

THE
RADIO
ONE

Story of Pop

THE FIRST
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
POP IN 26 WEEKLY PARTS



THE OSMONDS: Every teeny's dream
WHAT IS SOUL? From James Brown to Ray Charles
YOUTH EXPLOSION: Jagger, Shrimpton, Bailey etc.
PLUS: Trad, Death of Rock & Roll and more

PART 9

25p

EVERY THURSDAY



"You can do 'Tutti Frutti' just so many ways before you run out of ideas." So commented Jack Good – the most influential TV producer of pop programmes in the late '50s – on the dissipation of rock & roll. The fact of the matter was that rock ran out of steam. Writers and performers who had sprung to fame in the halcyon days had run out of ideas and public taste was looking for a change of direction. The trouble was that there was nothing that could spring into the breach. This meant that the first two years of the '60s were musically barren.

The result was a hotch-potch of styles as people came up with trends, ideas and forms that they hoped would catch on strongly enough to be the new global rage. This floundering around, this search for new musical avenues to explore, is the basic theme of both the BBC programme and this issue. The radio documentary investigates the forms that the new trends took – trad, the sudden burst of 'novelty' records, and some extraordinarily quirky offerings that were proof indeed that the music moguls were worried – and talks to the people who made them. Trad was probably one of the strongest contenders for the new crown and it now seems strange, in retrospect, that a form of music over 30 years old should suddenly command such huge popularity. Perhaps it is a comment of the fact that there was nothing really new and that people started looking backwards to see what the past had to offer. On Radio One, Kenny Ball and Chris Barber, two of the major exponents of trad, talk about those heady, stomping days and in this issue we analyse its appeal and define its success.

The hit craze of 1962 was, undoubtedly, the Twist. It was really the last of the great dances and it swept the States, Britain and Europe. It was danced in basement clubs and swish night-spots in New York, London and St. Tropez with equal abandon. The BBC talks to the men who wrote, conceived and promoted the Twist and we also look at the phenomenon and its star Chubby Checker.

Meanwhile, we develop our other primary themes. In particular we start the first in a series on soul – one of the great commercial flowerings of black music – and trace its roots. We also look at Philadelphia as a factory of pop singers, investigate why rock & roll finally did die, profile Neil Sedaka as a songwriter/performer and look at the truly astonishing success that the Osmonds have had in a new and hitherto untapped market – the weenyboppers.

**Although the radio programme and this publication have been linked for readers in the UK, we have taken care to ensure that readers abroad will find this publication complete in itself.*

How to obtain future copies: The next part of the Radio One Story of Pop will be on sale in one week's time. The best way to make sure you do not miss any of the future parts is to ask your newsagent to keep a copy for you each week or deliver it to you. When you place a regular order in this way you are not putting yourself under any long term obligation. With two weeks' notice you can cancel your order at any stage. But the great advantage of placing a regular order is that you run no risk of missing one of your weekly parts.

IN THIS ISSUE

- NEIL SEDAKA by John Pidgeon: He was part of the same singer/songwriter team as Carole King, but for him, success has been more elusive 225
- THE TRAD BOOM by Tony Russell: The revival of '20s and '30s jazz that resulted in high-spirited and uncomplicated music 228
- THE YOUNG TAKE THE LEAD by Virginia Ironside: It was Cathy McGowan, Mick Jagger, Chrissie Shrimpton and Terence Donovan, and they were young, flippant and very trendy 231
- THE TWIST AND CHUBBY CHECKER by John Pidgeon: He united the generations with a dance craze that swept round the world 234
- THE OSMONDS by Pete Harvey: A family act that takes special care of the teenies and the weenies ... 237
- WHAT IS SOUL? by Neil Spencer: It articulates important emotions for an increasingly confident black audience 241
- AMERICAN BANDSTAND by Paul Flattery: The ripples created by American Bandstand, the longest running TV show in history 245
- DEATH OF ROCK & ROLL by John Pidgeon: The deaths of the main big rockers, Eddie Cochran, Richie Valens and Big Bopper, made it fairly inevitable that rock & roll itself would die ... for a while 248
- TALKING 'BOUT MY GENERATION: Lyrics of 'Let's Dance' and 'Twisting The Night Away' in full, plus analysis 250
- POP FILE by Mitch Howard: Pop from A-Z 251

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PROFILE: 1956-73

Neil Sedaka



Neil Sedaka was once a promising concert pianist — Artur Schnabel's pick of the New York high school pianists in 1956 in fact — and from there he went on to become a student at the Juillard School of Music.

But Neil was hooked on pop, and in 1958 he had written a hit, 'Stupid Cupid' for Connie Francis, and made the American charts himself with 'The Diary'. From these beginnings, Neil followed the well-worn path to join the staff of Don

Kirschner's New York songwriting 'factory' — a place where he wouldn't have to wear a tail-coat to play piano, and where he could get rich by writing teenage pop fantasies.

Don Kirschner's Screen Gems-Columbia team was hot, and Neil wasn't the only precocious teenager working there. Just down the corridor there was Carole King, for whom Neil wrote 'Oh! Carol' — a song that became his third single release and biggest hit so far in 1959. In the middle of the song was a spoken passage that sounded so sincere it was a killer:

*'Oh! Carol, I am but a fool,
Darling, I love you, though you treat me
cruel,
You hurt me and you make me cry,
But if you leave me, I will surely die.'*

Carole's answer to this was a song called 'Oh Neil', after which she went off and married another writer, Jerry Goffin. Neil may have been cut up, but he certainly didn't die.

Kirschner's Brill Building was bulging with talent in those days. Besides Sedaka, Carole King, and her husband Jerry Goffin,

there were – among others – Jack Keller, Howard Greenfield, Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil – all of whom made a great many hits, and a lot of money, for Kirschner.

While he was at the 'hit factory', Sedaka worked mainly with Howard Greenfield, a lyricist who wrote Connie Francis's 'My Heart Has A Mind Of Its Own' and Mark Wynter's 'Venus In Blue Jeans' with Jack Keller, and the Everly Brothers' 'Crying In The Rain' with Carole King. Although their partnership was never as brilliantly prolific as either Goffin and King's or Mann and Weil's, they created a string of hits between 1958 and 1962 – mostly for Sedaka himself.

As a performer as well as a songwriter Sedaka differed from his Screen Gems colleagues. The rest made demos, but even Carole King – once she'd completed her answer to Sedaka's song – did little until 1962 when she had an enormous, and solitary, hit with 'It Might As Well Rain Until September'. For a pop star, in fact, his looks were ordinary. He was just a clean-cut, regular featured Jewish boy, who wouldn't turn any heads outside a convent. He played the boy-next-door, and in his songs he fell for the girl-next-door:

*'I'm living right next door to an angel,
And I just found out today,
I'm living right next door to an angel,
And she only lives a house away.
She used to be such a skinny little girl,
But all of a sudden she is out of this world;
I'm living right next door to an angel,
And I'm gonna make that angel mine.'*

(*'Next Door To An Angel'*)

The girl was permanently 16 years old and just grown out of tomboyhood. Sometimes, as in 'Next Door To An Angel' and 'Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen', it seemed the girl was really going to be his; whereas in 'Calendar Girl' she was simply an adolescent fantasy. Almost without exception though the songs were intensely melodic and musically uplifting. There was no way not to sing along with Neil, especially when his songs were riddled with 'tralalalalalalala' and 'wowowowo yeah-yeah-yeah' chorus lines.

Sticking closely to this formula, Sedaka had two simultaneous American and British hits in 1959 with 'I Go Ape' and 'Oh! Carol'; four American hits in 1960, two of which – 'Stairway To Heaven' and 'Calendar Girl' – did well in the British charts; two more hits both sides of the Atlantic with 'Little Devil' and 'Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen' (no. 4 in UK); and, in 1962, his only no. 1 record, 'Breaking Up Is Hard To Do'. The song reached no. 7 in the British charts, and was his last Top 20 hit until 'Oh! Carol' was re-issued in 1972. In the States he had a couple of other hits in 1962, and two more a year later. Then nothing.

The fact was that the song formula had worn thin, and Sedaka's musical persona was lodged somewhere in permanent adolescence. Besides, a lot of previously successful performers were having a hard

Main picture: Neil Sedaka re-emerged as a singer/songwriter in 1971 and once again began to write perfect pop songs. Insert: Neil's new-found satisfaction is reflected in this happy portrait with his wife.



Syndication International

time. The Beatles were peaking, and countless 'beat' groups had followed their lead and also started to write their own songs instead of the ready-made material supplied by professional songwriters. Sedaka was screwed twice over. In fact he was really down, and it took him a long time to recover.

Really it was Carole King who showed the way out. Times had been tough for her too, and even though there had been Goffin/King hits in the mid-'60s, they weren't strung together the way they used to be. Then she divorced Jerry Goffin and started working on her own. In 1970 she made her first solo album, 'Writer', and the following year released 'Tapestry' – which became one of the biggest-selling albums of all time. She was called a superstar.

It wasn't until 1971 that Sedaka decided to start performing and recording again. He'd written a few songs for other people, the most notable being 'Puppet Man', which was recorded by the Fifth Dimension and Tom Jones, and he could probably have continued on these lines, capitalising on the growing nostalgia boom that was about to make 'Oh! Carol' a hit second time around. As he said in one of his songs:

*'Standing on the outside, looking in,
You know, it's been a long time, don't
know where to begin,
So much I want to say, so much I
want to do,
Friends are telling me, 'It's time you broke
through.'*

(*'Standing On The Inside'*)

In the States especially Neil was 'on the outside'. To Americans he was either an oldie or a no one – depending on whether they were old enough to remember 'Oh! Carol' or not. He listened to his friends though, figured out where to begin, and released 'Emergence' to critical approval.

A year later he made a second album, 'Solitaire'. It was recorded in Stockport. That's Stockport, Cheshire, England. The back up musicians were Graham Gouldman (bass, guitar, vocals), Lol Creme (guitar, vocals), Kevin Godley (drums, vocals); the recording engineer was Eric Stewart. Alias 10 C.C.

'Solitaire' contained some fine songs and, apart from the title track, was a marvellously optimistic piece of work. Two



songs in particular showed that Sedaka had lost nothing during his lay-off: 'That's When The Music Takes Me' and 'Beautiful You'. Both were released as singles, and 'That's When The Music Takes Me' was a Top 20 hit in England. Rightly so, since it's a perfect pop song. The words describe how music lifts him — 'takes me to a brighter day' — and the music does exactly that. The chorus of 'Beautiful You' descends directly from his early songs — 'Ooolala, you're such a turn-me-on-lately, ooolala, you're such a beautiful you' — the only difference being that both he and his 'sweet 16' are twelve years worldlier:

*'You've got what you've got, and you know it,
I can tell by the way you show it.
This is our chance, honey,
Let's not blow it.'*

Neil's album, 'The Tra-La Days Are Over', marked another turning point in his career. It was again recorded with 10 C.C. (whom he has described as 'the most remarkable musicians I've ever worked with' — which doesn't mean he hasn't worked with remarkable musicians) at their Stockport Strawberry Studios, and he produced it himself in association with the band. Their musicianship is one of the outstanding features of the album; another is Sedaka's renewed partnership with Howard Greenfield. References to the past recur throughout, as the title suggests, but nowhere with greater force than in Sedaka's own 'Standing On The Inside' and the Sedaka/Greenfield song, 'Our Last Song Together', which closes the album. Both songs make crucial statements about Sedaka's career.

The first admits the immense problems of his come-back and expresses the joyful satisfaction his renewed acceptance has brought him:

*'I've been through the hard times of searching souls,
You know, it's been a hard climb since rock 'n' roll.'*

The second represents a final break with his past:

*'Misty faces, far-off places came and danced across the room,
Shalala's and doobydown's — the sounds that chased away the gloom,
Yesterday is yesterday, the past is dead and gone . . .'*

Whatever happens next, Neil has turned the corner. And even if there's something still following him, he won't be looking back over his shoulder to see.

NEXT WEEK IN PROFILE: The small-built, fast-talking money-making ballad singer Gene Pitney.

The Trad-Jazz Boom Booze and Bowlers call the tune

Trad was one of the ground-breakers for rock & roll – a softening-up process in the battle for a youth music. It was quite unlike rock – indeed, it stood opposed to it in almost every respect – but it did reach out for people with rather the same sort of friendly grasp as rock. And in the very places where trad was once the rage – in clubs that trad had often *created* – the first rock & roll plants later bloomed.

All of which is rather peculiar, when you recall what trad *was*: an earnest and often dedicated revival of '20s and '30s jazz, in a country and culture very distant from the roots of jazz. At the start, indeed, it was never known as trad – it straightforwardly called itself revivalist, and made no bones about its derivation from the romantic golden days of New Orleans. Subsequently, and after some modifications and concessions, it became trad, and there followed the period that publicity-men inevitably dubbed the 'Trad Fad'. But in the first place it was – like the rhythm & blues that followed it – a small, intensely committed movement.

Pub Music

There had always been a following in Britain for 'hot' small-group jazz, and the dance bands of the '30s contained plenty of musicians who liked to jam together in late-night spots. It wasn't a teenagers' music – nothing was, then; it was rather for the devotees of 'rhythm clubs'. Then, soon after World War Two, American jazz circles began to patronise a 'New Orleans revival', and the supposed root music of jazz was heard once more, both from old, rediscovered veterans, and from their younger followers. In Britain, groups like George Webb's Dixielanders came as close as they could to the treasured styles of the young Louis Armstrong, the legends like King Oliver and Johnny Dodds. In pubs and upper rooms over pubs, in basement bars and suburban assembly-rooms, 20- and 30-year-old jazz styles were faithfully recreated. One of the pioneers, trumpeter Ken Colyer, went further back than most, to the brass-band music and ragtime of New Orleans' beginnings. Even within

revivalism's small circles there was fierce disagreement about the 'true' sound – but the whole fellowship set its face against the pop music of the day. This was music solely for the committed, and if a 'Grand Jazz Band Ball' drew 20-odd customers, it was considered a moderate success.

Things remained like that for some years, but slowly the news got around that this old-fashioned jazz stuff had some attractions. For one thing, it was old-fashioned only in a strict historical sense – to most of its listeners, who had no time at all for modern jazz (bop), it was just the unchanging, ever-flowing stream of the jazz tradition. Record companies had little interest in any kind of jazz, so it was hardly surprising that British appreciation was a little out of date, out of phase with American developments. But this revivalist music was undeniably good to dance to. The old local dance hall tradition meant more in those days, and seated audiences were rarer than they are now. What's more, it was cheerful, high-spirited music, stuff to drink to and throw yourself around to, noisy and sweaty and, even at its crudest, invigorating. Given the choices offered by the musical establishment – ballroom orchestras, pop crooners, Geraldo and his Gaucho Tango Band – the noise and sweat counted for a lot.

So the music blossomed and the concerts began to draw more than a couple of dozen. The established groups went on perpetual tours, and the strugglers gathered at big multi-act shows and competitions. The leaders of the movement were trumpeter Humphrey Lyttelton – who with clarinettist Wally Fawkes came out of the pioneer George Webb band to form the finest of the '50s groups – and Chris Barber, once trombonist with Ken Colyer. While Colyer decided to stay with his rugged New Orleans approach, Barber moved on to a less purist style, and it was his band's clarinettist, Monty Sunshine, who had the first of trad's chart hits, the delicate and melancholy 'Petite Fleur' 1959. Also with the Barber band was singer Otilie Patterson, who did much to revive interest in the classic style of blues-singing. And the group's banjo-player, Lonnie Donegan, made his own special impression with old folksongs, and almost single-handedly started the commercial ball rolling, for a while, with a simple and homemade sort of music called skiffle.



Paul Popper Ltd.

Above: Kenny Ball, trad trumpeter supreme, and his jazzmen, in the days when trad was top-billing in the U.K.

Almost anyone could play skiffle – which was why it boomed fast and died fast. Quite a lot of people could play trad, after a fashion, and in its heyday there were countless groups. To make room for all these groups, unpretentious but adequate playing locations began to dot the enthusiast's map. As George Melly, trad's best chronicler, describes it:

'Barnet Jazz Club, which held its weekly meetings in a Trade Union hut, was typical of the suburban and dormitory-town clubs which had begun to open within a thirty-mile radius of the Charing Cross Road, in order to cater for the growing interest in traditional jazz, which the success of the Chris Barber band had sparked off. What usually happened was that a promoter would examine a map, settle for an area as yet virgin territory, and open two or three clubs with common membership on different nights of the week about ten miles apart. During the height of the trad boom in 1960-61 these clubs sprang up and proliferated like weeds on a bomb site. . . .'

The pattern, in fact, was exactly the same as that of a few years later when rhythm & blues slid into trad's place – and many of the R&B clubs were just the same old trad locations with different names on the posters. The Ricky Ticks, Eel Pie Island, the 100 Club – the old roundabout, with just a new tune playing. Who knows – maybe rhythm & blues would never have caught on as it did if there hadn't been a set-up, or at least the skeleton of a set-up, for it to operate in. To this extent, certainly, trad was an invaluable forerunner of the mid '60s R&B boom in Britain.



Keystone

Top picture: Clarinettist Acker Bilk wearing his trademark, bowler hat and striped waistcoat. Far right: Trumpeter Humphrey Lyttelton. Above: A Ban-The-Bomb march, positive proof that trad followers were also very politically aware.

Echoing the spirit of New Orleans, the trad bands often took to the streets and performed, in the approved fashion, on the backs of trucks. Trad required no amplification – though singers might resort to a megaphone or a converted biscuit tin – and once the drummer had anchored his equipment the band was ready to go. This made trad a great thing for mobile outdoor events. Most notably, trad's historical significance as a marching music (in the old brass-band days of New Orleans), coupled with the political attitudes of most of its practitioners and fans, established it as the regular musical accompaniment to the Left's political demonstrations – and indeed to most displays of radical protest. One of the most powerful British memories of the '60s is of the annual Easter Ban-the-Bomb marches to Aldermaston, with Bertrand Russell and trad bands in the van.

Anti-Establishment

Trad's political undertones were important. Though jazz revivalism was essentially reactionary, in comparison with the 'acceptable' establishment music –

classical, dance-band, middle-of-the-road Tin Pan Alley stuff – it was unrespectable, tatty, and anarchic. Its background, a fairly faithful copy of the original jazz backdrop, made it agreeable to anti-Establishment thinkers both on the stage and on the club floor, and to declare a liking for trad at least suggested that you had a 'liberal' turn of mind. Kingsley Amis cites a late '50s magazine report that 'one might as well give up hope of meeting a British intellectual committed to jazz who is not firmly over to the left in politics'.

Bowlers & Army Boots

So trad musicians and their followers appeared at CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) rallies and other protest demonstrations; they raved, though on the whole peacefully enough, at all-night Fests (the ancestors of our rock gatherings); they adopted a mild anarchy in their dress and habits. The fans of Acker Bilk, for example, wore (as George Melly recounts) bowler hats, army boots, potato sacks, and 'old fur coats cut down to look like stone-age waistcoats'. The floppy-

sweater and jeans get-up, often with a prominently positioned CND badge, was common too.

All this early activity at the grass-roots level of clubs and pubs didn't really mean that trad was anything more than the music of a quirky minority. By 1960, though, it was possible for publicity-men to talk about a boom – the Trad Fad.

The ideas-men swung into characteristic action. Chris Barber had been going a good while, and nothing very freaky could be done about him, but a campaign could certainly be created around the Somerset-born clarinettist Acker Bilk. The inspiration, strangely enough, was Victorian music hall, and Bilk was sent on stage in striped waistcoat and bowler hat, while at the door patrons were offered programmes couched in quaint turn-of-the-century advertising language. The promotion machine – inevitably – called itself the Bilk Marketing Board.

Then there was Kenny Ball, a trumpeter with a commercial traveller's moustache – his band sometimes appeared in riverboat costumes, white-flannelled and straw-hatted against candy-striped



Trad where it all began in New Orleans and right the man whose name says jazz, Louis Armstrong.

awnings. And naturally it occurred to some genius that Barber, Bilk and Ball had something in common beyond the fact they played trad – so music papers had endless headline material about 'The Three B's'.

Doom For Trad

The headlines were soon needed, because trad soon started to show up on the pop charts frequently enough for the business to take a hand. Remembering the success of 'Petite Fleur', A&R men set about collecting more instrumental numbers in a compromise trad/pop style – Bilk's 'Summer Set' (1960), Ball's 'Midnight In Moscow' (1961), and then, massively appealing to the whole market, Bilk's wistful 'Stranger On The Shore' (1961). Interspersed with these were cheery vocal numbers like Ball's 'Samantha' (1961) and 'So Do I' (1962), Bilk's 'Buena Sera' (1960) and 'That's My Home' (1961) – all put over in a casual, loose-mouthed, amateurish style that practically every trad singer adopted.

Such success on the Mum-and-Dad market obviously spelled doom for trad as any kind of youth music. Ball and Bilk might be top-billing at the London Palladium, but that would mean less than

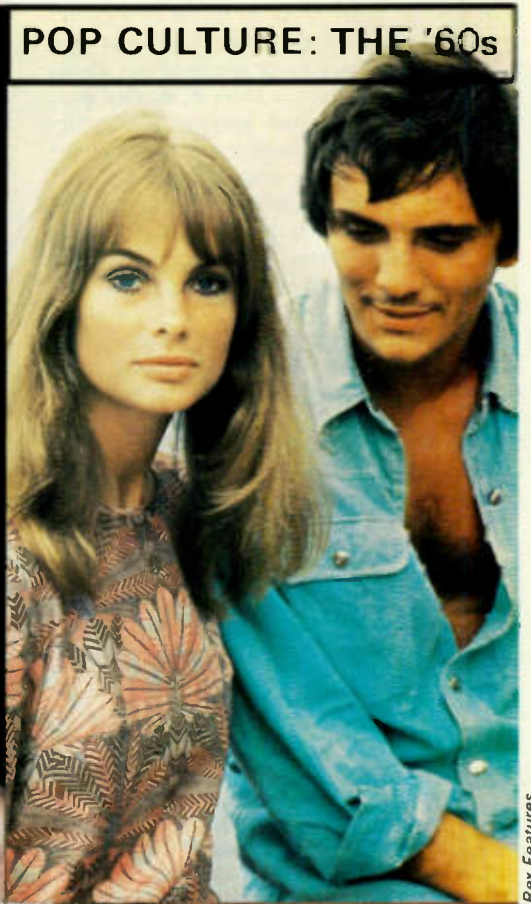
nothing to the Cook's Ferry or Railway Tavern regulars. In addition, there were now alternatives to trad. By 1963 the trad clubs were having to divide their weekly programmes between jazz and R&B.

And R&B both resembled and differed from trad in key points. Like trad it didn't take a lot of expertise, it was noisy and dynamic; but it was also young – played by and for teenagers. Obviously a kid was going to cotton on quicker to Mick Jagger than to Acker Bilk – the only reason it didn't happen earlier was that the music situation offered no way-in for Mick Jagers.

But R&B, if it pushed trad aside, nevertheless profited from its lessons and experiments. And perhaps it's fitting that in the '70s some of the better features of trad can be detected once more, and are being enjoyed by a generation that more or less missed out on it first time round. There was much in trad that can comfortably be forgotten, but traditional jazz has a spirit that can't be easily replaced.



NEXT WEEK IN THE MUSIC: Lennon and McCartney together introduced the singer/songwriter syndrome and made it a little unthinkable for singers to record other artists' work.



Rex Features

Rex Features

Above: One of the then 'with-it' couples, Jane Asher and Paul McCartney. Far right: The first of the 'beautiful people', Jean Shrimpton and Terence Stamp. Bottom: Mary Quant, the young woman who started a lot of new trends.

The new generation take the lead

In 1964 there was, in England, the unprecedented number of 4,000,000 people aged between 15 and 19. There were, in other words, more young people around than there ever had been before. And not just that. These young people were different. All generations mature a little quicker than their parents — and this particular generation seemed to mature exceptionally young.

In the '70s, 15 may not seem that young to us, when it's the 13s and 14s who are being catered for, but back in what were known as the Swinging '60s, 15 was like 12 to us now and the idea of a 15-year-old earning money and living an independent life was extraordinary

And they were earning money. Hand

over fist. The growth in earnings for teenagers between 1938 and 1960 had increased over 50% a year. Teenagers in the '60s had around £100 million to play around with. They spent a quarter of this fortune on clothes, 14% on drinks and tobacco, 12% on sweets, £25 million on motorbikes, £40 million on records and record players and magazines, and a mere 3% on mundane domestic stuff. A young working class girl horrified her parents and a judge when she gave, as an excuse for shoplifting, the fact that "I can't possibly live on twenty pounds a week!"

"Our children simply don't know about poverty", said one parent, gloomily, "they see a TV aerial on every council house and queues of cars parked in every suburban street. Our own middle-class youth, with its small economies, is incomprehensible to them." "You went to parties by bus?" said my own daughter, "How could you?"

The young of the '60s just couldn't



Keystone

possibly be seen dead on a bus in a party dress. They certainly couldn't be seen on a bus in the same party dress twice. They were, comparatively, rolling in money and that meant they had power. Economic reasons may have given them the means; it was the Beatles who gave them the confidence. The Beatles' emergence in 1964 seemed to say, quite simply: 'We're working class. We're the boys next door. We made it. We're millionaires. You can do the same.'

The Beatles emphasised even more the difference between the old and young and, armed with the confidence in the success of their idols, young people became such a force that, far from putting them down, as older people had tried to do in the '50s, anyone over 25 felt positively embarrassed. The tables had turned; old people emulated the young instead of the other way round, cramming themselves into tight-hipped bell-bottomed trousers, flaunting flowered ties, combing pieces of hair over their bald patches and speaking hip language. Young people not only had the economic edge but the social edge as well.

Friday-Night Stopper

The result was that spry businessmen finally realised what a great consumer market lay outside, and started to feed the hungry masses of youngsters with anything and everything they wanted. The youth explosion caused a boom in fashion – the hat industry was literally saved from extinction by it – holidays abroad, bikes, cosmetics, hair-dressing, transistors, shoes and soft drinks. Eating places boomed, new entertainments like ten-pin bowling came in, ballrooms were flooded and would expect at least 25 new dances to go in and out of the dance floor in a year.

The film industry discovered that 40% of kids visited the cinema once a week and promptly started making films that would appeal to this new audience. The most popular were the Beatles' films like *Help!* made by Dick Lester, but there was a fundamental change in the concept of film-making as well. In 1963 the managing director of ABC advised his executives:

'Go for the youngsters, go for as much sex as you can, for as much violence as you can – and we are going to succeed'.

Television was slower on the uptake, limiting its shows to the usual *Juke Box Jury*, *Thank Your Lucky Stars*, but did come up with that real Friday-night stopper, *Ready, Steady Go!* (The Weekend Starts Here!) which featured the inimitable Cathy ('smashing') McGowan who was great friends with Cilla Black and who boasted a different and more smashing piece of gear every week.

Other shows, like *A Whole Scene Going*, tried, but failed, and television didn't really take as much advantage of the youth scene as it might have done – considering that clubs were booming. The import of American pop stars rocketed



Left to right: John Lennon and his first wife Cynthia, Christine Shrimpton and Mick Jagger;

with interest in soul music and the pirate radio stations, like Radio Caroline and Radio London, which existed on their revenue from advertising alone, showed how desperately the media was needed to spread the youth culture.

The record industry was far from slow, however. Any spotty youth who could twang a C-chord on a guitar had a good chance of not only making a record but of getting a reasonable hit with it, so pop-obsessed were the young. In 1964 customers had paid £6¼ million on Beatles' records alone. In 1967 the record industry was turning over nicely thank you with £36 million a year. And that Christmas, admittedly a boom period, 250 LPs and 233 singles were issued a month. No, by no means all of them were bought, but the success of pop was so great that companies could afford to take risks, splash out money on anything that had the faintest hint of a hit around it.

So Many Successes

Magazines, too, were quick on the uptake, some still going like *Fab* and *19*. Pop papers quickly smartened up their images and circulations of *Melody Maker* and the *New Musical Express* soared. There were some duds, like *Intro* magazine and a curious teenage newspaper, but who cared when there were so many successes to make up the losses?

Apart from records perhaps the biggest

boom in the early '60s was fashion. Out of nowhere a girl called Barbara Hulanicki and her husband started up a tiny boutique, the first, in a corner shop in Kensington, selling incredibly good clothes for apparently nothing at all; a Saturday afternoon in that then minute shop might easily find Jagger himself, searching around the bargains with a girl-friend. Quick on the heels followed dozens more, culminating in the biggest fashion boom area of them all, Carnaby Street, the Soho street where the young John Stephens, boutique owner and millionaire was dubbed King. "Once it was top people who were fashion leaders like the Prince of Wales with his 'Windsor' ties" he said at the time. "Now it's the kids that set the pace. I hire young people to staff my shops because they are keyed to the generation I am serving."

This was a key point. The boom fed off itself. The young wanted, say, records, the record companies made them and sold them to the shops, the shops then booted out the old ladies with the encyclopaedic knowledge of the classics and the best recordings of birdsong and employed young people who understood the 'scene'. This made more employment for young people, more money to spend, more need for more records – and so on in every sphere where young people had commercial buying power.

Like all generations, the youth explosion of the '60s gave birth to a symbol of



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David Bailey; (below) George Harrison and Pattie Boyd; Cathy McGowan and Dave Clark.

never mind such monstrously trivial things as pleasure and fun. The young found England, the Royal Family and patriotism a drag. The Union Jack became just a pattern on a paper bag.

“‘People shout things at us,’” said one Mod, “‘you can see their point. They’ve been through a war and that. What for? So a lot of young thugs can ride around on motor-bikes. Middle-aged people today never had the chance because they went to war straight away. Those of us who were in the army found it a drag. I was stuck in Cyprus for a year and saw two of my friends blown to death for some silly, curly-headed olive-growing bum. It really gave me the hump.’”

And politics, too, a subject about which the middle-aged generally felt reasonably strongly, left their kids cold, one of whom was quoted as saying: ‘if you handed me the vote on a gold plate with watercress all round it I still wouldn’t know what to do with it’. And so the youth explosion continued. Ambitions changed. Heroes and heroines changed. Young men aimed to be photographers, like the successful young David Baileys or Terence Donovans, film directors like the young Christopher Miles, pop stars like John Lennon, a DJ like Keith Skues, millionaires like young Bennie Green, painters like David Hockney. Girls dreamed of being models like Jean Shrimpton or Twiggy, dress designers like Mary Quant or Marion Foale or Sally Tuffin, television comperes like Cathy McGowan, pop stars like Sandie Shaw or Marianne Faithful or even just to work, 9–5 in a boutique.

Mass Decadence

The Youth Explosion of the ‘60s contradicted everything that went in the decades before and after it. The youth of the ‘50s only paved the way, were only starting to feel the itchings of the new freedoms promised in the ‘60s, but they were still too ground down and scared and not quite rich enough to assert themselves with such force and vigour. The young of the ‘70s suddenly reversed and started caring about their communities, dropping out of society, disdaining money and material goods, looking to religion and wisdom, becoming concerned with politics and humanity.

The Youth Explosion of the ‘60s was the apotheosis of mass decadence in this century; the ultimate indulgence in frivolity, pleasure, greed, breaking down of old traditions of class and hypocrisy and the establishment of self-assertion. And, good heavens, was it fun!

NEXT WEEK IN POP CULTURE: Hysteria, is it a necessary part of the pop scene or will love and peace phase it out?

affluence in the shape of Mods – small strange creatures who were very neat and rode scooters, swallowed purple hearts by the handful and spent nearly all their money on clothes. Looked upon as queer scum by the opposing gangs, the Rockers, who seem in retrospect, to be more of a hangover of the ‘50s than a part of the ‘60s boom, they were constantly getting into fights even though they probably would have preferred to stay at home polishing the headlights of their scooters and ironing the creases into their immaculate trousers.

Not unnaturally, the media sped up the fashion cycle in the young and isolated them ever further from their parents than in the past. These kids were rich, they had different ideas to their parents and something sprang up called The Generation Gap which only served to widen the gulf between old and young. In ‘My Generation’, the Who sang, with fervour:

*‘People try to put us d-down
Just because we g-get around
Things they do look aw-awful cold
Hope I die before I get old’*

Old age was about the worst thing that could happen to anyone in the ‘60s, even to those creeping up to 30. Old age and youth not only didn’t share the same kind of financial past, their views on life were socially incompatible. The Pill meant that there probably was a great deal more promiscuity among the young – hence the

terrible phrase The Permissive Society – and the Beatles and other groups’ frankness about sex simply shocked the old out of their minds. Boredom, a great characteristic of leisure and affluence at any time since the Roman Empire, bred neurosis and lethargy and resulted in a vast increase in drug-taking, (something that had barely occurred to their parents). These kids spent most evenings smoking hash, pill-popping or, worse still, getting into more dangerous things like heroin and cocaine.

New Goals

The young queried religion; the old believed in God. The young hated school; the old regarded it as a privilege that they should be there and worshipped at the shrine of education. The young couldn’t care less about ambition and jobs. As Tom Wolfe put it:

‘their clothes have come to symbolise their independence from the old idea of a life based on a succession of jobs. The hell with that. There is hardly a kid in all of England who harbours any sincere hope of advancing himself in any very striking way by success at work. Englishmen at an early age begin to sense that the fix is in and all that work does is keep you afloat at the place you were born into.’

The old still clung to the idea that an Education, a Good Home and a Good Job were the only things in life to aim for,

The last of the great crazes-

1960 and 1961 were lean years for pop. They must have been – otherwise no one would have danced the Twist. Dance crazes were nothing new: they'd been part of pop music ever since it had a dance beat, which was always. Rock & roll created the wildest dances the world had seen, and, like the music, they were strictly for the kids. Legs flickered, bodies spun, parasol skirts whirled, thighs flashed, parents frowned.

These dance styles, of course, were all American and only reached England with the rock & roll films. Within the United States initially there were regional variations. Innovations would spread gradually from one area to another, never hitting the whole country at once. However, the process of change accelerated when first the movies and then television showed rock & roll and its dances to a national audience. The most important single influence was a television programme broadcast from Philadelphia called *Bandstand*. By mid 1957 its popularity was such that it was screened nationally as *American Bandstand*. The format was straightforward: the studio was filled, not as the name implied with bands or with singers, but with teenagers who danced to the latest records. From then on national dance styles mostly started in Philadelphia.

Another Fat Man

One consequence of *American Bandstand's* geographical location was the prevalence of records on the show by performers signed to Philadelphia record companies. Sooner or later someone in Philly had to add two and two. Someone did and found fat pickings.

In 1954 Hank Ballard had had a huge hit on the black record market with a song called 'Work With Me, Annie', whose raucous style and salacious lyrics were altogether too strong for white audiences, so it made little impression on the national charts. He hung on, and in March 1959 crept into the Top 100 listings with 'Teardrops On Your Letter'. Its highest position – 93 – is less significant than its

flip side, 'The Twist'. Fourteen months later he reached the national Top 10 with 'Finger Poppin' Time', and then 'The Twist' was re-released and made no. 28. By that time, however, Cameo-Parkway had set about exploiting *American Bandstand's* dance format. A fat ex-chicken plucker called Ernest Evans was chosen to do the job. Renamed Chubby Checker (in homage to another fat man, Fats Domino) he appeared on *American Bandstand* not only singing, but also demonstrating 'The Twist'. The dance caught on and Checker's version of Hank Ballard's song topped the national charts.

The Twist was nothing new musically, but as a dance it was a smash. The method was explained through similes – you moved your feet as if you were stubbing out cigarettes left and right, and swung your arms and hips the way you did when you were towelling yourself dry. That was it. Naturally the technique didn't take long to master and soon became a bore, so numerous embellishments were developed. You could raise a leg and thus

stub one imaginary cigarette in mid-air or bend your knees as you towelled and rubadub in a frantic squat. The more variations you could do the hipper you were, and as you didn't need a partner you could practise in front of the mirror as long as your shoes and your carpet lasted.

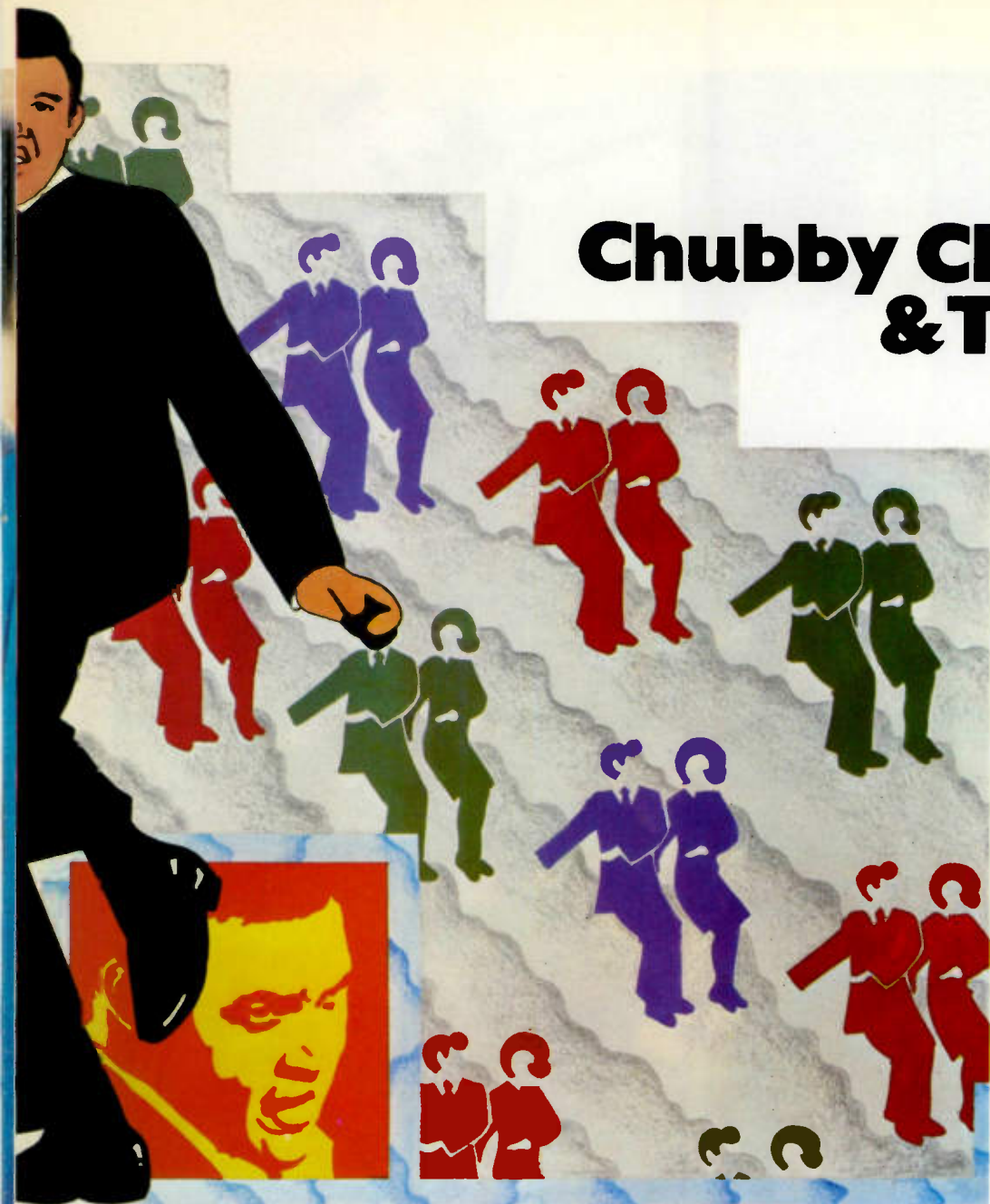
The Twist's solitariness was indeed its greatest innovation. Previously you always danced *with* someone, holding hands, even cheek to cheek. Doing the Twist you merely faced up and began to shake your ass in the most energetic and/or impressive manner you knew. It was great if you wanted to show off.

Twisted So Hard

Checker himself twisted so hard and so long he grew less chubby. He really was energetic; he sang as he danced, danced as he sang, and never once ceased to grin. Not surprisingly he sang in a somewhat breathless tone, high-pitched and strangled by flesh, but the kids didn't buy his record to listen to his voice.



Chubby Checker & The Twist



wagon as if it was the dance floor at the Peppermint Lounge and started twisting in as many ways as they knew how: Gary 'US' Bonds recorded 'Twist, Twist Senora' and 'Dear Lady Twist', Jerry Lee Lewis sang 'I've Been Twisting', Frank Sinatra led the middle-aged twisters with 'Everybody's Twistin'', Sam Cooke did 'Twisting The Night Away', the Isley Brothers had 'Twist And Shout', Duane Eddy recorded a whole album called 'Twistin' 'n' Twangin'', and when Bobby Darin revamped Ray Charles' 'What'd I Say', he changed the words and sang: "See the girl with the diamond ring – she knows how to *twist* that thing". Ray Charles himself (or maybe it was his record company's idea) simply re-released an early album under a new title, 'Do The Twist With Ray Charles'. It sold as if it was brand new and rose high in the album charts. Chubby Checker, in consideration of his ageing audience, dropped the tempo and had a Top 3 hit with 'Slow Twistin''. Perhaps he was feeling the pace himself.

'Don't Stop – Twist'

Naturally England caught on late. England always followed America in pop before the Beatles. Chubby Checker's first hit was in fact 'Pony Time', which showed for one week at no. 20 in March 1961, and the Twist didn't take off until almost a year after. 'The Twist' entered the Top 20 the same week as Joey Dee's 'Peppermint Twist' and one week before 'Let's Twist Again' in January 1962. Only the last reached the Top 10, peaking at no. 2 and remaining in the charts until late May. Once again the dance was a hit with the kids' parents and once again everyone was singing it. Billy Fury sang about being a 'Twist Kid' in the film *Play It Cool*, Petula Clark did the 'Ya Ya Twist', and Frankie Vaughan had his only hit that year with 'Don't Stop – Twist'.

There were films too. Chubby Checker starred in *Twist Around The Clock* with the Marcells and Dion, so Joey Dee and the Starlighters made *Hey Let's Twist*. Chubby Checker won out though, with a follow-up whose title aped exactly the follow-up title to *Rock Around The Clock*: *Don't Knock The Twist* (with Gene Chandler, the Dovells, and Vic Dana); and old Louis Prima starred in *Twist All Night*. In each the formula was identical – minimum budget, maximum exploitation.

Mick Wells

He followed up 'The Twist' with a couple of dance variations, 'The Hucklebuck', which didn't make the Top 10, and 'Pony Time', which made no. 1. Then, as summer came around once more and the Twist grew almost a year old, he sang 'Let's Twist Again' ('like we did last summer'): a simple idea, and another Top 10 hit. He must have thought the Twist was played out by then, for in October he innovated yet another dance, 'The Fly', which actually did better in the charts than 'Let's Twist Again'.

However, at this point a weird thing happened. Smart people in New York started twisting, and not just smart people, but smart, middle-aged people. Here they were in their 40s and 50s stealing a piece of teenage pop action. Their headquarters were in the Peppermint Lounge, where Joey Dee and the Starlighters played nightly. Dee released his own version of the Twist, 'The Peppermint Twist', and it went straight to no. 1. Also, the month it entered the charts – November 1961 – so did both 'The Twist'

and 'Let's Twist Again' for a second time. 'The Twist' reached no. 1, and Chubby Checker was back showing them how to stub out those imaginary cigarettes and rub their backs dry with that invisible towel. And it was clear he was grateful.

The adoption of the Twist by New York's ageing trendsters was almost as extraordinary as the fact that you danced it on your own. Previously pop had been strictly for the kids, had been anathema to most people the wrong side of 21. Pop was the musical counterpart of adolescence, acne, heavy petting, even juvenile delinquency. And you were supposed to grow out of it the same way you grew too old for those.

The very fact that someone who was fat, rich and 40 could and would do the Twist was the most conclusive proof that it was a monster hype. It just couldn't be all right if the Older Generation not only tolerated it, but were actually seen to be *enjoying* it. By now though there were so many of them doing it that, whatever the kids felt, it was bigger than ever. All of a sudden everyone stepped onto the band-



Keystone



Keystone

From left to right: Chubby Checker demonstrating the Twist. Brigitte Bardot does the Twist.

After 'Slow Twisting', Chubby had another Top 20 hit on both sides of the Atlantic with 'Dancing Party', but it was his last hit in England. In the States he tried out another new dance, and 'Limbo Rock' gave him his biggest hit (no. 2) since 'The Twist'. In fact he went on racking up American hits for several more years, an impressive achievement for a man who was essentially a one-hit wonder. In 1963 he stretched another hit out of the Limbo ('Let's Limbo Some More') and even squeezed one more out of the Twist ('Twist It Up'); he also instructed the Popeye, the Hitchhiker, the Swim, the Freddie, and the Boogaloo. It wasn't until 1966 that the dancing public got wise and told him they could do just fine shaking their asses without him. After that he sneaked back into the US Top 100 only once, when he covered the Beatles' 'Back In The USSR' in 1969.

236

Recently, however, both Chubby Checker and the Twist have been revived. Rod Stewart recorded 'Twistin' The Night Away' with the Faces, though not as a dance novelty, but because it was one of Sam Cooke's great songs, and Cooke is Stewart's idol. Also it's a great party tune and the Faces love a party.

Incredulous Gratitude

Mr Twister himself started performing in rock & roll nostalgia shows, demonstrating by his presence that the nostalgia counted for more than the rock & roll. One such show was filmed, so he ended up a star of *Let The Good Times Roll* alongside Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Bill Haley, Bo Diddley, et al. His appearance is mainly a laugh, but the look of incredulous gratitude upon his face as the crowd goes spare for an encore is almost touching.

He's promoting a new dance too. As before it's not his invention, but he's hoping the whole world will 'Reggae My Way'. This time there are no dog ends and no towels; the instructions are remarkably simple - 'Rock your body like a baby carriage, but be careful you don't break it'. Whatever way they do it though, they aren't going to get fooled again.

NEXT WEEK IN POP:
A whole new sub-culture begins in the British seaport of Liverpool. It was called 'Merseybeat'.

It was while they were in California, during a trip to Disneyland, that the boys were spotted doing an impromptu session with one of the park's regular groups and invited to appear there professionally. They returned some weeks later to make their very first public appearance, and before long they had made it on to the *Walt Disney TV Show*. They were now well and truly into showbiz, and when the *Andy Williams Show* started on TV in 1962, they were signed up, and appeared regularly for the next four years.

During this period the boys also made their acting debut in a TV series called *The Travels Of Jammie McPheeters*, and Donny, at the tender age of five, joined them for the first time in a TV special called *The Seven Little Foys*. Donny had also appeared at odd times on the *Andy Williams Show*, but it wasn't until 1966 when the show closed and the boys joined the *Jerry Lewis Show*, that he became an official member of the group at the age of nine.

After the *Jerry Lewis Show*, the act began to pop up on many other TV shows and the group started to make stage appearances – at first concerts with big name artists like Andy Williams and Nancy Sinatra, then tours of Japan and Sweden. In all this time the boys had ignored the record industry. They were true children of the TV age, and went on appearing for another year on the *Andy Williams TV-Special*.

'Sweet And Innocent'

It was 1970 that saw the big change. A cynic would tell you that the Osmonds had noticed the success of a rival group of singing brothers, the Jackson Five, and decided to liven up their image and compete. In fact, it may well have been mere coincidence that turned this middle-of-the-road band into competitors for the Jackson Five's share of adulation among the young hip kids. Whatever the motives and inducements, the Osmonds did at last sign a record contract with MGM in 1970. They at once repaired to the (by now) famous Muscle Shoals studio near Memphis and made their first and biggest group hit, 'One Bad Apple'. The single, which featured Donny's falsetto lead, leapt straight to the top of the US charts and earned the boys their first Gold Disc.

More Gold Discs followed – one for the group's first album, and one for Donny's first solo single, 'Sweet And Innocent' – then followed a golden year. First the boys were given their own TV-Special in which Jimmy made an appearance; their tours abroad took them to a *Royal Command Performance* in London; and between September 1971 and September 1972 they were awarded 10 Gold Discs. This put them ahead of the Beatles who had previously gained eight Golds in 12 months, and Elvis who had gained nine.

It was right in the middle of this period that Donny launched the group to worldwide fame with his multi-million selling recording of a 1958 classic, 'Puppy Love'.



From then on everything he and his brothers did struck gold. Donny stayed with the well-trying ballad hits of the past, and saw one after the other go into the hit parades of the world. Meanwhile, Alan, Merrill, and Wayne concentrated on their own compositions.

By the time the group returned to Britain in October 1972, the scene was set for the biggest display of fan mania ever witnessed – including the crazy days of Beatlemania. When the boys touched down at Heathrow airport in London on the morning of October 29th, there were 8,000 screaming, adoring teeny fans cramming the airport building. The police had to fight back charging hordes determined to battle their way through a wire fence to get to the group. Again it was Donny they craved to reach. Girls of 11 and 12 sobbed as he stood on the tarmac waving to them. Afterwards he said: "It's kinda crazy that I don't yet shave properly, yet all the girls out there think I'm the most desirable guy in the world right now. It's just great. It makes me feel as if I'm flying. I just hope I don't let them down and they are not disappointed with me." Donny reckoned that the fans identified with him because he was their age, but at the same time he stayed very cool about it all. "I don't do it for the adulation," he said. "I really love our music. I'd play for free. It's my great ambition to take a degree in music."

Despite his popularity, Donny took something of a back seat when the group appeared on BBC's *Top Of The Pops* to perform their new single, 'Crazy Horses'. The record was an immediate hit, and their first in Britain.

Pretty Faced Boys

But back at the hotel a siege was taking place as thousands of fans tried to get into Donny's room. It didn't seem to connect with his eager fans that the boy had come with his brothers to perform a protest song. In fact, the song was the first to point to the musical development and moral commitment of the Osmonds. It was an anti-pollution song that, although sneered at as riding on the latest liberal band-wagon, showed there was maybe a little more to the five pretty-faced all-American boys than just showbiz schmaltz.

Since that crazy tour in 1972, the group's interests have become polarised and their future set as a sort of pop-gospelling rock band spreading the word of brotherly love that has been so much part of their Mormon upbringing. Earlier this year they delivered 'The Plan', a concept album setting out their philosophies and beliefs. At once the group began to receive the sort of critical acclaim reserved for artists of lasting stature. It seemed they were now to be taken seriously and no longer thought of as merely a transient product of ephemeral teenybop pop.

Alan Osmond explained:

"We spent a lot of time asking people

Rex Features

Polydor

BACK TRACK



1960: First public appearance (without Donny) at the Mormon church in Ogden, Utah – then later, professionally, at Disneyland in California.

1962: First TV appearance on the very first *Andy Williams Show*. Donny's first appearance with the group in a TV show called *The Seven Little Foys* at the age of five.

1970: The group signed a record contract with MGM. Their first hit, 'One Bad Apple'.

1971: May: Their first visit to Britain for a *Royal Command Performance*. 'Sweet And Innocent' released by the Osmonds.

October: 'Go Away Little Girl' released by Donny Osmond.

1972: The Osmonds toured Britain.

January: 'Hey Girl' released by Donny Osmond.

February: 'Down By The Lazy River' released by the Osmonds.

April: 'The Donny Osmond' album released.

May: 'Phase III' album released by the Osmonds.

June: 'Puppy Love' released by Donny Osmond and made no. 1 in the charts.

September: 'Too Young' released by Donny and made no. 5. 'Portrait Of Donny' album released by Donny.

October: 'The Osmonds "Live"' album released.

November: 'Why' released by Donny, and made no. 3. He also brought out an album, 'Too Young'. 'Long Haired Lover From Liverpool' released by Jimmy and made no. 1. 'Crazy Horses' by the Osmonds made no. 2. 'Crazy Horses' album also released.

1973: January, 'Killer Joe' album released by Little Jimmy.

February: 'The Twelfth Of Never' by Donny made no. 1.

March: 'Tweedlee Dee' by Jimmy made no. 4.

May: 'Alone Together' album released by Donny.

July: 'Goin' Home' by the Osmonds made no. 4.

August: 'Young Love' by Donny made no. 1. 'The Plan' album released by the Osmonds.

what they wanted to know most of all and the answer was always the same. Who am I? Where am I going? What am I doing here? We felt we had a duty to provide an answer as we are kinda leaders."

Their answer, 'The Plan', is an album entirely conceived, written, recorded and produced by the group. They even played most of the instruments themselves in what seems to have been a gigantic effort to prove to the world that the Osmonds can do it.

Most of their non-touring time is now spent either recording in their own 16-track studio at their ranch home in Utah, or perfecting the skills of karate – which they now employ in their stage act. Otherwise they simply pursue the sports of the idle rich like horse riding and flying.

With their latest single, 'Goin' Home' making the Top 5 in Britain, Donny's latest single, 'Young Love', once again reaching no. 1, and their album earning them legions of new fans, it seems certain the Osmonds will be around for a long time.

In the midst of all the glamour and adulation, the Osmonds seem almost totally unaffected. They have been known to pose for hours in freezing streets just to please the press, they have gladly welcomed fans in to their hotel rooms and

patiently signed autographs for hours when pistol-packing security guards have done their utmost to protect them. They are perhaps an incredible peculiarity in a pop world that seeks rebels rather than saints.

Because of their too-good-to-be-true image, the Osmonds face an uphill struggle if they *are* to be taken seriously. Indeed, they are apprehensive about their lack of acceptance by the hip and heavy brigades: who in turn see the Osmonds as representatives of Middle America, and their fans as falling neatly into the area forever labelled by President Nixon as 'the silent majority'. The Osmonds even chose to support Nixon during his last presidential campaign because they believed it was 'good to have an opinion'!

Despite these affiliations they do not enjoy the wholesale merchandising which sees Osmond products in toy and book shops the world over, and their concern for the under-privileged has seen the formation of a foundation to aid the deaf and the blind. The boys have two older brothers, Virl and Tommy, who are both hard of hearing, and together they run the group's fan club and help administer the foundation.

Maybe they've chosen to remain in pop because it's undoubtedly the best means of global communication there is, and certainly the Osmonds will be the last to

abuse the position of power and trust they now occupy among the young everywhere. But as long as pop music is taken as something more serious than just entertainment by some people, it seems that the Osmonds will continue to be the consistently controversial and loved/hated band that they have been to date.

After all, 'Puppy Love' and the rest of Donny's re-recorded hits were seen as schmaltzy betrayals of real rock & roll when they were first released . . . let alone this many years later.



Camera Press

NEXT WEEK'S SUPERSTARS: The Beatles.

THE SUPERSTARS



The first family of Puppy Rock

There's never been a pop phenomenon quite like the Osmonds. Already they can outsell the Beatles and Elvis and produce fan mania that is wilder and more fervent than anything seen before. Without a doubt, they are *the* super teenybop heroes of the '70s.

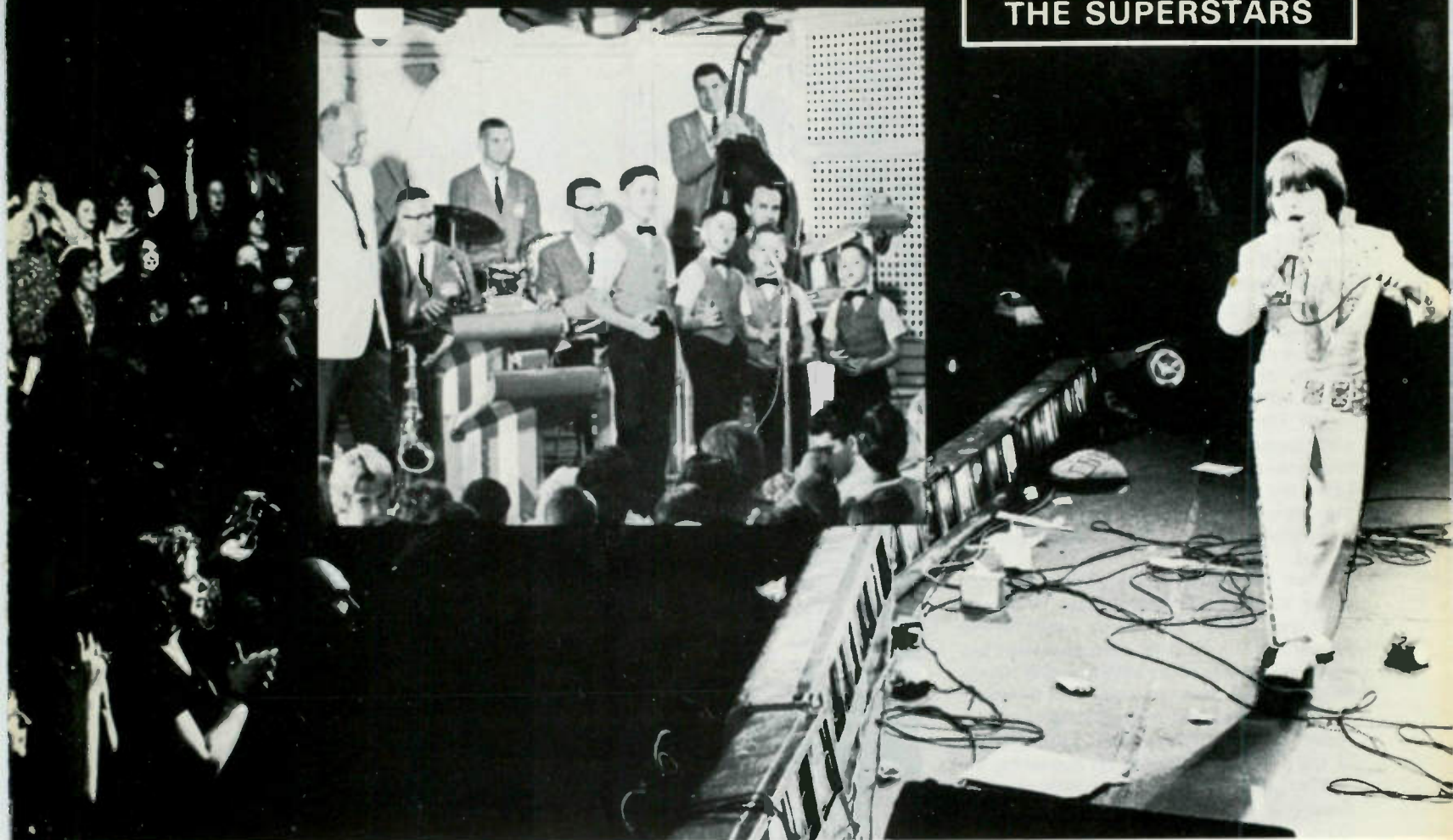
To many older rock & roll fans, the fact of the Osmonds success is extremely depressing. The original response by the established media to rock & roll in the '50s was the creation of young, plastic crooners, whose careers were entirely moulded by managers, agents and advertising men. Today, the Osmonds and the Cassidys of this world, appear to be the direct descendants of the Pat Boones, Paul Ankas, Tab Hunters and Fabians who watered down rock & roll into pop in the '50s and '60s. To an ageing rock fan, the Osmond mania is both disappointing and mysterious.

And yet, as any teenybopper will tell you, the reason for this quite extraordinary success, or rather the key to it, is a young man by the name of Donald Clark Osmond. Born in Ogden, Utah, on December 9th, 1957 – to millions he's just simply 'Donny', the boy heart-throb whose picture can be seen any day staring from the covers of countless glossy magazines on newsstands the world over.

If the Osmonds relied on Donny alone to win their fans it would be more than enough, but this is a family act that covers all angles. While Donny takes care of the teenies, Little Jimmy, aged 10, is the darling of the weenies – a spokesman for the music hungry sub-teens who enjoy their pop as much, if not more than, the next fan. What's more, he's the kind of showbiz trouper who wins the hearts of the older generations too, so that by the end of Christmas 1972 he had won over the pop audience everywhere with his 'Long Haired Lover From Liverpool' single. These two then take care of the younger

fans almost single-handed, and rely on their four older brothers – Alan (24), Wayne (22), Merrill (20) and Jay (18) – to provide the rocking. Donny is now a regular part of the singing/playing/dancing Osmonds act, though Little Jimmy, and only sister Marie (14), are still restricted to guest appearances on the shows.

The group's success is not, surprisingly, one of those meteoric-rise-to-fame tales that makes pop seem like a fairy story – more the opposite really. The four older brothers first started singing together in 1960, when their parents – Olive and George Osmond – began organising a family evening each week for a musical get-together. Mr Osmond joined in the singing, while his wife played saxophone. Before long the boys were singing regularly at family occasions, and soon the church in their home town of Ogden, Utah, heard of the act and asked them to perform at a church luncheon. The act was a success and prompted an invitation to California to appear at various churches.



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These two then take care of the younger

fans almost single-handed, and rely on their four older brothers – Alan (24), Wayne (22), Merrill (20) and Jay (18) – to provide the rocking. Donny is now a regular part of the singing/playing/dancing Osmonds act, though Little Jimmy, and only sister Marie (14), are still restricted to guest appearances on the shows.

The group's success is not, surprisingly, one of those meteoric-rise-to-fame tales that makes pop seem like a fairy story – more the opposite really. The four older brothers first started singing together in 1960, when their parents – Olive and George Osmond – began organising a family evening each week for a musical get-together. Mr Osmond joined in the singing, while his wife played saxophone. Before long the boys were singing regularly at family occasions, and soon the church in their home town of Ogden, Utah, heard of the act and asked them to perform at a church luncheon. The act was a success and prompted an invitation to California to appear at various churches.

It was while they were in California, during a trip to Disneyland, that the boys were spotted doing an impromptu session with one of the park's regular groups and invited to appear there professionally. They returned some weeks later to make their very first public appearance, and before long they had made it on to the *Walt Disney TV Show*. They were now well and truly into showbiz, and when the *Andy Williams Show* started on TV in 1962, they were signed up, and appeared regularly for the next four years.

During this period the boys also made their acting debut in a TV series called *The Travels Of Jammie McPheeters*, and Donny, at the tender age of five, joined them for the first time in a TV special called *The Seven Little Foys*. Donny had also appeared at odd times on the *Andy Williams Show*, but it wasn't until 1966 when the show closed and the boys joined the *Jerry Lewis Show*, that he became an official member of the group at the age of nine.

After the *Jerry Lewis Show*, the act began to pop up on many other TV shows and the group started to make stage appearances – at first concerts with big name artists like Andy Williams and Nancy Sinatra, then tours of Japan and Sweden. In all this time the boys had ignored the record industry. They were true children of the TV age, and went on appearing for another year on the *Andy Williams TV-Special*.

'Sweet And Innocent'

It was 1970 that saw the big change. A cynic would tell you that the Osmonds had noticed the success of a rival group of singing brothers, the Jackson Five, and decided to liven up their image and compete. In fact, it may well have been mere coincidence that turned this middle-of-the-road band into competitors for the Jackson Five's share of adulation among the young hip kids. Whatever the motives and inducements, the Osmonds did at last sign a record contract with MGM in 1970. They at once repaired to the (by now) famous Muscle Shoals studio near Memphis and made their first and biggest group hit, 'One Bad Apple'. The single, which featured Donny's falsetto lead, leapt straight to the top of the US charts and earned the boys their first Gold Disc.

More Gold Discs followed – one for the group's first album, and one for Donny's first solo single, 'Sweet And Innocent' – then followed a golden year. First the boys were given their own TV-Special in which Jimmy made an appearance; their tours abroad took them to a *Royal Command Performance* in London; and between September 1971 and September 1972 they were awarded 10 Gold Discs. This put them ahead of the Beatles who had previously gained eight Golds in 12 months, and Elvis who had gained nine.

It was right in the middle of this period that Donny launched the group to worldwide fame with his multi-million selling recording of a 1958 classic, 'Puppy Love'.





From then on everything he and his brothers did struck gold. Donny stayed with the well-trying ballad hits of the past, and saw one after the other go into the hit parades of the world. Meanwhile, Alan, Merrill, and Wayne concentrated on their own compositions.

By the time the group returned to Britain in October 1972, the scene was set for the biggest display of fan mania ever witnessed – including the crazy days of Beatlemania. When the boys touched down at Heathrow airport in London on the morning of October 29th, there were 8,000 screaming, adoring teeny fans cramming the airport building. The police had to fight back charging hordes determined to battle their way through a wire fence to get to the group. Again it was Donny they craved to reach. Girls of 11 and 12 sobbed as he stood on the tarmac waving to them. Afterwards he said: "It's kinda crazy that I don't yet shave properly, yet all the girls out there think I'm the most desirable guy in the world right now. It's just great. It makes me feel as if I'm flying. I just hope I don't let them down and they are not disappointed with me." Donny reckoned that the fans identified with him because he was their age, but at the same time he stayed very cool about it all. "I don't do it for the adulation," he said. "I really love our music. I'd play for free. It's my great ambition to take a degree in music."

Despite his popularity, Donny took something of a back seat when the group appeared on BBC's *Top Of The Pops* to perform their new single, 'Crazy Horses'. The record was an immediate hit, and their first in Britain.

Pretty Faced Boys

But back at the hotel a siege was taking place as thousands of fans tried to get into Donny's room. It didn't seem to connect with his eager fans that the boy had come with his brothers to perform a protest song. In fact, the song was the first to point to the musical development and moral commitment of the Osmonds. It was an anti-pollution song that, although sneered at as riding on the latest liberal band-wagon, showed there was maybe a little more to the five pretty-faced all-American boys than just showbiz schmaltz.

Since that crazy tour in 1972, the group's interests have become polarised and their future set as a sort of pop-gospelling rock band spreading the word of brotherly love that has been so much part of their Mormon upbringing. Earlier this year they delivered 'The Plan', a concept album setting out their philosophies and beliefs. At once the group began to receive the sort of critical acclaim reserved for artists of lasting stature. It seemed they were now to be taken seriously and no longer thought of as merely a transient product of ephemeral teenybop pop.

Alan Osmond explained:

"We spent a lot of time asking people

Rex Features

Polydor

BACK TRACK



1960: First public appearance (without Donny) at the Mormon church in Ogden, Utah – then later, professionally, at Disneyland in California.

1962: First TV appearance on the very first *Andy Williams Show*. Donny's first appearance with the group in a TV show called *The Seven Little Foys* at the age of five.

1970: The group signed a record contract with MGM. Their first hit, 'One Bad Apple'.

1971: May: Their first visit to Britain for a *Royal Command Performance*. 'Sweet And Innocent' released by the Osmonds.

October: 'Go Away Little Girl' released by Donny Osmond.

1972: The Osmonds toured Britain.

January: 'Hey Girl' released by Donny Osmond.

February: 'Down By The Lazy River' released by the Osmonds.

April: 'The Donny Osmond' album released.

May: 'Phase III' album released by the Osmonds.

June: 'Puppy Love' released by Donny Osmond and made no. 1 in the charts.

September: 'Too Young' released by Donny and made no. 5. 'Portrait Of Donny' album released by Donny.

October: 'The Osmonds "Live"' album released.

November: 'Why' released by Donny, and made no. 3. He also brought out an album, 'Too Young'. 'Long Haired Lover From Liverpool' released by Jimmy and made no. 1. 'Crazy Horses' by the Osmonds made no. 2. 'Crazy Horses' album also released.

1973: January, 'Killer Joe' album released by Little Jimmy.

February: 'The Twelfth Of Never' by Donny made no. 1.

March: 'Tweedlee Dee' by Jimmy made no. 4.

May: 'Alone Together' album released by Donny.

July: 'Goin' Home' by the Osmonds made no. 4.

August: 'Young Love' by Donny made no. 1. 'The Plan' album released by the Osmonds.

what they wanted to know most of all and the answer was always the same. Who am I? Where am I going? What am I doing here? We felt we had a duty to provide an answer as we are kinda leaders."

Their answer, 'The Plan', is an album entirely conceived, written, recorded and produced by the group. They even played most of the instruments themselves in what seems to have been a gigantic effort to prove to the world that the Osmonds can do it.

Most of their non-touring time is now spent either recording in their own 16-track studio at their ranch home in Utah, or perfecting the skills of karate – which they now employ in their stage act. Otherwise they simply pursue the sports of the idle rich like horse riding and flying.

With their latest single, 'Goin' Home' making the Top 5 in Britain, Donny's latest single, 'Young Love', once again reaching no. 1, and their album earning them legions of new fans, it seems certain the Osmonds will be around for a long time.

In the midst of all the glamour and adulation, the Osmonds seem almost totally unaffected. They have been known to pose for hours in freezing streets just to please the press, they have gladly welcomed fans in to their hotel rooms and

patiently signed autographs for hours when pistol-packing security guards have done their utmost to protect them. They are perhaps an incredible peculiarity in a pop world that seeks rebels rather than saints.

Because of their too-good-to-be-true image, the Osmonds face an uphill struggle if they *are* to be taken seriously. Indeed, they are apprehensive about their lack of acceptance by the hip and heavy brigades: who in turn see the Osmonds as representatives of Middle America, and their fans as falling neatly into the area forever labelled by President Nixon as 'the silent majority'. The Osmonds even chose to support Nixon during his last presidential campaign because they believed it was 'good to have an opinion'!

Despite these affiliations they do not enjoy the wholesale merchandising which sees Osmond products in toy and book shops the world over, and their concern for the under-privileged has seen the formation of a foundation to aid the deaf and the blind. The boys have two older brothers, Virl and Tommy, who are both hard of hearing, and together they run the group's fan club and help administer the foundation.

Maybe they've chosen to remain in pop because it's undoubtedly the best means of global communication there is, and certainly the Osmonds will be the last to

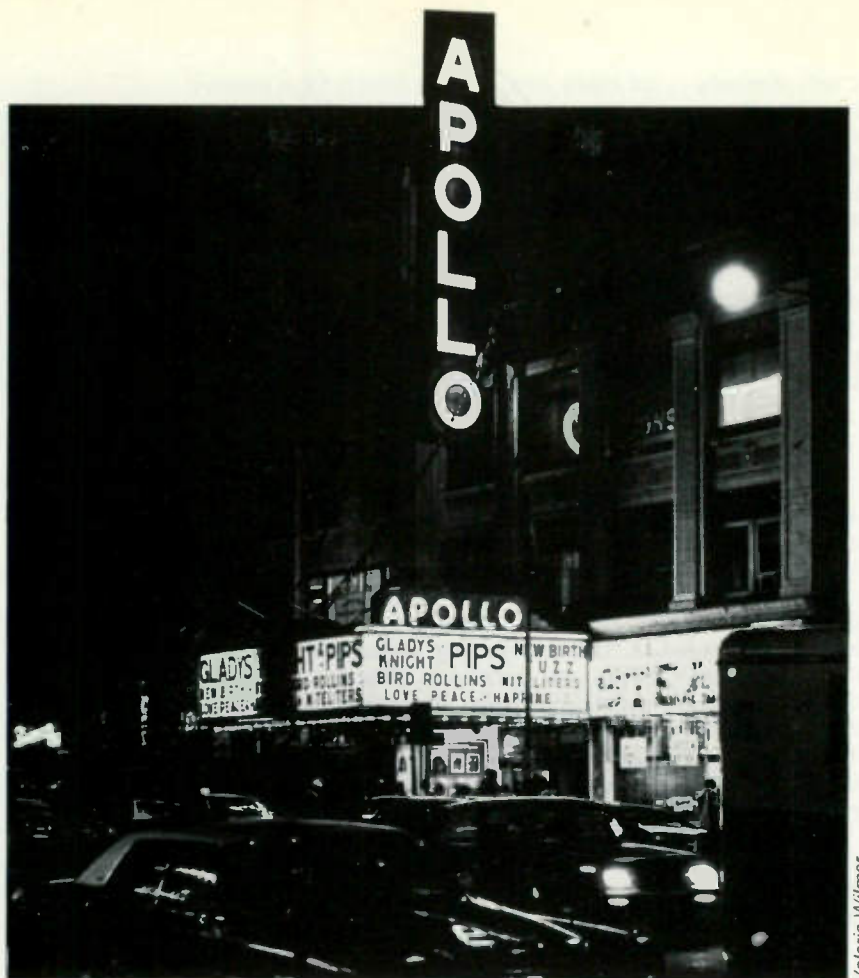
abuse the position of power and trust they now occupy among the young everywhere. But as long as pop music is taken as something more serious than just entertainment by some people, it seems that the Osmonds will continue to be the consistently controversial and loved/hated band that they have been to date.

After all, 'Puppy Love' and the rest of Donny's re-recorded hits were seen as schmaltzy betrayals of real rock & roll when they were first released . . . let alone this many years later.



Camera Press

NEXT WEEK'S SUPER-STARS: The Beatles.



Valerie Wilmer

BLACK MUSIC: '50s-'60s

WHAT IS SOUL?

*Soul is something that comes from deep inside
Soul is something that you can't hide*

Ben E. King

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty told Alice in Wonderland, "it means exactly what I want it to mean." Everyone has their own idea of what 'soul' is, and emotions run pretty high on the subject. Among some fans, referring to Tamla Motown as 'soul' is likely to fetch you a sideswipe with a turntable; others will be out their chair in alarm at the mere suggestion that any white artist could sing or play 'soul'.

Soul is, of course, black music first and foremost — yet no one was calling black music 'soul' before the early '60s — and if James Brown was a 'soul singer' when he cut classics like 'Out Of Sight' in the

mid-'60s, was he somehow *not* a soul singer when he recorded 'Please Please Please' in 1956? And while some would maintain that 'soul' didn't exist before the '60s, others would say that it died somewhere toward the end of the same decade.

The issue isn't made any clearer by the constant twists of meaning the word has been made to carry over the years. Today, any number of black musical styles are lumped together as 'soul', allowing artists as diverse as Billy Paul and Sly Stone to be considered under the same heading; and yet, beyond both being black, what real connection does the work of these two artists have? If there *is* a connection between the variety of artists that trade under the 'soul' tag (sometimes to their detriment), then it goes beyond musical styles — an attitude perhaps, a certain assumption about the nature of their music; possibly a certain honesty of expression.

Originally, the term did describe a certain musical style heavily influenced by gospel music — church being the place that you traditionally hear about your 'soul'. Gospel music had long been a part of the

American negro's culture, and the emotional, often frenzied atmosphere of black churches was an experience well known to most black people, especially in the southern states. Black church music — gospel and spiritual — was, however, a form quite distinct from the earthy and often bawdy blues tradition, and the two remained largely separate. There were even objections to records of religious music being sold over the same counter as rhythm & blues!

Nonetheless, during the '50s an increasing number of black artists were introducing aspects of the gospel style into their performances, both live and recorded. In particular, the vocal styles they adopted became gospel-influenced — a lyric would become loaded with intensity, or a number of voices would engage in a fine interplay, calling and answering each other, setting up harmonies and counter harmonies within the context of a song.

James Brown, from whom nobody has yet succeeded in wresting the title of 'king of soul', was one of the pioneers of the 'intense' style of singing, and in 1956 he cut 'Please Please Please' for Federal

records, the number which still climaxes his stage shows today. It relied almost entirely on Brown's delivery for its effect, with dramatic pauses in the backing to allow his fraught pleading vocal to the fore. A similar pleading style was also used by artists like Bobby Bland, Jackie Wilson, B. B. King, and Clyde McPhatter – all more successful than Brown at the time – carrying with it echoes of the devotional attitudes of gospel singing, only now it was a lover and not the Lord that was being addressed.

Frenzied Atmosphere

Undoubtedly though, it was Ray Charles more than anyone who pushed the gospel influence to the front of his music. Charles worked in many styles, including the 'crooning' style popularised by white singers, but in 1954 he had made his classic 'I Got A Woman' for Atlantic records, which was a straight cop of a gospel song, 'When I'm Lonely I Talk To Jesus'. It was, however, 'What'd I Say' in 1959 that was the real breakthrough. In style it was revivalist gospel – Charles shouted and moaned and his repeated demands were answered by the chants of a female backing group – a formula he was to repeat on 'Hit The Road Jack' for ABC/Dunhill.

The hostility that Charles attracted by merging the blues and gospel in so obvious a manner on both this and other songs, was often intense. Gospel was, after all, God's music, and thus sacred. Black singers who had an interest in both blues and gospel kept their roles quite distinct (see for example Mahalia Jackson's remarks to George Melly in his autobiography *Owning Up*), and Big Bill Broonzy, both a preacher and a bluesman, said of Charles, "He's mixing the blues and spirituals and I know that's wrong."

Wrong or not, the success of Charles and other gospel-based performers was incontestable – 'What'd I Say' alone was a landmark, a fierce pounding sound that made most contemporary white efforts at excitement pall by comparison. The same was true of the Isley Brothers' 'Shout', recorded in the same year, which used a similar call-and-response pattern to build up a pulsating frenzied atmosphere – an approach natural enough for the three brothers Ronald, Rudolph, and O'Kelly, who had spent their childhood and adolescence singing in the local church.

The rich vein of gospel music was also being tapped by Black jazzmen like Charlie Mingus and Cannonball Adderley, who saw in the blues and gospel a direction away from the abstract mathematical doodlings of jazzers like Dave Brubeck, to a more meaningful, emotional music. They became aggressively downhome, using blues and gospel tunes with their attendant verbal and musical vocabulary – and it was among the jazzmen that terms like 'soul' and 'soulful' were first bandied about.

The whole idea of 'soul' was, in fact, part of a wider movement within the black community that was keen to take account

of black 'roots' in its search for a positive identity within white society. Gospel music was part of a purely black tradition, and was thus held up for admiration and emulation. Moreover, gospel was a music borne out of real emotion, it had feeling; and by implication so did gospel-influenced rhythm & blues, or 'soul'.

Not that all 'soul' singers used the gospel influence in such a self-conscious way – for most it was something they'd grown up with, the natural way to sing when they wanted to convey a genuine feeling. In coming years though, the term was used increasingly self-consciously, and was applied beyond the confines of music to 'soul brothers', 'soul sisters', and even 'soul food'. At the same time, the music became increasingly subject to cliché, as will be seen in a later chapter.

In the meantime, an increasing number of R&B records used aspects of the gospel style. No particular label or area could claim dominance over the emergent soul style at this point, though gradually Detroit (largely through Tamla and its associated labels) and Memphis (largely through Stax/Atlantic) were to overshadow their rivals in the soul and R&B market. In any case, to talk of 'soul' records does not necessarily describe much, even at this point in time – a variety of approaches were followed, there being a diversity of styles *within* gospel music, and a variety of R&B forms to mix them with. Among solo performers, the 'intense' style of singing pioneered by James Brown, Ray Charles, Jackie Wilson, and Bobby Bland continued to be developed, both by these artists and others who altered their styles accordingly – Sam Cooke for example.

Downhome Gospel

Cooke was another artist who had spent his formative years singing in church (his father was a minister) and who had also sung in a straight gospel group called The Soul Stirrers. His early records though showed little of this influence – rather, they were smooth neat ballads like 'You Send Me', 'Wonderful World', and 'Cupid', which nevertheless carried an air of sincerity that was almost enough to class them as 'soul' in later years. Then in 1963 Cooke wrote and recorded 'Bring It On Home To Me' and 'A Change Is Gonna Come' the following year, both of which were downhome gospel in style, reflective and emotional. The first also used a call-and-response sequence with Lou Rawls, later to achieve success as a solo performer. Moreover, 'A Change Is Gonna Come' articulated important emotions for an increasingly confident black audience.

Much the same could be said for Ben E. King's 'Spanish Harlem', recorded in 1960, which though not gospel-styled, carried with it a similar air of hope and optimism that extended beyond the immediate subject of the song (a woman). King, who had been lead singer with the Drifters when they cut 'Save The Last Dance For Me' in 1959, was later to make some of



Above: A contemplative mood from Otis Redding. Far right: James Brown sweats his way through a soul number. Bottom from left to right: Ray Charles and the Isley Brothers.

the classic soul sides – 'Stand By Me' and 'Don't Play That Song' among them.

Bobby 'Blue Boy' Bland, who came from Memphis and recorded with Duke records of Houston, was more obviously gospel-influenced and made many of his finest records in the early '60s, though he remains undeservedly obscure on this side of the Atlantic. Bland's voice was usually smooth in tone, and as his nickname suggests, his records had a gripping aura of sadness about them, as in 'Stormy Monday' (1962) and 'Cry Cry Cry' (1960), though he also used an uptempo gospel style for 'Turn On Your Lovelight' (1961).

Most solo performers, whether male or female, seemed to prefer slower material, though their treatment of it was often a small age away from the ballad style that



Tom Hanley

Keystone

such material usually commanded, becoming increasingly harsh and strident. 'Cry Baby' by Garnett Mimms in 1962 was typical in its anguish, but 'I Found A Love', recorded by the Falcons out of Detroit in the same year, carried even more presence. Wilson Pickett, at that time lead singer with the group, came in with a stunningly powerful vocal that had him bursting from the constraints of both arrangements and chorus in an exciting tour-de-force . . . "YEAH, yeah" . . . it was a revelation how much feeling one man could squeeze into such an unpromising line.

Similar in feel to 'I Found A Love', was Solomon Burke's 'If You Need Me' (1963), which Pickett co-wrote, and which also included a break in the vocals for Burke to come across with some heartfelt rapping about "People always told me darlin' that I didn't mean you no good . . ." Burke was one of the first to refer to his music as 'soul' ('rock & soul' in fact), though beyond 'Everybody Needs Somebody To Love' (1964), he was to produce little else of any outstanding value, his range and tone being too narrow to compete with other singers that were appearing.

Memphis Horns

Among these was Otis Redding, whose name was to become almost synonymous with soul, especially to white audiences, and who in 1962 cut 'These Arms Of Mine' for Volt, a subsidiary of Stax, based in Memphis. Redding's vocal was similar to Bobby Bland's in its conviction and sadness, but at times it broke up under a welter of emotion, a disintegrative approach that was to become widely emulated in coming years. At the same

A flash of the ivories from solo singer Ben E. King, who used to be with the 'Drifters'.

time, Volt also issued William Bell's 'You Don't Miss Your Water', a similarly slow sad number. Neither record, however, made use of the Memphis horns that were to become such an outstanding feature of Stax sessions. These were first unleashed the following year when Rufus Thomas was urging everyone to do 'The Dog' (and later 'Walkin' The Dog'), and they blew hard, hard staccato phrases behind his growling vocal. Horns had not necessarily been a distinctive feature of soul up to this point – they were to become so later – though James Brown had assembled a massive band for his tours and had cut several hard dance records like 'Mashed Potato' and 'Night Train'. For the most part though, early soul records dispensed with lavish backings, preferring to allow the vocals to create the desired effect, as did the fervent exhortations of the Isley Brothers' 'Twist And Shout' (1962).

This was especially true of the productions of Berry Gordy's Tamla label in Detroit, started in 1960. Tamla included a number of styles within its rapidly growing roster of artists, but most of the early records had scant instrumentation, relying instead on a heavy pounding 4/4 rhythm, invariably reinforced by hand-clapping and tambourine bashing, creating a close approximation of the gospel style. The voices meanwhile were upfront, pleading, shouting, and using the familiar call-and-response chorus style so beloved of gospel. 'Please Mr. Postman' by the Marvelettes, one of Tamla's earliest hits, used this technique, as did Marvin Gaye's 'Pride And Joy' (1962), and 'Can I Get A Witness' (1963). Martha Reeves and the Vandellas' 'Heat Wave' (1963) took the technique further, with the chanting of the backing group eventually swapping places with Martha's vocal lead in an exciting, noisy climax.

Outside of Tamla and Stax, few other

record companies were creating any kind of identity within the soul field – though Atlantic, already the dominant force in R&B, released several classic cuts like Irma Thomas's 'Time Is On My Side' and Erma Franklyn's 'Piece Of My Heart'. Sue records of New York also came up with some blinders like the Soul Sister's roaring 'I Can't Stand It', Barbara George's 'I Know', and Charlie and Inez Foxx's 'Mockingbird' and 'Hurt By Love', all of which used shrill aggressive vocals and call and answer chorus work. Sue also recorded Ike and Tina Turner, who with 'It's Gonna Work Out Fine' and 'A Fool In Love' started a long career in soul music that is still continuing today.

Soul Style

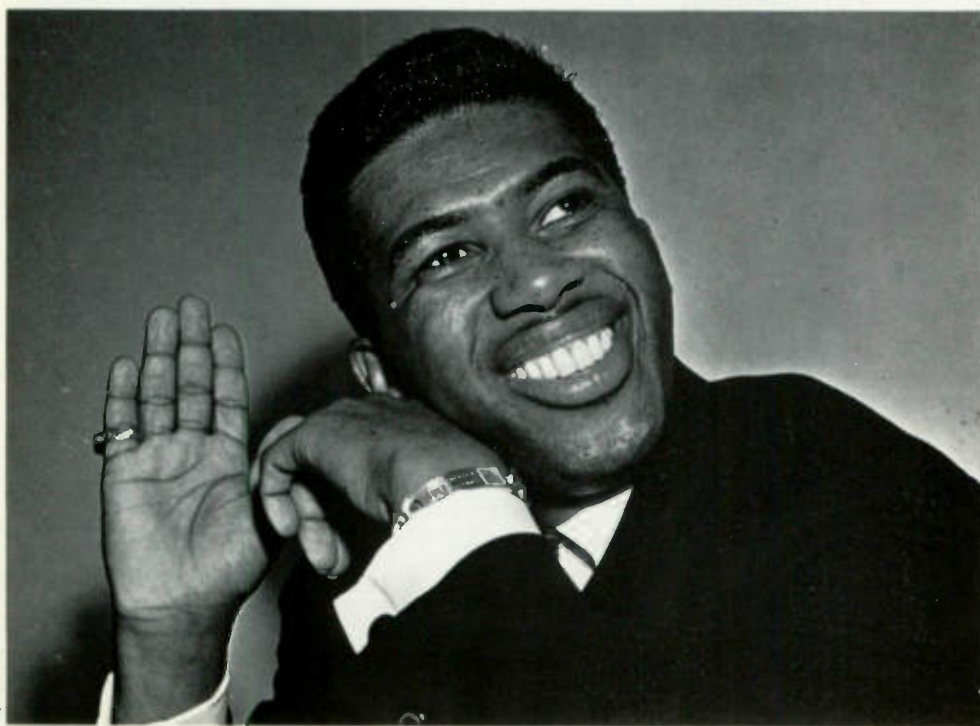
Several artists in Chicago were also working out their own version of the soul style – most notably the Impressions, who had previously backed Jerry Butler, and who now had Curtis Mayfield as their lead singer. The Impressions never really used the intense uptempo style favoured in Detroit, nor the dramatic personal approach used by James Brown and Wilson Pickett. Instead they had a cool, almost impersonal style, with soaring fine harmony work and a clipped sense of timing that was in its way equally dramatic, especially since Curtis Mayfield's material was among the best being written.

All in all, the 'soul' style was well conceived by the start of 1964, though many of its finest artists and performances were yet to come. In particular, the influential 'Memphis sound', as the Stax/Volt style came to be known, was only just beginning. 'Soul' was being talked about, but while you might recognise it when you heard it, it was already a confused term. Ray Charles himself had done a double-take by singing syrupy country & western ballads like 'I Can't Stop Loving You' and 'Take These Chains From My Heart', and if Ray Charles was a soul artist, then could country & western numbers like this be 'soul' too?

Most white people didn't care; most were unaware of the changing style that had been brought not just to the music, but to stage shows too. Jackie Wilson and James Brown, for example, were not only shrieking and collapsing on stage, but getting their audiences to do the same.

In Britain, though, a few weirdos – people like the Beatles and the Stones – were listening to the sound, 'ready for a brand new beat'.

NEXT WEEK IN BLACK MUSIC: A long look at America's 'Soul Stars' – the black singers who have had such an influence on our music.





POP INFLUENCES: 1959-73

AMERICAN BANDSTAND

*'Because they'll be rocking on
Bandstand
Philadelphia Pa
Deep in the heart of Texas
And round the Frisco Bay
All over St Louis
Way down in New Orleans
All the cats going to dance with
Sweet Little Sixteen'*

(*'Sweet Little Sixteen'*, by Chuck Berry)

Among the first effects of the rise of rock & roll in the mid-'50s had been the downfall of the merry band of Italian-American crooners whose good looks and (by-and-large) indifferent voices had dominated popular music for the previous decade. Ironically enough when rock & roll itself was pushed aside in 1959 it was by a select group of Italian-Americans who, with few exceptions, seemed to rely more on their good looks than their voices for success. The new crooners came from the Italian quarters of New York and, more significantly, Philadelphia.

By 1959 New York, and Brooklyn in particular, had already opened the way in the person of Robert Cassatto (Bobby Darin), and following on behind came Dion de Mucci and the Belmonts Fred Milano, Angelo d'Aleo and Carlo Mastrangelo, and Concetta Franonera (Connie Francis). From the Quaker City itself there emerged a whole list of notables: Fabiano Forte (Fabian), Robert Ridarelli (Bobby Rydell), Francis Avallone (Frankie Avalon) Frederico Picariello (Freddie Cannon), and Robert Volline (Bobby Vee).

Neither Freddy Cannon nor Bobby Vee were actually born in Philadelphia, but along with the rest it was the city that was behind their success, and in particular the city's own record labels. Why a few record labels in a city such as Philadelphia could achieve that sort of status was largely due to a local TV show, *Bandstand*, and its comper, Dick Clark.

American Bandstand became an enormously popular TV programme that was networked across the States five days a week from Philadelphia. Its influence was tremendous, the hometown boys and

record labels had easy access to it, and Philadelphia became almost single-handedly responsible for numerous dance crazes around the turn of the '50s. The twist even had the name of its main exponent, Chubby Checker, changed from Ernie Evans by Dick Clark's wife who said that he reminded her of Fats Domino.

Although Dick Clark's name is now synonymous with the show (which is still running), he didn't start it. A graduate in business administration from Syracuse University, Clark had had spells with radio stations in Syracuse and Utica, New York, and was then hired by WFIL radio station in Philadelphia as a summer replacement DJ.

WFIL's TV station started the *Philadelphia Bandstand* show as a daytime filler, hosted by the DJ star of WFIL, Bob Horn. The show started with an audience of schoolgirls sometime in 1952 from a studio in 46th and Market Street. The girls asked if they could dance to the records, and so the dance-format of the show was born.

Bob Horn also had a radio show on



SKR

Curt Gunther

From left to right: Teenage idols, Bobby Vee and Fabian.

WFIL in the same afternoon time-slot as the TV show. Horn would do the opening 15 minutes of the radio show (it was his name which drew the sponsor-advertisers), and then hand over to another DJ before leaving to introduce *Bandstand*. That other DJ was Dick Clark.

Horn presided over the show when rock & roll was happening – and with it the payola scandals that eventually brought him down. Payola itself wasn't at that time illegal; what was illegal was failing to pay income tax on such payments. Horn was the first DJ to be convicted on that illegality. (In addition he was also charged – but later acquitted – of statutory rape with a 14-year-old girl; and was charged with drunken driving at a time when WFIL's newspaper, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, was running a campaign against it.) In July, 1956, Dick Clark took over *Bandstand* from Bob Horn.

Clark himself was to feature in payola investigations four years later. In the course of these it was disclosed that he owned or part-owned 33 corporations in the music business – including record companies, publishing firms and record pressing plants. All together he held the copyrights to 160 songs, 143 of them 'gifts'. The investigations, which brought down many of the big names in the industry (most notably – the biggest name of them all – Alan Freed), found Clark as free from blemishes as his show's sponsors Clearasil claimed your skin would be.

Italian Names

Dick Clark was 26 when he took over the show. After a year WFIL became part of the ABC network, and Clark persuaded them to network the show as *American Bandstand*. To show them how big the ratings would be, Clark ran some competitions in the first few days. 'Why I'd like a date with Sal Mineo' drew 40,000 replies, and the following month the annual dance contest, which had been going since the programme's inception in 1952, had 700,000 letters.

By the time Chuck Berry had immorta-

lised *Bandstand* in the lyrics of 'Sweet Little Sixteen', 8½ million viewers had turned it into an American institution. The show had its own brand of miming performers, dancing audience, and Dick Clark himself together with 'regulars' like Kenny Rossi, Justine Corelli, Pat Molitierri, Carol Ann Scaldeferri, and Franny Giordano. The dominance of Italian names gives an indication of the ethnic make-up of Philadelphia itself – an influence that was to make itself felt in the city's recording companies and performers.

'Ninety-nine Ways'

Clark's show gave a lot of time to the city's own labels: Cameo-Parkway, Chancellor, Swan, and Jamie – a label that doesn't really belong in the same bag, as its main offering was Duane Eddy, a guitarist who gave his instrument a new dominance in pop music.

Of the Philadelphia labels the most successful of them all was Cameo-Parkway, formed by songwriters Bernie Lowe and Kal Mann. They had immediate success with their first record by a local singer, Charles Gracie. With his name slightly anglicised to Charlie Gracie he sold 1,000,000 copies of 'Butterfly' despite the 'A' side being covered successfully by Andy Williams, and the 'B' side, 'Ninety-nine Ways' by semi-heartthrob of the Day, Tab Hunter. It was all very ersatz-Elvis, and Lowe and Mann even ersatzed 'The King' himself, writing his 1957 hit 'Teddy Bear' for him.

Gracie followed up with more hits, notably 'Fabulous' and 'Wanderin' Eyes'. As such, he was not part of the Philadelphia influence, but a forerunner of it. More than Charlie Grace, Cameo and its subsidiary Parkway founded their Philadelphia dynasty on such names as the Rays, the Orlons, Dee Dee Sharp, the Dovells, and above all on Bobby Rydell and Chubby Checker.

Born Robert Louis Ridarelli in Philadelphia in 1942, Bobby Rydell's career was helped on by Paul Whiteman who changed his name and got him a job in a pop group

BPC Library

called Rocco and the Saints – whose line up included one Francis Avallone.

Rydell's first record was one of Bernie Lowe's own songs, 'We Got Love'. That was a big hit in November 1959, and was followed by four more: 'Little Bitty Girl', 'Wild One' (a Gold Disc), 'Swing School' (a Lowe Mann song) and the most appropriate, 'Volare'. All these hits came within a one-year span after which he suffered a two-year relapse, recovering in 1962 to score with 'The Cha Cha Cha' (a Kal Mann song) and 'Forget Him'.

Rydell had to rely on his backing musicians, his producers, and an echo-chamber to come up with a synthetic rock & roll sound. It was the production rather than Rydell himself that made his records sell. Rydell's voice lacked any distinctive or individual quality – something you certainly couldn't say about his successful stable-mate, Chubby Checker. Ernest Evans came from Philadelphia and had worked his strangled voice around the clubs in the area for some time before Dick Clark picked up on him. With his new name courtesy of Mrs Dick Clark, he put out a song written and recorded by Hank Ballard and the Midnighters – 'The Twist' – which sold over 1,000,000 copies for him in the late summer of 1960. While the record was a hit, the dance itself didn't catch on until about a year later when the French (who tended to lead the field in those days) decided it was the 'in' thing.

So at the very end of 1961 'The Twist' by Chubby Checker climbed back up the charts to become a second-time no. 1, and a second-time Gold Disc. Needless to say everybody from Frank Sinatra to Sam Cooke released 'Twist' records for millions of people to gyrate to on the dance floor. Chubby himself followed up with another huge hit, 'Let's Twist Again', before coming up with more dance records such as 'Pony Time', 'The Fly', 'The Hucklebuck' and 'The Pop-eye'.



SKR

SKR

Above: Connie Francis, who captured many teenage hearts. Right: Bobby Rydell.

Cameo-Parkway (and *Bandstand*) were responsible for a further deluge of dance-craze records, such as 'Mashed Potato Time', 'Ride' and 'Do The Bird' by Dee Dee Sharp; 'The Wah-Watusi' by the Orlons; and 'Bristol Stomp' and 'You Can't Sit Down' by the Dovells, whose lead singer Len Barry later came to fame with '1-2-3'. These dances, along with the Lindy and the Stroll, were all well-publicised on *Bandstand*.

Dance records weren't only confined to Philadelphia performers of course, and New York's Little Eva had great success with Carole King and Jerry Goffin's 'The Locomotion' and later with 'Turkey Trot', both on the Dimension label. *Bandstand* even pushed the record 'Short Shorts' by the Royal Teens (who included Al Kooper in their line-up) as a dance.

The main rival to the Cameo-Parkway label in Philadelphia was Chancellor, formed in 1958 by Bob Marcucci and Peter de Angelis. Their major success came with two Bobby Rydell look-a-likes: Frankie Avalon and Fabian. Francis Avallone was born in Philadelphia in 1940, and by the age of 12 was being hailed as a child-prodigy – although it wasn't for his singing but his trumpet-playing. After appearing with a band for a season in Atlantic City, he was given trumpet-playing spots on radio shows and on several networked TV shows.

A switch to singing brought a management and recording contract from Bob Marcucci and Peter de Angelis on Chancellor. His first record for them, 'Dee-Dee Dinah' sold over 1,000,000 copies in 1957. The follow-up, 'Gingerbread' was also a Top 10 hit, although not on the same scale. But the next year brought him three more Gold Discs: 'Venus', 'Just Ask Your Heart' and 'Why' (which was written by Marcucci and de Angelis).

As part of his move to be an all-round

entertainer, Avalon changed labels a few times (joining United Artists, Reprise and then Amos Records), and appeared in several films including: *Beach Party*, *Operation Bikini*, *Dr Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine*, *Beach Blanket Bingo*, *Ski Party*, *The Million Eyes of Stu Muru*, *I'll Take Sweden* and *Skidoo*.

Frankie Avalon was the epitomy of the 'Philadelphia Influence': the Italian good looks, a colourless voice – in fact the whole boy-next-door image that was so popular. Undoubtedly his almost continual airing on Dick Clark's *American Bandstand* took him to fame. Marcucci and De Angelis tried exactly the same formula they'd used with Avalon on Fabiano Forte, another Philadelphian, in fact, Stan Freberg's humorous record 'Teenage Idol', in which the record producer, finding he is short of a teenage idol at a recording session, goes out into the street and pulls in the first teenager he sees, was based on Fabian. He was signed to Chancellor after being seen in the street by Bob Marcucci, who thought he resembled Elvis Presley.

Mediocre Material

In fact the resemblance was more to Frankie Avalon and Bobby Rydell except Fabian couldn't sing at all. Marcucci and De Angelis put him through an intensive grooming and singing course and released him in a blaze of publicity. However, his first two releases were outright disasters and his third, 'I'm A Man' was just a moderate hit. Even so, this didn't stop *Bandstand* voting him 'The Most Promising Male Singer of 1958'. It wasn't until 'Turn Me Loose' in April 1959 that Fabian really got high into the charts, followed by his biggest-ever success, 'Tiger', which earned him a Gold Disc.

Fabian and Frankie Avalon were both representative of Philadelphia in that they were both first and foremost, and perhaps even totally, *image*. They, or rather Marcucci and De Angelis, built them an image and then tried to find voices and songs to match.

The other main Philadelphia label wasn't

as big as either Cameo-Parkway or Chancellor (who, for example, had eight records by Avalon and Fabian in the Top 10 in 1959). Swan's catalogue was almost entirely made up of just Billie and Lillie, and Freddy Cannon. Billie and Lillie came from Philadelphia and were feted by Dick Clark. Their biggest hit was with 'La Dee Dah', a song made up entirely from the titles of then-popular hits, followed by 'Lucky Ladybug'.

Although Freddy Cannon's real surname was Picariello, he wasn't born in Philadelphia, but Lynn in Massachusetts, in 1940. His father was a band leader and Freddy himself formed a small band performing in and around Boston. In April 1959, Frank Slay Jnr and Bob Crewe visited the city on business and were approached by local disc jockey Jack McDermott go listen to Freddy Cannon.

Slay and Crewe were songwriters with many hit records to their credit (one of them was the Rays' hit 'Silhouettes' for Cameo), and the joint-owners of Swan Records in Philadelphia. They signed Cannon, gave him his new name, his image, and his first song, 'Tallahassie Lassie'. They also got him his first TV appearance . . . on Dick Clark's *American Bandstand*.

Bobby Rydell, Frankie Avalon, Fabian, and Freddy Cannon formed the backbone of the mainstream Philadelphia influence (the other part was the dance innovations), and they had five major things in common: they were all from Italian backgrounds; they were all (with the exception of Freddy Cannon) born in Philadelphia; they all recorded for Philadelphia record labels; they were all lacking in a distinctive singing voice, and, perhaps most importantly, they were all more-than-frequent guests on Philadelphia's networked TV show, Dick Clark's *American Bandstand*.

NEXT WEEK IN POP INFLUENCES: A detailed look at Brian Epstein's early life and the effects he caused.

The day the

On April 17th, 1960, Eddie Cochran died at the age of 21. He was killed when the car in which he was travelling left the A4 trunk road and smashed into a lamp-post. His death was symbolic of the death of rock & roll, though the music was killed less by violence than by stealth: poisoning or suffocation make much better analogies.

Others had left the scene too: Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper took the same fatal plane ride just over a year before Cochran's death; and Chuck Berry was out of circulation for a while when he was caught on a morality rap. The rest mostly chose their own forms of rock & roll suicide. Elvis Presley was called up in 1958, and left the Army two years later a corporal and a crooner; Jerry Lee Lewis stopped looking for special material and was content to re-vamp rhythm & blues hits until he quit rock & roll for country & western; Bill Haley's novelty songs sounded as old as the man himself; Little Richard had 'Seen The Light', thrown away a handful of precious jewels and his career, and was singing the praises of the Lord in a church. And no-one was around to take their places.

Polite And White

To understand why there were no more where they came from it's necessary to go back to the time before there was rock & roll. Rock & roll, as Charlie Gillett points out in *The Sound Of The City*, took both the music industry and the public by surprise because it introduced a completely new notion of popular music. For decades popular music had been dominated by big dance bands and balladeers with one simple aim: to make the people forget about economic depression or war or unemployment or rationing or whatever else was making life a drag. They achieved this aim by means of an opulent sound, lavish melodies, an austere yet immaculate appearance, and above all an unwavering refusal to let slip any reference to reality. Their music was like a bed-side conversation with an amputee. Mention the weather – OK, for even if it's raining there's a silver lining to every cloud – talk about the moon and the stars and the birds and the bees and love – even tell a few jokes – but never, never say you see that space under the bedclothes. Everyone, of course, was handsome and polite and respectable and white.

248

The music industry was quite happy with this state of affairs. It was dominated by six major record companies – Capitol, Columbia, Decca, Mercury, MGM, RCA Victor – and the publishers' association, ASCAP. By the '50s the majors were selling a steady 200 million records a year, whose publishing rights were tied up with ASCAP publishers. Naturally, the big radio networks broadcast what the public was buying; and they were buying the crooners, the bands, and the ballads. Country & western got a look-in too, but since the most successful singers recorded for the majors, that hardly constituted a change. And who wanted a change anyway?

Too Loud And Crude

Basically the kids did. There was some kind of an adolescent revolution going on in the '50s. When their parents told them to shut up, even if they didn't say no, the kids asked why. Their heroes were Marlon Brando and James Dean, and the current singing stars – Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Eddie Fisher, Dean Martin, and Sinatra – didn't match. This is where rock & roll came in; by means of local radio networks, independent record companies, and singers who didn't just look as if they were modelling tuxedos.

Far from welcoming rock & roll, the music industry and most of its audience hadn't liked it one bit. For a start rock & roll shook up the business. Although 1955 was the first of a number of increasingly successful years (sales jumped from 213 million records in 1954 to 277 million in 1955, 377 million in 1956, 460 million in 1957, 511 million in 1958, and 603 million in 1959) the news wasn't good for the majors, for through those same years the independents had grabbed a bigger and bigger piece of the action. Also, they didn't take to the music itself. It was rebellious, sexy and, even when it was performed by whites, sounded black. Frankly, the major companies didn't want to know. Decca had Bill Haley, and RCA Victor bought Elvis Presley from Sun, but the rest hardly bothered at all – apart from Capitol, who signed up Gene Vincent as their answer to Elvis. In fact, they thought rock & roll was no more than a fad, whose appeal was mainly based on novelty, and before the end of 1956 several were promoting calypso as the next craze.

The majors were right in one assessment – rock & roll did not have universal appeal. It was too loud and it was too crude; by its anti-authoritarian (especially anti-parental) attitudes it offended all but

the young, and by its musical association with blacks it alienated whole areas of conservative America. It did, however, have certain positive qualities, which the industry set about exploiting with an equal disregard for artists and public. These qualities were a beat, catchy lyrics and/or melody, and teenage subject matter. As the industry gradually emasculated it, the intense personality of rock & roll gave way to formula-bound anonymity.

It wasn't only the majors who performed the lobotomy. Of the independents only Sun and Specialty declined to do so, and they died. Dot, on the other hand, did well. Dot's brightest star was Pat Boone – the King of the Cover Version. He had his first big hit in the summer of 1955 with a bleached-out version of Fats Domino's 'Ain't That A Shame' and followed it up with Little Richard's 'Tutti Frutti'. He was white, handsome, and a Christian. Between 1955 and 1959 he had more Top 10 hits than Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, or Little Richard, and only Elvis Presley, Fats Domino, Ricky Nelson and the Everly Brothers did better.

Just Puppets

Dot didn't stop there. They found a face even more beautiful than Boone's – Tab Hunter – a young man whose aspirations were to be a film actor rather than a singing star. The song they found for Hunter to sing – 'Young Love' – set the mood for 1957. By no stretch of imagination or definition was it rock & roll, but it was there to take its place. Other record companies and other singers followed suit. Some had more genuine musical intentions than Hunter's, others had even less. Mostly they were no more than puppets. Comedian Stan Freberg satirized the situation with hilarious accuracy in his 'Old Payola Roll Blues' – a producer sets out to make a hit record and pulls an adolescent into the studio from the street to be a star:

"Hey Kid!"
 "Who, me?"
 "Can you sing?"
 "No."
 "Good. Come with me . . ."
 "But I can't sing."

"What's that got to do with it. You've got all the right qualifications – a pretty face and a pompadour."

On one side of the record the kid merely has to sing the word 'highschool' every time the producer points at him. When he remarks afterwards that the song seemed rather short, the producer's reply

music died...

is simple: "It gets more plays that way." Between takes they do a little work on the future Teenage Idol's image, and the kid – Clyde Ankle – tries out an imaginary press interview, the basis of which is his assertion that he'll never replace Elvis. For the flip-side Ankle just sings the first thing that comes into his head ('I was on my way to highschool, when this guy came up to me . . .'), while the producer creates a nifty falsetto by prodding Clyde with a sharp stick and lays on suitable atmosphere with a scream machine. "Stick with me, kid," he says, "Clyde Ankle is going to jump up the charts."

Freberg was joking, but he wasn't telling lies. Perhaps the closest real-life example of this process was the case of Fabian. Fabiano Forte was a conventionally good-looking teenager who became a star, as they used to say – overnight. Actually it took a little longer than that, for Fabian was groomed from head to toe until he was perfect. Except for one thing – he couldn't sing. He was given vocal training, but, without any natural ability or much inclination, nothing could be done. Nevertheless he sang a song called 'Tiger' and it was a million-seller. It had cost a lot of money, but the investment paid off. Fabian himself wanted out and moved into films just as soon as he could. He owned up and said he knew he was a lousy singer. He was more honest than some.

The New Formula

The organisation behind Fabian was something new. The original rock & rollers had had record companies and managers, but they'd been responsible for their own image – the way they dressed, the way they wore their hair, the way they smiled or sneered, the quotes they gave the press, the way they moved onstage – and had control over the songs they sang and the way they were recorded. They even wrote their own songs and provided their own accompaniment.

By the late '50s it was no longer possible, in most cases, for a performer to have the same kind of say in the recording studio, because the simple guitar/bass/drums backing was rarely used. Instead the producers of pre-rock & roll popular music had re-emerged and were merely applying their conventional techniques to the new formula (although there were some new young producers bringing genuine rock & roll understanding as well as originality into the studios). The puppet singers simply sang the words on the page over a backing track they had had no hand in. The melody and the lyrics (composed

by professional songwriters) and the very sound of the song (created by the producer) became more important than any expression of personality on the part of the singer.

No Longer Offended

Rock & roll had drowned in the mainstream of pop, but few people seemed to care. The business was much better off. Rock & roll fans still bought records, but now so did many others who would never have wanted the real thing. Parents were no longer offended by their children's music (a sure sign something was wrong), and neither were teachers, ministers, policemen or politicians. Only those singers who couldn't or wouldn't adapt, lost out. Carl Perkins was one; having made the Top 10 with 'Blue Suede Shoes' (his own song) in 1956, he drifted into obscurity. The aggression of his warning, 'Don't tread on my blue suede shoes', could hardly have been further from the timid, pubescent plea by Tommy Sands in 'Teenage Crush' a year later: 'Please don't try to keep us apart, don't call it a teenage crush'. 'Teenage Crush' reached no. 3 . . . so it goes.

Elvis Presley (or rather his manager, Colonel Tom Parker) was cleverer than Perkins. He started out with the same record company as Carl, Sun, but after moving to RCA Victor in 1955 he modified his country rock sound, gradually developing a more contrived singing style to suit the self-conscious material and the increasingly sophisticated backing used for his recordings. The nadir was his sub-operatic 'It's Now Or Never' ('O Sole Mio'), released in 1960 after his spell as a G.I.

Two of the songwriters whose work was most crucial to Presley during the period of transition – Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller – were themselves in the vanguard of more general change. In 1956 they wrote and produced the Coasters' first national hit, 'Searchin'', and developed the song's humorous style in a series of hits – including 'Yakety Yak', 'Charlie Brown', 'Along Came Jones', and 'Poison Ivy' – over the next few years.

However, by 1959 Leiber and Stoller had started working with the Drifters and produced the group's Top 10 hit, 'There Goes My Baby', in a style unprecedented for a black vocal harmony group (not least because of the extraordinary use of strings). A year later the group topped the charts with 'Save The Last Dance For Me', which, although credited as a Leiber-Stoller production, is considered by some pop historians (among them Bill Millar in

his study of the group, *The Drifters*) to have been a very early Phil Spector session. Certainly Spector produced (and co-wrote with Jerry Leiber) the Drifters' lead singer Ben E. King's first solo 'Spanish Harlem', early in 1960. The song's lyrical and musical sophistication was about as far from rock & roll as anyone had got, but it was indicative of the way a branch black music was to develop. However, despite the enormous importance of Spector and Leiber and Stoller, the greatest single influence on the development of post rock & roll black music was Berry Gordy, who used his experience as an independent producer in the late '50s to create one of the most distinctive sounds of the '60s, the Motown Sound.

The Greatest Change

The very fact that these sounds were created by the men in the control room of the recording studio rather than by the performers represents the greatest change that hit rock & roll. Of those rock & roll stars who quit or died, it seems likely that only Buddy Holly would have continued to develop his music. (Significantly he formed his own record label.) But then it was already clear before his death that he had become a pop singer rather than a rock & roller.

Behind: Left to right James Dean, Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran and Richie Valens.

NEXT WEEK IN ROCK:

The Influence of Rock & Roll on the Beatles and the Stones.



Talking 'bout my generation

TWISTING THE NIGHT AWAY by Sam Cooke

*Let me tell you 'bout a place
Somewhere up in New York way
Where the people are so gay
Twisting the night away
Here they have a lot of fun
Puttin' trouble on the run
Man you'll find the old and young
Twisting the night away
Twisting, twisting
Everybody's feeling great
Twisting, twisting,
Twisting the night away*

*Here's a man in evening clothes
How he got there I don't know
Man you ought to see him go
Twisting the night away
Dancing with a chick in slacks
She's a'moving up and back
Man there ain't nothing like
Twisting the night away
Twisting, twisting, etc. . . .*

*Here's a fellow in blue jeans
Dancing with an older queen
Dolled up in her diamond rings
Twisting the night away
Man you ought to see her go
Twisting to the rock and roll
Here you'll find the young and old
Twisting the night away
Twisting, twisting, etc. . . . repeat chorus.*

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'The Year of the Twist' is as good a way as any of describing 1962, the year that heralded the return of dance music. Of all the twist records – and everyone from Frank Sinatra to Petula Clark seemed to get in on the act – the best remembered is probably 'Let's Twist Again', which was a global hit for Chubby Checker. It was not, however, the best of the twist records. This honour must surely go to Sam Cooke's really excellent 'Twisting The Night Away', a twist record only in as much as the lyrics mentioned the dance, but a record with a strong enough melody to make it a hit with whatever lyrics he cared to add. It followed the sequence of first-rate Cooke discs, and ranks with what is perhaps the best of his records, 'Another Saturday Night'.

What Cooke managed to achieve was a lyric that summed up what the twist was about. It wasn't solely in the domain of the young; as a dance it was so simple, so free-form, that anyone who could stagger could perform it satisfactorily. So Cooke sang of the diversity of people you could see doing the twist in clubs every night. He drew brief word-pictures of the characters: from drunks in tuxedos who stumbled in after a good-time, to aged socialites trying to recapture lost youth with a young escort. The whole song carries a feeling of abandon, and beautifully captures the discotheque scene of the early '60s. Little wonder that, a decade after it was written, it is a high-point of Rod Stewart's act.

250



Barry Thorpe

MUSIC: LYRICS

LET'S DANCE

Words and Music by Jim Lee

*Hey baby won't you take a chance
Say that you'll let me have this dance
Let's dance, Let's dance
We'll do the twist, the stomp,
the mashed potato too
Any old dance that you want to do
But let's dance. Let's dance*

*Hey baby if you're all alone
Maybe you'll let me walk you home
Let's dance, Let's dance
We'll do the twist, the stomp,
the mashed potatoes too
Any old dance you want to do
But let's dance. Let's dance*

*Hey baby yea you thrill me so
Hold me tight don't you let me go
Let's dance, Let's dance
We'll do the twist, the stomp,
the mashed potatoes too
Any old dance that you want to do
But let's dance. Let's dance*

*Hey baby things are swingin' right
Yes I know that this is the night
Let's dance, Let's dance
We'll do the twist, the stomp,
the mashed potatoes too
Any old dance that you want to do
But let's dance. Let's dance*

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Chris Montez carried no such solid commentary in his song. 'Let's Dance' was written for him, and is a piping, insistent dance record that cashes in on whatever dance form you care to mention. This is basically 'happy music' that serves no other purpose than to get people onto the dance floor. The words are really secondary to the beat, and are much in the tradition of '50s pop before the Beatles arrived to change the entire emphasis. 'Let's Dance' is, however, a successful number. It works in that people *do*, as the words exhort, start dancing. Pure dance numbers like this are rare today; perhaps we're more inhibited or there's just not one homogeneous dance that requires no feats of athleticism or ability to follow complicated routines, or perhaps record companies are no longer geared to promoting dance crazes as they were in those days. It is a matter of nostalgic regret that 'Twisting The Night Away' and 'Let's Dance' could not be made in the climate of this decade, and the proof of their lasting success is the number of times they are played at discos and parties.

NEXT WEEK: Lyrics to 'Please Please Me' and 'Penny Lane'.

POP FILE

... the Who's Who of Pop. Week by week the A-Z of who did what and when.

AHMET ERTEGUN formed Atlantic Records in New York in 1948, with his brother Nesuhi. Guided by Ahmet, the company assembled an amazing roster of talent through the 1950s, when it emerged as *the* major black independent company with artists like Joe Turner, LaVern Baker, Clyde McPhatter, Ray Charles, Chuck Willis, the Drifters, the Clovers and the Coasters. Ahmet also assembled a fine jazz catalogue including Mingus, John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman. Unlike most independents, Atlantic did not fold in the '60s, but embarked on a new wave of expansion with Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Sam and Dave and others, all under the guidance of Ahmet. According to Phil Spector, Otis Redding always thought the gentleman's name was 'Omlette'.

FABIAN was born Fabian Forte in Philadelphia in 1943. In 1957, Bob Marcucci, manager of Frankie Avalon and part-owner of Chancellor Records, 'discovered' him and started manufacturing a teenage dream-star. Despite the hard work Fabian never learnt to sing, but eventually made some US hit records that duly established him as a heart-throb for a while: 'I'm A Man', 'Turn Me Loose', 'Come And Get Me' and 'Hound Dog Man'. By 1963, Fabian, who never had a hit in Britain, was gone and forgotten. He later turned to acting, appearing in *Hound Dog Man*, and John Wayne's *North To Alaska*.



Rex Features

FAIRPORT CONVENTION have been the centre point of the British folk-lore scene, since they came together in May, 1967. They have had so many personnel changes, that the Fairports themselves list seven separate bands under the name - plus other groups ex-members have gone on to form. In May 1968, Sandy Denny replaced singer Judy Dyble - the rest of the group that built the name were Ashley Hutchings (bass), Richard

Thompson (guitar), Simon Nicol (guitar/vocals), Ian Matthews (vocals) and Martin Lamble (drums). Martin died in the group's motorway accident in June, 1969. The group reformed later that year, with singer/violinist Dave Swarbrick coming in as the focal point of all succeeding Fairports, writing much of the material and making his jiggy violin an essential part of the sound. In the same year Sandy Denny, who had written 'Who Knows Where The Time Goes' for the group (also recorded by Judy Collins), left to form Fotheringay, and, later, to work with her own band and on solo gigs. Since guitarist Richard Thompson left in January 1971, the group has become very much Dave Swarbrick's band. They have now reached the revered status of an Institution on the rock scene. Last year a 'History Of Fairport Convention' album was released containing many of their best tracks.

MARIANNE FAITHFUL

will probably be remembered best for being Mick Jagger's girlfriend in the '60s, but she also made records herself. The daughter of a European baroness, she was a folk-singer before Jagger gave her 'As Tears Go By', which made it to no. 9 in 1964. Her next hit, 'Come And Stay With Me', featured one of the sexiest voices ever heard on record. She had two more hits in 1965 with 'This Little Bird' and 'Summer Nights', before abandoning records in favour of acting.



Syndication International

GEORGIE FAME real name Clive Powell, was a big name on the R&B scene in Britain in the early '60s, but was more influenced by blue-beat than blues. His early hits 'Yeh Yeh' (1964) and 'Get Away' (1966) were light and jazzy. He turned to softer ballads with 'Sunny' and 'Sitting In The Park' (1966), and was some years ahead of his time when he abandoned his group the Blue Flames to play in front of an orchestra. He had a new lease of life with 'Bonnie And Clyde' (1967), and is now working with ex-Animal Alan Price on records and TV and in night-clubs.



Syndication International



SKR

FAMILY rose on the wave of 'underground' groups in Britain in 1967-8 and kept very much to their basic approach right the way through various personnel changes, until the group disbanded in 1973. It was singer Roger Chapman's band really, for his unique gravelly voice formed the distinctive cornerstone of their sound. After their first two albums 'Music In A Doll's House' and 'Family Entertainment', and the departure of original bassist Rick Grech to Blind Faith, Family settled down to working mainly in Britain. 'Weavers Answer' from their second album was a hit single for the band a year after the album came out. Despite this, and singles success with 'In My Own Time' and 'No Mules Fool', they never tailored their music to the singles market. Their albums 'Fearless', 'Anyway' (half of it recorded live) and 'Burlesque' give a good picture of the band. Musicians



FIFTH DIMENSION, formerly the Hi-Fis blues group, started out in 1966, singing with soft harmonies in white voices, although they are a black group. Their biggest success was 'Up, Up And Away', which brought them and songwriter Jim Webb to public notice in 1968. The record didn't make the UK charts, but Aquarius' did in 1969. Since 'Stoned Soul Picnic' the group has developed a less white sound and continues to sell an enormous number of records.



who have passed through the group include John Weider, Jim King, John Palmer, John Wetton, Jim Gregan, and Tony Ashton, as well as Roger Chapman, John Whitney and Rob Townshend who stayed with the group from beginning to end.

JOSÉ FELICIANO made it to no.6 in 1968 with a much-softened version of the Doors' 'Light My Fire'. His light acoustic guitar playing has made him more an intense 'easy listening' artist than someone involved in rock.



JULIE FELIX came from America to England in the folk-boom days and sang 'Masters Of War', 'What Did You Learn In School Today?', and 'We're Going To The Zoo' in folk clubs and on TV. She has now dropped some of her Baez inspired political earnestness in favour of cosy tea-time songs for the kids, and does a grand job in her own way.



FILMORES East and West were rock auditoria run by promoter Bill Graham, a man very much involved (some would say responsible for) the growth of the West Coast groups from 1967 onwards. The two Filmares became *the* places to hear good music and get blasted out on the drug-of-the-week for America's hip kids. But as the hippie movement degenerated so did the Filmares, and in 1972, Graham, a disillusioned but richer man, finally closed them down - leaving many and varied 'live' albums as the only souvenir.

FLATT AND SCRUGGS (Lester Flatt and Earl Scruggs) played bluegrass music together for more than 20 years before they split up in 1969. Their banjo style was the inspiration for a lot of bluegrass groups in the '50s and '60s. Although they were big names in country music, it was only when they did the soundtrack for the film Bonnie and Clyde, in 1968, that they reached a wider audience.

POP FILE

In the next issue



Binders

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Back numbers

POP

Mersey Beat: A combination of Liverpool, Hamburg, a scouse accent and a seaport, plus a load of enthusiasm, effort and excitement produced a vividly new sound for the '60s.

POP CULTURE

Hysteria: One of the side-effects of rock music that we could tastefully brush under our respective carpets. Or is the supposition that stars thrive on hysteria actually true? Do they need it to propel them and their music to even higher heights?

ROCK

The Influence of Rock & Roll on the Beatles & the Stones: It gave the Beatles the impetus to become musicians in the first place; and as for the Stones, they are still the greatest rock & roll band in the world.

PROFILE

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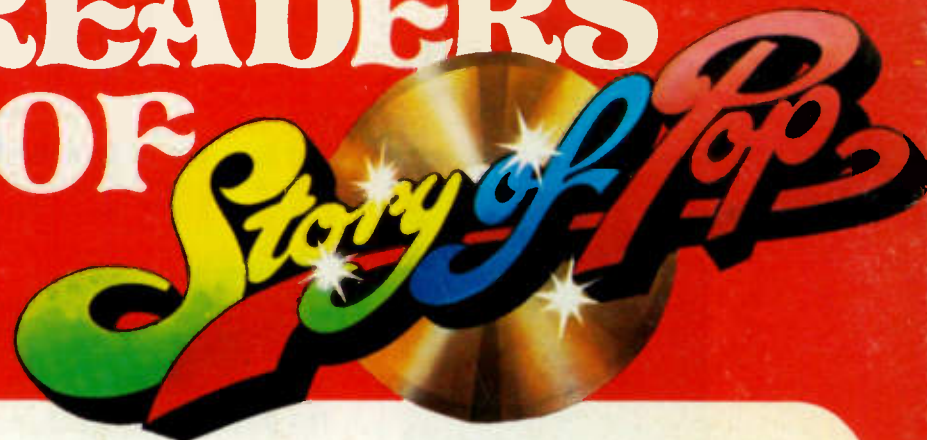
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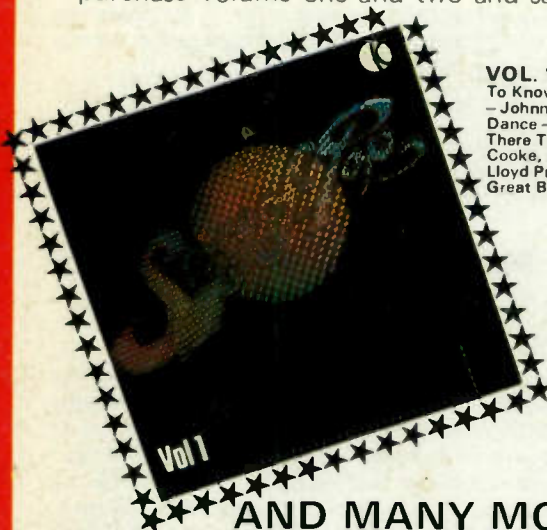
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