Calibers lost their appeal against the two years ban imposed by the Ent Secs Council in spite of strong local support. Expect the local fan club to go to war against these bureaucrats.

Birds are whispering that the Farinas are due for another disc next month. Let's hope it does better than the last one. Incidentally, X'Calibers first disc sold 30,000 — not bad for a first effort.

Magnificent shock for fans of the Magnificent Five when lead guitarist and drummer both decided to call it a day.

David Gibson will not be touring with Mike and Bernie Winters next summer. A change of plans will take him to Jersey.

Martin Wayne may be the next lad on the list to join the Langford organisation.

Sharon North and the Travelers have been booked by Scraptoft Valley.

The Plainsman may decide on a change of name. Why not the Sons of Father Ford. This would be appropriate because Syston priest Father Ford, besides investing in an organ for the group has fixed them up with a resident job in Nottingham.

Johnny Singleton, dynamic Midlands showman, has found yet another star in Cynthia Norris. Johnny is quite a starmaker. He has already built Tony Kent into one of the personalities of 1965.

Solettes did a great show for Highfields' Jack Osborne a few days back.

Watch out for the Blue Spots. They did a quick stand-in at Scraptoft recently and although they haven't been together long they look a mighty good prospect.

Another "shop window" for Leicester, this time the show is on Wednesday evenings and venue is Scraptoft Valley Club, Grantham Road, Leicester. Letters to the club or to me - if any group is interested.

I shall be presenting the winning cheque at the final of the Big Beat contest at DeMontfort Hall this month. Two guest groups will be on the bill, Farinas and Broody Hoo. There'll be dancing until the wee hours.

My group of the year? My old pals the Rockets! And if I've still got any readers left after that, may I wish everyone a terrific new year...

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

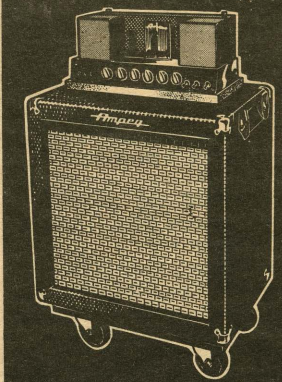
"YOU say the name, and people assume that you're something to do with a box of chocolates," says 18-years-old Samuel Pinkerton Kempe, leader of Pinkerton's Assort Colours, a group very popular in Northants.

The boys were discovered in August by Fortunes' manager Reg Calvert in their home town, Rugby. They were then calling themselves the Liberators. He was impressed by the raw excitement which they generated on stage, and signed them up.

The new name refers to the group's casual, but highly colourful stage clothes, and the fact that virtually every stage show fan in the Rugby area appears to know the group's leader as "Pinky".

Pinkerton's Assort Colours make their disc debut on Decca with "Mirror, Mirror". The number was penned by 19-years-old rhythm guitarist, Tony Newman. There's an interesting melody, while the backing features Pinky playing an electrified autoharp, which sounds like a cross between a harp and a souped-up piano.

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DERBYSHIRE

NEIL HALLAM,
Raymonds News
Agency,
4 Victoria Street,
Derby

BEFORE their sad demise this Summer, the Imps were acclaimed by many as Derby's top group. They won the right to that title at a Beat Contest at Derby Locarno and had a loyal and fanatical bunch of followers who would bare their teeth at the mention of the Rapids and hold their noses when somebody said Centors or Heralds.

Now the re-formed, not to say reformed Imps are hard at it to restore their image and re-establish themselves among the foremost Combos in the area. Manager John Frawley is keen to restart their fan club and is organising a Miss Imp Charm and Beauty Contest.

John explained: "Fans are fickle. We were only off the scene for a few months, yet when we set up again with new faces, many people who had been among our biggest fans had turned their affections elsewhere."

"Our fan club secretary wasn't keen to take the job on again and so we are faced with the prospect that faces a group first forming. It's been just like starting all over again but now we are beginning to get our support back."

A good thing too. What the Imos used to lack in musical ability they have now made up for with new faces, and the old spectacular flair or whipping-up an audience has not disappeared. It's good to see a good group back where they belong.

Rapids, who not long back adopted the more grandiose title, Rapids Big Roll Band, have been playing the name game again. After weeks of deliberation they have produced that elusive something out of the ordinary: Godfrey's Grit "n" Soul Band.

The Grit "n" Soul bit is the title of a Blues LP by somebody whose name they can't quite remember and they borrowed the Godfrey from the organist-vocalist, Doug Smith, who admits reluctantly that it really is his middle name. Other recent acquisitions at great cost include a superb Hammond organ and a single-decker bus.

What about this for a pleasant change — Bouquets instead of brickbats for beat fans. Heanor Urban Council, by all accounts a rather "hip" collection of public servants, last Summer approved an experiment of having beat groups play in the open air in the town's Memorial Park.

Now, because of the "support and fine behaviour of the young people" more concerts are to be held next Summer. The three concerts were practically sell-outs and one member of the Council, Mr. Tom Carrington, said at a recent meeting: "These groups were playing the sort of stuff youngsters want to hear and the response was very good. The teenagers get a lot of criticism for wildness but our lot were extremely well behaved."

In last month's "Midland Beat," I said of Gratch Raynor: "Newlywed Gratch has filled the vocal spot which has been the group's headache." But he hasn't. Now he has left the Yaks too, and 19-year-old mechanic Alan Toft is in the front spot.

Drummer Terry Hall explained: "Gratch was one of the best singers I or anybody in the group has ever heard. He was great and got a song over brilliantly. But towards the end we had differences of opinion and it was probably best that we parted company."

I also said that the Yaks had reaped the rewards for sticking to a straight three-guitars and drums line-up while others were introducing organ and sax. Now, to confound another of last month's bold statements, they too are considering adding an organ.

You can't be right all the time, can you?

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EAST ANGLIA

R. G. TUDOR,
92, Christchurch Road,
Norwich

RECENT bad weather caused havoc with local promotions. Groups due to play in Norwich were cut off by floods or snow.

The Who, booked to appear at St. Andrews Hall, were one of the bands who had to cancel their show. However they made an appearance later in December to make up for their cancellation and drew a four figure crowd.

Local vocalist Mike Patto has left Norwich to join the Bo Street Runners, the result of a chance meeting with the group when he appeared at Heacham with the Continentals.

The Runners were also on the bill and during the evening invited Mike to sing a few numbers in their act.

The original vocalist of the Runners has had to give up for health reasons and so the offer was made to Mike to join.

Norwich-based Group Circuit Five played at London's Allstar Club in December at an all-night session which also featured Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band.

The Ram Jam Band are now one of the most popular bands at the Orford Cellar, Norwich, and attendance records have been broken when the band made appearances there in December.

Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds are another group pulling in the crowds at the Orford.

Modern jazz was featured at this club in December after a two-year break. The Joe Harriott band played to a near capacity crowd and the good results of the event have prompted promoter Howard Platt to run modern sessions once a month, on Tuesdays.

Lined up for appearances are Tubby Hayes, Don Rendell and other leading bands from London clubs.

Vocalist for the Emperors, Lucas, is being demobbed from the U.S.A.A.F. this month. He will not be returning to the States but will stay over in this country and continue his singing career with the Emperors.

Johnny Byles, tenor sax player, has left Garry Freeman and the Contours and is now with the Paul Chris Band.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

JOHN STANLEY,
"Leiden," Harp Hill,
Cheltenham

FANS of Cheltenham's newest and most talented groups saw The Alan Walker group's picture but no story in last month's Midland Beat.

Nothing personal intended. So here's the story. "Digger" is currently playing lead with the Talismen in Rome and so the Roadhogs have rather scattered to the winds. Two of the Roadhogs however, have re-formed under the title of the Alan Walker Group.

Naturally, Alan Walker is one ex-Roadhog, the other being the talented Chris Letheridge. They have been joined by lead guitarist Michael Humble from the London group the Images and on drums is Michael Strachan from the Invaders.

They are the residents at the Blue Moon club in Cheltenham and are under the management of Norman Frazer. Already they have caused a good deal of interest, including a state visit from Disc A Gogo talent scout Tony Prince.

If the success these four boys have had in the last few weeks is anything to go by, there is plenty of future for the Alan Walker Group.

Skies are beginning to look just a shade bluer for the Newent group the Saxons. With the only other Gloucestershire recording group, the Talismen out of the country, the Saxons are sneaking in with another shot at the charts.

The number called "Baby, Baby I've Got Eyes For You" was written by one of the biggest names in the London record scene and at the time of writing it is hoped to be a January release.

A December one was decided against through heavy Christmas competition.

Mick Holder tells me that their bookings are still coming thick and fast and that Pete Holder and Robert Huxley, the two song-writing members, are being pressed to produce even more material.

Bill Phelps, the new singer with the Castells, also making with the organ music. The group are really beginning to sort themselves out and are booked solidly into '66, agent Doug Oldfield tells me.

Mr. Oldfield blames Ross for the lack of dancing activities in Lydney. According to him, most of the youngsters in the Forest of Dean trek up there rather than follow the local scene; hence the sad state whereby theirs is only the one dance on each Friday in the Town Hall.



Staffordshire's Wolves — hoping for success in 1966 with a new single.

Talented boy's club outfit from Gloucester, the Maxims, aren't any more; in future they will be the St. James Brigade!

Big musical chairs for Mr. Dutton's group from the West, the Concorde. The change is largely due to the ever-present problem of females. The group, who have been working for nearly three years now, had a recent pause of two weeks for the change, which now makes Raff Rafferty on lead the only original member.

The line-up is now, Tony Spallain, the Ex-Nightwatch, on bass; Alan Jones, another Ex-Nightwatch on drums; Alan Phelps, Ex-What on rhythm; Raff Rafferty on lead; Mike Evans, another Ex-What, as male vocalist, and pretty, 18-year-old Diana Cooper as their new female vocalist.

Diana, who comes from the Forest of Dean, heard that the group were looking for a female singer and offered herself for audition. When she started to sing, manager Dutton had no hesitations in signing her to the new look Concorde.

Those Insects from Chipping Norton are urgently in need of a drummer; at present Dougie Alcock is standing in with them. Dougie is trumpeter with Derek Bruce Band. Interested drummers are invited to ring Chipping Norton 2843.

Fabulous Christmas shows at the Blue Moon in Cheltenham. Big names visiting during January include the Birds and the Pretty Things.

Radio disc jockeying is the ambition of 22-year-old professional jockey Dave Bennett at the Blue Moon in Cheltenham. The club runs two discotheques every week and this keeps Dave on his toes.

Although he came from London he has spent the last 10 years in Gloucestershire and four years ago played in the local outfit Johnny and the Falcons.

He spent a while at the 61 Club in London DJing and then came back to Cheltenham to run the Blue Moons disc evenings. He has some 1000 records to choose from and has regular supplies over from the States.

He rehearses each show fully and spends many hours each week researching the trade press for interesting tit bits on the artists to make the shows more interesting.

STAFFORDSHIRE

ROGER BENNETT,
23, Lichfield Road,
Walsall

NOW seems as good a time as any to look back on 1965 and see how Staffordshire fared in the beat scene.

Without doubt there are several good groups with a "different" sound and individual style and on the whole they gained the recognition they deserved.

These groups caught the eye of the big recording companies and we had singles from Herbie's People (Bilston), Zero Five (Cannock), Wolves (Wolverhampton), Formula One (Smethwick), Steve Brett (Wolverhampton) and Montanas (Wolverhampton).

Although all these sold well locally, no one managed that tough

climb into the national charts which has so far eluded a county group.

In my opinion "You Thrill Me to pieces" by Herbie's People was the best commercial disc and the one most likely to make it. These boys, formerly Danny Cannon and the Ramrods, might have better luck with their next C.B.S. release. Here's hoping.

The Wolves, as polished as ever, had success in America with "Now" and also in their own home town, but after that — nothing. They start the new year on the right foot, however with a new release on an old Drifters number "At the Club," backed with "Distant Drums" previously recorded by Roy Orbison.

The Zero Five made the most promising debut as far as I am concerned with "Dusty" and I eagerly await their next Columbia disc.

That also applies to Wolverhampton's talented Montanas and smooth Steve Brett. Here's wishing you all the best of luck in 1966 — and all other groups who are after that elusive break with a recording contract.

And how about 1966? What has it in store for Staffordshire groups? For an experienced opinion on that listen to Miss Terry Matthews, of Walsall, who knows many Midland group members by their first names.

"The scene is still definitely much alive," she says. "It has just altered somewhat. These changes will occur but the pop scene will still be with us."

She should know. Terry has been connected with show business for a good many years and must surely hold a record on the number of group contests she has judged.

Being a voluntary youth leader, Terry is often called upon to engage groups for clubs and it is not surprising that she has such a first hand knowledge of them all.

Speaking in her smart Lysway Court flat, Terry laughed as she told me of the time she booked Gerry and the Pacemakers for £20 — likewise Herman's Hermits and Billy J. Kramer.

"I am an agent, but do not run an agency," she insists. And as her card states: "For the best, contact — Terry."

Talking of the best, what about Wolverhampton's "N" Betweens. Manager Maurice Jones tells me they must be the hardest worked group in the district and haven't had a clear night for weeks.

Returning from Germany on December 1st, they then raced all over the country, appearing at Stoke, Nottingham, Brierley Hill Leeds and in Devon, apart from Birmingham and their home town. They have a few dates clear in January but are booked solid for February while half of March has already gone. "I gave them Christmas day off, though," jokes their manager.

Paul Bradley, rhythm guitarist with the Sonnets, has decided to call it a day but the semi-pro group will continue as a four man outfit.

One of the Dutch members of the Zuider Zee has also departed. His place has been taken by Ray Hopkins, formerly of the Matchmakers, who will assist with vocals.

Last news of Steve Brett returning from a successful German trip was that his vehicle had broken down at Cologne. Hope he makes it!

Wolverhampton's Astra Agency now promoted at the Casino, Walsall. Tommy Burton is still there every Friday and rhythm and blues is organised over the weekend.

'Midland Beat' Diary

HAVE you got your 1966 "Midland Beat" diary? They have been selling like hot cakes — but there is still time to get your copy. The diary is a "must" for everyone connected with the beat scene in the Midlands.

For instance, it gives a list of just about every group in the Midlands that has recorded for a major record label. Where else is there such valuable information for the Midlands beat enthusiast?

And the diary also gives the 1965 additions to the unique "Midland Beat" group register — a real boon to anyone wanting to avoid adopting a name for their group that is already being used by another outfit in the Midlands.

There are only a few copies of the diary left. Don't be the man without one.

Make sure of yours by sending a 3s postal order, payable to "Midland Beat" Diary, "Midland Beat", 110, Wake Green Road, Moseley, Birmingham 13.

WALES

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FIVE South Wales beat groups are getting a distinctly organised look.

They have handed over their fate to Zodiac Entertainments who will find them more lucrative work than the Saturday night (hops) to which they have become accustomed.

Invaders, Witches' Brew, Hot Rocks, Victors and Vogues are being groomed under the practised eye of ex-Tiller Girl Pat Stewart, one of the partners in Zodiac Entertainments.

Zodiac feel the nights of the Jagger-rock are over. Long hair and the untidy look are out. We're shifting back to tidy suits and fashionable fashion. And for a horoscope, who better than Zodiac?

The organ run has reached its crescendo in South Wales. Just about every group is throwing out rhythm guitar to make way for the keyboard and a man with a certain amount of piano skill to play it.

Saxes are coming in, too. Since the trend started 12 months late, it may last 12 months longer. But then it may not end at all. The inclusion of organ and reed into local sound does tend to make it more wholesome. And all sorts of tinklers are turning into experts.

Llanely group the Untamed, who turned up on the bandstand of the London Hilton a couple of weeks ago, went over so well that the Hilton hotel empire and the group are talking tours. And with a tour for Hilton a trip round the world is just a fringe benefit.

The Gale Mail is suffering another sad bout of neglect. South Wales boasts around 1,000 beat groups. Someone somewhere must have a letter for me.

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- 9.—3 Men in a Boat, Walsall
- 10.—The Belfrey, Wishaw
- 12.—Heart Beat Club
- 13.—Police Ballroom, Coventry
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- 22.—Olympic Roller Rink — Club Cedar
- 23.—Staffordshire Volunteer
- 24.—Queens Head, Erdington
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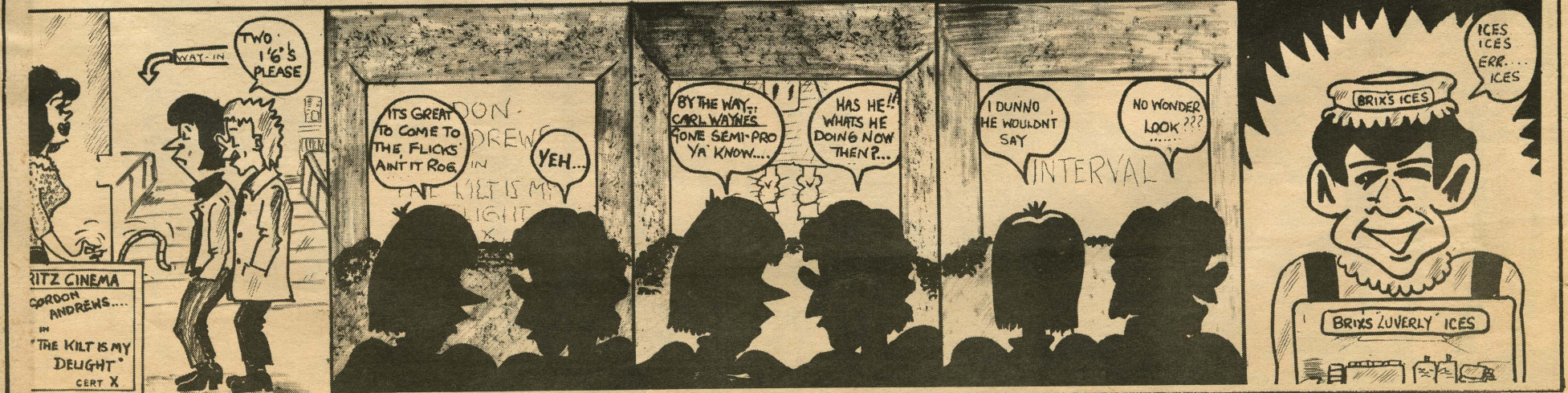
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