

Introduction

In 1970 the Beach Boys sang:

“Your doctor knows it keeps you calm, your preacher adds it to his psalms, so add some music to your day.”¹

Music pervades much of daily life: we may listen selectively, that is pro-actively choose what to listen to on vinyl, CD etc., or simply put the radio on and go along with whatever is played for us. Tastes are greatly diverse and, whilst differences of opinion abound, there should be no ‘high ground’ as to whether one genre has more merit than any other. There are genres of music that have always been classed as somewhat specialist, such as folk and jazz. There is music which has traditionally been tagged as ‘highbrow’ such as opera and classical. There is music unique to our churches and mosques and unique to cultures and countries other than the UK.

The Oxford Dictionary defines popular music as:

“Music appealing to the popular taste, including rock and pop and also soul, reggae, rap, and dance music.”²

1. Fifties Britain

Fifties Britain was still a very dour and austere place to live in, and change would not happen overnight. Shawn Levy (2002) states:

“Grey. The air, the buildings, the clothing, the faces, the mood. Britain in the mid-1950s was everything it had been for decades...”³

As the fifties progressed harder-edged popular music such as Rock & Roll began to supplant ‘Crooners’ like Bing Crosby and ‘fluffier’ hit songs like “She Wears Red Feathers And A Huly-Huly Skirt” and “Runnin' Bear Loved Little White Dove”. Informed by America, something stirred in the collective UK soul. Weary of rationing and the adage that life is to be tolerated, not enjoyed; Teddy Boys and other malcontents began to poke their heads above the wartime rubble. In the classic rebellious youth film ‘The Wild One’, Mildred asks James Dean’s character: “Hey, Johnny, what are you rebelling against?” To which Johnny nonchalantly replies: “What've you got?”⁴

Restraunter Alvaro Maccioni quoted by Levy (2002):

“The new century started in 1960. After that, it’s only been perfecting what we started.”⁵

Writing in 2003, Barry Miles, Sixties underground and countercultural guru:

“The sixties began in black and white and ended in colour. The Beatles were a black-and-white band; they dressed that way... ... television was a black and white

experience as well. But late in the decade came an explosion of colour: the hippies in their velvet and lace, psychedelia... posters so drenched in colour that they were unreadable. But for most of the sixties you had to make the colours in your own head.”⁶

Miles describes British life as “drab” and speaks of “a society as regimented as any East European Police state. Everything was designed to get people to work...”

Miles echoes the feelings of many:

“We wanted to change all that. then would come the great experiment of deciding how to live.”⁷

And, in 1963, no lesser person than the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, alerted everyone to the pressing need to change the country - from a nation still stuck in the last century to a modern and forward-looking land of creativity. Of course, Wilson wasn't specifically referring to 'music', but many of the changes British society and culture would go through had a direct bearing on the upcoming generation and how they lived their lives.

Sandbrook (2006) quotes Wilson:

“But the revolution cannot become a reality unless we are prepared to make far-reaching changes in economic and social attitudes which permeate our whole system of society. The Britain that is going to be forged in the white heat of this revolution will be no place for restrictive practices or for outdated methods...”⁸

Brian Clark:

“I was born in Jessop's Hospital, Sheffield and spent my first 21 years living in a terraced house at the top of Woodseats Road. My father was a keen photographer, so it's possible that looking back through the family album has a direct bearing on my memories - my recollections of growing up in the 1950's are shaded black, white and grey.

The men and women I saw walking about Woodseats were almost exclusively clothed in the darker shades. Maybe the smoke billowing endlessly from chimneys tainted not only the physical structures of the city but the imagination of its inhabitants also.”

Britain had made great sacrifices to defeat the fascists in World War 2 and emerged severely battered and bruised. Rationing ended in July 1954 but this didn't magically increase choice and affordability. Occasionally, in a comic book, on TV or in a film, you'd get a glimpse of the colours and razzamatazz of America, but rather than Drive-by Movies and Hamburger joints, for entertainment we had the local clubs, the local fleapit cinema and, if you were really ahead of the game, a television set.

With cash you could also buy a car, a fridge and have a telephone installed. With cash, you could also have an inside toilet. No running across the dark yard to light a candle: in winter snow blowing under the ill-fitting door. Squares of newspapers clipped to the back of the door and then finding the cistern frozen up and unflushable.

I think 'we' were happy, but then, at that time, we knew of very little else. The better-off sections of society may well have felt the warm glow of 'colour' in their lives – off different ways to be entertained – but not yet in Woodseats!

Sunday Night at the London Palladium was about as glamorous as it got, but then someone let the genie out of the bottle!"

Carol Higgins moved to Bracknell New Town (Berkshire) in the late 1950s. She found that:

"...there wasn't a thriving music scene..."

2. And How To Escape It

However, rather than the performer themselves, it was the 'consumers' (of records, tickets for venues, clothes etc.) who hastened the changes to many aspects of society.

Sandbrook (2006) has it:

"The real motor behind the social and cultural changes of the sixties was the steady growth of average weekly earnings, which rose by a staggering 130 per cent between 1955 and 1969."⁹

Bray (2014) adds:

"In 1965 the percentage of people unemployed stood around 1.5 per cent. In other words, if you wanted a job, you had one."¹⁰

Sandbrook (2006) again:

"For ordinary consumers, all of this meant not only more money in their pockets but fundamental changes in their way of life."¹¹

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Music has always been a great leveller. A young man born in a tenement in Hoboken, New York could go on to achieve massive fame and fortune. So could his friend, a black Jew with only one eye. Of course, Frank Sinatra and Sammy Davis Junior were exceptionally gifted individuals, whose abundance of talent helped to take them into the world of 'international celebrity'.

Likewise, in the UK, entertainers like Tommy Steele, Bert Weedon, Shirley Bassey and Alma Cogan were all from relatively humble origins, and music (or sport, or the army) offered a way out of whatever menial job your particular area was renowned for.

However, the late 1950s UK music scene was tightly controlled by both the BBC and a handful of managers/agents who maintained a tight grip on their performers (rumour would say - perhaps in more ways than one)! So, Harry Webb became Cliff Richard and Ronald Wycherley was Billy Fury. This sort of manager/performer subservience would not be seen again until the millennium and the appearance of Simon Cowell and his ilk.

Nevertheless, there was some great music produced in the fifties. Bill Haley had the recipe if not the persona. Rock and Rollers like Eddie Cochran, Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Little Richard and a few others knew the score. On the other side of the coin, Sinatra and Tony Bennett charmed generations with their melody, wit and finesse.

It was all ladled into the big boiling pot of pop music where an act was only as successful as the latest single, and longevity was nothing more contrived than having hit after hit. By the late fifties there were but a few 'keepers of the flame' – the likes of Roy Orbison and Del Shannon - waiting for change.

Stephanie Dixon was born and brought up a Catholic in the 1950's, when:

“Everything was in Latin. English was introduced in the 1960's and this is what brought about various changes. I must say I did enjoy singing some of the Latin texts and still do when given the opportunity. The modern English settings are not a patch on the old ones in my opinion, and I know I am not alone. Some of the changes and some of the modern hymns were welcomed and long overdue.”

Stephanie has:

“... always sung - earliest memory is aged four singing loudly in Church, hopefully in tune!

## 2.1 Going Out – The Youth Club

One of the places where the fledgling 'young generation' could go – mostly in urban areas - was 'the Youth Club'. As 'youth culture' became less impressed by traditional youth activities (which, by and large, mirrored adult activities) youth clubs began to spring up – often connected with religious establishments:

“to provide young people with activities designed to keep them off the streets and out of trouble...”<sup>12</sup>



*Left: Double Six Youth Club, Scarsdale Road/Chesterfield Road, Woodseats. Right: Gaumont Cinema, Sheffield centre.*

However, this was something of a double-edged sword as many of the activities that ‘youth’ wished to be involved in (often involving music and the opposite sex) were just the sort of thing that the clubs were set up to counter in the first place!

Monica Frith recalls:

“My early association with music began back in the late 50's when my local Youth Club - Dobcroft Road - put on regular 'dances' with all the well known Sheffield bands e.g. Jimmy Crawford, Dave Berry, Vance Arnold (aka Joe Cocker) etc”

## 2.2 Going Out – Music in Clubs, Cinemas & Other Venues

Many cinemas had Saturday morning matinees, sometimes featuring only films, sometimes including live, popular music.

Monica Frith again:

“... the real starting point for most Sheffield rock'n'rollers in the late fifties was the Saturday morning Teenage Shows at the Gaumont Cinema... which began in late 1959 and attracted audiences of up to 1,600 teenagers.”<sup>13</sup>

Monica Frith’s local group The Vulcans were regular performers at the Saturday morning sessions at the Gaumont Cinema:

“... the singer later becoming my boyfriend/husband (now ex). As the years progressed he was the drummer in the Cherokees, a well known group playing Beach Boys and 4 Seasons stuff around the local pubs and clubs.”

Roland Andersdon

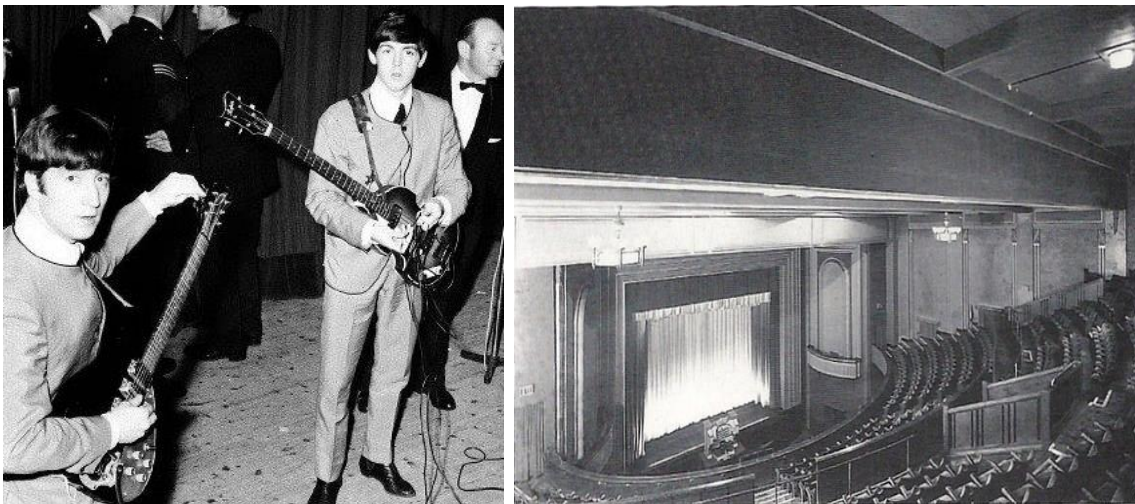
“I remember going to the Carlton Club on Gleadless Road when I was a young lad with my Mam and Dad what with the bingo and some act doing a turn I was put off for life thank God there was some proper pubs to go to when I was a teenager.”

Jane Keeton:

“The venue for the music tours in Mansfield was the Granada cinema. I think we got the same bands that you had at the City Hall during the sixties, which included a combination of popular British and American bands including the Stones. So exciting!”

In Sheffield, the City Hall was the main arena for hearing the bigger ‘stars’! Monica Frith and her husband went to:

“... lots of concerts at the City Hall - Joe [Cocker] being our favourite. I also saw the Beatles in 1963 fourth on the bill of the Helen Shapiro Tour!”



*Left: The Beatles at Sheffield City Hall, 2 November 1963. Right: The Granada Cinema stage, Mansfield*

For Monica going to concerts at the City Hall and the Arena has continued to the present day, Paul Carrack being the most recent.

At this time the acts at venues like the Sheffield City Hall often did two shows per night. For Jude Warrender it was:

“... always the first show; [I was] not allowed to go to second House – too late for my mum’s liking. ... mum was tired and had bad arthritis, so she didn’t like waiting up for me.”

On Saturday Jude had to be home by 10.30pm, and she wasn't allowed to go out during the week. Later, her curfew was extended to 11pm. For the occasional 'break with the rules', Jude stayed at her friend's on Attercliffe Common:

"They had a toy shop, open late on Saturday... so her parents stayed up... chatting etc. My mum thought she - her friend - had corrupted me, but I was quite capable of 'corrupting' myself."

The bands Jude saw at the City Hall were a veritable cross-section of the UK pop charts - Freddie and the Dreamers, The Searchers, The Beatles, Roy Orbison, Herman's Hermits, Petula Clark, The Kinks and Gerry and the Pacemakers and Frank Ifield.

"Their records were in the charts, they were exciting and fun."

Jude was: "I was part of the whole total screaming mob, I regret to say!"

Jude saw Billy Fury at the Old Gaumont theatre:

"... with shimmering pink satin ruche curtains."

She also saw local bands on at Dobcroft Road Youth Club and:

"... lots of churches [that] had Saturday Night dances – for example, St. Christopher's at Shiregreen [and] St James at Norton."

### **Interlude: Other Genres - Trad Jazz**

The Cushion Foot Stompers 1960/61

John Dixon recalls:

"We were a six-piece Traditional Jazz Band consisting of cornet, trombone, clarinet, banjo and percussion [with] myself on E<sup>b</sup> Tuba. Our inspiration was the Chris Barber Band whose style and repertoire we tried to follow, though gradually we embraced pieces made popular by others such as Acker Bilk, Monty Sunshine and Kenny Ball. We began under the name of the College Jazzmen during our last couple of years at school and played at school functions, including the pinnacle of the social calendar, the annual Perfects' Dance."

"My tuba was acquired from a junk shop for £5, and dates from 1904. It still works, just!"

Their repertoire included: "... Bourbon Street Parade which was our signature tune until replaced by Cushion Foot Stomp. Other favourites were When the Saints Go Marching In, Chimes Blues, Didn't He Ramble & Tiger Rag."

“Our fame began to spread... and we were invited to play at youth club, church dances and other social gatherings. The usual fee was 10 shillings, shared by the six of us.”

“As we neared the end of our school careers we decided to become more adventurous... [and] changed our name to the Cushion Foot Stompers.”

“Our rehearsal venue, which was originally the school Art Room, became the Concert Room of the Windsor Hotel on the Wybourn Estate.”

“We were now invited to play at a number of pubs and clubs across the city, including the Windsor itself. Those who are familiar with Sheffield in the 60’s will realise that this was not for the faint hearted.”

“The peak of our career was to be booked as the Christmas act at the ‘Eagle & Child’ pub in Wombwell. Shortly afterwards, we went our separate ways...”

However, the Cushion Foot Stompers reunited in the 1990s to celebrate the career of one of the original members: “... now a Parish Priest” of some 25 years!

### **3. The Birth of the Beat (Stirrings in the Suburbs)**

Almost as if from out of nowhere, there appeared four Liverpool scallywags known as The Beatles. With allies like Brian Epstein (their manager) and George Martin (their record producer) they took control of the British music scene and well and truly shook it up, and changed the face of popular music. They were talented songwriters whose music was sometimes raw, sometimes sweet. They had a sharp dress sense and they defined a whole new approach to ‘stardom’

In their wake came other ‘Merseybeat’ bands like The Searchers and Gerry & The Pacemakers. And there were bands from all over the country – The Hollies (Manchester); The Animals (Newcastle); and The Dave Clark Five from London. Another London band would go on to become The Beatles closest ‘rivals’ and, to the ‘establishment’, the epitome of disaffected youth. Welcome the Rolling Stones!

These groups largely consisted of ‘ordinary boys from down the street’, and their success in the music industry inspired many others to pick up instruments.

In the beat group era Sheffield had its own local heroes like Dave Berry and Joe Cocker.





*Left: Joe Cocker. Centre: Dave Berry (far right) & The Cruisers with Sheffield guitar legend Frank White (second left. Right: Mersey Beat, a Liverpool music publication which also came to feature bands from Manchester, Sheffield etc.*

Bill Gray lived near Weston Park, and then at Walkley [both in Sheffield]. He went to Central Tech between 1959 and 1963 and was encouraged by his music teacher to learn guitar, which he did “in 1960, aged 15”.

His band began doing gigs when he was 16 – the first being in a dance studio on Infirmity Road. They started doing Shadows and Ventures instrumentals, and then graduated onto American chart music such as Four Seasons material as they had a vocalist who could sing falsetto.

Bill continued to play in bands “through the 1960s and into the 70s” in the Working Men’s Clubs etc.

Jenny Barber was still at school when she started listening to the Beatles. She went dancing in the Church Hall at Crosspool. Her favourite records of the time were Helen Shapiro’s “Walking Back To Happiness” and “Moon River”.

Carol Higgins:

“We more or less listened to what was in the Top 20 charts with artists like Helen Shapiro and Lulu, and I particularly liked Aretha Franklin. When The Beatles burst onto the scene it was the most exciting era because it was a type of music we hadn’t heard before and it drew on so many different influences.”

Jane Keeton:

“Like many others I became a keen Beatles fan when they first came on to the music scene and saw them live in 1962 and 1963, when they were not well known, and, in fact, Paul McCartney wandered around Mansfield unmolested until he came to the stage door and spoke to a few of us gathered there! I have all four of their autographs and quite a large collection of the Beatles Monthly magazine (a true fan!).

Jude Warrender (nee Judith Hancock) was born in 1950. She lived on Page Hall Road, in the Grimesthorpe district of Sheffield. Jude passed the 11plus exam:

“... after being drilled to death for it, but I lapped it up, and went to Abbeydale Girls Grammar School...”

Jude saw this as:

“... [a] passport to wider horizons out of mediocrity and a wider circle of girls from all over Sheffield.”

Jude went to local church dances, to the City Hall and the Cutlers Hall every weekend.

Jane Keeton:

“During the early sixties I went to see live music firstly at the 'Hop' at the local church hall in Sutton-in-Ashfield then as a keen follower of the Ashes band in Mansfield. At this time, all the bands I saw were local bands usually doing covers.”

Denise West describes herself as: “a typical ‘Baby Boomer’, born in 1945. Denise had “the good fortune of living adjacent to Tasker Road, Crookes, Sheffield” - a neighbour of the ‘Cocker’ family and a “street pal” of Joe.

Denise remembers:

“In the early days after school, he could be found sitting on his front wall with an old washboard between his knees and Madge’s ( his Mum’s ) thimbles on his fingers strumming away at Lonnie Donegan’s skiffle classics like “ My Old Man’s a Dustman “ or “ Rock Island Line “. Even then his voice was raspy as if it had been coated with iron filings. We used to gather round nervously to listen and he would sometimes send one of the younger ones to Foers corner shop for some sweets or an ice lolly to lubricate this throat.”

She has fond memories of the nascent rock singer:

“... seeing him from our front room window walking up Tasker Road in his Central Tech’ school uniform with a satchel on his back, or later in his East Midlands Gas Board gear and gas fitter’s tool bag”

Denise speaks about how down to earth and considerate Joe was:

“Joe was a very kind bloke who always cared about his home town. Even when living in America and at the top of his game, whenever he visited his Mum and Dad you could find him sitting in the Mason’s Arms on Carson Road in a large woolen overcoat and wellington boots downing a pint and enjoying banter with the locals. There was no side to Joe.”

Denise says that she was:

“... greatly influenced by Joe’s musical tastes - she listened to whatever he was listening to, including Ray Charles, the Everley Brothers and Buddy Holly. “

As well as being a close friend, Denise was an avid follower of Joe’s live performances:

“One of the memories I have is a night he was appearing at The Highcliffe Hotel as Vance Arnold and the Avengers. The pub was at the top of a long hill in Greystones - so quite a climb in those non-driving days. The bare wood floors echoed in The Backroom with its walls plastered in old gig posters, the ceiling grained with nicotine stains, it was the perfect arena for Joe. By now he was singing the blues, covers of Chuck Berry and his all time favourite Ray Charles. He had also developed the spasmodic body movements he was to become so well known for.

In those early days he seemed to fight to get his music out and I was often worried he would fall off the stage as he lurched about, trying to avoid the crate of beer at his feet. He always seemed to get good instrumentalists playing with him whatever the band was called at that time and the audience loved him, he had a natural way of addressing them like they were all his mates. They crammed into the concert room and drank in every note, after all he was one of ours.”

In 1968, Joe put together a new line-up of his Grease Band, and they toured the UK in autumn 1968 and the United States in spring 1969.<sup>14</sup> He began to have UK chart hits most notably with the Beatles “A little help, and found fame and fortune in America. Joe’s album ‘With A Little Help From My Friends’ made number 35 on the American charts, eventually going gold. During the tour, Joe played several large festivals, including the Woodstock Festival. Later Joe hooked up with Leon Russell for the ‘Mad Dogs And Englishmen’ tour. Joe became a huge international star. Denise would, on occasions, see him when he came home to visit his Mum and Dad.

“One time after a grueling American tour he was shattered and worn out. There was always a sense that he was at odds with his high-living, rock n roll, drug infused life-style and that he longed to be back in Crookes, hanging around in tee shirts with holes in them, a mop of dark hair falling over his face as he helped his Dad dig their allotment. But inevitably the music always drew him back - it was in his soul.”

But before Joe – and pretty much anyone else – got there, The Beatles ‘took on’ America, and won:

“The [Beatles] triumph in America was especially important. One of the very few... things that old and new England had in common was a sense of awe with regard to the United States... Movies, cars, teen fashion, TV shows, soft drinks, cigarettes, hairstyles, mores: if it was American, it seemed to British palates fresher, hipper, freer and more honest than the home-grown brand.”<sup>15</sup>

Denise last saw Joe in 2002 at the Sheffield City Hall:

“... and as usual it was a great night, the clothes had changed, much more elegant, but the voice was the same. Watching, I suddenly realised what an influence he’d had on my musical life. When friends screamed at Cliff Richards and the Beatles or dreamed of Adam Faith or Billy Fury musically my heart lay across the Atlantic Ocean with Buddy Holly, the Everly Brothers, Ray Charles, and the slow and soulful music of the blues. This was Joe’s legacy to me and for that I thank him.”

#### **4. Radio, Television And Theatre**

##### **4.1 Radio**

###### **The BBC**

Popular music’s popularity owed much to the burgeoning appeal of radio (or the ‘wireless’ as it was still sometimes known).

“From the inception of radio broadcasting, especially of the sort featuring musical content, it can be said that the radio had and still has a large impact on music and popular culture. Before radio, the only way to listen to recorded music was on phonographs and gramophones.”<sup>16</sup>

“To begin to understand the sense of adventure felt by many when barriers (the status quo) started to be pushed over, it’s necessary to take stock of radio as it was in the early sixties, i.e. pretty much as it had been since 1927 when the BBC first came into existence as a public service corporation.”<sup>17</sup>

“The Light Programme was launched on 29 July 1945, replacing the General Forces Programme which had run during the war. It promised a diet of entertaining radio for the civilian listener...”<sup>18</sup>

Looking back now the BBC was clearly a service run by ‘elder statesmen’ who broadcast music that they believed the public should hear. Not all of it was dire – there were several gems in the area of comedy – but the popular music of the BBC was, to a large extent not ‘our’ popular music. A brief look at some of the programmes on offer, and the rather patronising titles alone give the game away.

“Workers Playtime” (1941 -64) - a variety show originally broadcast to boost workers morale during the Second World War.

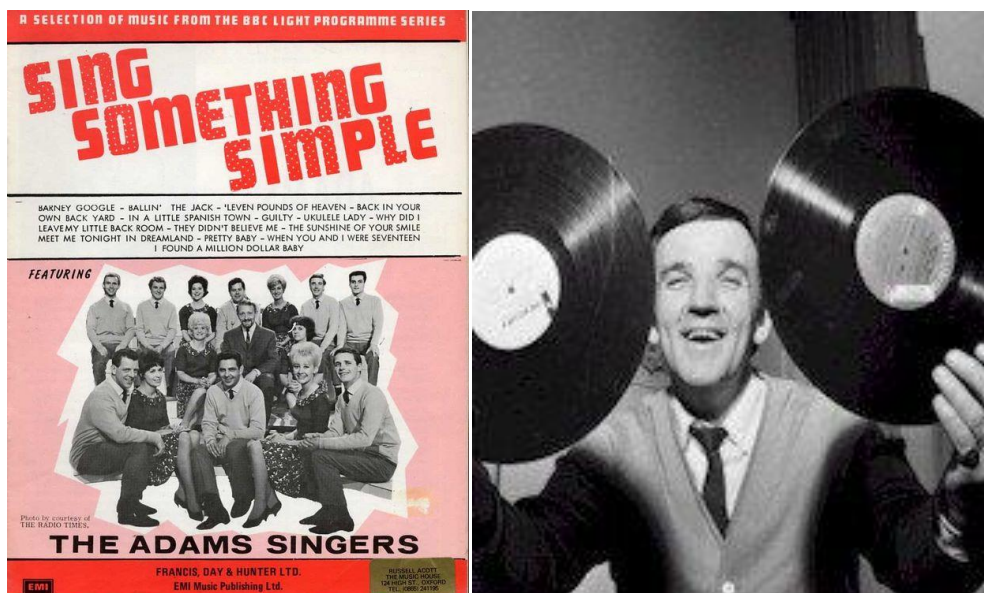
“Music While You Work” (1940- 67) - a live programme broadcast to entertain workers. The show began during wartime. Originally, the show consisted of live music from bands playing brass, dance, military and light music.

“Housewives’ Choice” (1946-67) - a request show that played music that would appeal to housewives at home during the day.

“Children’s Favourites” (1954-67) - requests from children of all ages. It was broadcast on Sunday mornings”<sup>19</sup>

There were occasional bright spots amid the gloom: Saturday Club (1958-69); Easy Beat (1959 -67) and Pick of the Pops (1955-72) on Sundays. Perhaps the most frustrating radio ‘moment’ came every Sunday afternoon as the excitement of ‘Pick of the Pops’ subsided to be replaced with ‘Sing Something Simple’ (1959-2001) which featured melodies from the last seventy years sung by the Cliff Adams Singers.

For a long time, the success in the music industry was reflected in Sheet Music sales – how many copies of a song had been bought by the public to play at home or in a ‘live’ environment. Now the ‘Pop Charts’ – the best selling records as compiled by the BBC and the press – became the real barometer of public taste in music.

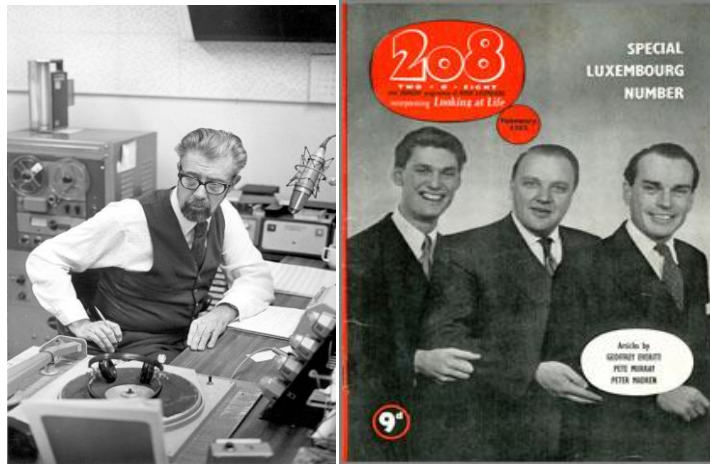


Left: EMI Song-book for music performed on “Sing Something Simple” by the Adams Singers.  
Right: Alan Freeman prepares his “Pick of the Pops”

Until 1967 there were only two alternatives to BBC monopoly

### Radio Luxembourg

“With its English language service, Radio Luxembourg was far more than just a radio station. From its long-wave outset in 1933 to its final shutdown in 1992, Radio Luxembourg was not only the biggest commercial radio station in Europe, it had a formative influence on generations of listeners. ‘The Station of the Stars’, the famous ‘Two-O-Eight’, was the expression of freedom and liberty for a whole generation in Western as well as Eastern Europe, and therefore had a major impact on society, especially in the 1950s and 1960s. It made rock music popular, it was a source of inspiration for many music stars...”<sup>20</sup>



*Left: Inside the Luxemburg studios (presenter unknown) Right: The cover of a Radio Luxembourg Special magazine with British DJ Pete Murray on the left*

Deborah Beetham was not alone in the way she listened:

“... [furtively] under the bedclothes, to Radio Luxembourg”. Her parents thought it was “dangerous” and didn’t sanction it at all.

Lynn Armstrong:

“Radio Luxembourg - with adverts for Tiffin biscuits...”

### **Pirate Radio**

“Britain's first offshore radio station, Radio Caroline, began broadcasting at Easter 1964 from a ship anchored just outside UK territorial waters. She was followed by a host of other radio stations based on boats and marine structures dotted around the coast. These ‘pirates’ rapidly won an enormous and enthusiastic audience.”<sup>21</sup>

“In 1967, concerned at the growing number of pirate stations broadcasting over the UK and the potential interference to foreign radio stations, the British government passed the Marine Broadcasting Offences Act which made it illegal to advertise or supply an offshore radio station from the UK. All the offshore stations off the British coast closed, with the exception of Radio Caroline, which moved its supply operation to the Netherlands where offshore broadcasting had not yet been outlawed.”<sup>22</sup>

The BBC finally wised up and opened their own pop station – Radio One – in September 1967. They signed up many of the DJs who had come to prominence on the pirates.



*Left: The 'Mi Amigo' which was the home of Radio Caroline South from 1964–1967 (photo taken c. 1974). Right: Group photo of the DJs who were to present on the new BBC Radio One station. Many had come from the pirates (1967)*

#### 4.2 Television & Theatre

There were a handful of pop music shows on television and shows in other genres, for example the easy listening melodies on 'The Black And White Minstrel Show'.

The "Six-Five Special" was:

"The BBC's first attempt at a rock and roll programme, an innovation and much imitated... It began immediately after the abolition of the Toddlers' Truce, which had seen television close between 6pm and 7pm so children could be put to bed. Jack Good was the original producer. BBC executives originally wanted a magazine format; however, Good wanted a show with music and lots of movement. The original sets were dispensed with and the empty studio space filled with the milling audience and performers. The BBC interfered with Good's vision of the show by including educational and information elements, which Good wanted to drop, as they diluted the music. The relationship between Good and the BBC became strained, and he resigned in early 1958. The BBC, never keen on the show, took this as vindication and pulled it from the schedules."<sup>23</sup>

"Juke Box Jury was a music panel show which ran on BBC Television between 1 June 1959 and 27 December 1967. The series featured celebrity show business guests on a rotating weekly panel who were asked to judge the hit potential of recent record releases. By 1962 the programme was attracting 12 million viewers weekly on Saturday nights."<sup>24</sup>



*Left: David Jacobs presides over a 'Juke Box Jury'  
Right: Janice Nicholls prepare to "Give It Foive" on 'Thank Your Lucky Stars'*

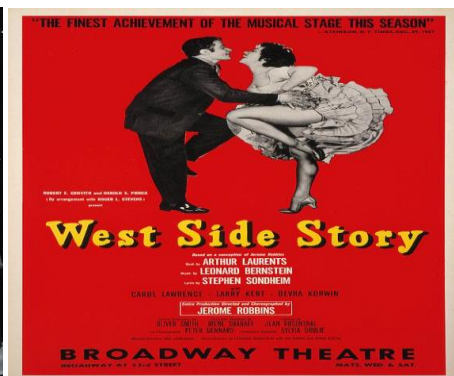
Roland Anderson:

“Thank your lucky stars’ with Brian Matthews and the panellist Janice Nicholls who got a regular spot with her “Oi’ll give it foive”! There was ‘Juke box jury’ which must have had the most boring format in history, but the best ever music show, with ‘The weekend starts here’ was ‘Ready Steady Go’ - what a programme, never bettered. Then there was the Monkees - what a breath of fresh air.”

Every Sunday evening, viewers throughout the UK would gaze at showbiz stars as they mounted the revolving stage at the end of ‘Sunday Night At The London Palladium’ and these artists seemed a million miles away from us mere mortals.

Christine Shepherd says:

“I liked to think I could not be categorised and my tastes were eclectic as I liked e.g. guitar music... and singers like Ricky Nelson as well as later popular music. I also liked show music and ballet music. Variety was good!”



*Left: The revolving stage on Sunday Night at the London Palladium.  
Right: Theatre poster for West Side Story*



## 5. Record Buying

Carol Higgins remembers:

“As records were expensive at the time, we were usually given them as presents or would buy one on a special occasion. Every Christmas me and my two sisters would get a record token from a relative, and we would go to Woolworths and stand in the record booths for hours listening to all the latest releases and thinking we were so cool! The first single I ever bought was ‘The Hippy Hippy Shake’ by the Swinging Blue Jeans.”

Jude Warrender bought singles - 45rpm records - from Cann’s in Chapel Walk (where the Sanctuary shop is now). Jude remembers:

“I think a single was 3/6p. Then there were EPs and LPs.”

Potential customers could hear records before they made a purchase. This was done using a row of booths that ran down a side wall. The booths were lined with that board with holes in and a wooden bench seat. They were very discreetly situated and were also used for mild romantic trysts – a young couple would ask to hear some album and disappear into the booth with a glint in their eyes!

Jude Warrender: recalls:

“It was quite OK to ask to listen to a disc and not buy it.”

Jude Warrender had little money to buy many records:

“... but we knew them off by heart because of Alan Freeman’s Radio Top ten programme on the radio (or rather - wireless!) and from Radio Luxembourg at night under the sheets.”

Brian Clark remembers:

“Early in the 1960s my parents bought a transistor radio which I always took in the car on our regular Sunday afternoon outings. Alan Freeman’s ‘Pick Of the Pops’ was essential listening and I was fascinated by the concept of ‘the charts’ and the Top Twenty. Our family newspaper was The Daily Mirror which published a weekly pop chart. One week in 1962 I came across a record called “Love Me Do” by The Beaties – very strange-sounding. Later I realised the group’s name had fallen foul of imprecise printing. However, it was still an unusual song title and, anyway who were these ‘Beaties’?”



*Left: Downstairs at Phillip Cann's Record Shop, Chapel Walk, Sheffield. The Ralph McTell album (bottom left in the rack) suggests this was the early seventies, but the ambience had changed little since the sixties.*

*Right: 45 RPM record bag from Bradley's, Fargate, Sheffield*

### **Interlude - Other Genres - Folk Music**

Although she later developed a liking for traditional music Jude Warrender recalls her opinion of folk in the 60s:

"[It] was mostly Aran sweaters and accordions, and what I thought of as 'cheesy' and very 'conventional' songs compared with rock and pop."

But away from the commercial aspect of 'pop', Sue Beardon found enlightenment:

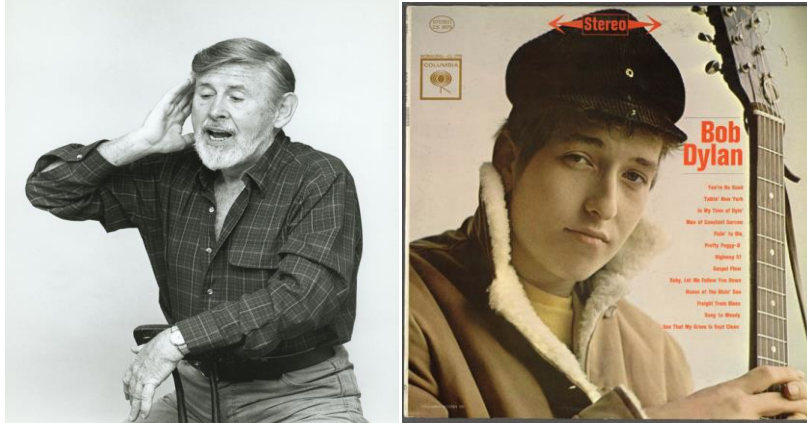
"1962 - a friend came round brandishing an LP record – 'You've got to listen to this,' he said. It was Bob Dylan's first LP and we were all mind-blown."

Jude Warrender first heard Bob Dylan at St. Cuthbert's (Fir Vale) Church Youth Club) and says:

"... it was an instant wake-up call/ knock out."

Jude adds:

"Sadly I didn't see Dylan here in '66. Don't know why - perhaps I was away."



Left: Bastion of the UK folk song revival, Ewan McColl. Right: cover of the first Bob Dylan LP

There was no sudden flick of the switch that turned ‘fifties culture’ into a ‘sixties thing’. In fact the first few years of the new decade were, pretty much, a continuation of what had gone before. Bobby Vee, Brian Hyland and others kept the spirit of the fifties alive, whilst but Roy Orbison and Del Shannon both brought something new. Music continued to be dominated by Americans, and with regards to what was later called ‘the generation gap’

Jude Warrender says:

“My brother liked Jim Reeves, bought his LPs and played them on the radiogram (the height of modernity) and I thought those songs were so middle aged!”

### **Interlude - Other Genres - Ska**

In the early 1960s, ska was the dominant music genre of Jamaica and became popular with the nascent British ‘Mod’ movement.

“Ska evolved in the early ‘60s, when Jamaicans tried to replicate the sound of the New Orleans R&B they heard over their radios. Instead of mimicking the sound of the R&B, the first ska artists developed a distinctive rhythmic and melodic sensibility, which eventually turned into reggae music.”<sup>25</sup>

Ska is characterized by a walking bass line accented with rhythms on the off beat<sup>26</sup>



*Don Drummond and Clement 'Sir Coxson' Dodd in the studio*

The Skatalites were the definitive Jamaican group, who first came together in Kingston in the late 1950s... In 1963 they became the house band at Clement 'Sir Coxson' Dodd's newly opened Studio One at 13 Brentford Road. The group played on every song cut at the studio, backing the greatest singers of the day - Bob Marley & The Wailers, Ken Boothe, Toots and The Maytals - as well as recording some of the finest instrumental music ever made under their own name.<sup>27</sup>

### **Interlude: Other Genres - Surf Music**

John Wragg speaks at length of his love of Surf Music and other instrumental based music:

“My music teacher at school would have been described as ‘square’ and serious, except for one particular class when he allowed each boy to bring his own favourite track for ‘consideration’. The teacher took the records home and then played them with comments the following week. He described one track as the worst example of music he had ever heard. I thought, ‘This could be good’. He played it and I was totally shocked and spellbound. Whatever had hit me in such a major way was like nothing that was permitted at home. After the class I had a desperate chase down the corridor to catch the boy who had brought it. The guy was excited and into this new stuff and from that moment I joined the club.”

John’s teacher had inadvertently pointed him in the direction of a rather unique ‘branch’ of the popular music scene of the sixties:

“What started around then was a rare period in popular music, not repeated since - the popularity of soft-rock instrumentals. That track in the class... the rousing Peter Gunn by Duane Eddy, led [me] to five years of hits and misses by Duane Eddy, The Shadows, The Ventures, The String-a longs, The Spotnicks, the Tornadoes, The Surfaris, The Chantays, The Routers, The Marketts and others.”

John’s first record purchase was The Shadows ‘The savage’ which he:

“... gingerly played to my father. The ceiling did not fall in... “



*Left: From the USA - The Surfaris of 'Wipeout' fame. Right: From the UK – The Tornados, who had a hit record with 'Telstar'.*

### **Interlude: Other Genres - Phil Spector and the Wall of Sound**



*Phil Spector and Veronica Bennett of the Ronettes – soon to be man and wife.*

In the early sixties, American songwriter and record producer Phil Spector developed a unique approach to how a pop record should be by utilising what came to be known as the 'Wall of Sound'. Spector sought:

“...to create an unusually dense orchestral aesthetic that came across well through radios and jukeboxes of the era.”<sup>28</sup>

Spector himself said:

“I was looking for a sound, a sound so strong that if the material was not the greatest, the sound would carry the record.”<sup>29</sup>

“He often used two musicians playing the same instrument – guitars, bass, drums etc. whilst the norm was one of each. He also made use of liberal amounts of echo/reverb to create a full soundscape.”<sup>30</sup>

In 1960, he co-founded Philles Records and became the youngest ever US label owner. He was dubbed 'the tycoon of teen' and, wrote and produced records by his own discoveries like the Ronettes and the Crystals. However, his twin peaks were two magnificent pop anthems: "You've Lost That Loving Feeling" by the Righteous Brothers (1965) and "River Deep, Mountain High" by Ike & Tina Turner (1966). The latter failed to make much of an impression in the US (although it reached number 3 in the UK charts) and a disillusioned Spector became something of a recluse.

In the late sixties he went on to work with various solo Beatles and was roped in to make something of their "Let It Be" fracas. Later still he was incarcerated for murder.

### **Interlude - Other Genres - James Brown & the beginnings of 'Funk'**



*James Brown & the Famous Flames invent 'funk'*

"Brown began his career as a gospel singer... [before joining] an R&B vocal group... [He came] to national public attention in the late 1950s as a member of the singing group The Famous Flames. Brown built a reputation as a tireless live performer with the Famous Flames as his backing band... His success peaked in the 1960s with the live album 'Live at the Apollo' and hit singles such as 'Papa's Got a Brand New Bag' [and] 'I Got You (I Feel Good)'.<sup>31</sup>

In the late sixties he moved away from his roots to a more rhythmic based music, later labelled 'funk' which:

"de-emphasizes melody and chord progressions and focuses on a strong rhythmic groove of a bass line... and a drum part."<sup>32</sup>

~~~End of Part One~~~

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