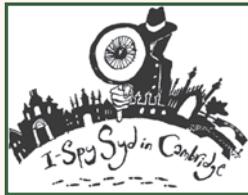




**3rd**  
expanded  
edition

# The Music Scene of 1960s Cambridge

## Walking Tour, Venues and Bands



researched and compiled by **Warren Dosanjh**

editing and layout by **Mick Brown**

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# Walking Tours 2009/10



Photos © Mick Brown



*For information on how to book  
a fascinating guided walking  
tour of the 1960s Cambridge  
music scene, please contact:  
**[info@i-spysydincambridge.com](mailto:info@i-spysydincambridge.com)***

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# Introduction

Cambridge developed its own unique music scene during the 1960s. Some local musicians later left and became internationally famous while others, equally talented, chose to remain in the city. This booklet describes the venues, meeting places, the way of life of young people during the 1960s - and some of the bands that entertained them. The story is told by Cambridge residents and musicians who were there in those times and are still here today!

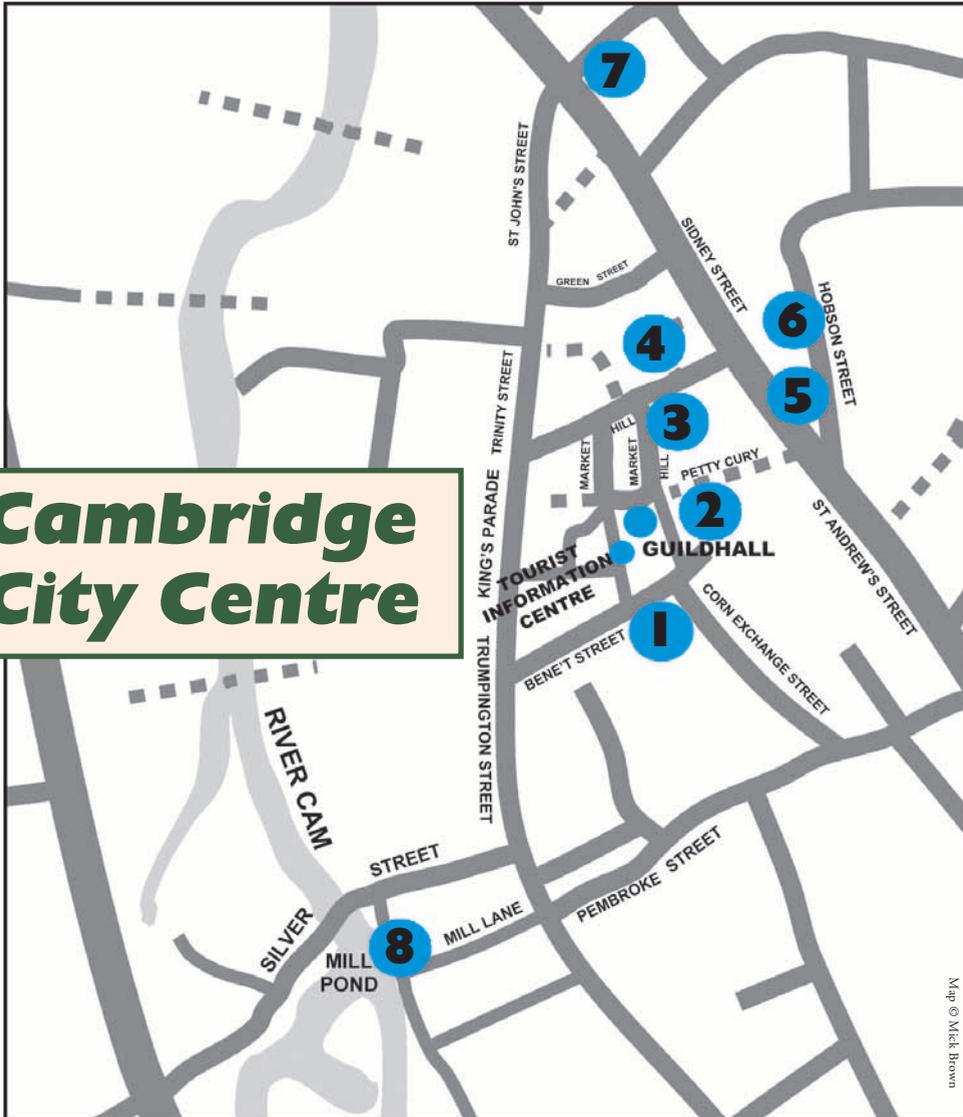
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*Before a night out in the 1960s* Photo © Alan Willis

# The Tour



## Cambridge City Centre

## Main places of interest

- 1** The Corn Exchange  
Red Cow, Masonic Hall
- 2** The YMCA, Alley Club,
- 3** The Victoria Ballroom
- 4** The Criterion
- 5** Millers Music Shop
- 6** The Dorothy Ballroom
- 7** The Union Cellars
- 8** The Mill Pond

*The four places below will not be visited on the tour but extensive information will be given about them both on the tour and on pages 11 - 14 in the booklet:*

- 11** The Cambridgeshire High School for Boys
- 12** The Rex Cinema and Ballroom
- 13** The Cambridge School of Art
- 14** The Regal Cinema

The cover picture shows a 1960s view of Cambridge Market Square from Great St Mary's Church Tower



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# Your Tour Guides



**Warren Dosanjh** was born in Cambridge in 1945, and has lived there for virtually all of his life.

Like Syd Barrett, he attended the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys from 1956 until 1963, when he just walked out! Warren was manager and roadie of **Those Without** from conception until their last gig in August 1965. He is a local businessman and antique dealer and can be contacted on:

[info@i-spysydincambridge.com](mailto:info@i-spysydincambridge.com)



**Stephen Pyle** was born in 1945 and moved to Cambridge with his family in 1957. He attended the Cambridge School of Art from 1962 during which time he was also the drummer of **Those Without**. Stephen has spent the past 30 years gaining a reputation as a world-class scenic sculptor working in glass fibre. His work has included **Phantom of the Opera**, two **Rolling Stones** tours and other commissions that can be seen on:

[www.stephenpylestudio.com](http://www.stephenpylestudio.com)



**Dave Parker** was born in Cambridge in 1944, where he still lives with his wife Val. He joined the **Redcaps** band in 1961 as vocalist. In 1962 they released a record on the Decca label: *Stormy Evening/ Blue Eyes and Golden Hair*, and then became known as '**Dean**' **Parker and the Redcaps**.

Dave's grandfather, 'Happy' Tom Parker performed in early Music Hall with Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel, often going to parties held on Fred Karno's boat 'The Astoria' now owned by David Gilmour. Having known David Gilmour since the early 60s, Dave has had access (including backstage) to many **Pink Floyd** gigs both here and in the USA. He still writes songs and plays the guitar.

# The Corn Exchange and Red Cow

## 60s Photo Gallery



*Right: the poster for the 27 January, 1972 gig designed by Gaylene Preston of Hot Grunt*

Photo: David Ellingham



*Main picture: published on 14 January 1972, shows the demolition of much of the City Centre. The Corn Exchange is on the right with the Red Cow opposite. Widespread power cuts were also in force at the time*

Photo © Cambridge Newspapers Ltd

*Manfred Mann (above) and Georgie Fame (right) appeared at the Corn Exchange*

Photos © Jess Applin

The Corn Exchange was built in 1874. Although it had 'terrible railway station-like' acoustics, it became a venue for the public's insatiable appetite for Rock & Roll. The 1960s audience and dancers were not fussy about the sound as long as it was 'different and electrifying'.

The list of bands that appeared in those days is quite impressive: the **Kinks**, **Spencer Davis**, **Gene Vincent**, **Screaming Lord Sutch**, the **Pretty Things** and many more. In January 1972 Syd Barrett was in Cambridge jamming with a few friends. They managed to get a gig at the Corn Exchange on 27 January supporting the **Pink Fairies** and **Hawkwind**. They called themselves the **Last Minute Put-Together Boogie Band**.

After that night, Syd, Jack Monck and John Alder (known as 'Twink' after the sachets of hair-perming lotion of

that name thrown at him by girl fans) decided to call their band **Stars**. They then played at the Corn Exchange, first on 24 February supporting MC5, then on the 26th supporting **Nektar**. This was Syd's final gig. According to Gaylene Preston who was at the gig: "Syd played really well for a minute or two then looked at the audience and lost it".

Across Corn Exchange Street was a pub called the Red Cow (now simply The Cow). As well as being a source of draught Merrydown cider (often mixed with Guinness and called Black Velvet), the upstairs room was popular for jazz and blues gigs.



*Above: Brian Foskett's poster for a 1960s gig at the Red Cow*



# 60s Photo Gallery

# The Masonic Hall and The Bun Shop



*Above: the Bun Shop pub  
Right: the Masonic Hall*

Photos: The Cambridgeshire Collection

**T**he Masonic Hall, along the road from the Red Cow, was often hired out for private parties.

In 1964/5 some friends from the Stretham area, near Ely, hired the hall for a small fee for a 60s-style rave.

**Those Without** - Syd Barrett included - were there to play and the hosts brought with them a large quantity of local strawberries to hand out to whoever turned up to the party.

Not surprisingly a strawberry fight broke out with the result that everyone and everywhere was covered with squashed fruit by the end of the evening. Some believe this was the foundation stone for the Strawberry Fairs that started in the 1970s.

Unfortunately the building, a supporter of charitable causes, was destroyed in favour of a multi-storey car park as part of the Lion Yard

redevelopment of the early 1970s.

Gone for ever were the oak-panelled walls and the spectacular ceiling with its celestial display of moons, stars and planets - a fascinating sight for any acid-tripping art student about to embark on the psychedelic era.

Behind the Masonic Hall, in St Andrew's Hill past Frank's Cafe was the popular Bun Shop pub. Shortly before it was ripped away in the redevelopment it was the last call before a trip across nearby Parker's Piece to the Dandelion Cafe on East Road. That was when, in the pitch-black of the 1972 power cuts, the unlit lamp post on the Piece became known as 'Reality Checkpoint'.

*Right: a pint of Guinness and cider in the Bun Shop in 1966*

Photo © Richard 'Greg' Gregory



## The Dolphin

**A**n almost forgotten venue was The Dolphin pub in Coronation Street, off Hills Road past the Catholic Church. Long since demolished, the pub had a crumbling cellar in which Rado Klose and Syd Barrett were seen playing together in 1963/4 possibly with a local pick-up band.

Earlier in the 1960s, a friend of Jess Applin booked some modern jazz groups there for jazz and poetry sessions - a short-lived fad in the city

at the time- attended by future writer David Gale and film-maker Nigel Lesmoir-Gordon. Jess organised Jackson Pollock-style painting sessions in which customers took part.

*Right: the Dolphin Pub*

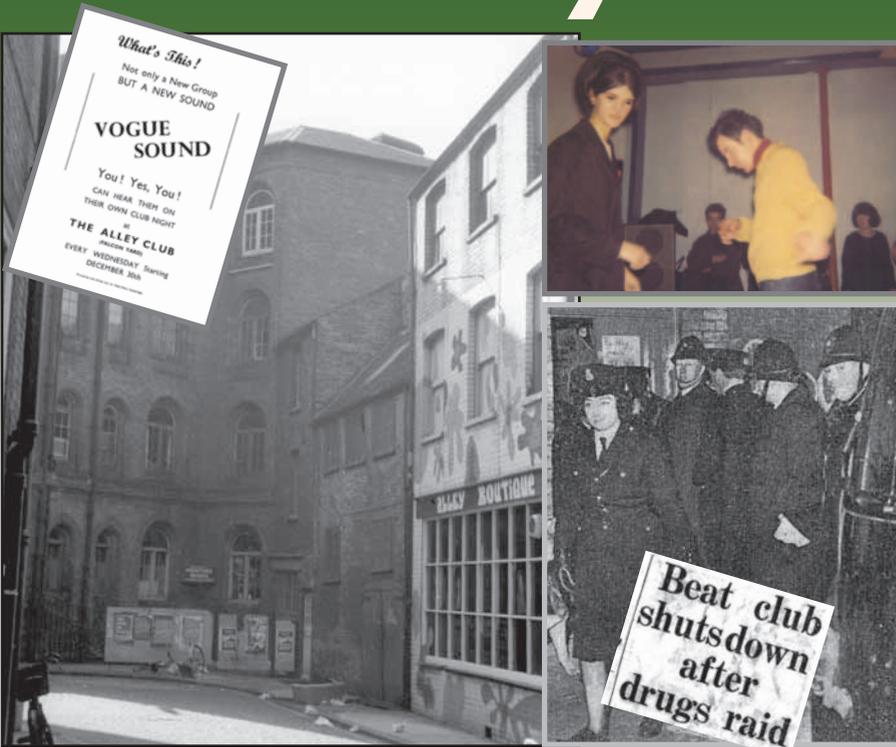
Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection



Gallery photos on this page  
© Jess Applin

# The Alley Club

## 60s Photo Gallery



Above: the Alley Club building is just visible on the left with the Alley Boutique opposite in Falcon Yard

Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection

Right: Press picture of police entering the Alley club

Top left: a leaflet advertising the Alley Club Courtesy Cherrill Richardson

Top right: Barbara Lawrence dances with Pip Carter in the club Photo © Alan Willis

Local booking agent Stuart Dingley seized the opportunity in the late 1960s to develop a disused research laboratory in Falcon Yard.

In partnership with London manager John Smith (his band the **Quiet Five** had just crept into the top 50 with a cover version of **Simon and Garfunkel's** *Homeward Bound*) the building was transformed into the Alley Club. The ground floor became the stage and dance area, the second was a coffee bar and the third floor became the offices of Stuart's variety agency.

As well as local bands, Stuart managed to attract household names to the club: US soul singer/harmonica player, **Little Walter**, **Chris Farlowe** and the **Thunderbirds**, **Donovan** and many others.

Stuart remembers how when

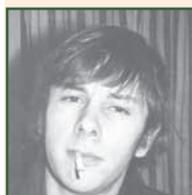
**Donovan's** manager asked for cash on the night and worrying about security, he locked a member of his staff in the upstairs office with the money and forgot to let him out until the end of the evening. "...the poor boy never got to see Donovan whatsoever!" says Stuart.

Some years later the local Drug Squad raided the premises while Stuart was away. The club was closed down and he was charged with allowing the sale and use of illegal drugs on the premises. Stuart won his case and as a result the law concerning property owners' responsibility was changed.

Stuart decided not to reopen the club but instead allowed Ian Burns to expand his nearby boutique business. The ground floor became Alley 2 with the Magic Mushroom club/bar and restaurant above.



## 60s Photo Gallery



# The YMCA

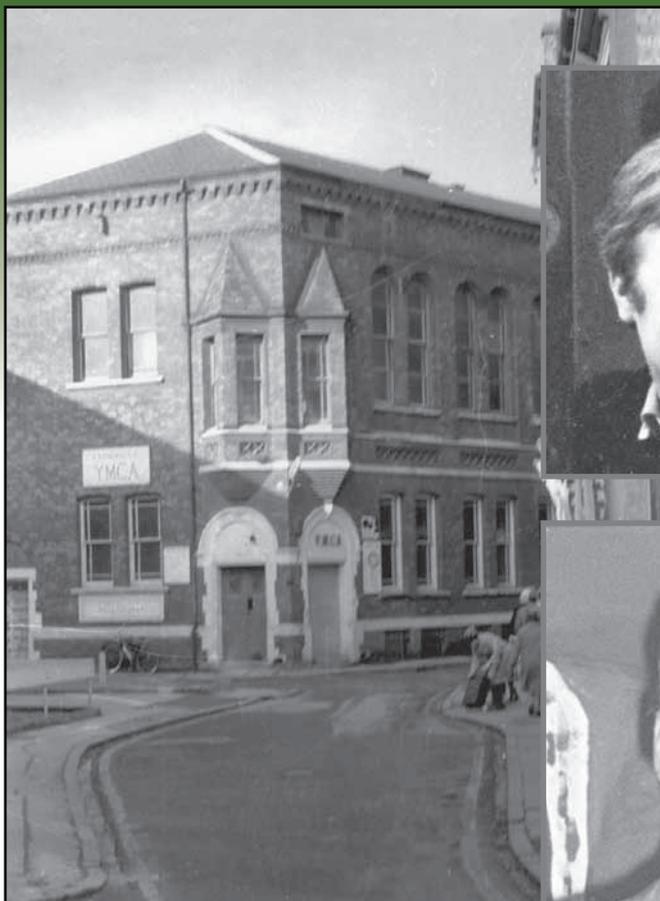


Photo: Cambridgeshire Collection

*Above: the YMCA building where the Riverside Seven played regularly*

*Above right: Brian 'Fred' Foskett in 1966*

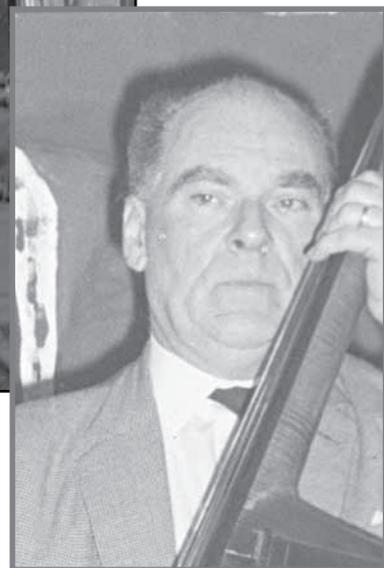
*Right: Sid Barrett, regular bass player with the Riverside Seven*

There is some anecdotal evidence that Roger Barrett was given the nickname 'Sid' while still at school; however, jazz photographer and drummer Brian 'Fred' Foskett says that Roger adopted the name after listening to Sid Barrett, the bass player with the **Riverside Seven**.

"He wanted to hear some jazz so I took him along with me to the YMCA where the **Riverside Seven** was playing. He decided to change the spelling to avoid confusion with the real Sid Barrett.



Photo © Mick Brown



From a publicity photo

Characteristically for that period, Roger was wearing jeans and wellington boots."

The YMCA was then sited in a cobble-stoned labyrinth of varied delights that was demolished at the end of the 1960s to make way for what has been described as a modern 'soulless' shopping arcade.

The area, adjacent to Petty Cury, also contained the affordable Civic Restaurant, the Alley Boutique and a Hennekey's wine tavern.

# The Victoria Ballroom

## 60s Photo Gallery

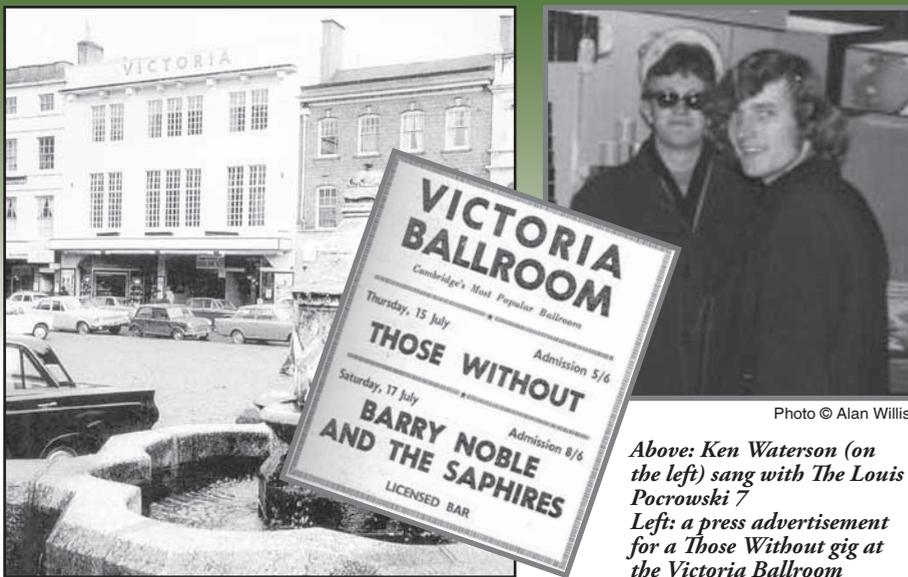


Photo © Viv 'Twig' Brans

Photo © Alan Willis

*Above: Ken Waterson (on the left) sang with The Louis Pocrowski 7  
Left: a press advertisement for a Those Without gig at the Victoria Ballroom*

The Victoria Cinema & Ballroom was situated on the Market Square. It was the second most popular cinema in Cambridge, only surpassing the Regal in showing foreign imports such as *Never On A Sunday* and other avant garde films. On a Sunday lunchtime, when cinemas were obliged to be closed, it succeeded in showing early 'Bollywood' imports to the expanding local Indian Cinema Club.

Facing the cinema, to the left, the popular downstairs pub called the Still & Sugarloaf was reputed to have the longest bar in Cambridge. One manager was known to sing the **Beatles** song *Yellow Submarine* to his wife if she was dressed in yellow.

The music scene was unlike the other venues. It didn't book up-and-coming bands from outside of Cambridge, but catered for the swelling numbers of foreign language students and a more sophisticated local youth, who were wary of the more aggressive Rock &

Roll dance halls, and appreciated the more melodic and girl-friendly music.

Two of the most popular bands were **Jokers Wild**, who played fortnightly at 'Les Jeux Interdits' and the **Louis Pocrowski 7**, who alternated with them, at 'Club Cavagnol'. Both were names designed to be unappealing to the average local yob!

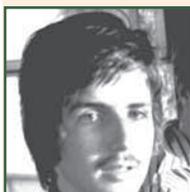


Photo © Cherrill Richardson

*Above: the Market Square fountain was a popular meeting place between the then strict pub opening hours*



## 60s Photo Gallery



# The Criterion



Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection

**T**he Criterion pub (the 'Cri') was in Market Passage, about 30 metres from the Arts Cinema.

The pub was used after WW2 by American GIs who were stationed on nearby airbases. This custom carried on into the early 1960s and often resulted in arguments and fights between GIs and the young local male population.

American Military Police were regularly in place in Market Street on Friday and Saturday nights.

After the Teddy Boy era, the Cri became the social centre of a freer young vibrant society. The lounge bar at the front was reserved for older people with their own favourite juke box records by the likes of **Frank Sinatra**, **Bing Crosby** and **Russ Conway** while younger people used the large back bar managed by Ken Hart Snr. Ken was helped by Lennie and his 'controller' - a police baton.

A sign often seen in the pub on a Saturday lunchtime stated: 'Beer today will be 1s 6d (7.5p) a pint until the

damage caused last night is paid for! Then it will go back to 1s 3d'.

The traditional 'Town versus Gown' class war was disappearing in the 1960s and students who did visit the pub daringly wore 'donkey jackets' rather than college gowns. The pub, however, had its own form of social distinction: when the lounge bar parrot started swearing at customers, the young people in the back bar were often accused of teaching it foul language.

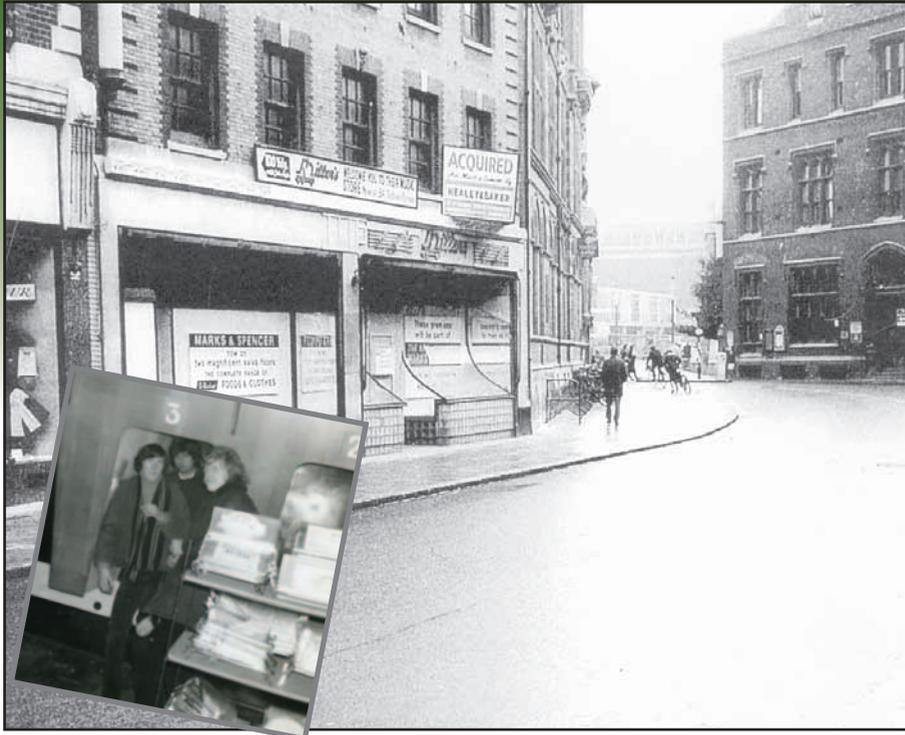


Photo © Mick Brown

*Above: around the corner in Green Street, The Volunteer pub was another favourite meeting place before a night out*

# Millers Music Shop

## 60s Photo Gallery



*Main photo: the curved window allowed a view down to the record department* Photo © Viv 'Twig' Brans  
*Inset: the popular listening booths at Millers Music Shop* Photo © Alan Willis

**M**illers Music Shop was on Sidney Street, opposite Boots the Chemists. Looking across the road, it would have been to the right of what is now Marks & Spencers.

The ground floor of the shop sold televisions and radiograms, the first floor sold musical instruments and the basement was for listening to - and buying - records.

Warren says: "On Saturday morning, everyone would meet downstairs as the first stop of the weekend. We would crowd into open standing booths to hear the latest pop records, occasionally even buying one!"

John Pole' Taylor remembers winning a 'Twist' competition in a room above the shop. Having beaten Syd Barrett into second place, he chose a Miles Davis record, *Bags' Groove* for his prize.

Those interested in jazz by the likes of Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington and Thelonius Monk which was mostly sold in LP format were allowed

to listen in enclosed booths with seating.

"Millers also had a second record shop, where we sometimes went. This was in King Street, opposite Malcom Street and the Corner House restaurant. Millers today, although nearby, is at an altogether different location," says Warren.

Millers was established in 1856 and is still in the original family ownership. Barry Robinson, the present owner, first started working at the shop in 1956, at the age of thirteen (part-time, of course).



Photo © Mick Brown  
*Above: Mods regularly met outside Boots the Chemists opposite Millers Music Shop*



# 60s Photo Gallery

# The Dorothy Ballroom



Photo courtesy Stuart Dingley

*Right: local music agent Stuart Dingley with The Small Faces when they appeared at the Dorothy. The newspaper advert shows the local bands who backed them*

The Dorothy Ballroom and Tea Rooms was the epitome of traditional British middle-class life. Long before the 1960s, one could saunter down to Hobson Street on certain weekday afternoons or in an evening and dance to the latest popular tunes.

Post-war, the Dorothy struggled to come to terms with the tidal wave of 'exceedingly loud and tasteless' music emanating from the USA.

By the late 1950s it was forced to compromise: there were three floors, each dedicated to a different musical generation. Traditional ballroom orchestras and bands such as those of Reg Cottage, Bob Kidman and Ken Stevens, were forced to share this venue with the likes of local rock bands bearing ghastly names like the Dawnbreakers, Squad 5 and Those Without!

Worse was to come: by the mid 1960s, The Dorothy was hosting The Who, the Hollies, Georgie Fame, even the legendary Jimi Hendrix who, according to local booking agent Stuart Dingley, was paid just £75. Today, retaining its original facade, it is a Waterstone's bookshop.

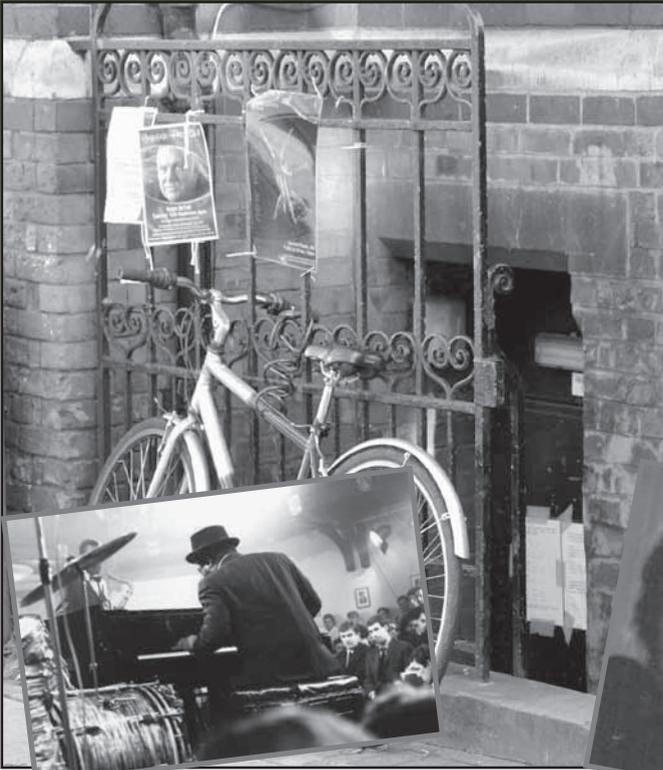


Photo © Mick Brown

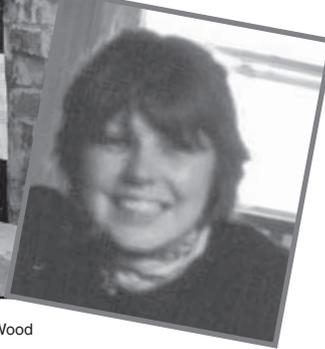
*Above: Hobson's Passage was a short cut to the Dorothy. The entrance to the Prince of Wales pub was at the far end on the left*

# The Union Cellars

## 60s Photo Gallery



*Syd Barrett played bass guitar with Those Without in the Union Cellars in 1964 while on Christmas holiday from Camberwell Art College*



*Main picture: the entrance to the Union Cellars* Photo © Lee Wood

*Above: Thelonus Monk playing at the Union Society* Photo © Brian Foskett

*Right: Jenny Spires who met Syd in the cellars in 1964* Photo courtesy Jenny Spires

The Union Cellars are in the basement of the Union Society, which is located directly behind the Round Church, a notable Crusader Chapel. The cellars remain to this day more or less as they were in the 1960s, but fire and safety issues mean they have been out of use for some years.

With all forms of music becoming popular with young people in the early 1960s there was always a shortage of local venues. The Cambridge University Union Society decided to book local bands rather than those formed solely within the university.

Several undergraduates forsook the elitism offered by the university and joined local bands. They included David Altham (Trinity), who was with

**Jokers Wild**; Ian Jack (Emmanuel) and Fred Friedlein (Pembroke), who played with the **Boston Crabs**.

**Those Without**, with Syd on bass guitar, played in the Cellars in 1964. Some accounts claim that it was in July, but it was during the Xmas holiday period, when Syd had returned home after his first term at Camberwell.

Jenny Spires (pictured above), who became a friend of Syd confirms that she first met him at this time.

The Union Society Debating Chamber also hosted gigs. **Thelonus Monk** was recorded there in for the now deleted 1966 BBC programme *Jazz Goes To College*. A photograph from this date is included in Brian Foskett's second publication *Jazz Pictorial 2*.



# The Mill Pond



*Above: on Laundress Green by the Mill Pond in 1965. Syd Barrett, in white, is in the centre of the picture*

Photo © Cherrill Richardson

*Right: sitting on the Mill bridge with the Anchor pub behind*

Photo © Alan Willis



*Above: Hank Wingate at work on the punts at the bottom of Mill Lane*

Photo © Hank Wingate

**T**he bridge and grassy area around the Mill Pond was the place to hang out during the 1960s.

Draught Merrydown cider at four shillings (20p) a pint from the Mill pub, hashish, pills and liberated sex were all on the menu in this new spirit of freedom.

The Mill was not the starting point for upper-class students' car races as portrayed in the 1958 film, Bachelor of Hearts but a usually friendly meeting

place for Mods, Rockers, Beats, Hippies - even the occasional Special Constable!

Tourists would often to pay to photograph young people jumping fully clothed into the river to retrieve beer mugs. The going rate at the time was 10 shillings (50p).

Iconic figures at the Mill were Hank Wingate and Alan Stiles who, as punt masters, had achieved the ultimate in drop-out status craved by local middle-class youth.

*Below: the busy Mill bridge in March 1966* Photo © Mick Brown



# The Cambridgeshire High School for Boys

**60s**  
Photo  
Gallery



*Above: Syd Barrett, centre, from a school photograph taken in 1959*

Photo © Lee Wood

Several leading characters from the local 1960s music scene were educated at the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys (known as The County). Boys who passed an exam at the age of 11 at a high level attended this school. Those who passed at an even higher level - or who passed an entrance exam and had rich parents - could attend the Perse School just along the road. Both schools had a similar disciplinary systems that included corporal punishment.

Roger 'Syd' Barrett and Rado Klose were both at The County as was Warren Dosanjh who was roadie/manager of Those Without. Another band member was Alan Sizer who attended The Perse School.

In those days, competitive sports and military training were considered to be character-forming. Only the genuine conscientious objectors were

exempt. Syd Barrett managed to get out of military training so spent his time in the Gardening Club (the 'Flower Club' as it was known to pupils) litter-picking and weeding flower beds.

Cadet Force training was carried out on Wednesday afternoons and miscreants were forced to attend drill parades on Saturdays.

Warren says: "This was terrible: it meant missing being with your mates on a Saturday while they were with 'the girls' in the basement of Millers Music Shop listening to all the latest releases before moving on to the El Patio coffee bar. It was the worst imaginable punishment".

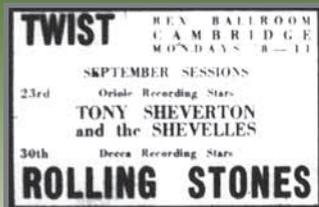
*The six people seen in the Photo Gallery on this page all played in local bands. From the top: Kevin Day, Rado Klose, John Gordon, Albert Prior, Roger Waters and Dave Chapman*

*The pictures come from the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys photograph of May 1959*



# 60s Photo Gallery

# The Rex Cinema and Ballroom



*The Rolling Stones played at the Rex Ballroom in 1963*



*The Incredible String Band appeared at the Rex on 9 March 1969*



Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection

The Rex Cinema and Ballroom in Magrath Avenue near Castle Hill was another venue providing live music.

Although away from the city centre, such was the appetite of young people to enjoy live music to which they could dance, The Rex became a weekend must.

American GIs, who were stationed in and around Cambridge after WW2, attended the concerts and their presence often led to fights with the locals, who could not afford the generosity that their US counterparts would lavish on the local girls.

The venue was owned by George Webb, a local haulier and among the bands appearing were the local **Ken Stevens Big Band** and the famous **Ted Heath Band**.

Throughout the 1960s, The Rex

continued to provide a much needed venue, promoting with foresight many bands that would later go on to achieve world-wide fame.

In 1963, having just released their first single, the **Rolling Stones** came to The Rex. Most of the city's teenagers seem to be there.

The **Rolling Stones** wore black PVC jackets, and performed on a simple raised platform with no security. During the interval, they stood up at the bar with the rest of us, mingling quite freely. We weren't to know then that they would become one of the greatest rock bands of all time.

The Rex was also an independent cinema and dared to show *The Wild One*, starring Marlon Brando, when it was banned by other local cinemas for many years.

# The Cambridge School of Art

60s  
Photo  
Gallery



*Above: an exhibition of Syd Barrett's art was held at the ARU (formerly CCAT) in October 2008*  
Photo © Mick Brown



*Above: the main entrance of the CCAT, now part of Anglia Ruskin University*

## Stephen Pyle remembers:

"I first met Roger (Syd) Barrett early in 1962 at a Saturday morning art class in Homerton College, then at evening classes in life drawing at The Cambridge School of Art - this was part of the Cambridge College of Arts and Technology (CCAT) which we we both attended full-time from September of that year.

During the next two years we became firm friends. One of our favourite antics was to sit at the back during History of Art lectures on top of some fitted cupboards, behind which were curtained windows. When the lights were dimmed we would drop out of the windows and go off for a fag and a coffee, returning just in time for the lecture to finish. Needless to say, neither of us shone particularly well at History of Art.

In 1964 Syd joined me in a Rhythm and Blues band that I played drums with called **Those Without**. He played bass guitar and sang along with Robert 'Smudge' Smith on rhythm guitar, Alan Sizer on lead guitar and Alan 'Barney' Barnes, a naturally gifted musician, on keyboards and vocals.

At the CCAT Syd often discussed chord sequences and other mysteries of the fretboard while the rest of us had to confine our conversations to sex,

music, books and films (with a sexual content, of course) and politics (oh yes, remember Profumo? ... and Christine Keeler?).

It was a wonderful time to be young as Rock & Roll and jazz, literature and films were all pushing back post-war austerity with everything possible.

Attitudes to class, race, morality and religion were all being challenged. We were going to change the world ... but did we?"

## Mick Brown adds:

"Around 1963/4 I remember seeing Roger 'Syd' Barrett being chased through the CCAT Students Common Room (in good humour, of course) by female students. I also saw language student David 'Fred' Gilmour there. He seemed to me to be waiting in the wings."



*Above: Syd Barrett (on the left) at the Homerton Painting Club in February 1960*  
Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection



## 60s Photo Gallery



# The Regal Cinema

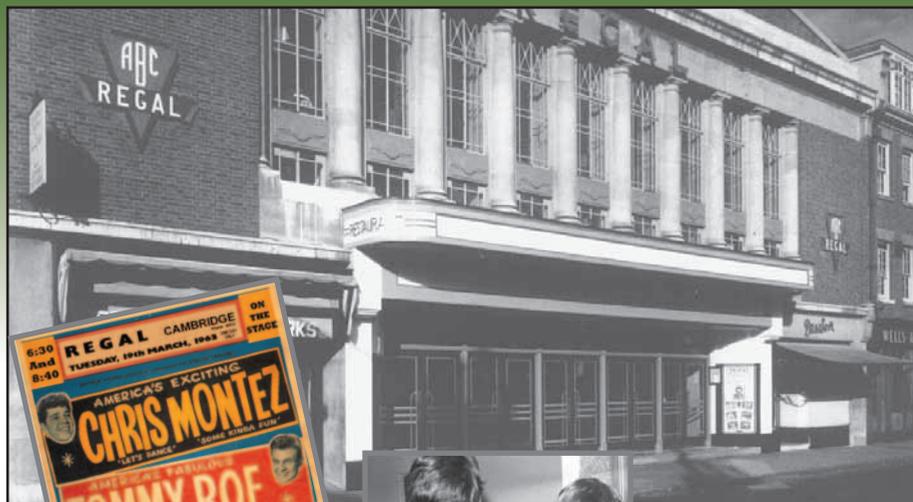


Photo: The Cambridgeshire Collection

*Left: the Beatles appeared later, in November 1963 topping the bill at The Regal*

Photo © Cambridge Newspapers Ltd

The ABC Regal cinema was the largest and best in the city, always showing the latest releases before any other cinema.

Cinema was still the king for the younger generation, with television unable to compete.

At weekends, when the latest blockbuster came to town, queues would form early, and extend from the front and all along the passage to the rear of the cinema. By the late 1950s the cinema management decided to cater for young people's attraction to the latest craze from the USA: Rock & Roll! In 1959 **Cliff Richard** came to the Regal and attracted vast crowds. He returned the next year, as did **Adam Faith**, who received this review from the local newspaper correspondent:

"The show was deplorably uninteresting, but the audience gave a

magnificent performance."

Soon every pop act had The Regal included in its tour, with appearances from **Billy Fury**, **Helen Shapiro** and the **Rolling Stones**.

In March 1963 the **Beatles** visited the City for the first time. They were still relatively unknown, and were way down on the billing (see poster inset above).

Syd Barrett wanted to see the show and bought a ticket along with some other friends, but, unable to attend, he gave his ticket to Stephen Pyle, a close friend from Art School.

The local reviewer wrote: "The Beatles, a four-man 'rock' group with weird hairstyles as a gimmick, sang and played their current hits. The show was not the best Cambridge audiences have seen".

# Bands of the 1960s



**I**n the early 1980s, Leys School pupil and Cambridge University history student Graeme Mackenzie did his best to chart the history of Rock & Roll in Cambridge with a 'family tree' of local bands. The result of this daunting task helped inspire Warren Dosanjh to organise the first Roots of Cambridge Rock Reunion in October 2008.

Now, nearly 30 years after the chart was first published in the Cambridge Evening News and later in Graeme Mackenzie's *Blue Suede News* it would be even more difficult to record accurately the changes in band names and personnel in the 1960s. We hope, however, with the invaluable help of band members from those days to contribute to the record of those days. In doing so we are also able to set the record straight concerning some of the myths that have appeared in expensive coffee-table books over the years.

We also include in this edition links to videos of performances at the Roots of Cambridge Rock 2010 Reunion.

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# 1960s Publicity

## Devi Agarwala and Maxpeed Printers



*Above: Devi Agarwala with long-term employee Roy Briggs in Union Road with a Heidelberg platen press* Photo © Sudhir Agar

*Above: 'Nektar' was misspelt by the designer on this flier for the 1972 gig*

**D**evi Dass Agarwala was born in Uttar Pradesh State, India. Arriving in Cambridge in 1951 as an accomplished signwriter he soon found that his skills were much in demand, particularly with local cinemas where he was regularly commissioned to signwrite lobby cards advertising forthcoming films.

In 1955 he opened Maxpeed Printers at 21 Union Road and one later employee was briefly **Hollerin' Blues** manager Brian Scott. The business started with a foot-operated press, the posters being produced one-by-one and then hung out to dry on an improvised washing line.

Maxpeed had a contract with GP Hawkins (owners of the Dorothy Ballroom and Restaurant) to print between 5000 and 10000 wrappers every week for their bread products. The business was also responsible for a large proportion of music gig posters that were seen all over Cambridge during the 1960s. In 1970

he moved the business to Mill Road.

Devi did a lot of local charity work with The Lions and became probably the most famous ethnic Indian in Cambridge with large and varied business interests including the Kismet Indian Restaurant, the Friar House, the Harlequin Club and Casino amongst others. He was also a member of the Magic Circle. He later retired to New Delhi where he died in late 1984.

Another popular printer at the time was F&P Piggotts Limited (founded 1881) which was based in the City Centre and Round Church Street opposite the Union Cellars. Few competitors, however, could match Devi Agarwala's professionalism and flair for design and typography - skills that became side-stepped by the customer-supplied camera ready artwork that became popular from the late 1960s onwards with the introduction of small offset presses and dry-transfer lettering.

# The Redcaps



*Above: the Redcaps backed the Hunters, who had recently backed Cliff Richard in the Shadows' absence at Newmarket Memorial Hall in 1962. That night the audience preferred the Redcaps who played for three of the four sessions*

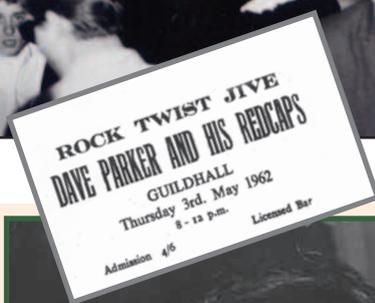
Photo courtesy Dave Parker

In the 1950s, friends Graham 'Ned' Bishop and Graham 'Smudge' Smith were avid fans of radio's *Journey into Space* and the *Goon Show* but then **Lonnie Donegan** came along. With Allan 'Dick' Bentley and Dave Richardson, 'Ned' and 'Smudge' formed a skiffle group with guitars and home-made instruments such as a washboard and a tea chest with broom-handle and string for a bass.

"We knew nothing about music", says Smudge, "we thought a key was for opening a door .." They called themselves the **Black Diamonds** from a **Lonnie Donegan** song and first played in a pub on Newmarket Road.

Gradually, with the introduction of Rock & Roll, new instruments and meeting more experienced musicians, the band improved. 'Smudge' remembers the turning point was meeting multi-instrumentalist Jimmy Graham and vocalist Tony Clarke.

The Redcaps were formed around 1959 and the line-up was: Jimmy Graham (lead guitar), Graham 'Smudge' Smith (rhythm guitar), Graham 'Ned' Bishop (bass guitar), Robin Bailey (drums), Tony Clarke (vocals). The name was inspired by



*Above: after singing to Pauline Hobbs of Soham at the Memorial Hall gig, Dave Parker handed her the powder-blue handkerchief he had placed on the stage to kneel on*

Photo courtesy Dave Parker



Above: Dave Parker at Cambridge Guildhall and below: the band's 1960s transport



Above right: the cover of the music for the Redcaps' recording Stormy Evening

**Gene Vincent's Bluecaps.** Wearing red caps, their repertoire included *Be Bop A Lula* and *Baby Blue*.

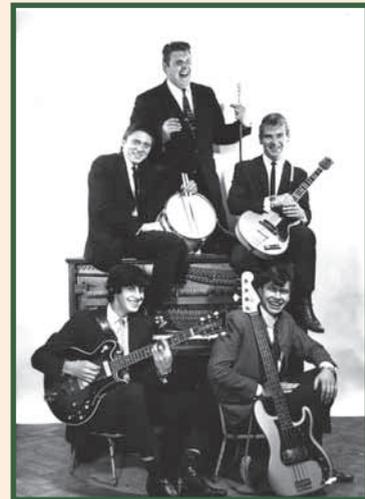
In 1960 Robin Bailey, who had joined the **Phantoms** who were to play professionally in Scandinavia, was replaced briefly by Alan Baker then by Dave Carter, Tony Sainty took over from from 'Ned' Bishop on bass. Tony Clarke moved on to the **Prowlers** and became known as Tony 'Earthquake' Colleano. Roy Clark, from Ely, took over as vocalist until Dave Parker joined in 1961.

The 1962 line-up was: Jimmy Graham (lead guitar), Graham 'Smudge' Smith (rhythm guitar), Peter Wilby (bass, replacing Tony Sainty), Dave Carter and Graham 'Ned' Bishop (drums), Dave Parker (vocals).

During 1962 Paul Williams, a Jesus College music student (later a Radio One producer) took the band to the Landsdown Studios in Holland Park to record two of his songs, *Stormy Evening* and *Blue Eyes and Golden Hair* (released as the B side but considered by many as the better track). The recordings were released by Decca under the name **Dean Parker and the Redcaps**. All the royalties were donated to The Earl Haig Fund. Managed by the Roy Tempest Agency of London, they played in London, the South and the Midlands. The record was played often on Radio Luxembourg and the band appeared on the About Anglia television programme.

Dave left the music business in 1963 due to health reasons but not before recording six more songs with session musicians for Paul Williams at Landsdown Studios. Dave Carter then took over as vocalist.

The band eventually broke up having decided not to risk their steady jobs by taking up offers



including a tour of Europe. In 1965, however, some band members got together again briefly and were joined by Tony Colleano as vocalist (see picture above).

*Thanks to Dave Parker ,Graham Smith and Dave Carter*

*See Dave sing Blue Suede Shoes at Roots of Cambridge Rock Reunion 2010 by clicking on this link:*

*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovCiBQqWW64>*

*and Move It with Mike 'Buster' Richardson on:*

*<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBRRwBlnxYu0>*

*and hear Dave as Dean Parker and the Redcaps sing Blue Eyes And Golden Hair in 1962 on:*

*[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDuR-\\_jFk\\_8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CDuR-_jFk_8)*

# The Chequers



Above: the Chequers with Noel Gooch, Andy Peters, Bubs White, Jenny Smith and Tony Sainty

**B**ubs White and Andy Peters were in a skiffle group in 1959. Then, having joined Noel Gooch and Tony Sainty in the **Saints** they became the **Chequers** after meeting at a gig in a Hills Road pub. Early practice sessions were held in a house in Ross Street.

When Jenny Smith (now Taylor) joined as the band's drummer, the line-up in 1960 was: Bubs White (lead guitar), Noel Gooch (rhythm guitar), Tony Sainty (bass guitar), Jenny Smith (drums) and Andy Peters (vocals). The Patrick Cowling was the band's first

manager before Brian Read took over later on.

Later, Tony Sainty left the band and was replaced by John Speak who was in turn replaced by Bob Ruckwood on bass.

In 1962 the **Chequers** disbanded. Bubs joined the **Sundowners** and Andy and Jenny joined Trevor Parfitt, Rob Fuller, Rod Butcher and Joan Stevenson in the **Burnettes**.

In 1963 the **Chequers** decided to re-form and with the break-up of the **Sundowners** Tony Middleton joined on vocals along with Ricky Wills on bass guitar and Bubs White on lead. Andrew 'Fitz' Fitzpatrick, an American from a nearby US base also joined on vocals. During this period, singer Andy Peters also played rhythm guitar.

Tony Middleton took the name 'Clausius Fink' at that time and performed comedy numbers alongside the band's usual pop and Country & Western repertoire. Tony is a multi-talented performer who is also well known as a magician. Curiously he doesn't remember dressing up as 'Clausius Fink' in various guises, including that of an old woman, but the evidence is there on posters from the time.

In 1963 the **Chequers** appeared on television



The Burnettes with Jenny on drums and Andy sharing vocals with Joan Stevenson



Right: posters showing the Chequers' wide popularity and below, a poster for a Burnettes gig



twice. On one occasion, Jenny remembers, the camera zoomed in on Bubs White who promptly broke a string and had to improvise as best he could as no re-takes were allowed.

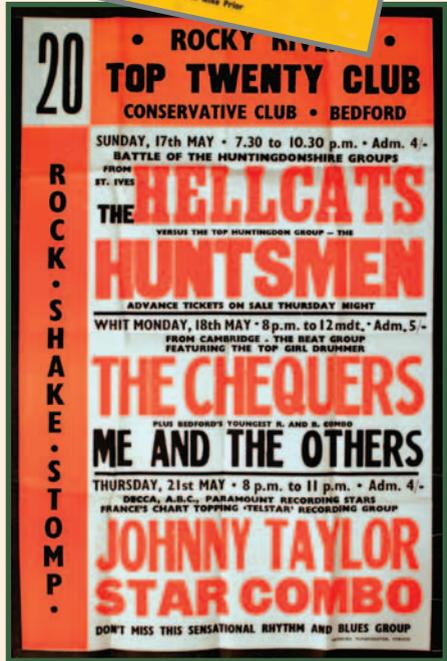
As well as appearing at the usual city venues and in Newmarket Memorial Hall the band played on many US bases: Bentwater, Woodbridge, Lakenheath, Mildenhall, Alconbury and Ruislip. They played at Chicksands, the RAF signal intelligence unit in Bedfordshire that was linked to Bletchley Park.

Tony remembers that they were asked to stop playing on a base in July 1964 when it was suddenly announced that American country singer **Jim Reeves** had died in a plane crash. They played no more that evening.

They also supported the **Allisons**, a UK pop duo who came second in the Eurovision Song Contest in 1961 with their song *Are you sure?*

In 1965 Andy and Jenny left the band and other members, Bubs, Fitz and Ricky became part of the newly-formed **Soul Committee**.

Thanks to Jenny Taylor and Tony Middleton



Above: this fragile poster has been folded for nearly 50 years!

# The Sundowners



Above: the Sundowners in 1961 with Bubs White, Ricky Wills, Judy Holmes and Tony Middleton  
Left: Bubs and Tony on a Scottish holiday  
Below: Ricky Wills and Tony Middleton



Photos courtesy Tony Middleton

Tony Middleton first sang in public at the Duke of Argyle with 'Barney' Barnes Snr playing the piano. In 1960 he joined the **Vikings**, taking over from John Wildeman as front man. At that time Ivan Carling was on lead guitar, Ricky Wills on rhythm guitar, Bobby Haylock on bass guitar and Mick Clark on drums.

Several months later in 1960 or early 1961 the **Vikings** broke up and the same line-up with a different bass guitar player remembered only as Will (who was in the habit of mostly saying "cheers, man") carried on with the **Sundowners** name that was chosen by Ivan.

Later in 1961, the **Chequers** broke up and Bubs White, their lead guitarist joined the **Sundowners**. The line-up then became: Anthony 'Bubs' White on lead guitar, Ricky Wills on rhythm; Ivan Carling on bass, Nick Clark on drums and Tony Middleton as front man. There was also a girl singer, Judy Holmes (now Woodford), for about a year who would sing popular numbers such as *Bobby's Girl* and as

a duet with Tony, *Hey Paula*. Tony says: "The band would do rock and roll numbers and a few instrumentals. I would also do *Blue Moon*".

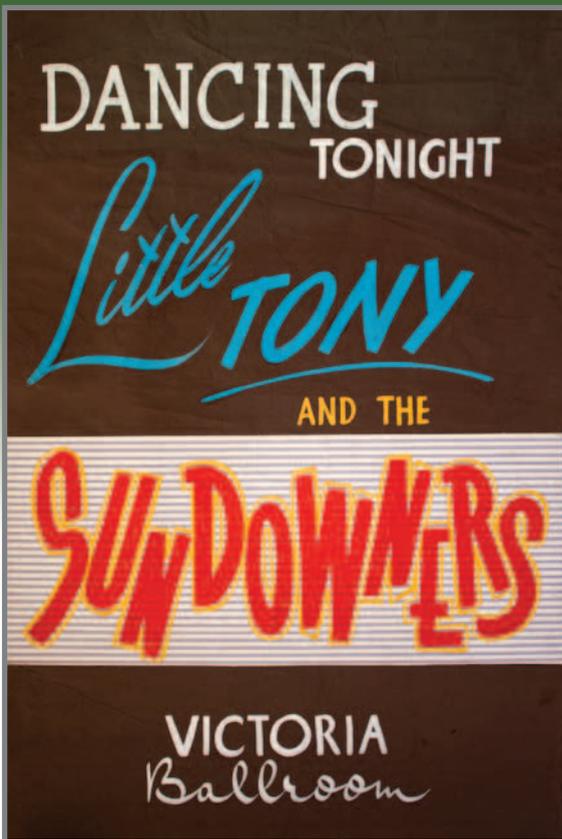
The band continued until late 1963 when the **Chequers** decided to re-form. Bubs White returned to the **Chequers** along with Tony Middleton. Throughout the **Vikings** and the **Sundowners** existence the manager was Brian Read (from the Read family of hairdressers). Sadly Brian read took his own life in 1968.

Ivan Carling's Fender Jazzmaster was white, Bubs' was blue and Ricky's was Sunburst so they took them to Ken Stevens to be sprayed white to make a more impressive line-up.

Tony was known as 'Little Tony' or 'Tiger' - a workplace nickname based on 'Tony the Tiger', from a cereal advert of the 1960s. "The name stuck with me for 30 years!" says Tony.

The band rehearsed in the Pelican pub, now absorbed into the Grafton Centre on East Road.

The **Sundowners** backed a lot of big names in those days. Tony says he will always remember backing **Gene Vincent** "because he broke my mic



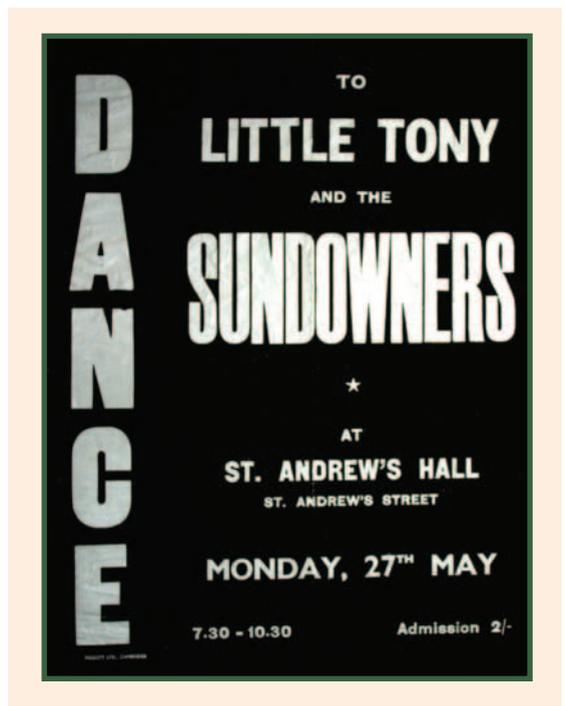
*Above: Tony Middleton at work in 1962  
 Left: a hand-painted poster by Devi Agarwala  
 Below: a black and silver poster by F&P Piggott Ltd*

stand which had a big, heavy base". Tony recalls that when agent Stuart Dingley introduced him to **Screaming Lord Sutch**, "Lord Sutch put an arm round my shoulder and whispered in my ear: 'I have very strange dreams, you know' and with that he walked off". Others backed included **Freddie and the Dreamers**, **Johnny Kidd and the Pirates**, **Duke D'Mond** and the **Barron Knights**.

As well as the usual Cambridge venues, the **Sundowners** played on US bases. Tony and Ivan remember that Dave Gilmour, later of **Pink Floyd** played with them on one of those dates, although they remember more of the magician on the bill that night than their own performance.

Summing up, Tony says "It is a credit to the front line of the **Sundowners** that Ricky Wills, 'Bubs' White and Ivan Carling went on to make a successful careers in music. 'Bubs' went on to the **Bonzo Dog Band** and others; Ricky was with **Foreigner**, **Small Faces** and **Roxy Music** while Ivan spent time playing music in the USA and the Mediterranean". Tony carried on in bands until 1999 while carrying on his career in engineering.

*To hear Tony Middleton sing and introduce friends and musicians from the 1960s at the Roots of Cambridge Rock 2010 Reunion click on this link: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj\\_wM-ISoJ8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kj_wM-ISoJ8)*



*Thanks to Tony Middleton, Ivan Carling and Judy Woodford*

# The Ramblers



Above: the Ramblers. From left, Albert Prior, Chris Marriot, Clive Welham, Richard Baker and Johnny Gordon

In early 1962 the **Ramblers** were formed by around 18-year-olds Clive Welham (drums), Albert Prior (lead guitar), Johnny Gordon (rhythm guitar), Richard Baker (bass) and Chris 'Jim' Marriott (vocals).

Clive played a Trixon drum kit, Albert Prior played a Futurama guitar and Richard Baker used his home-made bass guitar. Chris ('Jim') Johnny, Chris and Albert had all attended the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys and Clive had been at the Perse School.

Rehearsals took place in an upstairs room at the Jolly Waterman pub on Chesterton Road, Cambridge. The **Ramblers'** first gig was at the United Reformed Church Hall on Cherry Hinton Road. They used their new Watkins Copycat Echo Chamber giving them great sound on **The Shadows'** *Wonderful Land* and *Move It*. The band played covers, including songs and instrumentals from **Cliff Richard and the Shadows**, **Elvis Presley** and other bands in the hit parade at that time.

Gigs were in village halls across Cambridgeshire including Harston, Fen Ditton, Sawston, Ely

and Newmarket, as well as pubs, and at the Cambridge Guildhall, University May Balls and the Cavagnol Club above the Victoria Cinema. On one occasion the rhythm guitarist of one of the leading Cambridge bands (possibly the **Prowlers** or the **Phantoms**) couldn't make it to their gig, so Albert Prior, who was in the audience, was asked to stand in for the night. This included using the rhythm guitarist's Fender Stratocaster - Albert's first experience of the iconic guitar.

Albert Prior left the **Ramblers** in late 1963 to take up a job in a bank in London and took up a career in the book trade and publishing. Following his move, Dave Gilmour apparently played lead in the **Ramblers** for one or two gigs.

The group disbanded early in 1964, when Johnny Gordon and Clive Welham joined **Jokers Wild**, with Dave Gilmour. Johnny went on to a career in magazine publishing (and as a magician); Clive became a successful singer with a local Cambridge band called **Executive Suite**, and Chris Marriott became a university academic in Brighton.

*Thanks to Albert Prior*

# Those Without



*Above: Those Without in Wandlebury near Cambridge. From left: Alan Sizer, 'Smudge' Smith, Alan 'Barney' Barnes, Stephen Pyle and an unidentified band member*

**B**efore **Those Without** was formed, Alan 'Barney' Barnes, son of 'Barney' Barnes a talented pianist from Cavendish Road and Stephen Pyle had formed **Hollerin' Blues** in 1962/3.

The line-up of this Rhythm & Blues band was Barney (piano, harmonica and vocals), Alan Sizer (guitar), Pete Glass (harmonica) and Stephen Pyle (drums). The manager was Brian 'Scotty' Scott under whose guidance the band played mainly in church or village halls.

Ambitious for a wider range of bookings, the band broke up and reformed with a new manager, grammar school dropout Warren Dosanjh. As a result of Warren's management, the band secured bookings in the main city venues as well as private functions and at RAF camps. The band's name was changed to **Those Without** - a name inspired by a copy of the Françoise Sagan novel *Those Without Shadows* in Warren's book collection (not, as claimed by other commentators, a result of the surreal imagination of a future band member).

Rehearsals were held at Stephen Pyle's home as well as in the back room of the Midland Tavern in Devonshire Road or the Ancient Druids pub in the Kite area.

Later, in 1964, Stephen invited Syd Barrett, a friend and co-student at the Art School in the Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology (CCAT), to join the band. Syd, who had played once before in public in 1962, joined on vocals and bass guitar.



*Above top: a collage by Stephen Pyle based on photographs by Charles Stewart of band members in action used as a poster to advertise Those Without*

The band played blues and jazz influenced Rhythm & Blues rather than pop covers and this taste in music was echoed in the Common Room of the CCAT where albums from **Charles Mingus' Mingus Oh Yeah** through **Christopher Logue's Jazz & Poetry EP Red Bird** to **Muddy Waters at Newport 1960** were passed around and played to destruction.

Among those who made a 'guest' appearance with the band was eccentric student Lionel Barst who sang a gruff version of *Take This Hammer* at the Blue Horizon Club in the Guildhall.

**Those Without's** last gig was in August 1965 at the Gardiner Memorial Hall in Burwell.

For further information and details see page 13 of this booklet and visit the [i-spysydincambridge.com](http://i-spysydincambridge.com) website.



*Alan 'Barney' Barnes will be remembered by many in Cambridge as a highly talented but sometimes unreliable musician. Barney was also a keen artist and above is his painting of US bluesman Sonny Boy Williamson who recorded in the UK with the Yardbirds and The Animals*

Picture courtesy Annie Stewart

# The Soul Committee



Photo © Jess Applin

*Jess Applin was commissioned by the Ken Stevens Agency to take the promotional photos on this page but they were never used From left: Dick Parry, Martin Fabb, Andrew Fitzpatrick, Ricky Wills, Bubs White and Phil Leaford*

**P**hil Leaford (drums/vocals) seem to have been the main man when the **Soul Committee** was formed in 1965, along with 'Bubs' White (lead guitar), Ricky Wills (bass guitar), Martin Fabb (Sax), Dick Parry (sax) and Andrew 'Fitz' Fitzpatrick on main vocals.

The band later approached Stuart Dingley, a local Rock & Roll booking agent based above his Alley Club in Falcon Yard to be their manager. They were then joined by Denis 'Drew' Andrews a second black singer from a US base.

This dynamic band now provided the style to attract Liberty Records who in 1969 gave them a recording contract.

The 'A' side of their first record was called *The Hard Way* and was written by the famous Mike Batt, whilst the 'B' side was written by the band themselves. The contrast of the two numbers prompted them to drop the word 'Soul' from their name as they no longer felt that this was a fair reflection of their wide range of material.

Hence they became **The Committee**, entertaining many audiences with their power-packed show.

Bubs White was later to join the **Bonzo Dog Band**; Ricky Wills (still playing) was with Foreigner for many years, whilst Dick Parry is best known as the sax player for **Pink Floyd**.



*Dick Parry unpacks his saxophone at the rear of Emmanuel College*

Photo © Jess Applin

*To see Martin Fabb's tenor sax solo at the Roots of Cambridge Rock Reunion 2010 click on this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EHa35IPmLE>*

# Wages of Sin



*Above: this photo of Wages of Sin on the statue of Joshua Webb then in the Corn Exchange was taken by Brian Foskett in the late 1960s* Photo © Brian Foskett

**D**ave Thaxter joined **Wages of Sin** after playing in the **Newcomers** and other bands with the same personnel including Dave Gilmour and Chris Ian.

Colin Freeman, from Royston was leader and singer and rehearsals were held at his house on Tuesday evenings. Ivan Carling who also played in the band remembers Colin as being a good front man who also drove a “huge white Ford Zodiac with tail fins”.

Dave introduced his friend Barrie Hawkins to the band and he became their manager. Barrie was a trombone player and had already established a successful Rose Jazz Club in Rose Crescent. Through him **Wages of Sin** were offered their first ‘pro’ job at Butlins in Wales.

Only Dave and Colin were prepared to go to Wales as they all had day jobs in or near Cambridge at the time.

Eventually in 1966 Dave Thaxter, who had worked in the Instrument Department of Millers, decided to turn fully professional and joined the RAF Music Services and stayed there until retiring in 1989 to teach for Lincolnshire County Council and play the odd gig as a guest. Ivan left his job in Barclays Bank around 1965 to

pursue his career in music.

Ivan’s place was taken by Tim Renwick (standing on the left of the photo above. Tim was another talented pupil from ‘County’ school. Syd Barrett had been his scout patrol leader and nicknamed him ‘Bertie’ after Gilbert Harding TV adverts for Rennies indigestion tablets.

Tim also remembers the hard times in those days. He was sacked from his £5-a-week day job at Eaden Lilley’s store for falling asleep on a pile of rugs after late gigs, and the whole band was once given a ten-shilling note (50p) for food expenses by manager Barrie Hawkins. Tim managed some recompense by never paying Barrie back for the £65 red Fender Stratocaster he bought from Ken Stevens Music Shop.

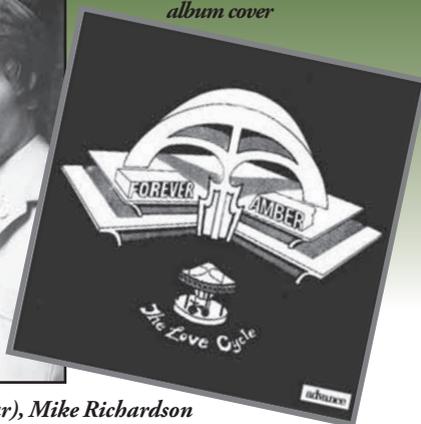
New players came and went: Ricky Wills became a second bass player for a time before being replaced by Vic Farrer; London-based keyboard player Dante Smith joined briefly, then Peter ‘Dino’ Dines arrived on Hammond organ with Jerry Shirley on drums. Gradually, with more London dates the band’s ambitions grew away from playing covers under Colin Freeman’s leadership and ‘morphed’ into **Little Women**.

*Thanks to Dave Thaxter and Tim Renwick*

# Forever Amber



Below: Forever Amber's album cover



Above from left: Graham Jenkinson (drums), Tony Mumford (bass guitar), Mike Richardson (lead vocal), Dick Lane (lead guitar) and Chris Parren (organ) Photo courtesy Mike Richardson

**F**orever Amber came into being in the late 1960s via first the **Swinging Hi-Fi's**, **Blues Beat 64** then the **Country Cousins**, says Chris Jones.

By the time singer Mike 'Buster' Richardson joined the **Country Cousins** with a much changed line-up, psychedelia was taking over. Influenced by **Jimi Hendrix** and the **Beatles'** *Sergeant Pepper* the band changed their name to **Forever Amber** in 1967.

Driving to gigs in a multi-coloured ambulance painted by keyboard player and art student Chris Parren, band members wore hippy-style kaftans, beads and sandals. Regrettably we have no photographs from that period!

The band rehearsed in the Salisbury Arms where Mike was originally auditioned for the **Country Cousins** and in Chris Parren's flat.

When Graham Jenkinson sadly died, Barry Broad took over on drums. Otherwise the line-up hardly ever changed. The band still had day jobs (often chosen to fit in with gig dates) but played all over Cambridgeshire, especially in the City Centre venues. **Forever Amber** played at crowded dance halls such as the Dorothy, nightclubs (including the short-lived Magic Mushroom in Falcon Yard), birthday parties, weddings and May Balls. The band are remembered as flamboyant performers. One singer would swing the mic over the audience during breaks in vocals. Famously, one night in the Oak Room at the Dorothy it was returned with just the cable and two live wires!

A regular venue for the band was the

International Centre which catered for foreign students. At the time **Forever Amber** alternated three-weekly with Dave Gilmour's **Joker's Wild** and **The Soul Committee**.

The band's manager, Derek Buxton who worked in Millers Music Shop was able to get them gigs supporting the **Swinging Blue Jeans**, **The Tremeloes** and others. He was expert at handling the temperamental nature of musicians. Eventually, in 1969, through Derek, they were introduced to student John Hudson who wanted **Forever Amber** to record some music he had written.

*The Love Cycle* 16-track album resulted from this meeting. It was recorded in a very basic Hitchin recording studio at a cost of £200. Ninety-nine copies of the album were made with two each given to band members and the rest sold in Millers. Despite the basic recording quality, *The Love Cycle* is now considered one of the best of the 1960s and original albums are said to be changing hands for £thousands.

Offers to play abroad came next but the band broke up in 1970, with members staying on playing and singing locally, except that Chris Parren carried on art studies in London as well as famously playing keyboard on George Michaels' *Careless Whisper*.

*Thanks to Mike Richardson and Chris Jones*

To see Mike Richardson sing 1960s classics at the *Roots of Cambridge Rock Reunion in 2010*, click on these links:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPIeADvw9vE>  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3F\\_ojQuA7sk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3F_ojQuA7sk)

# Pete Rhodes



*Above: the Bluebirds in the early 1950s. From left, Billy White (bass guitar), Pete Rhodes (drums), Dougie Papworth (lead guitar) and John Walters (rhythm guitar).*

*As befits 1950s austerity the band wore surplus British Railways Board waiters' jackets that they boiled clean and dyed red to suit their dark trousers. After an energetic gig the dye would leak out and stain their white shirts!*

Photo: courtesy Pete Rhodes

Pete Rhodes, great grandson of Rhodesia founder Cecil Rhodes, had a difficult early life. His mother died at his birth and, left with a strict army father he ran away from home at the age of ten. He was found by police in London and on his return he developed two ambitions: to be a signwriter and a drummer. He achieved both, becoming one of the best signwriters in Cambridge after an apprenticeship with Swainlands and he played the drums for 50 years.

Pete's drumming career began in the early 1950s when he saw an advertisement in the local paper for a rock band drummer. The contact number was the Jubilee pub in Thoday Street, off Mill Road and the band was the **Bluebirds**. The band's manager was Fred Papworth of Ross Street and his 'studio' was the kitchen of his house. Having no phone of his own, Fred used the pub as his office.

After an interview with Fred, Pete joined the **Bluebirds**. The line-up then was: Richard Papworth (saxophone), Dougie Papworth (lead guitar), Eric Coulson (rhythm guitar), Billy White (bass guitar) and Pete Rhodes (drums). Pete replaced Butch Lindsay who had fallen out with Fred.

The **Bluebirds** played at youth clubs and village halls. They also got a contract from Norman Jacobs to play three times a week at the Corn Exchange where there were music, roller skating and wrestling nights when they played between bouts. They also played at other wrestling venues such as in Skegness.

Hoping to improve his drumming by



*Above: the Coronets in the early 1960s at the British Legion in Bury St Edmunds. From left, Dave Garner (an invited friend on tambourine), Reg Merrydew (bass guitar), Pete Rhodes (drums), Roy Pilsworth (piano), Don Merrydew (saxophone)*

Photo: courtesy Pete Rhodes

playing with better bands, Pete took to hanging about the Dorothy looking for a chance to play with the **Bob Kidman Band**. Bob said to Pete: "You'll get nowhere fast unless you learn to read music".

Pete's luck changed one night, however, when he was sitting in the Prince of Wales, a pub below the Dorothy. During the interval Kidman's drummer, Norman Shepherd slipped down the metal steps into the pub and banged his head on the large weighing machine that was kept there.

Finally getting his chance, Pete took over the drums for the second set. What he didn't know was that because Norman rarely used his bass drum it wasn't properly fixed to the pedestal where he was to play above the rest of the band. When Pete struck the drum, it broke loose, rolled forward and struck band member Derek Bailey on the back of his head. Having nearly choked on his clarinet, Derek never forgave Pete for this mishap.

Pete went on to play with the **Coronets** as well as gigs with the **Bob Kidman Band**, then with **Triangle** worked the Cunard Cruise circuit.

Later, his band **Casino** nearly lost a residency at the Cambridgeshire Hotel in Bar Hill when the management said they would not pay local musicians who usually played for free. To get round this, Pete joined the Enfield branch of the Musicians' Union.

Pete, along with Johnny Phillips (former **Hi Fi's** drummer) booked bands such as the **Kinks**, the **Dave Clark Five** and the popular **Apex Band** from Norwich to play at the Victoria Ballroom on Thursday nights. He also remembers promotional nights for Guinness as well as for non-iron Rael Brook shirts when the prize shirts often ended up on market stalls for sale!

*Thanks to Pete Rhodes*

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