

TALES FROM THE WOODS

Issue No. 18

June 2002

Rockabillicies need loving too

HALL OF FAME

Hi folks, Keith Woods, editor-in-chief speaking to all you wonderful loyal subscribers/contributors, here on the front page of issue 18. The reason I have taken the liberty of stealing the front page is to officially launch the **'Tales From The Woods' Hall of Fame** award. 'Now Dig This', the excellent Rock'n'Roll magazine, has for many years run an awards system where readers vote for acts deserving of being inducted; and quite rightly so. Many of the lesser-known acts have belatedly received a little of the recognition that has been denied them throughout their long careers. 'Tales From The Woods' feels the time is right to award the loyal and dedicated Kats and Kittens who turn out in all weathers, to travel many a long mile, often at considerable inconvenience and cost, despite often hysterical opposition from wives, girlfriends, husbands or partners. I am sure virtually everyone can identify with that.

"Oh no, you're not going to another gig!" or "Not more bloody records! How much did all that cost?" Oh yes folks, we have heard it all over the years – all familiar lines to us dedicated Rock'n'Rollers, blues-boys and soulies. Or what about the old chestnut, "If you go to that gig tonight, I won't be here when you get home!" Does that stop us? Of course not. The 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board feel it is time for the fans to be rewarded for their often many long years of dedication. The idea was proposed to me, several months ago, at one of our end of the month gang meet-ups by Ken Major, who I first encountered at the Maton Hall, Waltham Cross, around forty years ago, during Little Richard's first ever British tour which featured the late, great Dewey Terry on lead guitar. I find myself shaking my head with disbelief as I write "forty years ago"; that's the great thing about never growing up – time doesn't mean a damn thing.

Well, now on to a more serious note; our very

good friend, Lynne Peters, as many of you will know, has been experiencing difficulties with her health of late. Despite that, a little over a year ago, Lynne (a long time 'Tales From The Woods' contributor/subscriber), Ken Major, Mary and John Howard, Rockin' Ronnie Cowles and yours truly, took a trip to the USA which included attending the second weekend of the New Orleans Heritage Festival. Lynne had travelled and driven many long miles as she was determined to witness one of her life-long heroes in action – the legendary Fats Domino.

As the minutes counted down to show time, Lynne and I, politely and casually, made our way through the massed throng to gain a vantage point as close to the front, centre stage, as possible. What did we find upon reaching our goal? A vast group of family, friends and relations occupying the prime spot – ground sheets, portable deckchairs, ice buckets and food storage cabinets containing enough grub to feed a small third-world country. Oh yes folks, you name it, they had it. Truly a home from home for these folks.



But, hang on a minute, this is not allowed. It categorically states on notices as you enter the site, in the programmes and through loudspeaker announcements that such behaviour disrupts the viewing and comfort of others. These people obviously felt such rules didn't apply to them. Lynne and I chose to ignore them, standing against the crush barriers, arms resting on top,

enjoying the hot Louisiana sun, our heels resting on their ground sheet, just a few precious inches of their space you might think. Well, you'd think we'd started the second Battle of New Orleans! How dare we invade their space? Words were exchanged but we refuse to budge despite being sprayed with water pistols, ice cubes and having orange peel tossed at us. Anti-English sentiments abounded. Despite the constant barrage and insults we stood our ground and they eventually gave up and made friends with us for the remainder of the gig. Lynne got to see one of her all time heroes from the best possible vantage point and everyone lived happily ever after.



So we here at the 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board unanimously agree that the first 'Tales From The Woods' Hall of Fame award should be awarded to Lynne Peters for her dedication, above and beyond the call of duty. The award was presented to Lynne at her home in Sidcup on the occasion of her birthday by John 'Mr Angry' Howard and 'Shaky' Lee Wilkinson as executive contributors.

'Tales From The Woods' would like to hear from its readers for further names to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. I would be proud indeed to present the award on some future date.

Keith Woods

Lynne Responds:

Dear Keith,

Thank you ever so much for your card, vase and CDs. The vase is gorgeous and is stuffed to the gills with flowers, and I am looking forward to playing the R'n'B CDs which Ken assures me do not duplicate any others which I have in my collection. I do love the harmony and jump sounds



I was not aware of the birthday celebration last Sunday lunchtime, and when revealed I was bitterly disappointed I could not be there, but equally I am very pleased Ken decided to go ahead with it, and extremely flattered that so many friends (27) turned up on the day. What a fantastic compliment.

I understand that due to lack of information from the hospital, many of my friends and relations were in a quandary whether to attend the lunch or visit me in hospital direct, and in the end common sense prevailed. Most went for the lunch, taking the chance I may turn up, and as you know, some did visit me direct in hospital, with one arriving on Monday after I had been discharged.

My sister Joan and hubby Stuart actually drove down from Yorkshire and arrived at Guy's at 10am on Sunday morning, which was a great surprise, in fact just one of several surprises during the day.

Marie and Martin arrived just before 5pm direct from the Horse & Groom and showed me the digital photos taken at the lunch. I think I was the first to see these, shortly followed by Claire, Hazel, Dave and Ken. Ken had just dropped Ian off at Vauxhall.

From what Ken tells me I don't think I would have been well enough to have spent much time with you on Sunday lunchtime, I definitely would not have eaten and I am barely shuffling around, but fortunately, I got my second wind on Sunday night and managed to enjoy a nice couple of hours.

Thanks again for attending the lunch and coming to see me, it was a great surprise and brightened up my birthday. I feel really honoured to be the first to be entered into the TFTW Hall Of Fame, a beautiful certificate, and many thanks for the award, I must quickly do a contribution piece to stop Ken continually nagging! I'll speak to you again soon when I am feeling better

Love,
Lynne



Norma Jean Applebaum says **HOLD THE THIRD PAGE!**



'Tales From The Woods' raises a glass and says farewell to the great film director and scriptwriter **Billy Wilder** who died aged 95 on March 27th. Born Samuel Wilder on the 22nd June 1906 at Sucha in what was then the Galician part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, his parents ran a small Krakow hotel. Nicknamed Billy by his mother after Buffalo Bill Cody whose Wild West show she had seen in New York whilst living there as a small girl, her dream was to return; alas it was not to be for she was to perish in Auschwitz.

The family moved to Vienna just prior to the outbreak of the First World War, Billy entering the city university to study law in 1924. Two years later he moved to Berlin, landing himself a plum job as a publicity agent for the American bandleader Paul Whiteman, followed by a period as a journalist. Billy, now very much a part of Berlin's bohemian café society, befriended a then little known struggling cabaret singer Marlene Dietrich, along with screenwriter Carl Mayer. The latter led the young Wilder to assist with the writing of 'Menschen Am Sonntag' a neo-documentary film of Berlin youth (1929). It proved a success allowing him to leave behind journalism to become a professional screenwriter.

The next four years would bring moderate returns until forced to flee from Berlin with his girlfriend to the safer surrounds of Paris in 1933 after the Nazi takeover. The hotel they chose to make their home already housed an ambitious young actor, Peter Lorre, and a composer, Franz Waxman whom Wilder would work with many years later on 'Sunset Boulevard'. By the end of the year Wilder found himself reluctantly directing his first film, still believing screenwriting to be his true vocation. 'Mauvaise Graine', a film concerning the exploits of a bunch of young tearaways, with an impressive jazz score by Waxman, proved to be a moderate success in France.

The following year he sailed to America learning English during the voyage, to settle in Los Angeles writing screenplays for a string of unremarkable movies. Within a year or so his friend Peter Lorre also made the trip from Paris, rooming with him for a while. A partnership in 1938 with novelist Charles Brackett proved lucrative – indeed the pair became the toast of the town, turning out scripts for a number of highly successful projects including 'Arise My Love' starring Claudette Colbert and Ray Milland (1940) and 'Ball Of Fire' with Gary Cooper and Barbara Stanwyck.

Brackett and Wilder turned themselves into a production team; they wrote together, Brackett produced and Wilder directed, working with Ray Milland again who starred opposite Ginger Rogers in 'The Major And The Minor' (1942) and 'Five Graves To Cairo' (1943) in which Erich von Stroheim played Rommel. Brackett wanted nothing to do with 'Double Indemnity'; being a puritan he found it distasteful. Wilder went for the James M Cain novel big time and searched out a new producer, which he found in Joe Sistrom and they hired Raymond Chandler for the screenplay. This excellent film starred the great Fred MacMurray, which must have come as a shock to his natural audience used, as they were, to him being a comedy actor. Barbara Stanwyck starred opposite Fred in this classic film noir.

Equally abreast of its time was the follow up, 'The Lost Weekend' (1943), starring Ray Milland in a portrait of alcoholism, which reunited Brackett with Wilder; it won Oscars for best picture, director, screenplay and actor. 'A Foreign Affair' (1948) set in the ruins of post war Berlin starred his old friend from that city's café society days, Marlene Dietrich. 1950 saw the release of the film which



has seen more screenings at Bromley's artisan cinema Queen Anne than any other movie from its impressive archives, the stunningly brilliant 'Sunset Boulevard' starring Gloria Swanson, William Holden and, in the opinion of the 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board, the performance of his career from Erich von Stroheim.

At the peak of their powers, Brackett and Wilder parted company; Wilder went on to direct Kirk Douglas in 'Ace In The Hole' (1951), which, although acquiring a cult following in later years, suffered poor returns at the time of release. It was not too long though before the wheel of fortune to spun back in his direction. the mid to late fifties proved highly lucrative with 'Seven Year Itch'

(1955), 'The Spirit Of St Louis' (1957) and 'Witness For The Prosecution' of the same year.

In 1958 he teamed up with I.A.L.Diamond, a Romanian born writer and maths wizard; like a cocktail they fizzed immediately and the pair gave birth to one of the greatest radical comedies of American cinema history 'Some Like It Hot' (1959) with Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and the late, great Jack Lemmon, a cast that spun a web of pure magic. 'The Apartment' (1960) won three Oscars, casting Jack Lemmon again along with Fred MacMurray and Shirley MacLaine and casting James Cagney in a fast paced comedy the following year 'One, Two, Three'.



Obviously Wilder held Jack Lemmon in as much regard as we do here at 'Tales From The Woods' Towers, casting him in many subsequent films; 'Irma La Douche' (1963) 'The Fortune Cookie' (1966) alongside his sparring partner

Walther Matthau, using the pair again in 'The Front Page' (1974) [incidentally the inspiration for 'Tales From The Woods' Hold The Third Page] and 'Buddy Buddy' (1981). Billy would also use Jack Lemmon for the 1972 movie 'Avanti' playing opposite Juliet Mills. In 1964 the Museum Of Modern Art in New York presented a sixteen-film retrospective of his work; similar exhibitions followed in Paris, Berlin, London and Los Angeles. During the mid-nineties he was awarded the National Medal of Honor by president Bill Clinton. Married twice he is survived by his second wife Audrey and his daughter from his first marriage.



Raise a glass to gospel singer **Dorothy Love Coates** who died on the 9th April aged 74. Born Dorothy McGriff in Birmingham, Alabama on 30th January 1928, one of seven children, through impoverished circumstances, she was forced to leave school at thirteen to work in domestic service. Within a couple of years she had formed her own gospel group playing local churches at weekends. She knew only her natural gift could lead her out of a life of servitude or, as Dorothy once quoted in an interview, "On weekdays I worked for the white man and on weekends I sang for the people".

1947 would see Dorothy joining the all female gospel group The Harmonees, which had originally been formed some seven years previously. The same year she married Willie

Love of the Fairfield Four; a daughter was born with cerebral palsy forcing her to quit the group. Over the next few years her marriage broke down but her marriage to second husband Carl Coates of the Sensational Nightingales would last until his death in 1999. Around 1950 she was able to resume her career and rejoined The Harmonees, swiftly renaming them The Original Gospel Harmonettes and, like so many gospel outfits of that period, found success on the Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts television show.

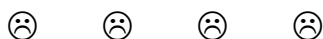


A number of singles sold extremely well within the confinements of gospel, including 'I'm Sealed', 'Get Away Jordan' and 'Ninety Nine And A Half'. She also found time to pen her own tunes; 'You Must Be Born Again' which proved popular and 'That's Enough' which was covered by both Johnny Cash and Ray Charles in later years. Dorothy wrote 'You Can't Hurry God He's Right On Time' after a bout of pneumonia came close to costing her her life which, it is safe to say, came pretty close to being a gospel classic.

As the 1950s gave way to the 1960s, Dorothy became heavily involved in the Civil Rights movement, working alongside Martin Luther King. In 1964 she wrote 'The Hymn', a tribute to the assassinated president, John F Kennedy. When The Original Gospel Harmonettes broke up in 1970 she formed the Dorothy Love Coates Singers along with her sister Lillian and daughter Carletta.

She was featured in the Civil Rights film 'The Long Walk Home' in 1989 and also 'Beloved' in 1998. Her recording of 'No Hiding Place' can be heard in the 1990 film 'Ghost'. Dorothy was obviously a considerable influence on the great Little Richard and maybe, to a lesser degree, on Mavis Staples and Cissy Houston. Back in the late 1990s I was privileged to catch the great lady perform in the gospel tent at the New Orleans Heritage Festival;

sadly now there will not be another opportunity but I have the memory and that is what is important.



I received an e-mail from 'Tales From The Woods' contributor/subscriber Tony Wilkinson of Winkles In The Mud/ WaxoWilko fame to advise us that country singer **Johnny Paycheck** is in very poor health. The 63 year old is suffering from emphysema and asthma; an infection of his lower intestine has infected his lungs leaving him desperately short of breath. Paycheck's best known song is 'Take This Job And Shove It', a massive country hit in 1976; other biggies include 'She's All I Got' and 'I'm The Only Hell Mama Ever Raised'. At the time of writing he is bedridden in a nursing home. The 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board sends their regards and we look forward to hearing better news.



Loyal 'Tales From The Woods' subscribers may recall (at least those with good memories) back in issue 4 we were campaigning for knighthoods for both **Lonnie Donegan** and **Ray Davis**. We stated at the time that if they could give one to Elton John and Cliff Richard for all those long years of excruciating, yukky records, Donegan and Davis are far more deserving for their considerable contribution to British music. Prime Minister Tony Blair, as you may know, has been a subscriber virtually from the birth of 'Tales From The Woods' (although we have heard through the grapevine that he has voiced his displeasure concerning some of the items I have written about Jack 'the Kack' Straw and David 'don't care about airy-fairy civil liberties' Blunkett). Despite that, Lonnie Donegan was awarded an O.B.E. on the last honours list. It's 'Tales From The Woods' wot dun it! Ray Davis, on the other hand, was invited to appear at Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee garden party on June 3rd (Ray performed 'Lola'). Does this mean that the only true genius of British pop/rock music will finally get his just reward next time round?



Whilst on the subject of the Jubilee, after the Queen and her family returned to Buckingham Palace after the carnival parade and the Concorde and other aircraft had completed their fly past, she took three encores from the balcony of Buck House. However, we here at the 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board feel she took things a little too far by doing her James Brown routine, crawling around on all fours with that crown on her head, the Duke of Edinburgh tossing the cape over her shoulders, patting her gently on her back as she faked exhaustion whilst Prince

Charles called out to the million strong crowd "We want to hear Mummy scream!"

The screams of hysteria from excited young girls as Prince William joined his grandmother on the balcony were indeed phenomenal, comparable to that of the latest boy band sensation. You could almost read the Queen's lips, "Good boy, the firm is safe for a few more years yet". The Guardian, the UK's only intellectual left-of-centre newspaper, has been running an articulate and convincing campaign for republicanism for some years and I personally agree, in principle, with much of what they argue. The only problem as I see it is that once you remove the Monarch as head of state, what do you replace it with? A president, which means a clapped out old politician; president Thatcher or Major, president Blair... even what a bloody nightmare! I think I prefer to remain totally neutral on this one.



The other big celebration going on at the time of writing is, of course, the World Cup. We here at the 'Tales From The Woods' editorial board don't give a toss about football although we will say, if anything, that we will be rooting for the African nations e.g. Cameroon, Nigeria etc. to come up trumps. we, as we do by pure accident of birth in Europe, live in some of the richest nations on earth and can live quite safely without the glory. I love the excuses (don't you folks?) about the English team's poor performance against Sweden. Aaah, their tired little legs during the second half. For crying out loud, those pampered brats are earning around £100,000 a week! Tired?! They should try working down a coal mine for eight hours a day - they would have every right to feel tired then!

Keith Woods



'Tales From The Web'

Please note that, due to various moves in the Internet market, our e-mail address for your comments/contributions has changed to

tftw@blueyonder.co.uk

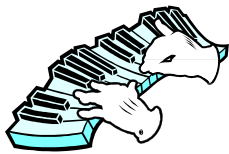
The 'Tales From The Woods' website has still got some scaffolding up but is taking shape nicely (thanks to all Fatbelly's hard work). If you wanna take a look, the web address is;

www.tftw.freeuk.com

Keep your eyes peeled for further developments.

JAZZ JUNCTION

Starting on a downbeat note, I have to report that the jazz train has remained in its siding for the whole of the month for refurbishment.



However with the World Cup upon us, it's an appropriate time to reveal one of football's little known stories regarding Bobby Moore, England captain and one of the greatest defenders ever to play the game.

In 1970, during the warm-up to the World Cup in Mexico, England visited Colombia for a friendly match. According to newspaper reports at the time, Bobby Moore was arrested for the theft of a gold bracelet and held in custody out of sight of the press. But Bobby Moore never saw the inside of a jail and had secretly gone to America to put down some vocals on a couple of tracks in order to fulfil his obligations under a recording contract. Only his employers, West Ham United, knew anything of his dual identity after it had come to the attention of one of their directors who was in the music business and, when confronted by them, Bobby had duly agreed to give up his 'night' job.

Four years earlier in 1966 during the euphoria of winning the World Cup in England, Bobby had been signed by Chess Records and had visited Fame studios and recorded '*Searching For My Baby*', a yearningly good soul number (as the Soulboy will no doubt affirm). The song had been written by Bobby for his wife Tina in an attempt to deal with their anguish at being a childless couple. However Tina was not best pleased and during the ensuing argument, Bobby had agreed to keep his identity secret and was never able to cash in.

Anyway four days after his arrest, Bobby was 'released', continued on his way to Mexico and gave a faultless display of the defensive art against the greatest footballer the world has ever seen (note to fans of Maradona – Pele had two feet, not one and was not stupid enough to stuff his money up his nose) and the rest, as they say, is history.

REGGAE IRREGULAR

**Johnny Clarke, Max Romeo and
Horace Andy
Ocean – 28 April 2002**

There seems to be a spate of visits to England of reggae artistes who achieved fame during the music's commercially golden years of the 70s when, as a result of the rock world's interest, reggae was accepted by a wider audience and came to be included as part of rock's diverse family. This is rather strange when you consider Jamaican music has much stronger links with black American music than the white rock world, but the major record companies are always liable to embrace the virtues of inclusion when they sense a trailer-load of dunza.

First on was **Johnny Clarke** whose star burnt brightly in Jamaica during the mid 70s thanks to producer Bunny Lee and his studio band, the Aggrovators, who developed the 'flying cymbal' sound, said to be a response to the Philadelphia sound of Gamble and Huff. His set was a mixture of dread tunes and love songs – '*African Roots*', '*Left With A Broken Heart*' and '*Move Out Of Babylon*' were all recognised. His outstanding feature was a set of dreadlocks which reached beyond his knees.

Last on stage of this trio of Jamaica's finest was **Horace Andy**, a singer of outstanding vocal technique. He was born Horace Hinds but renamed Andy by Coxson Dodd as a tribute to Bob Andy in view of their mutual songwriting abilities. The self-penned classic '*Skylarking*' (a warning about the dangers of a hardcore of unemployed) was inevitably the diamond in his set which also included haunting versions of '*Money, Money*' and '*Cuss, Cuss*'.

However the star of the show for many was **Max Romeo** not only because he is the possessor of a beautifully plaintive gospel voice but also because he was the only one to colour his music with real horns. A smallish man with greying beard and waist-length dreadlocks, it was not surprising that after twenty years as a Rastafarian, he should not perform '*Wet Dream*' which was a hit in the UK in 1969 in spite of being banned by the BBC.

What we did get though was an hour's worth of rasta songs and conscience lyrics – '*Three Blind Mice*' (about a police raid on a party), '*Uptown Babies*' (about the advantages of wealth), '*One Step Forward*' (an indictment of the government of Michael Manley), the gospel influenced '*Chase The Devil*' and '*Public Enemy Number One*' (Satan), and of course the song that starts and started out '*Sipple Out Deh*' but became '*War Ina Babylon*' when released in the UK (about political corruption and ghetto violence). Heavy stuff! On this night when three wise looking men came to Ocean, Max Romeo was definitely king.

Dave Carroll



Tony Philibert's Kuik Korner Kuiz

1. Who are the composers of the great Southern country soul hit 'Dark End Of The Street'?
2. Who recorded it in the mid eighties for the Ichiban label?
3. Which sixties Brit R&B band covered The Daylighters' 'Uncle Willie'?
4. Which legendary Delta blues singer was born in Clarksdale, Mississippi in 1902?
5. Which blues/rock artist played bass for Otis day and the Knights in the John Belushi film 'Animal House'?
6. Who recorded 'I'd Rather Go Blind' on her 1981 Alligator album 'From The Heart Of A Woman'?
7. Which band had an album out on the Blind Dig label called 'Empty Arms Hotel'?
8. Which rockabilly artist performed at the New Circle Club, Elmers End, Beckenham, last month?
9. Fran Leslie is the editor of which monthly music magazine?
10. Which Brit-rock drummer, ex-Wings, Chevalier Bros, Wild Angels, The Inmates is currently working in Spain?

Answers on the back page.



HENSBY 28

The 28th Hemsby Weekender, held between May 9th and 12th, was truly an occasion where the stars came out. Not only were the featured American headliners on view, but, spotted mingling amiably with the vast crowds (literally, as there were "House Full" signs seen on Saturday night) were very late fifties/early to mid-sixties Bill Haley bass man **Al Rappa**, no doubt convincing the younger generation that he was an original Comet, and guitar hero **Jeff Beck**, responsible, along with the Big Town Playboys, for the excellent Gene Vincent tribute album "Crazy Legs" in 1993.

THURSDAY

I was disappointed with **Alvis Wayne's** set due, in no small part, to the fact that he had been imbibing for much of the afternoon (some say since the morning) which proved to be detrimental to his performance. Backed by Holland's **Tin Stars** (who had earlier played an energetic, hard-hitting set), Alvis kicked off with the great Westport bopper 'Swing Bop Boogie' and then featured a track from his recent album "Rockabilly

Daddy". Back to Alvis's halcyon days for 'I Gottum' and then a nod to Johnny Horton with 'I'm A One Woman Man'. Another new song, a slow blues called 'Here I Am' was swiftly followed by the classic 'Lay Your Head On My Shoulder'. Despite a real train wreck of an ending, 'Honky Tonk Man', another Johnny Horton tribute, sounded okay.



Photo courtesy of Keith Woods

An interesting inclusion was 'Thanks A Lot', perhaps best known by Brenda Lee. Another recent cut 'Lonely, Lonely Teardrops' preceded what, for me, was the highlight of the set, a version of Roy Hamilton's 'You Can Have Her', which had a modicum of fire and passion. It was about this time that I deduced Alvis had picked up a cold as he decided to blow his nose and, to the amusement of some front row observers, some residue was left hanging on his chin in a not entirely successful attempt to wipe it off. Requests for 'Keep On Running' and 'Snot Unusual' were wisely ignored. With 'Sleep Rock'n'Roll Rocka Baby' the last scheduled song, Alvis came back to encore, firstly with an excellent 'Don't Mean Maybe Baby' and secondly with Hank Snow's 'I'm Movin' On'. So, okay in places. A shame as, another time, his brilliance can bring the house down.

FRIDAY

Pianist and singer **Teddy Redell's** reputation largely rests on the excellent sides he cut for the Vaden label out of Truman, Arkansas, and some of these were featured in his first ever show on English soil. A big black grand Joanna was drafted on stage especially for the occasion and Redell's enjoyable set revealed a style that is part Moon Mullican, part Jerry Lee, a hint of Fats Domino and quite a bit of Teddy Redell. Backed on this occasion by the excellent **Wildfire Willie and the Ramblers**, who made an important contribution to Huelyn Duvall's show on the same stage a while back, Teddy actually began the first third of his performance playing and singing solo, offering a tasty selection of boogies along with versions of Jimmy Reed's 'Baby What You Want Me To Do'; Cookie and the Cupcakes' 'Got You On My Mind' and the Wolf's 'Sittin' On Top Of The World'.



Photo courtesy of Paul Harris

During a Johnny Rivers/Lonnie Mack inspired 'Memphis', Willie and the Ramblers ambled on stage, plugged in and joined in. Thereafter, many of the Vaden classics were featured such as 'Knockin' On The Backside', 'Old Pipeliner' and a version of 'I'll Sail My Ship Alone' that seemed to reflect the piano style of Jerry Lee Mullican. All great stuff though and 'Boogie Woogie Bill From Shelby County' was an absolute corker. Teddy also pointed out that it was he who composed a song called 'Judy' that Elvis went on to record for RCA in 1961 and on this night he treated us to a fine rendition. He closed with 'Brain Cloudy Blues' and encoed with a second go on 'Boogie Woogie Bill' concluding a good performance.

Drummer/vocalist **Matt Lucas** has recorded for a number of labels through a 40-plus year career, most famously for Smash, where his unique, individual interpretation of Hank Snow's 'I'm Movin' On' became a US chart hit in 1963. It's his first visit to this country and I do hope that it won't be his last. Tony Wilkinson and I were fortunate enough to have spent the Saturday afternoon at the Dolphin Hotel, where he and his charming wife Barbara were staying, and along with a few other friends, Matt held court, recounting one hilarious anecdote after another.



Photo courtesy of Paul Harris

However, that's another story. Backed by the

Hemsby House Band (an all-star line-up with Thomas Lavelle on piano, Dave Briggs on guitar and Wayne Hopkins on bass), Matt announced himself musically with a brief drum solo before rockin' headlong into Roy Orbison's 'Ooby Dooby'. What followed was a selection of rockin' classics, many drawn from ol' Memphis town, such as 'Ubangi Stomp', 'Put Me Down', 'Mystery Train', 'Down The Line', 'Sweet Little Sixteen' and 'Maybelline', with spirited singing and drumming from our main man.

Then a treat! An early sighting of fellow headliner Narvel Felts, with whom Matt worked extensively through the mid-fifties up until around the mid-sixties. Together, they rocked through 'I'm Movin' On' and then, on Narvel's departure, Matt encoed with a rousing 'Midnight Special'. To some, this show may have been a bit rough and ready; you don't often get drummers leading a band at Hemsby but Matt Lucas provided great entertainment value and I, for one, look forward to his show in Beckenham, though by the time you read this, it will have come and gone and no doubt there'll be a review.

SATURDAY

Apart from the aforementioned rendezvous at the Dolphin Hotel, what else happened? **Lew Williams** with the **Rimshots**, for starters. This was his second appearance in the UK (the first being at the Rockabilly Rave last year) and, like the first time it seems Lew was pretty nervous playing to such a vast, cosmopolitan audience (he has played only three shows since the late fifties and these have been in the last year or two).



Photo courtesy of Paul Harris

Towards the end, as the crowd screamed their approval for such songs as 'Bop Bop A Doo Bop', 'Abracadabra', 'Centipede', 'Something I Said' and 'Cat Talk' in particular, Lew gained in confidence. However, his voice was quite weak and didn't carry too far, though it has to be said that the

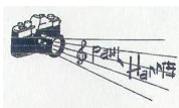
sound engineers could have helped matters by bringing his voice up in the mix. Also, while I didn't mind certain songs being reprised once, to sing 'Cat Talk' three times in all was ultimately irritating to me personally. Still, he was a friendly and popular gentleman and, with more stage work, he'll get bookings on a regular basis.

Another friendly and popular gentleman, though hardly nervous, was tonight's bill topper, **Narvel Felts**. This is his third tread of the Hemsby boards (the first two being in 1997 and 1999) and on each occasion he has held audiences spellbound with his down-home, funky guitar picking and his unique voice that spans the octaves through a trembling lower register up to a powerful falsetto.

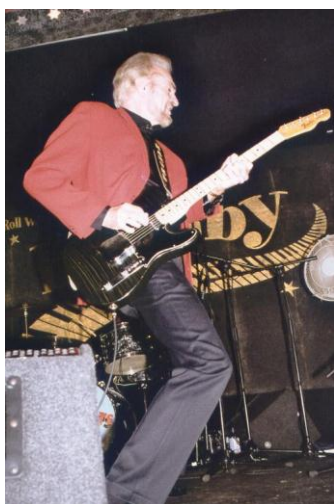


Photo courtesy of Paul Harris

Backed to perfection by the Rimshots (without doubt the finest rockabilly band in Britain today) Narvel once again slayed the capacity crowd with a performance rich with professionalism and class. He apologised for having a slight throat problem (not so we'd noticed) and from time to time he'd take a sip of water and a honey and lemon mixture. Even so, he included many of his regular stage rockers from the Sun/Mercury period, such as 'Kiss A Me Baby', 'Cindy Lou', 'Foolish Thoughts', 'I'm Heading Home' and the truly sublime 'Did You Tell Me'. Other highlights were the opening 'Go, Go, Go' (or 'Down The Line'), 'Baby Let's Play House', 'My Babe', 'Great Balls Of Fire', Narvel's own 'Pink And Black Days' and a tip of the hat to Eddie Bond with 'Rockin' Daddy'.



There were also a few ballads given the Felts treatment, such as 'My Prayer', 'Since I Don't Have You' (dedicated not only to the memory of his son Bub but to legendary Blue Cap, Paul Peek) as well as a song that, according to my notes, was entitled 'The Cold, Grey



Days Of December' (is that correct?) It's ab-fab, whatever the case. We also heard the songs that, in the seventies, made him a huge country megastar in the States; 'Lonely Teardrops' and Johnny Adams' 'Reconsider Me'; both superbly performed (ain't that right Bern?)

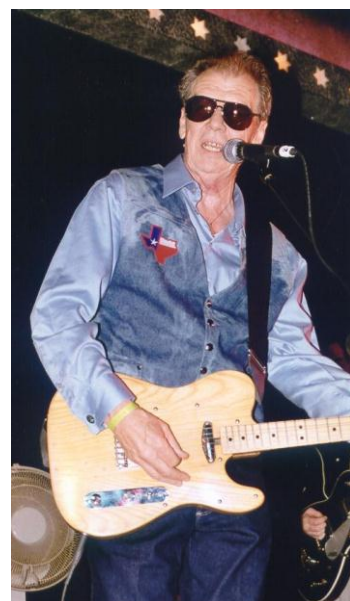
If you recall, Narvel was invited to do a song with Matt Lucas toward the end of the latter's set on Friday so it was time tonight for Matt to return the compliment. Together they rocked on Charlie Feathers' 'Tongue-Tied Jill' with all stops out, which culminated in a wild, extended ending during which Narvel did his infamous 'press ups' routine. For an encore, the Marvel saluted the Big O with an appropriately spine-chilling take on 'Crying'. And that was it; wonderful musicianship, wonderful voice, wonderful person.

SUNDAY

During my regular trip to the morning boot sale in the car park, I heard that a jam session was to take place in the Queen Vic pub at 1.30pm. Unfortunately, I didn't attend, so we can only speculate on what went on (*unless someone tells us - H*).

So the first live music of the day for me was provided at 8 o'clock Sunday evening, when the Hemsby House Band (Clive Osbourne sax, Malcolm Chapman guitar, Thomas Lavelle piano, Wayne Hopkins bass and Paul Atkinson drums) broke into a brisk, swinging, jazz instrumental with solos by most of the guys (I thought Clive and Malcolm would exchange 'fours' with Paul but it wasn't to be).

Anyhow, this done with, the band struck up a mean, lean rockabilly riff to announce the arrival on stage of **Sonny West** to provide the crowd with a little Tex-Mex magic. However, in the early stages his act was slow to get going; long, ponderous gaps in between songs meant lost momentum. 'Dire Need', 'Bad Case Of Wanting You' and 'The Rave Is Gone' all turned out well (thanks for the song info Ian) but things suddenly took an upward turn with a version of Peanuts Wilson's 'Cast Iron Arm'.



The new-found groove was maintained with 'Big

City Woman and *Bessie Lee*. The ante was upped further with *I've Had It* (not the Bellnotes' song), a nice, chugging rocker and then, in recognition of the fact that Sonny wrote it, we heard *Rave On*. *Sweet Rockin' Baby* raised the crowd's noise level still higher and, following a singalong on another West composition, *Oh Boy*, it was down the home straight with the popular record hop hit *Rockola Ruby*, so popular it was repeated as an encore. So, despite an uncertain start, Sonny West finally conquered the hearts of the Hemsby faithful. Yes, the music was rockin' and the joint was jumpin' with jive.



Maurice Williams, Fred Mangum, Calvin McKennie, Don Thompson

If Narvel Felts was, by general consensus, the top act of Hemsby 28, then **Maurice Williams and the Zodiacs**, the main American act on Sunday's bill, must have been just a fingernail's length behind. Though not really a doo-wop act as such (though a doo-wop medley was included), they are a great, slick, sharp R&B act, with a new found following, thanks to the success of their worldwide hit *'Stay'* as part of the *'Dirty Dancing'* soundtrack. They work constantly in the States and, looking at their stage act (all precision timing, professionalism and top-drawer vocalising), there's no wonder why.

Opening with *'Shoop Shoop'* and the Drifters' *'This Magic Moment'* (inappropriate fare for Hemsby, but who cares?) the guys (backed by the Swing Kings) immediately had the crowd in the palms of their hands. From the Herald label, we next heard *'Come Along'*, a bit of a *'Stay'* clone (as Williams himself admitted), *'I Remember'*, also from Herald, was a nicely played ballad, which then led to the doo-wop medley featuring *'Earth Angel'* etc. During the course of this, Fred, the excellent young lead tenor, leaned over and sang directly to a certain young lady in the photographer's area. No names, but her friend Wally was looking on with some amusement.

Next up was a three-song tribute top the Quasar of Rock, with some great sax work by Don (I think). By now, a real party mood engulfed the audience. Onwards with *'We Are Lovers'*, another fine ballad, then a salute to Hank Ballard with a

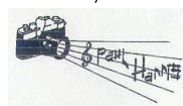
rocking *'Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go'*. Time for Fred to deliver a set-best performance with the timeless *'Unchained Melody'*. Then it was really time to get down and party – *'bom-bom-bom STAY!! Ah, just a little bit longer...'* Sheer excellence.



Photo courtesy of Paul Harris

Maurice then reminded us that the Zodiacs were spawned from the Gladiolas, who cut the original version of Maurice's composition *'Little Darlin'* for Excello in 1957 (the Diamonds shouldn't even be considered). An exuberant, lively burst of *'Shout'* and that was it. Congrats to Zodiacs Fred, Cal and Don and the one and only Maurice Williams on one of the finest shows I have ever witnessed at Hemsby.

So as Hemsby 28 rides off into the sunset, prepare for Hemsby 29 in October where Billy Adams, Jack Earls and the Edsels among others will rock your socks off. Later, gator!



Boppin' Bunter



Mr Excitement 1934 - 1984: A tribute to Jackie Wilson (Part 1)

Had he lived, Jackie Wilson would have been 68 years old next month. That he never quite made it to septuagenarianism was due to the fact that he was Mr Excitement to Sam Cooke's Mr Soul and James Brown's Mr Dynamite. A dynamic colossus who sang hard, worked hard, played hard, living life at full tilt, perhaps this may account for the (eventually) fatal heart attack he suffered while on stage at the Latin Casino, New Jersey in September 1975; his being transferred from institution to institution while in a vegetative state over the next few years, up to his eventual death in January 1984. While his wives (common-law or

not) and girlfriends fought viciously over his goods and chattels, he burned back into the British public's conscience with a re-issue of his first solo hit *'Reet Petite'*, an unlikely Christmas number one, in 1986. Once the fuss died down, things continued as they were in the States while, over here, with the onset of CDs, the music lovers wondered if there would ever be a comprehensive box set released of Wilson's material. Over in the States, Rhino lit the fuse in the early 90s with the three CD overview 'Mr Excitement'; but it took Edsel/Diablo in the UK to give us Wilson acolytes what we really wanted; a complete re-issue (in 2 on 1 form) of Jackie's 26 (yes 26!) studio albums released between 1958 and 1976.

By way of a tribute to this R&B/soul titan, over the next few months I'd like to offer an appraisal of Wilson's work by looking at these releases (issued during 1998/99) in rough order. First, a quick biog pre-Brunswick; born Jack Leroy Wilson in Highland Park, Michigan on June 9th 1934, he expressed a love for singing at an early age and particularly enjoyed the work of Al Jolson (whose songs formed the basis of the 'You Ain't Heard Nothin' Yet' album in 1961), Roy Brown, Al Hibbler and Mahalia Jackson. Though he formed his first group, the Ever Ready Gospel Singers, when only twelve he had aspirations to be a boxer, a career curtailed by his mother who felt that her son had been bashed around too many times.

Turning back to singing, he entered 'amateur nights' at Harlem's notorious Apollo Theatre where he was noticed by Johnny Otis, who tried (and failed) to get him a solo contract with Syd Nathan's King label (Jackie would become involved with King a year or two later, but more on that in a tick). In early 1952, he managed to get on to record for the first time, recording a personal favourite song, *'Danny Boy'*, along with *'Rainy Day Blues'*. Recorded at Joe Syracuse's United Sound Studios in Detroit, the sides were issued (as by Sonny Wilson) on Dizzy Gillespie's DG label on two separate 78s, the B-sides of which featured instrumentals. Their rarity value is enormous; no re-issue, whether in official or bootleg form, has ever surfaced.



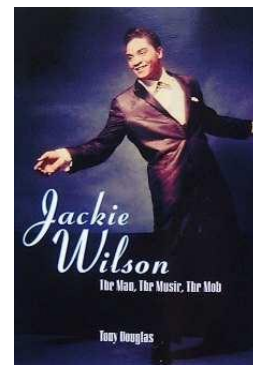
At the end of '52 Wilson got his big break; he was offered a job as lead singer with Billy Ward's Dominoes, replacing the departing Clyde McPhatter. With McPhatter out front Ward had amassed a number of R&B chart hits over the past two years but,

with Jackie, hits became scarce (only the first release, a stunning version of the pop hit *'Rags To Riches'* made the R&B Top 10 in 1953). A change of labels, first to Jubilee in 1955 and then to Decca in 1956, did not see a change in fortunes. However, the Dominoes attracted a lot of attention as a live act, in particular Jackie himself; toward the end of 1956 they worked a season in Las Vegas and in the audience, more often than not,



was the year's biggest new star, Elvis Presley. In what became known as the 'Million Dollar Quartet' session, held at the Sun Studio in Memphis, the Hillbilly Cat enthused over "a little coloured guy with Ward's Dominoes" who did an interpretation

(rather than a mere version) of *'Don't Be Cruel'*. In fact, Presley became a serious fan thereafter and pictures of Elvis and Jackie together, taken in 1967 and 1974, can be viewed in Tony Douglas' excellent biography *'Lonely Teardrops'* (recently re-issued as *'The Man, The Music, The Mob'*).



Now let's look at a couple of CDs;

He's So Fine/Lonely Teardrops (Diablo 867)

After leaving the Dominoes in the first months of 1957 (he was replaced by ex-Lark Gene Mumford) Jackie Wilson settled back in Detroit where he met Al Green, manager of LaVern Baker and Johnnie Ray and owner of the Flame Bar, a popular local venue that featured many top R&B acts from time to time. It was at the Flame that Jackie reacquainted himself with childhood friend Roquel "Billy" Davis who subsequently played guitar in Hank Ballard's band (indeed, you'll remember him at the legendary Hammersmith Palais gig at the end of 1986). Davis had formed a songwriting partnership with a friend, Berry Gordy, and offered samples to Jackie who liked the material. Al Green initially appointed himself as manager but soon handed the reins over to a junior member of his staff, the relatively inexperienced Nat Tarnopol.

Rather than veer Wilson towards a reputable R&B label, Green landed Jackie on Decca, a major run by Bob Theile whose preferred musical tastes ran to MoR/whitebread pop. Placed on the Brunswick subsidiary, Green placed Wilson with an appropriately MoR musical director, Dick Jacobs and so the tracks on Jackie's debut album *'He's So Fine'*, released in March 1958, all bear a riffing

horn section, occasional strings and a Modernaires-like chorus, as well as the likes of Sam 'The Man' Taylor, Ernie Hayes, Lloyd Trotman and David 'Panama' Francis. Also, the sessions were held at the Pythian Temple in New York, where Bill Haley and the Comets had been cutting their most memorable sides. Composing credits were divided between Gordy and Davis (a.k.a. Tyran Carlo) – 'Etcetera', 'It's So Fine' (which ironically, LaVern Baker also recorded for Atlantic), the groundbreaking ballad 'To Be Loved', 'I'm Wanderin' and 'Reet Petite', – another childhood pal Alonzo Tucker – 'As Long As I Live', 'Why Can't You Be Mine' – Jackie himself – 'Come Back To Me' – and various others – 'Right Now', 'It's Too Bad We Had To Say Goodbye' and 'If I Can't Have You'.

'Reet Petite' itself was visualised by its composers as a cool, mid-tempo blues but was instead transformed by Jacobs into a frothy, bouncy rocker, much to the chagrin of Gordy and Davis; Jackie himself described his vocal as an affectionate parody of Elvis' style. Whatever the principals felt about it, it was only a modest hit when released in the States in the Fall of '57, reaching number 62, but it burned up the British dance halls and went Top 10, peaking at number 6. The album also carried a majestic re-cut of 'Danny Boy', a real tour de force in which Wilson unleashes his box of tricks on the listener in no uncertain terms. 'To Be Loved' was Gordy and Davis' first real money spinner; it peaked just outside the Top 10 in the States, providing Jackie with the first of some 50 or so chart hits on the R&B and national pop charts, a track record equalled only by James Brown and it provided Berry Gordy with the title for his best selling autobiography. Both 'Etcetera' and 'Come Back To Me' have, in recent times, become dance favourites at such weekenders as Hemsby with the new generation of bopcats.

If 'To Be Loved' made the American public aware of Jackie Wilson, the success of 'Lonely Teardrops' was to elevate him to the superstar league. Again, Billy and Berry saw the song as a slow blues and, again, Jacobs pissed them off by this time utilising a Latin treatment, reflecting the then-popularity of the 'Chalypso' dance (*doing the cha-cha to a calypso tune – H*). One of the few R&B hits to feature a tuba playing a bass line, 'Teardrops' was Wilson's first major crossover hit and stands unchallenged as **the** definitive version of an occasionally covered song (only Narvel Felts comes close to equalling Jackie).

The 'Lonely Teardrops' album included two more hits, both penned by Gordy and Davis, 'That's Why' and 'You Better Know It', which Jackie memorably featured in the 1959 rock flick 'Go, Johnny, Go'. The guys also contributed three

strong ballads, 'Each Time', 'Someone To Need Me' and 'We Have Love'. 'The Joke' by Janie Bradford and Gwen Gordie (sister of Berry) is an okay, if gimmicky, rocker. Wilson himself wrote the quirky 'Singing A Song'; as for the rest, material such as 'In The Blue Of The Evening', 'Love Is All', 'Hushabye' and, for God's sake, 'By The Light Of The Silvery Moon', were concerted efforts by Jacobs and Tarnopol to push Jackie into the absolute mainstream. It worked – but at a price; disenchanted by outside interference, Berry Gordy and Billy Davis wanted to leave the set-up.

So Much/Jackie Sings The Blues (Diablo DIAB 881)

The Wilson – Davis – Gordy – triumvirate lasted for one more album. At the time of the release of 'So Much' in November 1959, not only was Jackie Wilson one of the top hit-makers in the States, he was also one of the most exciting (not to say daring) live performers. His stage performances were truly a spectacle; he sang, he danced, he spun, he glided, back-overflipped, sank to his knees, lay at the front of the stage inviting the women, already worn to a frazzle, to tear his clothes off (quite often they did) – he was **that** kind of performer.

Anyway, 'So Much' features songs from a variety of songwriting teams; Berry and Billy bid farewell with the ballad 'Thrill Of Love' and the excellent 'I'll Be Satisfied' which became another Top 10 hit for Mr Excitement as he came to be known. Barbara Campbell (Mrs Sam Cooke) contributed 'I Know I'll Always Be In Love With You'. Jackie weighed in with an attractive ballad 'Wishing Well', while Sid Wyche added to the hit roster with 'Talk That Talk'. The title track, as well as 'The Magic Of Love', 'Happiness' and 'Never Go Away', while up-tempo, aren't genuine R&B, rather pop confections. Jackie goes into Lanza-esque overdrive on 'Only You, Only Me'; real drama in this, as there is in the quasi-religious 'Ask'.

'Jackie Sings The Blues', issued in April 1960, is really an opportunity missed. The material itself is fine but the musical application (the bloody Modernaires more than anything else) is disappointing. If Jackie had recorded 'Please Tell Me Why', 'Doggin' Around', 'New Girl In Town', 'Nothin' But The Blues', 'Passin' Through', 'Excuse Me For Loving', 'She Done Me Wrong', 'Sizzle Dazzle', 'Please Stick Around', 'C'mon And Love Me Baby', 'Comin' To Your House' and 'It's Been A Long Time' with, say, King Curtis, Mickey Baker, Harry Van Walls, Frank Fields and Earl Palmer, now that would surely have been one of the top three R&B/soul albums of all time. Instead we got Dick Jacobs. Shame. Jackie's vocals on each of these tracks are as transcendent as they could be but both manager and musical director managed

to empty every last drop of menace from the gut-bucket.

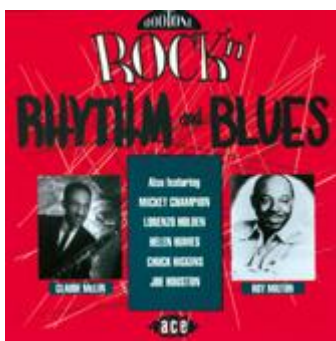


C.D. REVIEWS

HI THERE, KATS AND KITTENS. IT'S BOPPIN' BRIAN (A.K.A. HARD ROCK BUNTER, A.K.A. BRIAN CLARK) WITH A LOOK AT SOME RECENT ROCKIN' CD RELEASES

Dootone Rock'n'Rhythm And Blues – Various Artists – (Ace CDCHD 839)

Baby I'm Gone | Cry Some Baby | Fools Are Getting Scarcer | I Can't Go On | You Got Me Reeling And Rocking | Nothing Left | I Never Would Have Made It | I Want To Go Home - **Roy Milton** • Bam-A-Lam | I'm A Woman - **Mickey Champion** • Groovy Boogie | Just Blues - **Lorenzo Holden & Ernie Freeman** • Woojamacooja | All I Ask Is Your Love | Real Fine Daddy | I'll Surrender Anytime - **Helen Humes** • The Itch (Instrumental) | Looking For My Baby | Wet Back Hop | Tonky Honk | Don't You Know I Love You Baby (vocal by **Frank Dunn**) | Hey Dig | Here I'm Is | Gamblin' Woman | Eye Ballin' - **Chuck Higgins** • So Fine | You're Lookin' Good - **Claude McLin** • Shindig - **Joe Houston**



Here's a tasty 28 tracks worth of material drawn from Dootsie Williams' Dootone label, based in Los Angeles. Only one previously unreleased track on here (Chuck Higgins 'Hey Dig') but there's a fine assortment of rare

tracks, among which I find a few Grade A goodies. Among these are the two offerings by Mickey Champion (that's her name by the way) who, according to booklet note writer Bob Porter, still performs in L.A. on a not-infrequent basis. Mickey's two songs were first released on a Dootone single (378) in 1955. Something of a 'Tutti Frutti' clone, 'Bam-A-Lam' is an absolute stunner that moves along with total urgency; great ensemble playing with an appropriately booting tenor solo (from Oozie Fooktifino!?) plus a forceful, strident vocal from this particular Champion. Heavenly. Impressive too was (presumably) the B-side, 'I'm A Woman', not the Leiber and Stoller classic but a powerful blues that just begs for Etta James to do a revival on her

next album. For now though, this will do nicely. Porter claims that Mickey released a CD in 2000; whether it contains vintage or newer recordings isn't known but, if the contents are of a similar quality to these tunes, then I'd like to get my little mitts on a copy.

Drummer, vocalist and bandleader Roy Milton was one of the first major stars to emerge from the Specialty stable, amassing a run of hits for Art Rupe's legendary label in the early '50s, and his Solid Senders included the amazing talents of Camille Howard. Although the hit spell had ground to a halt by the time Milton parted with Dootone in 1955, some fine sides still emanated and some are included here – eight in fact. 'Cry Some Baby', 'I Can't Go On', 'Nothing Left' and 'I Never Would Have Made It' are blues based ballads and, as for 'You Got Me Reeling And Rocking', well it enjoys a degree of popularity with fans and bands alike (certainly many British jump-jive outfits include it in their sets).

'Baby I'm Gone' is a good, punchy, mid-tempo item and 'Fools Are Getting Scarcer' is a jaunty piece based on 'Strange Things Happening'. The offerings by the duo of Lorenzo Holden and Ernie Freeman (best known for his Imperial cover of 'Raunchy' of course) and by Claude McLin, straddle the jazz/R&B fence, reminding one as they do of Bill Doggett with their organ/sax leads. All of the contributions by Helen Humes have jazz leanings, as you'd probably expect; I particularly liked the slow shuffle that forms 'Real Fine Daddy'. Following his successful spell with John Dolphin's series of labels, honking sax star Joe Houston linked up with Dootone to record, among other things, a mid-tempo instrumental entitled 'Shindig' from 1958. Joe's contemporary, Chuck Higgins, has no less than nine tracks to his name here and these are a mixture of booting sax pieces (the successful 'Wet Back Hop') and a vocal or two ('Don't You Know I Love You Baby', 'Looking For My Baby'). A nice collection.

The Erwin Records Story – Various Artists – (Stompertime STCD 15)

Memphis Rockabillys, Hillbillies & Honky Tonkers Volume 2

Enie Meanie Minie Mo | Standing In Your Window | It's A Little More Like Heaven | I Just Can't Learn To Say Goodbye | You'll Never Be A Stranger To Me - **Hoyt Johnson** | Jukebox Mama - | Got The Blues From Waiting - **Merdell Floyd** | The Joint's Really Jumping - **Jimmy Evans** | Boppin' Wigwam Willie - | The Train's Done Gone - | Just Behind Your Smile - **Ray Scott** | Surge | Friday Night | Weekend - **Monarchs IV** | River Of Love - **Jerry Dion** | Bop Hop Jamboree | You'll Be The Last To Know - **Rex Ellis** | Lowdown Feeling - **Retus Blair** | Boo-Be-Ah-Bee - **Kimball Coburn** | Here

Comes The Train | Someday I'll Sober Up | The Way You Shake It - **Eddie Bond** | Skipping The Strings Roby Ramble - **Jimmy Roby** | Rock A Little Baby - **Harmonica Frank Floyd** | Wondering If You Still Care - **Billie High** | I'm Asking But I'm Not Getting - **Lee Carzle** | Got You On My Mind No One But You - **Happ Perry** | Hello Memphis - **Tex Dixon** | Memphis Rocking - **Rex Toran** | Stormy - **Billy King** | How Can I Go - **Chuck Raleigh** | Honky Tonk Ways - **Carvis Turney** | Goodbye She's Gone - **Walter Dixon** | Tall Man - **Chuck Hensley** | Monkey Love - **Larry Kennon** | Spanish Rock-A-Rolla - **Len Griffin**

The words "for", "money" and "value" spring readily to mind when perusing this latest collection from Dave Travis' Stompertime label. 38 tracks drawn from Erwin (and affiliated) labels from Memphis, Tennessee, with a total running time of 79 minutes – not bad, eh? Subtitled 'Memphis Rockabillys, Hillbillies & Honky Tonkers', this is number two in the series (the first set was a look at the Stompertime label, also of Memphis).

Erwin was founded in 1956 by Marshall Erwin Ellis who continued to release singles on his group of labels (Rivermont, Clearmont, Zone, F & L, GMG, Rex and King-Thompson) until the early '90s. The bulk of these recordings cover the period between 1956-67 with one track, Eddie Bond's *'The Way You Shake It'*, dating from 1984. Before we examine the contents, remember I have (not for the first time) listed the songs in a different order to that on the CD; this is purely for convenience reasons. Anyway, Hoyt Johnson's tracks include the classic double sider from 1957 *'Enie Meanie Minie Mo'*/*Standing In Your Window*, plus two un-issued demos, one of which, *'It's A Little More Like Heaven'* could (maybe) be a prototype for *'You're The Nearest Thing To Heaven'* as recorded on Sun by Johnny Cash. Merdell Floyd cut *'Jukebox Mama'*/*Got The Blues From Waiting* for Erwin in 1960 and the former is a short but urgent rocker with some good guitar work.



Jimmy Evans' *'The Joint's Really Jumping'* is an excellent bopper with some fine piano, while Ray Scott (composer of *'You're The One That Done It'* and *'Flying Saucer Rock'n'Roll'*) hits the spot with the classic *'Boppin' Wigwam Willie'* and *'The Train's Done Gone'*. The three songs by the Monarchs IV are guitar-based instrumentals with a sound similar to the Ventures; *'Weekend'* is a decent blues. Jerry Dion serves up a dramatic rocker, a bit like Jody Reynolds; Rex Ellis' *'Bop Hop Jamboree'* is a hot hillbilly bopper with some nifty guitar work, while Retus Blair's opus adopts a rougher approach with crashing drums. Kimball

Coburn is a name synonymous to me with Hi; however, he turned up on Rivermont with the shuffling rocker *'Boo-Be-Ah-Bee'*.

No introductions needed for Eddie Bond; among his three songs is the superb *'Here Comes The Train'* and it's nice to see an unreleased alternate of *'Someday I'll Sober Up'* which underlines how great a country singer he is. Jimmy Roby offers some Chet Atkins style guitar dexterity while the ever-brilliant Harmonica Frank Floyd contributes a great guitar rocker *'Rock A Little Baby'*; a potential Hemsby hop hit if ever there was one. Billie High is calling! She had, in *'Wondering If You Still Care'*, the first release on Erwin in November 1956 and the song has Barbara Pittman-ish overtones to it. There are two great tributes to Memphis by Tex Dixon and especially Rex Toran, who name-checks all the top local musical talent. What's left is mainly a pleasant selection of country sounds from such as Happ Perry, Carvis Turney, Walter Dixon and other household names. All in all an excellent presentation and Dave T's booklet notes are as detailed and entertaining as ever.

Teddy Redell – Young And Still Young 1952-2002 – (Collector CLCD 4470)

Knocking On The Backside | Before It Began (Shame Shame) | Hang Out That Front Door Key | El Paso Boogie | Study Boogie | I Don't Want To Know | Going To California Bye Bye Sue | Hot Spot Of The Town | Practice Boogie | My Old Kentucky Home | Mississippi Boogie | I Might Have Known | Urge To Cry | Crazy Arms | Coconut Grove | Fanny Mae | Stirring Gravy | Baby, What You Want Me To Do | Today I Started Loving You Again | Under The Double Eagle | Remember Me | It Don't Hurt Anymore | Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain | Nadine | Got You On My Mind | Memphis Tennessee | Half A Mind To Leave You | Last Date | Orange Blossom Special | We Live In Two Different Worlds | I'm Feeling Sorry

An interesting collection of performances by one of this past Hemsby's main headliners, kicking off with two alternate takes of two popular songs from his tenure with Vaden records. Then there's a batch of what purports to be his earliest known recordings from 1952/53 and finally tracks from two sessions held in September 2001 and January this year, bringing the Teddy Redell story up to date, still rocking half a century on. It must be pointed out, however, that these recent sessions are solo performances only (as indeed are the 1952/53 tracks), only two songs have band involvement, so 29 piano/vocal solos may be hard going for some. Nevertheless, Redell was (and very much still is) a fine, lucid, country-based 88-man and deserves far more recognition than has thus far come his way.

The two openers *'Backside'* and *'Before It Began'* don't vary much from the issued versions. The early demos (tracks 3 to 9 inclusive) are quite interesting and show Teddy to be a rare talent, even at age 15/16. Notable among these is *'El Paso Boogie'* with a clever imitation bass solo, our man even achieving a slight slapping sound. *'Practice Boogie'* is pretty much *'Tea For Two'* tune-wise. Tracks 10 to 21 inclusive form the September 2001 items and all bear the honky tonk style that Teddy often utilises. The same is generally true of the January 2002 slew, lotsa honky tonkin' and a little boogie woogie. Here also are good versions of the merry berry's *'Nadine'* and *'Memphis'* and Floyd Cramer's *'Last Date'* gets a tender, sensitive reading. But, as I've said, only two tracks feature a band. A good CD is this, but I can only liken it to a black forest gâteau – not to be devoured in one sitting, only to be tasted now and again; take it one piece at a time. Good notes and photos adorn this release.



1950'S SCRAPBOOK

Part 1

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

by Neil Foster

Two forms of transport which lasted well into the '50s were the tram and the trolleybus. Trams survived in Liverpool until 1957. They were noisy and because of their fixed tracks were a hindrance to other traffic at rush hours, but they could carry more passengers than the buses that were to replace them, were safer, due to more efficient braking, and gave a smoother ride as well.

Long after their disappearance, the tram-lines remained, rusting away, a hazard for the unwary cyclist, or even pedestrians, during wet weather. In Liverpool, in some areas, the trams had a central reservation, dividing the wide dual carriageways, and these still survive today, but now grassed over and planted with trees.

The trolleybus was the tram's natural successor as it could be powered using the same overhead electricity cables, so it was comparatively cheap to change over. It was more manoeuvrable than the tram in heavy traffic and had the advantage of being quiet and clean in operation.

A slight draw-back was the need for reversing-points at the end of its run; side-streets or specially-constructed spaces, where the driver

could transfer the overhead trolleys from one set of tracks to another, using a very long hooked pole, normally carried slung underneath the bus.



Prescot tram and trolleybus

I well remember the red-and-white trolleybuses that ran between Prescot and St Helens up to the complete withdrawal of all services in 1958. My most vivid recollection is of the soft swishing of the bus and the occasional clashing sound as it moved over the junction points, causing an electric spark. But unlike the tram, it left no trace of its passing.

The conventional motor bus eventually replaced both types of transport and attempts were made to improve the services. Early in the 1950s, Liverpool Corporation introduced "limited stop" buses, faster than the normal ones, which stopped only at strategic places along their routes. The 510, for example, was the limited stop version of the number 10 which ran between Prescot and Liverpool. The journey time was reduced by up to ten minutes.

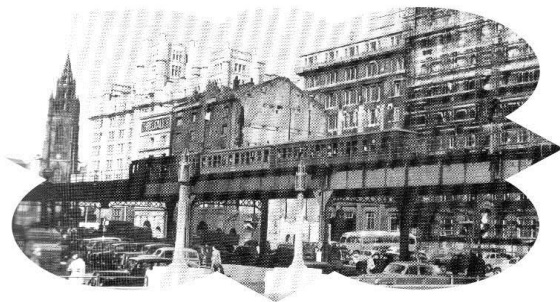
In those days, the buses were not equipped with heaters and since the platforms were open to the weather, they could be very cold in winter. I usually tried to sit up front behind the driver's cab where it was slightly warmer.

The open platform was the cause of many accidents, too, due to people falling off or trying to jump on at speed. One night, in the '50s, I watched a drunk swaying on the platform of my bus and he was nearly thrown into the road as the bus negotiated a roundabout. Only the miraculously quick reactions of another passenger about to get off, who grabbed him and hauled him back on, saved him from death or serious injury.

There were no "one-man" buses then, of course, but both drivers and conductors, which meant much faster journeys and fewer delays than today – one example of how some things do not progress! I think the conductors of those days coped very well with the multiplicity of small change that they had to deal with in their big leather bags, as the bus bounced along the road – coppers, threepenny bits, sixpences, shillings,

two-bob pieces, and half-crowns. As ever, they also had to contend with loads of drunks, too, a particular feature of my bus-route, which passed through some of the worst parts of Liverpool.

Trains I very rarely used because the bus-services that passed through Prescot were so numerous (at least *eight* buses!) but steam-trains were still going, up to the middle of the '50s, with wood interiors, lamp-shades, framed landscape photos in the carriages, and those huge, leather straps to raise or lower the heavy windows. Most large stations were still coated with the grime of a century of use and had a peculiar, sooty smell.



Unique in Britain was the **Liverpool Overhead Railway**, which ran alongside the docks and carried to work the still considerable numbers of people whose business was in that area. Our family went for a ride on the line a few years before it was unfortunately closed down for economic reasons in 1956.

(To be continued)



Marffa's Muffins

Various venues and bands: 10th May

The trouble with shift work is that sometimes you can't get time off to do things that you want to do. More often than not you either miss a gig completely or turn up half way through the evening's billing. Turning up midway through a gig isn't that uncommon for me. In fact I've missed more support acts than I care to mention, admittedly a pisser sometimes, but rarely that much of an issue. However, missing the main act is somewhat a novelty (a rather expensive novelty I might add @ £18 a ticket), and came as a bit of a shock.

I refer to the **Alien Ant Farm** gig at the Astoria on the 10th May.

Now I know that on the tickets it said doors at 6pm, but with two support acts I would have thought that the concert would go on longer than it

did. If only I had looked at the tickets properly, scrutinised them, rather than glance at them, I might have seen in the very small print that it was booked to finish at 10pm! But of course I didn't! And you can imagine my dismay after parting with a shocking £4.60 for a coke and a can of Grolsch, seeing the band thanking everyone and leaving the stage! Surely they must be due for a long encore? It was only 21.35hrs after all.



Wrong! That was the encore! Two bloody songs, two bloody songs! That's all I heard them play! Ok, It's my fault, I should have got up there earlier, but in mitigation I was working till 9pm. Well, for what it's worth **Alien Ant Farm** didn't sound too bad! Their version of **Michael Jackson's 'Smooth Criminal'** went down a storm with the crowd, although personally it didn't do anything for me. The sound was good and the venue appeared to be rocking to a capacity crowd.

So, two lessons can be learned from this debacle:

- Firstly, read the tickets properly!
- Secondly, take a bloody mortgage out if you want to buy a drink in the Astoria!

Nursing my can of Grolsch, I must have looked a bit miffed and down. My girlfriend, Louise, had an idea to break me out of my disappointment. "Weren't **Pimp** playing tonight?" she casually enquired. They were indeed! 20 minutes and a short bus ride later found us at the Water Rats theatre in Grays Inn Road.

Arriving at the Water Rats we paid our £8 each and gained admittance to a world of glam and sleaze. Welcome to the world of Virginia Creepers. That's what the club night is called. With fifties porn playing on a telly and a DJ playing decent R'n'B/R'n'R, a real good vibe was running through the place. It was actually quite a relaxed and chilled out feeling. A good number of people had dressed up in various different get ups. A woman dressed as French hooker, men wearing Zoot suits, lots of leopard skin and gold sequins.

Around about 22:45 **Pimp** take the stage. Opening with '*Sliding Doors*', the partially muted trumpet screams out and the Hammond starts to sing. The sound mix is superb, a good volume too. '*Have No Fear*' follows. Ryan, the vocalist, is now swaggering around in his own inimitable manner. Stumbling around and getting entwined in his microphone lead, bringing the stand down on a couple of occasions. The new guitarist meanwhile has left the stage, and although still

playing, is nowhere to be seen. Ryan turns around and looks mildly surprised, but not perturbed.

By this time there must be about fifty people watching the performance. Slowly but surely getting into it. 'Did Your Mamma Never Ever Tell Yu Never Drink In Bars?' gets people going. With its slow and mild build up, in a vague **Tom Waits** style, this song is amazing, the soft vocals and gentle Hammond breaking into a more shouty style and coarser vocals. The simple picking of the guitar coupled with the fine brush playing on the drums contrasts well with straining vocals of a man who sounds like he smokes 60 a day. With the guitarist back in full view, 'Do You Wanna Drive In My Car?' opens with a more light work on the Hammond and a very funky bass line. Some people are now moving around the dance floor to this. And so is Ryan, like a drunk in the middle of an epileptic fit. This song has such dirty connotations, with the repetition of the lyric, 'slipping on the clutch'. It's just so sleazy. Actually if you want to bump and grind with someone, so to speak, then this is the tune to do it to.

'Head High' has more of that funky flavour. The **Pimp** tells us: "There was tiiiime when my suit was made of silk, there was tiiiime when bath was filled with milk". Then it's time for a track that I think is called 'Crocodile Tears', this has quite a Doors feel, Ryan's vocals sounding very much **Jim Morrison** himself in places. The last song, 'Street Life', starts with the usual spoken word and brings to an end another superb set of funky sleazy blues.

After the show, I was fortunate enough to have a chat with Ryan Savage, and pick up a sampler of the band. I congratulated him on the show and enquired about the likelihood of there being any more shows soon. It turns out that he will be playing keyboards for **Gallon Drunk** for a month around Europe, but has planned another show for **Pimp** at the 12 Bar Club on the 22nd of June. He told me that he really wants to get the album finished and out for later this year. The new guitarist has a lot to offer in the way of input and he wants to record some new tunes. Quite an easy person to talk to, completely at odds with the persona that he exudes on stage.

Back in the bar area the crowd had swollen somewhat. More people and more outlandish outfits than you could shake a stick at! With admittance up to 1am and the bar open till 02:30am, the Water Rats was still attracting people when we left, even though they had missed the band. If you want to know more about the Virginia Creepers club and the nights that it promotes, then go to www.virginiacreepersclub.com
If you want to know more about **Pimp** then go to

www.pimp-hq.co.uk

[SPUNGE] @ the Astoria 25th May.

Spunge come from Tewkesbury. They play ska/punk. They have a very young fan base. The latter two statements are very evident as soon as you enter the Astoria. The former, on the other hand is not, at any part of the evening. I say this because it always amazes me that they haven't taken off in a bigger way. Ska/punk is still very popular with the disaffected youth and this lot are truly brilliant. They seem to tour constantly and have now built up a sizeable following. They have a reputation built around their live gigs, full of energy and friendliness towards their legions of fans, which has been complemented by two very good studio albums. I can only presume that the record companies don't like them 'cos they are British and not American.



Opening up to a packed Astoria with a tune that I recognised but cannot name, the whole floor shook to the movement of 1000 pairs of feet jumping up and down. I say shook, but it was actually more of a bounce; sort of like being on a giant bouncy castle! Next up, 'Room For Abuse', their **[Spunge]** thank you song to everyone. By this time the floor is behaving like the wobbly bridge across the Thames and it is quite a worrying feeling. In the centre of the dance floor a small whirlwind of people start spinning around. This has a similar affect as a snow ball rolling down a hill, so much so that in no time at all the whirlwind has turned into a veritable tornado of people. This got to a diameter of around twenty-five feet at one point! Bodies bouncing off the outside on to others, but always a calm eye in the middle. Couple this with the usual crowd surfing and you can imagine the possibility of injury is high. But hey, what the #@%\$.

With cans of beer (very expensive beer remember), and assorted soft drinks being knocked out of hands and over clothes, my girlfriend had had enough and retired to a safe distance behind the sound desk. I on the other hand continued to throw myself into the crowd at every available opportunity. Po-going like a....

pogo stick and generally skanking around.

Spunge don't do slow songs unfortunately. I say unfortunately 'cos when you are bouncing around like a loony so much you wish for the odd slow number so you can recover. The only vaguely slow number that I recalled them doing was, 'No Woman No Cry'. Even this arrangement of the famous **Marley** tune is speeded up at the end. A great version though, and considerably better than the dreadful cover of **Elvis Costello's** 'Oliver's Army' that was delivered during the encore.

A couple of new tunes, 'Skanking' and 'Too Little Too Late' are aired. Not much to say really about them as they are typically **Spunge** and fairly inoffensive. The usual selection of tunes from the previous albums litter the set; including: 'Ego', 'Break Up', 'Live Another Day', 'Wake Up Call', 'All Gone Wrong', 'Lyrical Content' and my real faves; 'Idols' and the hilarious 'Kicking Pigeons'. The former has the lyric: 'I wanna, I wanna, I wanna be Bart Simpson, don't have a cow man, eat my shorts instead. The only major drawback is a bright yellow forehead!' Topical nonsense if that makes sense! The latter is about boredom and what to do with pigeons in the park. Not to be taken too seriously.

There were another three bands on the bill tonight, but yes you guessed it, I missed them. That said, it's not too surprising when the doors open at 6pm and the first band comes on when the doors open. Add to that the policy of kicking you out so abruptly at the end and that it makes you feel a little bit cheated. At least I got to see the whole of the main band's set, 1hr and 15 of it.

Now a couple of album reviews.

Cornershop: Hand cream for a generation.

Eagerly awaited since their last effort in September of 1997, Cornershop's latest album has lived up to what I would expect from them. This is a wonderful album. It has jazz, different dance styles, strings, brass, samples, oh and of course the Indian musical influences with Sitar and drums.



One of the more bizarre tracks, 'Spectral Mornings,' which is full of samples of pilot to passenger announcements, has Noel Gallagher playing guitar playing on it! 'Slip The Drummer One' has seventies disco samples coupled with a lot of Golden Voice. Far more jazzy than their previous

album, 'When I Was Born For The 7th Time', this album is only similar in its diverse approach to musical styles. 'Heavy Soup', is a cracking combination of muted trumpet, flugelhorn, woodwind, Hammond and violins. Not forgetting the guy doing the vocals who sounds so smooth!

I'm not going to try to pigeonhole this album, it's impossible. If you liked 'Brimful Of Asha' or 'Sleep On The Left Side' from the previous album then you will like at least some of the tracks on this latest release. 9 Out of 10 for this glorious album. Go to <http://www.cornershop.com/> for more info.

The Cooper Temple Clause: See through this and leave.

'Did you miss me?' is the first track on this mixed bag of an album. Sounding very much like **Pink Floyd**, sort of airy plinky starry keyboards with a contrasting heavy bass and soft vocals. It reminds me a lot of 'Breathe'. With its slow build up heading towards a raucous ending. Next up, 'Film Maker', is a charging mixture of feedback and crunchy bass, coupled with the excellent lyrics making this superb tune easily the best on the album. It also happens to be the single that XFM have been plugging to death for three months. 'Panzer Attack', track 3, is another worthy effort.

Then it goes all **Oasis!** 'Who Needs Enemies?' This could have been taken from the last **Gallagher** offering. 'Amber', the following track is similar. The next three tracks go a bit weird, with lots of samples and strange sounds. 'Been Training Dogs' sounds like a Faith No More rip off. I got bored after that track. 5 out of 10 for this effort.

If you want to know more about them then go to <http://www.thecoopertempleclause.com/>

Up and coming gigs that may be worth going to if tickets are still available (*and you can get there on time - H*).

6th June Astoria = **Ted Nugent**. The hunter returns after a long absence; not for vegetarians.

8th June Shepherds Bush Empire = **Chuck Berry**. Need I say more!

13th June Astoria = **Fun Lovin' Criminals**. Huey and the boys come to town.

18th June ULU = **Suzanne Vega**. A very small venue for an impressive performer should be well worth the £21.50 ticket price.

20th June ULU = **The Moldy Peaches**.

22nd June 12 Bar club = **Pimp**. See the reviews for this lot.

29th June Garage = **Dickies**.

2nd July Dingwalls = **BR549**.

3rd July Kentish Town Forum = **Cake**. Quirky

American alternative outfit who write top tunes.
 11th July Garage = **King Prawn**. Agit ska at its best. Rescheduled from previous month.
 18th July Shepherds Bush Empire = **Joe Satriani**. The man who taught **Steve Vai** how to play guitar returns to London. Expect lots of widdly guitar!
 20th July Borderline = **Zodiac Mindwarp**. 80's Rockers return. Are they still prime movers?
 23rd July Mean Fiddler = **Suicidal Tendencies**. Bandanas and big shorts from Mike Muir and his crew.

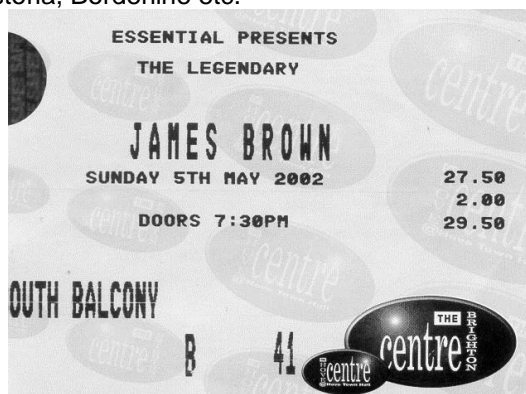
That's all from me this month. I'm now off on a well-earned rest, haring around the French countryside in my trike.

MM



James Brown The Centre Brighton

'Tales From The Woods' subscriber/contributor Martyn Harvey and myself took a trip to this loud and brash East Sussex seaside town, otherwise known as London-by-the-Sea, to witness the godfather of soul, grand master of funk, James Brown. Impressive venue, 3000 capacity, huge standing area, seating in the circle above, beer, coffee and food all at reasonable prices and, most importantly, excellent sound. Bitter and lager at around £2.50 a pint – take note please Jazz Café, Astoria, Borderline etc.



Extremely mixed crowd. Spotted plenty of old soulies, middle-aged funksters, plenty of young faces raised on dance and Indie. Even rockabilies in the guise of Jay Hawsley and companions from nearby Burgess Hill. So then, perfect ingredients for a great gig but would this 70 plus veteran be able to pull it off? Of course he did – with ease. Four horn section, lead guitar, second lead and rhythm, two bass men, three drummers, the Bitter Sweet (four girl back up singers), two scantily clad foxy young lady dancers and a boy dancer all the way from Maida Vale. Plus of course, the

perennial MC whose main task was to whip the crowd up before the main man's grand entrance, to fling the cloak across JB's shoulders and to pat him on the back for when the man is overcome with his sanctifying. If that ain't enough, there is also a male and female singer to add to the payroll – I sure wouldn't like to pick up the tab for this lot.

The band hit the stage at around 9pm, makin' it funky for an excited, near-capacity audience. "Are you ready for show time?" the MC called out several times, a few thousand voices chanting "James Brown" in answer before the man strode out, that jet black piece on his head (the only thing in the entire building that did not budge an inch throughout the evening), resplendent in a red suit and black frilly shirt, immediately hitting us with some fancy footwork. In all honesty, JB don't look much different from any time that KW can recall, it could have been any time in the past few decades. JB slid the band effortlessly into 'Get Up Off That Thing' – I doubt if any of these cats have ever played a wrong note in their entire lives. Up next, a funk drenched workout on 'Cold Sweat' before slowing the pace, James taking a breather seated at the keyboard, taking cool, controlled vocals on Charles Brown's 'Come Back Baby'.



JB himself gave the girl singer, Tammy Ray, a big build up as star turn on the Las Vegas circuit, describing her as a modern day Janis Joplin. Oh dear, sorry JB but that is not the way I saw it – Janis she is not! More akin to Celine Dion with her screeching histrionics. 'At Last My Love Is Here To Stay' was awful, the old Stax warhorse 'You Can't Turn Me Loose' was positively unexciting. A duet with James on 'Blues In The Night' was indeed the best of a bad bunch.

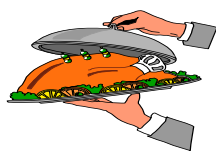
Once this annoying interlude was over, the main man was back in business, visiting his huge back catalogue for 'Prisoner Of Love' and the classic

'It's A Man's World', that voice as clear and as strong as ever. Soul drenched. Wow! This was something else again. 'These Foolish Things' followed, before hitting a familiar groove with 'I Feel Good' (just about anyone who fancies himself as a bit of a James Brown has had a stab at this one) but in the hands of JB you don't mess with the Guvnor. Time for the famous cloak routine, sobbing and pleading on 'Please, Please, Please' and finally an extended workout on 'Sex Machine'. For me at least this was the real deal, ripping to shreds the rumours that he ain't got it no more. All together folks; "Oh yes he has!"

Keith Woods



SOUL KITCHEN

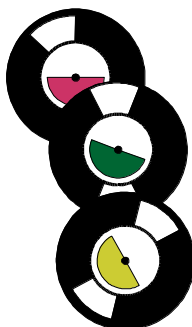


A very fond welcome to the latest edition from the kitchen. The saucepans are steaming with spicy soul broth, so lets get down to

business and serve up some soul food.

CLICKS and FLUFF: VINYL SPOTLIGHT

RALPH GRAHAM 'I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LOOK FOR LOVE'
(Ralph Graham) Sussex Records
1974



This month we move away from our usual suicidal offerings, to desperation - a moving piece of work, about lost love, and loneliness. I know absolutely nothing about Ralph Graham but this tale speaks of a situation I'm sure we've all been through sometime in our lives.

*I wish I'd taken time to ask her name
But I was shy and insecure
About being turned down once again
I should at least have asked from where she came
But I get a feeling that my answer will always be
the same
I don't know how to look for love anymore
For two whole years I've only known one name
Blinded by my love I did not see life change
And now she's gone and I must
Play in this brand new ball game

I don't know anymore what I should do
Say my friends have gone away
Now all the faces here are new
The places that I used to go
Hold memories of things That I no longer want to
know*

*I don't know where to look for love anymore
Running away they say won't change my state of
mind*

*Life changed too quick for me to see
So it seems logical to me
If I run fast enough
Leave some of this past behind me.*

*Love is cruel and unfair
But maybe I'll travel there
I don't know how and I don't know where
I just know it's doggone lonely here
I don't know how to look for love anymore
I don't know where oh to find sweet love anymore
I don't know how I can look for love
But I'll keep on looking
Oh, I'll keep on looking for love somewhere
I don't know where to look for love anymore
Can't seem to find it any place, anywhere,
anymore.*

BANKS and HAMPTON

Homer Banks and Carl Hampton released just three classic soul singles, plus one fairly decent album during a short lived recording career, with Warner Bros in the mid seventies. I guess they are best remembered as primarily one of the greatest song writing partnerships from the soul world, with many monumental soul classics behind them, up there on the same pedestal as other great soul music writers, Sam Dees, Dan Penn, Lamont Dozier etc. But first lets not forget Homer Banks had his moments of glory in the sixties, being one of the first artists to record under the then budding Isaac Hayes and David Porter partnership.

Born in Memphis Tennessee on 2nd August 1941, he first started singing gospel music in high school with a group called The Soul Consolaters, where he was lead singer. It was Hayes and Porter who persuaded Homer to make the change from gospel to secular music - it was after a high school talent contest that they talked with him and suggested that he should try singing soul. After a failed audition with Stax Records in 1964, they cart him off to Genie Records, a local Memphis label, the result being in 1965 his debut disc 'Lady Of Stone'/Sweetie Pie' on Genie 101. What a debut was 'Lady', from the opening elephant herd horn section to his high pitched pleading climax is sheer magic. This wonderful deep ballad proved to be quite a large regional hit, but didn't go far beyond that. Recorded at American recording studios, Chelsea Ave, Memphis, the record was subsequently picked up for national distribution by Minit Records, the R&B arm of Liberty records, being re-released a couple of years later.

Signing direct to Minit in 1966, Homer went back to the American recording studios with Hayes and

Porter where he laid down tracks that were to become soul classics. The brilliant driving stormer 'A Lot Of Love' was the first from this session to be released b/w a pretty good ballad, 'Fighting To Win' Minit 32000. 'A Lot Of Love' has since become a soul standard, a staple diet of many artiste's live act, also this was borrowed very heavily by Spencer Davis for their hit 'Gimme Some Lovin'. The next release, '60 Minutes Of Your Love' emulated the excitement of his previous release, a jogging rhythm along with his rasping vocal style, girlie backing singers, has to be one of the greatest soul releases of all time b/w a wonderful off deep slowie, 'Do You Know What' Minit 32008. Can they really be bottles I hear clinking on this?

1967 sees 'Lady Of Stone' re-issued b/w another great sixties classic bouncer 'Hooked By Love', Minit 32020. In 1968 the soul quality continues with his final two releases on Minit, the mid-pacer, 'Round The Clock Lover Man' b/w, again a worthy ballad 'Foolish Hearts Break Fast' 32036. '(Who You Gonna Run To) Me Or Your Mama/I Know You Know I Know I Know' 32056. Interestingly as Homer was to become one of soul's most successful songwriters he only co-wrote 'A Lot Of Love' with Deanie Parker, the majority being penned by Hayes Jnr/Porter.

When Homer's time with Minit was up, Hayes and Porter, who were now becoming an influential force, introduced him again to Stax/Volt records and he kinda drifted off into producing and writing more. Initially working with sound alike William Shack, 'Too Many Lovers' is worth a mention, and Johnnie Taylor. In 1969 Homer Banks he met a young songwriter from Memphis, Carl Hampton, so the birth of this incredible writing partnership began, along with regular collaborators Raymond Jackson, and Betty Cruthcer. They soon became important writers and producers at Stax. Their hits and classics over the years are too numerous to mention, but they were responsible for some of the greatest works ever to come out of soul, putting cheating and stealing love to the fore front, amongst other nice loving things.

A random selection of big hits and personal favourites shows the wealth of talent they were involved with, not necessarily all on Stax.

'Who's Making Love' : 'Separation Line' Johnnie Taylor.

The Soul Children's FRICTION album, from which the masterpiece 'I'll Be The Other Woman' came.

'I've Got A Feeling' Al Wilson.

'Long Walk to DC' : 'If Your Ready (Come Go With Me)' Staple Singers.

'(If Loving You Is Wrong) I Don't Want To Be Right' Luther Ingram.

'Woman To Woman' Shirley Brown.

'I Cant Stand Up From Falling Down' Sam and

Dave.

'I'm Drifting' Wilson Pickett.

'I Like What You're Doing To Me' Carla Thomas.

'Love On Borrowed Time' William Bell and later

'Better To Have And Don't Need' Don Covay.

'Taxi' J Blackfoot.

So it goes on, hot stuff hey.

When Stax collapsed Banks and Hampton were left in limbo. Observing that other known songwriters were achieving vocal success with massive hits, the likes of Ashford and Simpson, Johnny Bristol etc, led to the first Banks and Hampton record on Warner Brothers in 1976, recorded at Muscle Shoals, Alabama. This cheating saga needs no introduction, as all real soul fans should be well acquainted with this, yes, yet another all time soul classic 'Caught In The Act (Of Getting It On)' b/w a bumping (for bumping info see last issue) 'Make Do With Watcha Got' WB 8177. The record didn't sell, but a cover version of 'Caught In The Act' by Facts Of Life was a top twenty R&B hit in May 1976.

Next up in the summer of 1976 was a beautiful laid back slowie 'Wonderful' b/w 'It's Gotta Be This Way' WB 8199, also failed to sell, but are again two gems with tremendous vocals from Homer. The final single in 1977 'I'm Gonna Have To Tell Her', a dreamy intro and rap which is based on that love triangle situation type of thing, it's equally on a par with the previous two b/w 'We're Movin On' WB 8344. This release actually sees them finally getting a hit, albeit only 80 R&B.

1977 saw the album PASSPORT TO ECSTASY released, expectation were high but in reality was slightly disappointing, featuring three OK instrumentals, a couple of laid back disco things, the single 'I'm Gonna', the redeeming features being two more classy ballads 'Let's Make Up', 'Believe'.

I guess in 1978 Banks and Hampton with the lack of success throw in the towel as a singing duo, returning to what they did best, or what kept the larder full, song writing. What a return, penning and producing Randy Brown's classic deep soul debut album. WELCOME TO MY ROOM, which blew everyone away on release. It features one of my all time favourites from their pen, 'Too Little In Common To Be Lovers', previously recorded in 1974 by The Newcomers US Truth. A brilliant deep forlorn tale. Randy does lose his cool with spine tingling high tenor shrieks towards the end of his version. Pure soul perfection. It seems that Carl disappeared from the scene. Homer now teamed up with Chuck Brooks and went on to work with Randy Brown, J Blackfoot, Lester Snell.

SOUL/R&B released in the UK

This time around I am going to turn the spotlight on two independent UK soul labels **HIT and RUN**

and **SPECIAL AGENT**. If anyone wants to know what deep soul is all about, I can quite honestly say, listen to the entire output from these two labels, for the answer. Every quality release is soul in its deepest purist form.

In 1978 Garry Cape, owner of the mail order set-up Black Grape (Soulboy was a very regular customer), set up his own label HIT and RUN, issuing real soul that no big company would go near. Unfortunately it had to close after only three singles because of legal problems with the label's name.

Undaunted, Gary went on to set up SPECIAL AGENT, but after five singles and one album, that too folded. A case of where were the soul punters to make this venture commercially viable. They did succeed in issuing first class soul in the UK, and all are indispensable.



HIT & RUN All released 1978

5001 Eddie Giles

Married Lady/Are You Living With The One You're Loving With. (Alarm)
Exquisite deep soul. Eddie's softly strained and pleading vocals set off nicely against the laid back production and female backing. Lady was originally recorded by Bobby Patterson on Jetstar in 1973 b/w chunky beater, good lyrics, nice sax.

5002 Mighty Sam

Mr & Mrs Untrue/Never Too Busy. (Malaco)
Mighty is Mighty in some soul quarters. Here he is at his deepest best on this well constructed slipping around song. This is the definitive version of this often recorded ditty. Brilliant. b/w near

instrumental mid-tempo dancer.

5003 George Perkins

Keep On Trying/What The Deal Is. (G.P)
One of the all time great deep soul songs with a message. An un-credited Frank Turner helps George along on this beautiful deep soul ballad in the Al Green mode. The immaculate falsetto and thundering climax reaches parts of the attorney that only Heineken can find. Ultra goose pimples. b/w a funky piece.

SPECIAL AGENT All released 1980

SPY 9001 Jewel Bass

Overflowing (For You)/I Don't Trust Myself. (Malaco)
Eddie Floyd produced wailer. A beautiful song, well sung. There is so much soul on this... it's overflowing b/w a funky bassy beater.

SPY 9002 Ohio Players

Bad Bargain/Here Today and Gone Tomorrow. (Compass)
A bit rugged this one, with the guitars and horns battling with the emotive wailing.

SPY 9003 Herman Hitson

You Are Too Much For The Human Heart/I Got That Will. (?)
Haunting backup, strong lyric, and Herman's gravelly pleading vocals combine for an excellent deep doomy affair b/w One of these name dropping tunes, that mentions every soul artist in two and half minutes. It's good though, a nice bouncer.

SPY 9004 Johnny Adams

Stairway To Heaven/Baby I Love You. (?)
What can you say about the tan canary? Stunning vocals on this O'Jays original. Absolutely brilliant is the only description for this release. But than one would only expect this quality from an all time great. The flip is more of the same on the old Aretha Franklin tune.

SPY 9005 Charles Brimmer

I Stand Accused/God Bless Our Love. (Chelsea)
Jerry Butler's classic 'I Stand Accused' is one of those songs that in anyone's hand cannot fail to hit the spot. Charles pleads his case exceptionally well b/w Al Green's chestnut. Church organ adds flavour to Charles' amazing emotive feel. He really means it, lucky lady. He had a top R&B hit with this

SPY 100 Sandra Phillips LP

Too Many People In One Bed
A Jerry 'Swamp Dogg' Williams concept creation, originally released on Canyon in 1972. Along the same lines as Doris Duke's I'M A LOSER album which we featured last month. In fact it contains two of the tracks from that album, 'To The Other

Woman' and 'Ghost Of Myself' which compare very favourably with the originals. Another stand out track is a remake of Dee Dee Warwick's 'She Didn't Know'. The album is very soulful but lacks a little something, and overall the production seems a bit thin, lacking that dramatic interpretation, compared to the Doris and Irma Thomas, who also had a Swamp concept out around this time, IN BETWEEN TEARS Fungus Records. But there's no getting away from the fact that Swamp Dogg's distinctive lyrics never fail to amuse, and demand to be listen to.

In 1993 Gary released some fine CDs by George Jackson, Percy Milem, R L Griffin and Cadillac George Harris on his newly formed Grapevine label. Today I believe he is still releasing product, this time in demand soul and northern limited edition vinyl 45s on Grapevine.

RANDOM DIP

SAMMY TURNER Raincoat In The River/Falling.
London 9488 (Big Top)

One plucked from my miscellaneous London American pile. Now it's been a very long time since I last played this, twenty years or so, and what a revelation. This long forgotten catchy item is now top humming tune by Soulboy, this week anyway. Vocally patterned after Clyde McPhatter, it is a clippety clop type of thing that Titus Turner was so good at. Surfing strings, girlie backing singers aarrhning, wooing and chorusing about raincoats and umbrellas, "I'm gonna throw my raincoat in the river, I'm gonna toss my umbrella in the sea". Brilliant.

So what do I know about Sammy Turner, not a lot. Born June 2nd 1932 in Patterson New Jersey. Sammy started composing and singing in high school. Interrupted by the Korean War, where he served six months as a paratrooper. On his return he was an accounting clerk who crooned in the clubs of New York, mainly at weekends. He became part of The Twisters vocal group. In 1959 they signed with Big Top Records NY where they recorded their debut single, 'Sweet Anne Laurie' produced by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who in 1959 were laying groundwork for what was to become one of music's most successful partnerships.

Sammy was one of the first black artists allowed to record a relatively unmodified gospel vocal style over lush accompaniments. Sammy's vocal style, even on slushy standards, makes him stand head and shoulders over others doing that sort of thing. A high tenor voice with this amazing ability to bend and reshape notes like no other. He went solo on the next release which was to be his biggest hit,

reaching 3 in the US charts, with the standard 'Lavender Blue', (all together now, "dilly dilly"). His next release in late 1959 'Always'/Symphony' was a hit on both sides of the Atlantic, reaching 26 in the UK on London. 1960 'Paradise'/I'd Be A Fall Again' nibbled both charts. Then in 1962 came 'Raincoat...'



CD of the month held over, so there should be two next time.

So until next time, remember to keep on keeping on.

SOULBOY



“Papard Pontificates” I Wanna Be A Rockabilly Star

Hardly anybody in Europe had even heard of Rockabilly in the 1950s. Even Rock'n'Roll itself never dominated the record charts, and so there were very few Rockabilly hit records, even in the States. It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that we started to become acquainted with what were then considered obscure Rockabilly singers such as Warren Smith, Billy Lee Riley and Sonny Burgess, largely due to the efforts of Breathless Dan Coffey who travelled to Memphis and brought back the now famous yellow Sun 45s by the boxload, which no-one in America was interested in at the time. Dan also brought back obscure records on other little independent US labels, and the new European Rockabilly fans started building up their collections, which till then had consisted of mainstream Rock'n'Rollers like Little Richard, Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, etc.



Jerry Lee Lewis (at an impressionable age) meeting his hero, Tony Papard

The only Rockabilly we were familiar with in the 1950s was really Carl Perkins' *'Blue Suede Shoes'* and other tracks from his Sun 'Dance Album', issued in UK on the London label, early Gene Vincent and The Bluecaps recordings and the excellent Rockabilly of the Johnny Burnette Trio. Even Elvis's Sun Rockabilly recordings were not generally available over here, only his RCA recordings, which were mainly ballads and Rock'n'Roll.

It was very exciting discovering a whole new music form and its artists, and seeing some of them 'live' for the first time. There was a big show in 1977 at the old Rainbow Theatre in Finsbury Park, which I personally missed due to being abroad on holiday I believe. However I did catch a show at the Roxy, Harlesden which included Warren Smith and also his namesake Ray Smith, among others. In later years, of course, a regular troupe of Rockabilly singers made it to our shores. Many of these were re-discovered working in gas stations, etc. in the States, and were amazed that the records they recorded long ago were now of interest to a new generation of European fans. Hank Mizell even had a big chart hit with a re-issue of his *'Jungle Rock'*, recorded a new album of songs in similar vein, and had a successful tour of the UK before disappearing into oblivion again.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s a whole new tribe of 1950s music fans started to come on the scene in the UK, to join the Teds and Rockers. At first the new fans had no corporate identity - I remember seeing youngsters at the Southgate Royalty wearing American clothes instead of drape jackets or leathers. Hawaiian shirts were much in evidence. Then denim jackets with the Confederate flag emblazoned on them. Later whole new wardrobes of 1950s fashions were available at Rockabilly venues and weekenders, as the Rockabilly cult really took off in the 1980s and 1990s.

As the cult grew, it became not so much 'purist' as 'obscurist'. Rockabilly fans competed with each other to dig out the rarest and most obscure records they could. I have been to Rockabilly record hops where I didn't recognize one track the entire evening. Indeed our esteemed Editor (he of the many colourful hats) and myself did a record hop in the East End which attracted some Rockabilly fans. We gave one of them a guest spot as a DJ one week, and he played the most obscure Rockabilly tracks you've ever heard. He actually complained because we were playing tracks people had actually heard of! The only trouble was, most of the obscure stuff he was playing was absolute rubbish. True, we'd never heard it before, and quite frankly we couldn't care less if we never heard it again!

I am amazed at how many Rockabilly records on

almost as many small labels were churned out in the Southern States during the late 1950s. I did begin to wonder if some secret recording studio was putting out all this material under different labels, and passing it off as being recorded in the 1950s. There was just so much of the stuff, much of it absolute crap one has to say. However, the records were authentic. Although Dan Coffey got Charlie Feathers into the recording studio again to make a great new follow-up to his *'Tongue-Tied Jill'* called *'Stuttering Cindy'*, and other Rockabilly singers recorded new albums, most of the material we heard was actually recorded in the 1950s in small Stateside studios. In the 1990s Keith and a group of us visited Eddie Shuler's Goldband studios in Lake Charles, Louisiana, where Dolly Parton got her first recording contract, and where Al Ferrier and His Boppin' Billies put out their rockabilly singles. It was certainly very interesting seeing the tiny studio next to a record shop, which had changed very little over the years, and talking to Eddie Shuler; a great character who had so many fascinating tales to tell.

Goldband was essentially a Country and Cajun label, and others like Sun in Memphis started off as black Blues labels then went over to recording white artists. It seems, once Rock'n'Roll took off, practically every budding Hillbilly singer on every little independent label decided to try to jump on the bandwagon, and recorded up-tempo Country, now re-named Rockabilly. Some of these were simply traditional Country ballads speeded up, with the fiddles and steel guitars removed and drums and guitars brought to the fore. Echo chambers were added, and blues riffs brought in. Indeed old Blues numbers were also speeded up and given the Rockabilly treatment by white guys. Some of these were very good, but an awful lot weren't.

We now see an endless stream of ageing Rockabillicies, many of whom haven't picked up a guitar or been in a recording studio since the 1950s. After their records flopped in the 1950s many gave up their short-lived recording careers for jobs in factories, gas stations, etc. Others continued their Country Music careers, or became cabaret artists. None continued to sing and record Rockabilly, the original fad never taking off and dying a natural death in the 1950s till rediscovered by a new generation of fans in Europe in later decades.

A few very big names in Country Music recorded good Rockabilly tracks. George Jones' *'Who Shot Sam'* and Tennessee Ernie Ford's *'Shotgun Boogie'* spring instantly to mind. But hundreds of obscure singers who never had a hit with Country, tried their hand at Rockabilly and have now been elevated to the dizzy heights of Superstars by the

European fans. Many of them had little talent back in the 1950s, and, unlike good wine, age has definitely not improved them.

Don't misunderstand me. There is some very good Rockabilly, and people like Warren Smith, Don Woody, Billy Riley, Charlie Feathers, Sleepy La Beef and a lot of others deserved to have far more success than they ever did. But now it has gotten silly, with ever more obscure singers being brought to Europe, their long-ago and best forgotten records emblazoned on flyers as if they were big hits to justify forking out good money to go and see these geriatrics which, quite frankly, nobody had ever heard of a few years previously.

I am expecting any day now to hear that Ramblin' Sid Rumpo was the greatest Rockabilly singer ever, and that a whole stash of his material has been found in the vaults of some obscure American record company. Or perhaps we could reverse the trend, and instead of poor old Ramblin' Sid (an alter-ego of the late Kenneth Williams) we could export some of the many obscure skiffle bands to the States. I'm sure if we search hard enough we can find some old reel-to-reel tapes recorded in garages and bathrooms all over the UK during the skiffle craze which we could pass off as golden gems from a bygone era. After all, skiffle in the UK was the equivalent to Rockabilly in the US as a short-lived music fad which had a bandwagon effect, almost everyone who ever had been given a guitar for Christmas trying to perform it.

There were some great Rockabilly recordings from the 1950s which never got the airplay and recognition they deserved, and these should take their place along with the great Rock'n'Roll, Rhythm'n'Blues, Jive and Boogie tracks as part of that golden era of the 1940s and 1950s when these styles were developing from earlier ones. But there are quite a few records in my collection I wouldn't care if I never heard again, and the last thing I want to see and hear is some old codger dragged out of an old people's home in Tennessee to stand in his Zimmer frame and croak them out before he himself croaks out.

Quite frankly, I'd rather see a good second, third or fourth generation Rockabilly band perform, particularly if they write good new material. There are quite a few around, most hailing from Europe. Crazy Cavan and The Rhythm Rockers may not be everyone's cup of tea, but at least they write most of their own material, and much of it is excellent. I also happen to think they are one of the best Rockabilly bands around, even now in the year 2002. They have just recorded a new CD with Linda Gail Lewis on piano, which I can't wait to hear. Also let's not forget Graham Fenton's 'Matchbox' who took Rockabilly into the UK

charts, and BR5-49 who are a rare example of a 1990s American Rockabilly group and whose live shows are really great.

So excuse me if I don't rush to see the latest unknown-to-me American Rockabilly 'Superstar' who has been brought over to our shores. Before considering paying good money to see them I want to know four things: Who the Hell are they? Who were they? Who did they hope to be? And, lastly and most importantly, were they any bloody good?

Tony "Happy Pappy" Papard

Tony adds, "I look forward to reading Tony and Ian's counter-blasts!"



Hackberry Ramblers

A quick reminder that the Hackberry Ramblers are at the 10th International Cajun & Zydeco Festival Raamsdonksveer 2002. They are on stage in Holland at 9 p.m. on Saturday, June 8th, returning to the US on Monday, June 10. Check the website at www.zydecozity.nl

They also play France on Sunday, July 28 at the Country-Rendezvous in Craponne-sur-Arzon, south of Lyon. Check out www.festivaldecraponne.com



SHAKY LEE'S JUNE JOURNAL

My initial encounter with Bill Haley and The Comets live on stage was on 3rd June 1968 when I travelled by bus to Leeds hoping they wouldn't go on too late for me to get back across the border to Lancashire. Luckily they appeared in the early evening, being the only Rock'n'Roll outfit on an all day show, and the one act that I wanted to see.

The Queens Hall was a huge concrete place, without seating, and resembled a disused bus station. The crowd was far less than the organisers had anticipated, and when Haley and The Comets were announced a limousine drove in through the huge doors and delivered them to the front of the stage. Only a tiny minority of those present seemed remotely interested in their act, but, those of us who were, enjoyed a good old shake, rattle and roll.

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As can be seen from the newspaper ad it was a very mixed bill. Does anyone out there in TFTW land know what became of the compere - "King Mojo himself"? (Answers on a postcard please to Stringfellows, Upper St Martins Lane, Covent Garden, London WC2).

THE VINTAGE ROCK 'N' ROLL APPRECIATION
 SOCIETY

Present

DAVE TRAVIS' BAD RIVER BAND

and

ROCK 'N' ROLL DISCO

AT BURNLEY CRICKET CLUB
 ON MONDAY, JUNE 12th, AT 8-00 p.m.

Admission 40p By Ticket Only

I first met the eminent Dave Travis thirty years ago this month when he and his Bad River Band performed in Burnley for our local branch of the Vintage Rock'n'Roll Appreciation Society. We had been holding Rock'n'Roll nights there every other Friday since February, but Dave had no free Fridays. So, for the princely sum of £30 the band did two 45-minute spots on a Monday night before about sixty enthusiastic boppers,

Local bands of the time mainly stuck to the standard Rock'n'Roll classics, so it was refreshing when Dave delighted us with his renditions of Jerry Lee's *'Put Me Down'* and Carl Perkins' *'All Mama's Children'*. The band that night consisted of Harold Burgon on lead guitar, Terry Nicholson (bass) and Spider Kennedy (drums), plus Dave himself on rhythm guitar and vocals.

Rockin' birthdays for June include: -

- 1st Hot Rod Lincoln - Johnny Bond (1915) - died 29/6/78
- 2nd Hearts Of Stone - Otis Williams (& The Charms) (1936)
- 6th Quarter To Three - Gary 'US' Bonds (1939)
- 7th Judy - Teddy Redell (1937)
- 11th Goodnite Sweetheart Goodnite - James 'Pookie' Hudson [Spaniels] (1934)
- 12th One Hand Loose - Charlie Feathers (1932) - died 29/8/98
- 13th Betty Lou Got A New Pair Of Shoes - Bobby Freeman (1940)
- 18th Justine - Don 'Sugarcane' Harris (1938) - died 1/12/99
- 19th Feel So Fine - Shirley Goodman [Shirley & Lee] (1937)
- 23rd Pink Thunderbird - Paul Peek (1937) - died 3/4/01
- 27th Boogie Woogie Country Girl - Doc Pomus (1925) - died 14/3/91
- 29th Everybody's Rockin' - Leonard Lee [Shirley & Lee] (1935) - died 23/10/76

A couple of imminent live gigs worthy of your attendance:

- Sat 8th June - James Hunter - 100 Club
- Sun 9th June - Chuck Berry - Shepherds Bush Empire

Teddy Boy Wilkinson



Shaky Lee gives Don Thompson (of the Zodiacs) some helpful words of advice

Shaky Lee's Sunday Evening In Camden Town (Dave Edmunds - Jazz Cafe - 5th May 2002)



My good buddy Wayne the bassman called to say he was playing the Come On Down & Meet The Folks session at the Golden Lion, so Bunter and I decided to check some of that out prior to the main event. The band put together for the occasion was led by Ian Fahey on lead guitar & vocals, accompanied by double bass, drums and trumpet. An unusual combination, but great fun, and a good sound on covers of such as Billy Boy Arnold's *'I Wish You Would'*, Slim Harpo's *'I'm A King Bee'*, Lee

Dorsey's *'Everything I Do Gonh Be Funky'*, and Jimmy Reed's *'Aw Shucks, Hush Your Mouth'*.

Dashing over to the Spread Eagle to meet Brian 'The Rocker' Jessup and Comrade Papard. I enjoyed a couple of pints of Young's traditional bitter before venturing down the road to the Jazz Cafe which provides uniform drinks at inflated prices e.g. £1.50 for a glass of coke and £3.10 for a pint of lager (they don't sell bitter unless you count Caffreys). Not one of my favourite venues, I remember my first visit here some years ago when Mary Costello told me it reminded her of an operating theatre. I couldn't have put it better myself.

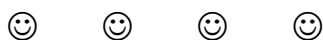
Arriving just prior to the show commencing, the main room was absolutely heaving. We therefore elected to watch proceedings from the small lounge, across the bar, which afforded a pretty decent view of Dave Edmunds, looking in good shape for a fifty eight year old, who appeared in solo mode. Keeping the chat to a minimum he managed to cram almost thirty numbers into his set. About one third of these were instrumentals ranging from *'Lady Madonna'* to the Allegro from Mozart's *'40th Symphony'* via *'Love Letters In The Sand'*, *'Sweet Georgia Brown'*, *'Classical Gas'* and *'Men Of Harlech'*.

Showing Elvis' influence Edmunds opened up with *'Blue Moon Of Kentucky'*, and also included versions of *'Mystery Train'* and *'A Mess Of Blues'*. His own hits were represented by *'Girls Talk'*, *'Crawling From The Wreckage'*, *'Queen Of Hearts'*, *'I Knew The Bride'*, and Smiley Lewis' *'I Hear You Knocking'*.

The highly entertaining show was only spoilt for me by the dreaded backing track surfacing on *'Sabre Dance'*. As far as I am concerned if you can't do it live properly, don't bother doing it at all. However fans chanting "We want Dave" encouraged him to return for a deserved encore where he redeemed himself with sparkling versions of *'Promised Land'*, *'Let's Talk About Us'*, *'Let It Rock'*, and *'The Sheik Of Araby'*.

Overall quite a polished individual performance, but I would like to see Edmunds with a band to beef up the sound. Maybe next time around?

Lee Wilkinson



Just in from Ken Major, **The Blues Prayer**, to be intoned each night before taking to your bed with your hot cocoa.

Our Bluesman
Which art in Blues Heaven
Blues-ed be thy name.
Thy Bluesdom come
Thy Blues be done,
In Blues earth as it is in Blues heaven.
Give us this Day our daily Blues,
And forgive us our three passing chords
As we forgive those who pass three
chords against us.
And lead us not into The Temptations,
But deliver us from Crapville:
For thine is the Bluesdom,
The Blues Power
And the Blues glory,
For Ever and Ever,
Oh Yeah!



The Funkster

Not one for the current pop charts I happened to chance upon Ronan Keating on Top Of The Pops singing *'If Tomorrow Never Comes'* - I was familiar with a version by American Country singer Garth Brooks which I thought was pretty recent but, checking back, I found the song on G.B.'s first album (modestly entitled Garth Brooks) in 1989. I know that our Tony Papard has no time for him but, without a doubt, Mr B has recorded/written some fine songs. The fact that somebody on this side of the pond hasn't been blinkered says a lot.

It was sad also to hear that Otis Blackwell had died (May 7th). His contribution to the world of song included *'Great Balls Of Fire'*, *'Don't Be Cruel'* and *'Return To Sender'*. There was a fine obit in the Wednesday 8th edition of the 'Daily Telegraph' while brief by-lines appeared in the 'Evening Standard' and the 'Daily Mirror'. I don't know if any other Broad Sheets covered his passing. He was a very quiet man, shunning any limelight - it was revealed that he'd never met Elvis and an opportunity to meet Peggy Lee (he'd written 'Fever') one time wasn't fruitful. He decided there were "too many hangers on" at the gig where he was meant to meet Peggy so he went home instead. I've no doubt a more in depth piece on Otis' career will appear in other mags (particularly 'NDT' where I guess Stuart Coleman will gush accordingly). Hey, Otis, thanks for many great songs. We all at T.F.T.W. raise a glass to you - hope you find the peace you were looking for.

Did you know that May 14th heralded the 40th Anniversary of a Jerry Lee Lewis show at The

Mitcham Majestic in 1962 - it was Lewis's only London appearance (okay, Mitcham is in Surrey but easier to get to than some of the 'Central London' venues that could've had him). The 1958 ban was still in place and Rank Theatres wouldn't have him.

In the last issue of the mag, our own Mr Papard enquired about certain songs – *'Lost In The Fifties Tonight'* that was cut by Ronnie Milsap in 1986. The album also included *'I Heard It Through The Grapevine'* and *'Happy Happy Birthday Baby'*.

'I'd Trade All My Tomorrows For One Yesterday' is a little more obscure. I know a song of that title that was cut by Willie Nelson while he was still with RCA, and you can find the song on 'Willie Nelson Sings Great Country Songs' on Eagle records for about 7 or 8 quid.

A recent poll in the newspapers suggested that *'Bohemian Rhapsody'* by Queen was the nation's favourite record of all time. Okay I never voted as I suspect that Charlie Rich would not have been in the running but the list did include Elvis, The Beatles and John Lennon (solo as opposed to being part of The Fab Four). Does one have a favourite record of all-time? Quite possibly. I could list many that I've always liked over the last 45 years or so, but one that's always been a firm candidate was an American EPIC 45 by Charlie Rich issued in 1972 *'A Woman Left Lonely'* before he was smothered with Billy Sherrill's production.

At that time it was one of a few Rich 45s that hadn't made the grade as an album track (There are still a couple that have yet to see an album, never mind a CD). The Epic Files reveal that it was out on 1st April 1971 (Rich was no April fool that day). A Dan Penn/Spooner Oldham copyright, Penn freaks will recall that he composed one of the greatest soul songs *'The Dark End Of The Street'* (I don't know if he ever retired but the monies from that alone should secure a good pension).

Did anyone catch 'Late - With Jools Holland' on Sunday 19th May? Jools' guests included ex-Animals vocalist Eric Burdon. He sang a new version of *'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood'* and an acapella arrangement of *'Careless Love'* with Jools on piano. An earlier interview revealed that he like Elvis, Gene Vincent, Ray Charles and Johnnie Cochran (Jools pulled him up "Don't you mean Eddie?") but also mentioned a certain Joe Turner (perhaps he'd heard Turner's recording of *'Careless Love'*)

I invested in a copy of the recent Sanctuary box set of Sun recordings 'Sun Records 50 Golden Years' - perhaps a little expensive at £59.99 but it's attractively packaged. Stuart Coleman's

explanatory notes are easy reading, although he doesn't really tell you anything more than you knew before. Some of the artists involved are featured on Disc 8 with interview snippets. Obviously not all the interviews are recent (considering that some of the participants are now dead). What's the sound like I might hear you ask? Well Kats, the obvious 'biggies' don't sound any different to previous re-issues though tracks like Rufus Thomas' *'Bear Cat'* sound much brighter to previous re-mastering techniques (I've an old Charly EP of Rufus and it's virtually unlistenable to. Probably dubbed from a very bad 78)

Also as a bonus you get a Vinyl 45 Of Elvis' two acetate pre-Sun records *'My Happiness'* and *'That's When Your Heartaches Begin'*. An indulgence perhaps, but then haven't we all spent money on something we didn't really need? (Oi! You at the back shaking his head - get a life mate!)

Cuttin' Some Toons

2.6.1959

Dinah Shore (for Capitol Records) – *'My Funny Valentine'* (with Andre Previn on piano)

3.6.1952

Smiley Lewis (for Imperial) - *'Lilie Mae'* and *'The Bells Are Ringing'* (IMP 5194)

6.6.1956

Wanda Jackson (for Capitol Records) - four songs including *'I Gotta Know'*, *'Half As Good As A Girl'* – it's her first session with Capitol.

9.6.63

Gene McDaniels (for Liberty Records) – *'It's a Lonely Lonely Town Without You'* and *'False Friends'* (Liberty 55597)

7.6.1943

Frank Sinatra (for Columbia Records) - *'Close To You'* (Frankie's first session for the label)

7.6.1958 (unconfirmed) 1

Chuck Berry (for Chess Records) - *'Memphis Tennessee'* and *'Sweet Little Rock'n'Roller'*

8.6.1953

Joe Liggins (for Specialty Records) - *'Whiskey Woman and Loaded Dice'* and *'The Big Dipper'*.

9/10.6.1970

Charlie Rich (for Epic Records) - *'Big Boss Man'*, *'Memphis and Arkansas Bridge'*, *'I Can't Even Drink It Away'* and *'Have a Heart'*.

10.6.1960

Faron Young (for Capitol Records) - *'There's Not Any Like You Left'* and *'Is She All You Thought She'd Be'* (Capitol f4410)

13.9.1969

Jerry Lee Lewis and Linda Gail Lewis (for Smash Records) – *'Roll Over Beethoven'*, *'Secret Places'*, *'Crying Time'* and *'Gotta Travel On'*.

14.6.1950

Hank Williams (for MGM Records) – ‘They’ll Never Take Her Love From Me’ and an un-issued performance of ‘Honky Tonk Blues’.

17.6.1959

Porter Wagoner (for RCA Records) – ‘Battle Of The Big Horn’ and ‘Our Song’.

19/20.6.1961

Jack Scott (for Capitol Records) – ‘Strange Desire’, ‘Steps 1 & 2’, ‘Fancy Meeting You Here’ and ‘My Dream Came True’.

22.6.1939

Glenn Miller for Bluebird/RCA – ‘Back To Back’ (composed by Irving Berlin)

23.6.1958

Keely Smith (for Capitol Records) – ‘Sweet and Lovely’, ‘I’ll Never Smile Again’

26.6.1946

Louis Jordan (for Decca Records) – ‘Let The Good Times Roll’ and ‘Ain’t Nobody Here But Us Chickens’

26.6.1958

Chuck Willis (for Okeh Records) – ‘Wrong Lake To Catch A Fish’, ‘My Story’ and ‘Take It Like a Man’

26.6.1959

Jerry Lee Lewis (for SUN Records) – ‘I’m The Guilty One’.

26.6.1962

Marty Robbins (for Columbia Records) – ‘Ruby Ann’ and ‘Little Rich Girl’

27.6.1957

Webb Pierce (for Decca Records) – ‘Don’t Do It Darlin’ and ‘New Pan Handle Rag’.

27.6.1962

Carl Perkins (for Columbia Records) – ‘Hambone’ and ‘Sister Twister’ (Columbia 42513)

The Funkster



Waxo Wilko's Jit Bits

An Education for Doctor Dale Beer in history

If you doubt the importance of beer in history read on...

It was the accepted practice in Babylonia 4,000 years ago that for a month after the wedding, the bride's father would supply his son-in-law with all the mead he could drink. Mead is a honey beer, and because their calendar was lunar based, this period was called the "honey month" or what we know today as the "honeymoon."



Before thermometers were invented, brewers would dip a thumb or finger into the mix to find the right temperature for adding yeast. Too cold, and the yeast wouldn't grow. Too hot, and the yeast would die. This thumb in the beer is where we get the phrase "rule of thumb."



In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts. So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them to mind their own pints and quarts and settle

down. It's where we get the phrase "mind your P's and Q's."

Beer was the reason the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock. It's clear from the Mayflower's log that the crew didn't want to waste beer looking for a better site. The log goes on to state that the passengers "were hasted ashore and made to drink water that the seamen might have the more beer."

After consuming a bucket or two of vibrant brew they called aul, or ale, the Vikings would head fearlessly into battle often without armour or even shirts. In fact, the term "berserk" means "bare shirt" in Norse, and eventually took on the meaning of their wild battles.

In 1740 Admiral Vernon of the British fleet decided to water down the navy's rum. Needless to say, the sailors weren't too pleased and called Admiral Vernon "Old Grog" after the stiff wool grogan coats he wore. The term "grog" soon began to mean the watered down drink itself. When you were drunk on this grog, you were "groggy."

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim or handle of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.

Now Dr. Dale can appreciate the importance of **BEER** throughout history...

Tony Wilkinson



This is a nice little obituary via Billy Vera from Tuesday, 7th May 2002.

Otis Blackwell died last night in Nashville. He was 70 years old and was pronounced dead on arrival at Saint Thomas Hospital of an apparent

heart attack. Born in Brooklyn, Blackwell was a classmate of Bert Keyes at Boys' High, where Keyes served as concertmaster of the school orchestra. Otis did not graduate. Credited with such Elvis copyrights as "Don't Be Cruel," "All Shook Up" and "Return To Sender," as well as Rock'n'Roll classics like "Great Balls Of Fire," "Handy Man" and "Fever," Blackwell was stereotypically fiscally irresponsible, squandering many hundreds of thousands of dollars as soon as the checks came in. It was a standing joke that you could always tell when it was royalty time, as Otis threw a big party where the booze and the women flowed freely.

Under the auspices of music publisher Joe Davis, Blackwell first recorded for RCA Victor in 1952, before moving over to Davis's Jay-Dee label, where he cut "Daddy Rolling Stone," the following year. The record was revived in 1955, thanks to heavy airplay from Alan Freed, a friend of Davis's. In 1954, Otis recorded a session for RCA subsidiary Groove. To augment his \$25 a week advance paid by Davis for his services as a songwriter, Blackwell began peddling his songs to other publishers, usually under various pseudonyms. One of these tunes, "Don't Be Cruel," became a #1 hit by a new artist named Elvis Presley. Otis also recorded tunes he penned, and published with Shalimar Music, for Gale Records, owned by booking agent, Moe Gale.

Another Blackwell tune recorded by Presley at the time, "Paralyzed," had "hit" written all over it, but the label, fearful of possible controversy due to the title, declined to released it as a single. Davis sued Blackwell, along with Shalimar Music and Elvis Presley Music, for \$500,000, claiming the song fell under his exclusive contract with the writer, which had six months to go. The defence claimed that Davis had stopped paying the \$25 per week and had failed to live up to the contractual obligation to record 16 sides per year with Blackwell. Blackwell then was hired, for \$200 a week, as music director on the film "Jamboree," for which he wrote "Cool Baby," sung in the flick by Charlie Gracie, and "Great Balls Of Fire," co-written with Jack Hammer and sung by Jerry Lee Lewis.

Another hit was actor Sal Mineo's "Start Movin' (In My Direction)." He joined Roosevelt Music, the publishing home to black songwriters like Jesse Stone. Under one of his pseudonyms, John Davenport, Blackwell wrote, with Eddie Cooley, the Little Willie John R&B hit, "Fever," successfully revived by Peggy Lee, who revised the lyric herself, without taking credit. Capitol A&R man Dave Cavanaugh, producer of the Lee version, said that, the year of her hit, he had to give Otis a check to fly back to New York from

Las Vegas, where he'd gambled away all his money. Otis then took another \$200 a week job as talent scout for Cub records, where he signed Jimmy Jones and "doctored" a tune previously recorded by Jones's vocal group, the Sparks of Rhythm, on Apollo, "Handy Man," resulting in a giant hit revived in the 70s by James Taylor. In 1957, he recorded unsuccessfully for Atlantic, as he later did for Date, MGM and its Cub subsidiary. His "Daddy Rolling Stone" was revived by Jimmy Ricks and Derek Martin. Blackwell continued to write and reap enormous royalties, which he spent as soon as they came in. He moved to Nashville where he passed away.



Country singer **Orville Couch** died on Sunday night, 26th May 2002 in Dallas, Texas with leukaemia. He wrote and was famous for the song "Hello Trouble" that was a big hit in the early sixties as well as "King For A Day" written by Dr Joe Price. He was buried on Wednesday, May 29th in Combine, Texas. Orville, like so many other country singers, also cut some decent rockabilly and Rock'n'Roll in his early days. He also recorded an album for Vee Jay Records. Rod Pyke via Tony Wilkinson



Songwriter Sharon Sheeley, who as a teenager wrote the 1950s hit "Poor Little Fool," has died of complications following a cerebral haemorrhage. She was 62. Sheeley died at Sherman Oaks Hospital Medical Centre on Friday, May 17th. Sheeley had been hospitalised since she suffered the haemorrhage on May 12th.

Sheeley was the girlfriend of guitarist Eddie Cochran, who sang "Summertime Blues" and "C'mon Everybody." Cochran has a wide following in England and was killed in a car crash here at age 21. Cochran had just completed a tour of England in 1960 when the hired car carrying him to London's Heathrow Airport smashed into a concrete telephone post. Cochran died the next day. Sheeley and fellow rocker Gene Vincent survived the crash.



Some Waxo's Tit Bits for yer:

In an apparent copycat terrorist act, a Polish terrorist, Stanley Bin Ladinsky, hijacked a Goodyear blimp. So far, he has bounced off five buildings.



Marriage is like taking a hot bath. After you've been in it for a while, it starts to cool.

I read recipes the same way I read science fiction. I get to the end and think, "Well, that's not going to happen." Same thing with Dr. Dale's prescriptions.

Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospital dying of nothing.

Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days, no one talks about seeing UFOs like they used to.

According to a recent survey, men say the first thing they notice about a woman is their eyes. And women say the first thing they notice about men is they're a bunch of liars.

Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.

In the 60s, people took acid to make the world weird. Now, the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.

Politics is supposed to be the second oldest profession. I have come to realise it bears a very close resemblance to the first.

There is a theory which states that if ever anybody discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states this has already happened. (*H2G2 as I recall - H*)

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a barbecue?

Doctors can be frustrating. You wait a month-and-a-half for an appointment, and he says, "I wish you'd come to me sooner."

You read about all these terrorists. Most of them came here legally; but they hang around on these expired visas, some for as long as 10-15 years. Now, compare that to Blockbuster: you're two days late with a video and these people are all over you! Let's put Blockbuster (possibly aided by Dr.Dale) in charge of immigration

Waxo Wilko



The next gang meet up will be Friday 28th June, at the **Uxbridge Arms, Uxbridge Street, Notting Hill Gate**, from 18:45 hours onwards. Depart for a meal at Geales Fish Restaurant at approx. 20:20.

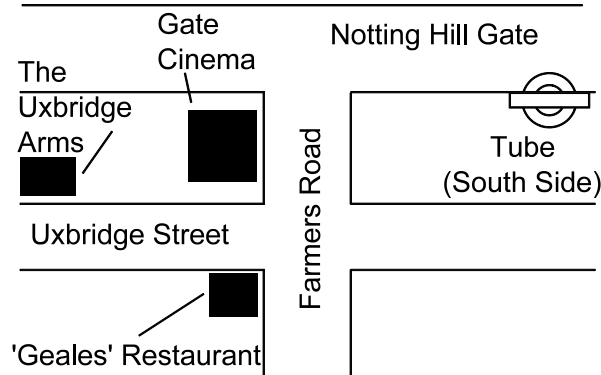
This month we will be doing it a little

differently, transferring our custom to the bohemian surrounds of Notting Hill. I have called into the Uxbridge Arms, a friendly cosmopolitan local hostelry, and explained to the landlady that, for many years, this bunch of eccentric bluesters, Rock'n'Rollers and soulies have been meeting up on the last Friday of each month. Strangely, she is looking forward to meeting us all on the 28th.

Geales Fish Restaurant is booked for up to 14 people although, such is the interest in the rendezvous, there is a strong likelihood of our numbers being swelled in excess of 20. If that should be the case, Geales have offered us a private room upstairs. I therefore respectfully request that, should you not be able to attend for whatever reason, can you please let me know about three days before (the 25th)

as Geales get very busy and they insist they are made aware of the numbers beforehand.

Both the pub and the restaurant are situated in a quiet side street away from the hustle and bustle of the main drag. Should you all be happy with the venue and wish to return, there is also a Thai, Greek and Italian restaurant within a minute's walking distance of the pub. I look forward to seeing you all on the 28th.



Exit Notting Hill Gate, south side only, walk approximately fifty metres (or yards), turn left by the Gate Cinema into Farmer Street and then turn right after 20 metres into Uxbridge Street. The restaurant is on the corner and the pub is about 120 metres down on the right.

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Quiz Answers

1. Dan Penn/Spooner Oldham
2. Artie White
3. Zoot Money's Big Roll Band
4. Son House
5. Robert Cray
6. Koko Taylor
7. Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers
8. Matt Lucas
9. British Blues formerly Blueprint
10. Jeff Brittain

Rating:

- 7 – 10 You've been looking over my shoulder
3 – 6 You're hip
0 – 2 See you at the Wigmore Hall



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Blues Prayer – Ken Major

Quiz – Tony Philibert

Marffa's Muffins – Matt Slade

The Funkster – The Funkster

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Remember – you're only young twice

Keith Woods