

Merry Christmas to all our readers

MAD RAT MAGAZINE

rock'n'roll ~ rockabilly ~ rhythm & blues ~ jump 'n' jive

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issue #41 December 05



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THE GUV'NA

Ho Ho Hum!!! Tis' the season of good cheer and good will to all men and I for one am in a very good mood (even with having to buy pressies for eight rug rats). The bicycles are ordered and the Christmas lists written, the Christmas cards are stacking up on every available surface, I even dusted off the old whistle and the festive and new year gig list is looking very exciting. Where will I go? I'm not sure yet but I will be out and about spreading my Christmas cheer. God Help You All!

Well, It's been four issues since the mag snuck back into our lives and we have received some great feedback, but I would just like to remind everyone that you've got to be in it to win it! So, send that review of your latest clubnight and let everyone know your out there. Send us the reasons why you're part of the Scene, what you love, what you hate. Why not do a review of a CD or two or if you're in a Band, whack in a profile and tell us what you're up to. You know me, I am 100 percent behind the Scene, I will promote it anytime anyplace and anywhere but I can't do that if I don't know your out there. So for the last time this year SEND IT IN!

As you all know and have read we are having a great time in Southend and I know that you're having great times elsewhere and without boring you I would just like to thank Crazy Cavan And The Rhythm Rockers, The Rat Pack & DJ Radar, for what has been dubbed the ultimate gig of the last five years, cheers guys! It was a long time coming but you

rocked Charlies Bar and I thank you for that.

Now back to business. There has been a couple of problems with the Gig

Guide of late and I mean a couple, so please if you see a mistake, wrong venue, wrong date then please let us know but mostly please check with the venue before travelling.

Also, we've had an overwhelming request for Mags to be sent to individual readers by post. If you would like to receive a Mag each month, hot off the press and delivered to your door, please send us a cheque for £10 which will pay for a years worth of postage and packing and saves you the trouble of sending us stamped addressed envelopes. This is not a subscription charge, just a means of getting the Mag to you pronto without it costing me an arm and a leg! Cheques payable to Roaming Mad Rat Enterprises, please. Ta.

I am also looking for more distributors for the Mag. If you are a club, venue, weekender, travelling band or DJ that can help us spread the good word by distributing then, please drop me an email to info@madratmag.co.uk.

So to the end of another great year. I have had fantastic support from all my friends new and old and I would like to thank them for their continued support and a big thanks to all our advertisers, contributors and you, our beloved readers. Also to the bands that have travelled miles and given fantastic performances. I say cheers guys and gals and hope we can do it again sometime soon.

So from me, Linette, Paul and the Mad Rat Team, we wish you all a very happy Christmas and best wishes for the new year. Stay safe, be lucky and be happy, but must of all, keep rockin'.

See ya out there

Rockin' regards
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Band: The Rockin Bandits
Venue: The B52 Diner
Date: 24th Sept 05

This Band's promo states quite categorically that "THEY ARE DEDICATED TO THE ROCK AND ROLL SOUNDS OF THE 1950's". and that they "PLAY THEIR MUSIC WITH A GOOD TIME SENSE OF ENTERTAINMENT JUST LIKE THE OLD TIME DANCE HALLS OF THE 1950's". So we booked them and expected nothing less. Believe me we got so much more! From the first bars of Wine Spodee Ode' their audience were transported back in time the amazing original sound that this band produce to each very different number is nothing less than an art form long forgotten and sought after by few. Honey Dont', Midnight Shift Lonesome Road, Jivers, Strollers, Boppers and a bit of hillbilly and a mancub or two to finish, completely awesome a very well thought out set with a bit of everything for everyone. This is a class act, with two incredibly flattering reviews of their last two recordings in Now Dig This, I now know why! The front man has a voice and a half, a friend and I pondered the age old question of, had we heard this voice before and we decided yep, we had. It was not unlike the voice of Darren Spears, loads of emotion and passion and that fifties slant that all singers dream of having. The Band's guitarist, although intent on hiding behind his microphone and speaker due to lack of room, led the band with some cracking riffs and lead breaks and didnt even break a sweat. The bass player just turning 18 and lookin mighty scrummy (says Donna) worked his bass with ease and pleased all the wannabe bass players in the crowd, and pleased all

the girlies when he took to the mic and sang us a couple! The drummer well the drummer kept it all together, tight, until the challenge of the night Wipeout! With Spike in his face daring him to go faster and faster....fantastic. Each musician finely tuned to each other not a bum note, brilliant. Whilst the gorgeous vocalist took to the washboard, no not to scrub his longjohns but to accompany quite a few of the numbers and yes he actually played the thing not just grated it like a cheesecutter, thats an unusual sight and sound and added so much more to an already versatile band. The rockin' Bandits are MIKE LEAD VOCALS, CHRIS GUITAR, DAVID DOUBLE BASS, COLIN DRUMS, the Rockin' Bandits are also absolutely ruddy tremendous!! Their latest CD is available on Foottappin' Records and is available at gigs. From Foottappin' or your usual dealers. To book The Rockin' Bandits call 01268 457767



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MARTYN SAVAGE THE CAT HOUSE CREEPERS

Plucked from obscurity and thrown into the biggest gig this country has seen in many a year TheCathouse Creepers and their record label Raucous are of course still reeling in the aftermath of the Stray Cats visit to the UK, The Mad Rat mag wondered how the hell you get booked to support The Stray Cats, so obviously we contacted the guys and asked them! So come on Martyn how do you get booked to support The stray Cats?

I heard that they were doing a uk gig so I rang surfdog records and asked them who was doing the support, I was told to get in touch with William Morris agency, which I did. They asked for a demo, then I just emailed, rang & emailed until I got the email which said we had the 2 gigs. Best email I've ever had.

Had you played to such a big crowd before or anything near it ?

Well not to such a big crowd who have come to see just the 1 band. We have all done festivals in the past where there's a lot of people.

Did you meet them, if so did they have much to say or was it just the stage guys and the roadies?

We meet Lee Rocker and Slim Jim, we had photo's taken with them, but we only met Brian Setzer once,he was out side Manchester signing autographs,he turned round saw us and asked are you the opening band? We said yes he shook our hands and said great job.

Where did you come from, what was your background, because very few had heard of The Cathouse Creepers before the promotional gumph went out?

We have all know each other for years. I first meet Darren in 1982, he put on Restless in Wakefeild and my first band was the support and he was in the Juvies. Richie was the drummer for Phil Haley until 2002 when he and Darren started the Cat Pack Big Band. I've played for Wildwind and Phil Haley for 7 years.



So did you hit the big money during the tour, after the tour did your gig fee go through the roof?

No what we made just covered the cost of the outfront sound guy and the on stage sound guy. We try to keep our fee at a realistic price, but after this who knows!!

How many dates have you done with The Stray Cats or members of the Stray cats?

We did 2 gigs with the Stray Cats and this July we did 3 gigs with Lee Rocker and his band. Great band and great guy's.

Was it as awesome from on stage as it was from the audience?

I think even more so, to see all those people.... really awesome.

Are you disappointed that there is no mention of you on the DVD? Or was that in the contract? Did you have a contract?

We got the chance to use the film crew at Brixton to make a dvd for ourselves and at a really good deal but, we couldn't afford it. Darren's guitar is in the booklet, a full page, and on the beginning of the DVD.

Tell me about the new album?

We are all pleased with the album, we think it let's people know what we are about. There's 8 originals by Darren and 6 cool covers.

Your part of the Brixton show was extremely energetic, is your show that visual say in a little pub in Manchester?

Yeah, if you can't jump around and enjoy yourself playing rockabilly there's something wrong, doesn't matter what size venue we do the same.

What are you doing now, I mean you really did start at the top didn't you. Where do The Cathouse Creepers go from here?

We have been playing all over the place

since the Stray Cats. Met some good people played some cool places. We just want to carry on playing and recording.

Tell us a good Cathouse Creeper Story,
We had to cover for the Stray Cats on the Manchester gig because they got lost. We had a 45 min set worked out, then we got told as we came off, go back on and play until we tell you to stop. On the second night Gary ,who was roadieing for us, got recognised by Robert Plant and Gary didn't know who he was.

When did you get the deal with Raucous and when was the album recorded?

We sent Howard the demo, he liked it and offered us the deal. We have all known Howard for ages, so it wasn't hard to say yes. It's a great label.

Is there anyone else you would like to support here in the UK or elsewhere,
The Polecats, Meteors, Reverend Horton Heat..

What now is the biggest ambition for the band (worldwide tour) (Hemsby) three hour show outside your local Sainsburys?

Hemsby would be cool,we are thinking of going to the States next year for a couple of weeks trying to get gigs. We'd like to play in Europe and really anywhere that dig's rockabilly.

What are the influences that make the style and sound of the Cathouse Creepers

The usual,Gene,Eddie,Elvis,Carl Perkins,Johnny Burnette,then the 80's stuff,StrayCats,Polecats,Restless,Nolans,BI ue Cats, Bucks Fizz,and all good rockabilly.

If you had only one track left to play in your whole life what would it be?

That's a hard one there' so many.....maybe one by the Nolans!!!!

Well there you have it, how to get a big support gig and what it will be like!!!! Before during and after, Incredibly nice guys whose taste in music covers many genres big band, rock'n'roll and rockabilly. You can buy the CD from Raucous or from gigs, look out for gigs in the rats guide and go see them.

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Fri 24th	The Victoria, Coalville Leics 01509 508423
Sat 25th	Irish centre, Manchester 01924 724166
Sun 26th	The Winding wheel, Chesterfield 01246 345534
Mon 27th	Day off
Tues 28th	Press day

MARCH 2006

Wed 1st	TBA
Thur 2nd	Mason Hall, Edinborough (tba)
Fri 3rd	Croft WMC, Co. Durham 01388 663628
Sat 4th	Marjons Derriford, Plymouth 07866255
Sun 5th	The Rescue Rooms, Nottingham

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KEV'S KAPERS

Having devoured my second portion of finch and chimps of the day, I was well and truly stuffed and feeling too lethargic to give the Brom boot-scooting jive bunnies my guitar swinging all. However, this was the club's Xmas do and therefore one felt that one should make an effort. My enthusiasm waned approximately 20 seconds later when the DJ tested his equipment with the cringing sound of "A Little Late Night Swing", the mod-jivers anthem. I could see Nev making a clenched fist b-line for the Peter Powell lookalike. I managed to do the "Octopus" and the "Basket" across the dance floor in time to curtail any disagreements relating to musical content.

The sound check had been great. We had managed to cut the power to the amps and the disco twice due to tripping the sound meter. Joe was put into action and started climbing up the caretakers ladder to stick a ten pence piece and some gaffe tape over the mic sensor. "Nice one son" I called - phew our problem could be solved. Doors opened and in trickled a few early punters some of which looked like they'd been dressed by the grotto designer at Bon Marche and some who had managed to Xmas-ize their boot scoot outfits and appeared like the lucky strike cowboy fallen into a box of Rob Dyas crackers. Nice!



Within half an hour the hall was heaving. It was a "bring your own" evening, so a good helping

of home made butties, girl repellant cheese and onion pasties and a host of Libfraumilch, Morrison's own Latvian Lager and fruit flavoured fizzy waters, were a plenty.

From experience, I just new this wasn't going to be the best night of my life. The fact that a tressel table had been set up right in front of the stage, so the kids could do some drawing under the lights and that a request had been slipped into my hand by a winking, wanton cowgirl of circa 55 years asking for anything by "hooonky Garth Brooks" plus Nev had been approached by one punter who suggested that her uncle get up and do a number with us.....on the spoons. No b****y way!

I slipped into the dressing room behind the stage, when I say dressing room I mean store for the set of the forthcoming Xmas Panto. I plonked my rear down on Wishy Washy's basket and looked at the guys, who gave me that; thanks for the booking look. "Come on lads, It'll be fun - we've only got to do an hour and then we're out of here" Achy Breaky Heart bel- lowed through the door. A huge sigh leapt from opposite as Joe simulated the motion of firing a Bren gun at the strolling scooters.

Finally Cheggars chucked on a couple of Rockin' faves - Blue Suede Shoes and a bit of Elvis. Nearly our turn I thought. Then the doorway opened and in walked a man with some spoons. "What time we on lads?" Happy Christmas.....

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XMAS 50's Style

What will you be doing this Christmas?

Well if you're anything like me, "yule" be out rockin' and boppin' at one of your local clubs, slippin' back home in time to see 100 worst movies ever or FBI Files Xmas special at the high end of the Sky channel list and sober up in time to get to Cost Cutter on Xmas morning to get some turkey rashers to go with the box of Paxo you've never opened. I jest of course.

Nothing better than a nice family Xmas, lots of good cheer, plenty of grub and a present with a plug on it. Ace!

I'm sure the majority will agree that Xmas time nowadays is more commercially driven and not the celebration that it once was. In the fifties, Xmas wasn't anything like today's present buying frenzy, pubs charging people to come in, toys for the kids that rot intelligence and devoid them of the art of conversation. Bah Bah Bah! A fifties Christmas seemed more serene and innocent and the kids would be extremely pleased if they received a present such as a Slinky or a wind up car or even a visit to see Santa who had made an impromptu appearance at the local Woolies! The following are memories of a Christmas in the 1950s through the eyes of a child:

"Not long after World War Two had finished, things such as sweets, meat and butter were still

rationed. However, we still enjoyed Christmas, perhaps even more so than children do today.

There was no commercial television until the middle of the decade and so there was no pressure for mums and dads to have to buy the latest toy for their demanding offspring.

Computers and computer games, CDs, televisions - all of these were unheard of in those days, which to people of my generation really don't seem so very far off.

About three weeks before Christmas, Mum would cook the puddings in the big Burco copper in the kitchen. We could smell them cooking while we were in bed and it all added to the excitement and anticipation. She also made her own mincemeat, and we had to 'have a stir' of both and make a wish.

There was always a party at school before we broke up for the holidays. We looked forward to these parties, as we could wear our best clothes instead of our school uniforms.

There was also modern dancing, with our music teacher playing the latest records. Instead of a barn dance, the veleta or the dashing white sergeant - the old time dancing that we were taught in school - we were allowed to dance the quickstep, the fox trot and the modern waltz.

These were, for us, the equivalent of today's disco dancing. We were NOT allowed to jive - the forerunner of rock and roll - as that was not approved of!

We used to go carol singing about a week before Christmas, around the district. We always sang the proper words and verses



to at least one, sometimes two carols at each door, and finish off with "Apples to eat, nuts to crack, we wish you 'Merry Christmas' and a rat-tat-tat", knocking the door on the last Tat!

Then, the owner of the house answered the door and gave us a penny or, if they were very appreciative of our renditions, 3d. It was very rare for anyone to send us away

On Christmas Eve, Mum would take us into town, where we went to see Father Christmas at Owen Owens - the big Broadgate department store, now called Allders.

Then, we would go to the Barracks market where mum would buy the fruit and nuts.

My two younger brothers and I would go to bed early after our bath, hanging clean pillow cases at the head of the bed, ready for Santa to come.

In the morning, we would wake early to find our pillow cases full of goodies. I believe it was Christmas 1950 that I received a doll's furniture shop that Dad had made for me - and he had put lights in it. I was thrilled to bits!

My brother, David, had a crystal set radio from one of our uncles. We used to sit in bed on Saturday nights, listening to Jack Jackson's Record Round Up, twiddling with the 'cat's whisker' to tune it in.

We had Christmas dinner at 1pm, on the dot, and Dad always set the pudding on fire after dousing it with whisky. This never ceased to amaze us.

After the pudding, he would share out the sweet ration. Christmas afternoon, uncles,

aunts and Nan would arrive, in time to hear the King's speech on the radio.

For tea, mum always made a Christmas cake and a trifle, with various kinds of sandwiches. We usually had tinned fruit and cream. Not real cream of course, but Carnation milk poured over it, but to us, it was the height of luxury!

The evening was spent playing games with our relations. Snakes and Ladders, Ludo or Lotto.

After we had gone to bed, the grown-ups played Monopoly or cards. These games were considered too adult for us children."

Ho hum, no Two Ronnies, must of been great!

Cool Yule to Y'all.

Nick Saint




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Band: Ocean's Seven
Venue: Maloe Melo, Cruise Inn & Caddy's Diner - Amsterdam/Pumerend
Date: 14th - 16th October 2005

Last time I headed for Amsterdam was roughly three years ago to check out the Cruise Inn, D-Day all-dayer. This time, however, I was off shore to see the seven ex-Slammers/Big Town Playboys/Big Six R 'n' B combo, Ocean's Seven. The guys were on a three date mini-tour of one of the coolest cities in Europe.....Amsterdam. Home of windmills, clogs, ganja (coffee) bars, obliging women and friendly folk. A bit like Yarmouth really, apart from the latter! Kidding !!

First venue was the small blues club, Maloe Melo. A tunnel type club with a great smokey atmosphere, a stage smaller than an olympic medal podium and an owner who can pull a red beer quicker than you can say halibut. The guys sound checked around 9.30 pm and then shot off to prepare for the three sets commencing from 11.30. By 11.00 the club was coming alive and by 11.30 Ocean's 7 hit the stage and although extremely cramped belted out a tight and energetic set to an audience of listeners and dancers. The next two sets followed until 3.30 am when, seemingly exhausted from a long days travel and tongue looseners, the Band played their final encore and headed off to the hotel. A good night demonstrated by a very late emergence from the sack the following afternoon.

Gig 2, and off to the world famous, Cruise Inn. This place is steeped in history and has staged some of the finest acts from around the planet. This is the 'new' Cruise as the old one had to be demolished, however before it was raised to the ground the patrons took the interior down piece by piece and transported it to the new venue wherein all the bits were put back together.



Even the graffiti in the dressing rooms has been lovingly restored. After a few gulps of Cruise Inn draft, I jostled to the front of a now busy club to see the support act. The three gents from Finland, known as the Flatbroke Trio. The guys gave a good 60 minute set of country/rockabilly which the crowd enjoyed. However, the tip jar put in front of the stage by the Band remained empty. No reflection of their performance but a long walk home in prospect. The midnight hour struck and on came the main event. From the off 07 hit the spot and got the floor filled with their opening number the infamous "Jam Up", then into the Little Richard-esque "Juicy Fruit" followed by a smattering of Amos Milburn, Rosco Gordon Little Jesse tunes and my fave of the night "Drinking Beer" - the tune you fool not my hobby?!! Without reference to prior performances, this was faultless - thumping rhythms, huge horns and Monsier Ocean delighting the crowd with an animated and vocally excellent show and certainly had some of the local lasses swooning. Two great sets left the timbers of the Cruise shaking. 2am and the night was still young. I ventured back into the town centre and found myself a little snug with a view of some of the smallest flats I've ever seen. How those women can live in accomodation that tiny, I'll never know?!

Round three. A short taxi ride to a truck park in Pumerend, home of Caddy's Diner. A fifties type Diner with a dance area attached to the restaurant. The lads looked a bit bleary eyed but at 4pm they were back on the boards knocking out some more great R'n'B and Rock 'n' Roll including "Wooly Bully" and "Mr Bear Comes to Town." The floor was packed from the off and stayed so until the end of the second encore. Another stonker and as fresh as the first time I saw them. Promises of gigs next year and the sale of 50 plus CDs waded the lads into the van and back on the road to dear old blighty. I however carried on partying.

Great weekend.

Guy Lawless





Barbara Pittman has died . Barbara passed away from heart failure on October 29th at home in Memphis. Best known for her classic 'I Need A Man' her health declined after her trip to England for The Rockabilly Rave earlier this year. Barbara, one of few women from The Sun stable had just four singles but many recordings issued and released on "I Need A Man" (Bear Family BFX15359, 1989) which contains Barbara's recordings with "The Sunrays" and a number of previously un-issued alternate takes and The Original Sun Sides" (Rockhouse 8307, 1983. The Rockabilly Hall Of Fame will soon feature a tribute page where you can leave messages of sympathy for her family and fans to view.

Nick Willett will mini tour the UK in January coinciding with Elvis's birthday the 6th 7th and 8th of January 2006 will see him play supported and backed by Gene Gambler And The Shufflers Sun 8th 06 is still being organised but catch details in next months issue when Nick Willett will help celebrate Elvis's birthday in style. Jan 6th event will be at Northampton Trades Club and Jan 7th will be at The Ace Café London. Contact Bill Guntrip for more details 01908 227540

Xmas stocking filler for your old psycho pal..... Deathrow The Chronicles Of Psychobilly is available NOW from Cherry Red Books.

Barrence Whitfield will appear in London on February 12th 2006, a one off UK show from the owner of one incredible pair of lungs and limitless energy and enthusiasm for his music supported I believe by the Hemsby Houseband. Watch this space for full details in the next issue.

The Rockin' Daddy is dead, Sonny Fisher died October 8th aged 73. Fisher only made a few recordings with Starday Records in Houston during the mid-'50s, most notably Rockin' Daddy and Hold Me Baby, but he left a lasting impact in Europe and the UK. Rockin' Daddy has to be his legacy to the UK and it's host of musicians.

Teddyboys and Teddygirls from around the world are rushing to sign up to The Federation Of Teddyboys. www.federation-of-teddyboys.tk

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NEWS

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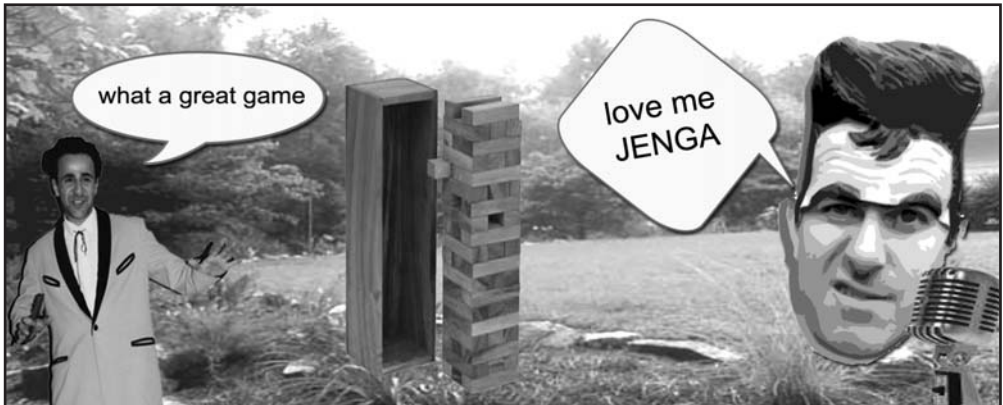
Founder members John Facer from Northampton and David Burke from Australia have members from Japan, Finland, Germany, Denmark, Spain and the UK but more members are required. Fill in the registration form online and keep the drape alive! Or call John for more details 01604 451774

BAKER KNIGHT prolific songwriter has died aged 72. Knight whose hits were recorded by stars such as Elvis Presley, Ricky Nelson , Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and most recently Paul McCartney wrote an amazing 1000 songs in twenty years from the 1950's to the 1970's. His own efforts as a singing star got him recorded and his one hit ' Bring My Cadillac Back' was taken off air after selling 40,000 records in two weeks because the powers that be thought it too much of a free commercial for Cadillac, but a chance meeting when almost destitute with Ricky Nelson the rising teenage idol changed his luck for ever as Ricky's management arranged the first two of 21 hits that Ricky recorded that were written by Baker Knight. Baker Knight leaves his unforgettable music Lonesome Town and I Got A Feeling and many more.

There will be two Eddie Cochran festivals in 2006 watch this space for details of both...

Kwiff Kwipps (#2)

by the Sherriff



Bands: Big Sandy
& the Fly Rite Boys
Jack Rabbit Slim
Venue: Acacia Ballroom, Dartford
Date: Friday 4th November 2005

This was arguably the biggest rock n' roll event in the UK since The Stray Cats visit to the UK last year. Everyone seemed excited about it.

Of course it was Big Sandy And The Flyrite Boys that drew the initial attention. They are American, they don't gig here often enough, so the chance to see them within the environs of a club, was tempting indeed.

Support was to be provided by **Jack Rabbit Slim**, whose current CD Album, *Sin-endo*, has got everyone worked up. Simply put, they are the hottest things on the block in the UK at the moment. So not only were they chuffed to get such a prestigious gig, but DJ/Promoter Pete Bruce, showed someshrewd promoting skills by adding them to the bill.

At only £10 on the door it was hardly surprising that the queue to get in was impressive, containing an eclectic array of rockabillys and rockers, mixed in with other music lovers of all ages and class that perhaps would not be seen at most rocking venues.

However, as I mentioned,



A Big Sandy gig in the UK is about as rare as rocking horse droppings, so it does tend to attract all and sundry.

Promoter, Pete Bruce doubled up as DJ, ensuring that the crowd were suitably warmed up with a mixture of good solid rockin' and the dance floor fillers, which did exactly what they are supposed to do...fill the dance floor and coupled with a few strollers so that the more mature could catch their breath, and a few references to stampeding buffalos when the floor was busy with women strolling!

Jack Rabbit Slim opened with a fiery version of the still rockin' Eddie Cash's *Doing Alright* and the crowd went wild, this set the pace for the next two or three numbers and the crowd went wilder still!

If you don't like your rockabilly fast and furious, then Jack Rabbit Slim are not the band for you. The boys flew through an hour's set of rip it up rockabilly and a few more laced with a good spattering of stuff from the album including *Gypsy Curse*, *The Touch*, *Long Time Dead*, *Cherry Pie*. Pete called for an encore or two and the guys finished with a wild version of Ronnie Dawson's *Rockinitus* followed by rapturous applause, cheering, whistling and some silly bint trying to catch it all on film (me). Still, it was worth every minute of being spilt on, elbowed and toe trodden on and I for one can't wait till the next time.

Big Sandy and the Flyrite Boys were due on at 10.30 but at 10.45 Pete was still filling the dance floor. Finally sound perfect and band ready, the Flyrite Boys and Big Sandy (who I admit to knowing nothing about - I have a cou-

ple of albums that I love but that is about it) took to the stage tequila in hand. Now I could barely hear myself think for the first few numbers as the cheers lingered round the room.

The band were very tight consisting of some well-established players such as Ashley Kingman, Bobby Trimble, Jimmy Roy and Jeff West, and there is no doubt about it, these boys can play.

I'm not a hundred percent sure what was expected by the crowd, but if it was out and out rockabilly, then they were disappointed. Big Sandy and the band certainly can play that stuff, but have moved on since the early days of their career. Their set now consists of western swing, smoothly mixed into a stylish lounge act. Very laid back, very classy and very easy going.

There were some, probably those that knew Big Sandy only by name and not by music or reputation, that decided this wasn't for them, however, most of the rockabillys stood fast till' the bitter end, appreciating the varied musically superb set..

Big Sandy is a charming man and as ever a formidable front man. The requests shouted from stage front were performed without exclusion and friends and fellow musicians all grinned up at the stage. All in all this was definitely a night of fine music and beautiful woman and dapper dan's lovin' it live at the acacia. A word of warning to anyone experiencing rockabilly for the first time though.....

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Rhythm & Blues Reviewed

Apollo Theatre, Harlem -

A wee bit of history

One November night in 1955, when a young man from Memphis, Tennessee makes his way in a cab uptown to visit the Apollo Theatre on 125th Street. In many ways it was like a pilgrimage for the 20-year-old, in New York for the first time to meet with his record company. The man in question was **Elvis Presley**, and he spent many a day and night at the theatre. He had listened to and emulated black singers all his life but now was the time to see the place where so many of them had made their name. Elvis was from Memphis, a hotbed for great Southern gospel and rhythm and blues singers but it was Chicago guitarist, **Bo Diddley**, who made a lasting impression on 'The King' that night.

In fact, Diddley unwittingly came to the rescue of another popular white star at the Apollo in 1956.

Buddy Holly and the Crickets had been booked into an all-black show, promoters and fans in New York assuming them to be black. When Holly came out on stage the Apollo audience couldn't believe it! Launching into the song 'Bo Diddley' just might've saved him that night! Diddley, the subject of that song and the man with the big black Stetson and rectangular-shaped guitar, regularly brought the house down at the Apollo. The blues and gospel shows of the '50s caused similar commotion. When acts like **Thurman Ruth's Gospel Caravan** played the theatre in 1955, by all accounts the Holy Spirit would enter the build-

ing! The audience felt a step closer to God and were whipped into a frenzy.

It was through a secular take on Southern gospel music that the era's dominant sound would develop. The '50s became the era of rhythm and blues and it was the **Orioles** who had signalled its arrival in 1949. According to Jack Schiffman in his book *Uptown*, the raw emotion captured in lead singer Sonny Til's vocals and moves "affected the girls like an aphrodisiac," bringing a new look and a new sound to the Apollo. The group's biggest hit 'Crying In The Chapel', a remake of a country-and-western song, was recorded in New York while the Orioles were at the Apollo and performed for the first time at the theatre. The crowd took to r&b with open arms. In fact, they couldn't get enough of it. A precursor to rock & roll, r&b was a clear break from mainstream white pop, a purely black music, drawing on the vocal passion of gospel, the rhythm of swing, and the gutsiness of the blues. It was looked down upon by whites and middle-class blacks, who viewed it as wild and low-class, of being overtly sexual. But the music was very much a product of its environment. As discrimination and the social hardships facing blacks worsened after World War II, the creators of rhythm and blues took inspiration from their gospel roots, and groups like the Orioles and the **Dominoes** channelled their creativity into making something out of the hardship. Up until now *Billboard* magazine called black hits 'race records,' but from 1949 these records fell into the 'rhythm and blues' chart, future Atlantic Records vice-president Jerry Wexler coining the term while at the magazine.

With **Ray Charles's** 1954 hit 'I Got A Woman,' the genre was firmly established, but it was **Sam Cooke**, former lead singer of the Soul Stirrers who was the first of the big gospel stars to cross over with 'You Send Me' in 1957. Cooke possessed an incredibly natural flowing voice and his commercial success sent tremors through both the gospel and pop worlds. **Clyde McPhatter's** soaring vocals made the Dominoes, then the Drifters hugely popular. Jackie Wilson replaced McPhatter

in the Dominoes before going solo himself, and became one of the great male acts of the day. His style combined gospel with raw passion, as well as acrobatic dance moves. The **Drifters** broke up when McPhatter joined the army in 1955 and the Five Crowns, headed by **Ben E. King**, became the new Drifters and continued to be successful. Bobby 'Blue' Bland is said to have got his style from the preaching of Reverend C. L. Franklin, Aretha's father in Detroit, and the bellowing **Big Joe Turner ('Shake, Rattle and Roll')**, **Little Richard**, **Fats Domino**, **Chuck Berry**, the **Coasters**, and the **Platters** were also very popular. Bill Haley and Elvis may have blown the pop charts open with the r&b sound, but black artists too were reaching white audiences, as proved when 'What'd I Say' took Ray Charles to the top of the pop charts in 1959. **Little Willie John** was a soulful r&b singer who achieved his greatest success with 'Fever' (later to be covered by Peggy Lee in 1958). In Ted Fox's Showtime At The Apollo, Bobby Schiffman, who became active in running the theatre in the early '50s, says: "Willie John in my opinion was the best male singer I ever heard...he used to send chills up and down my spine." Willie John also helped promote the career of **James Brown** but a heavy drinking habit led to his downfall. He would die of pneumonia in prison in 1968, convicted of manslaughter. He was 30.

As the big bands died out not every artist to emerge in the '50s followed the traditional r&b route.

Screamin' Jay Hawkins certainly danced to a different beat, scoring a hit with 'I Put A Spell On You' in 1956. As part of his routine, he would emerge from a coffin dressed in a cape, holding 'Henry', a



stick with a skull attached! His wild performances caused chaos in the theatre. James Brown won an amateur night in the '50s and the new sound of rhythm and blues created a seemingly endless supply of new stars on amateur nights. For both the audience and record companies, the Apollo was the place to be on a Wednesday night. Leslie Uggams appeared on Amateur Night a mere seven-years-old and made her Apollo debut aged nine in 1952! Anthony Gourdine, later to become the teenage star of **Little Anthony and the Imperials**, was originally turned down the amateur slot

however.

The 1950s saw the rise of the disc jockey as record companies realised that playing discs on air was beneficial and publicly airing records shouldn't be solely jukebox territory. Deejaays such as **Alan Freed** (who coined the term 'rock & roll'), Jocko Henderson, Rocky G and Doc Wheeler replaced producers as the organisers and hosts of shows at the Apollo. In keeping with this shift, Bobby Schiffman phased out many of the variety acts and concentrated more on the top r&b acts who had hit records on the radio. The Apollo's r&b revue had as many as 12 singing acts on one bill and although these revues were more expensive to produce, their popularity turned the theatre's financial fortunes around. One comedian who made his name at the Apollo during this time was Timmie Rogers, the first comedian to headline at the theatre in 1957. Rogers was instrumental in getting rid of blackface comedy in the late '40s and was the first black comedian to wear a tuxedo in his act, like a white man. The great Joe Louis, former heavyweight boxing champion of the world, became an unlikely comedy sensation in 1953, performing with sidekick Leonard Reed, the Apollo's manager at the time. In the mid-'50s, Sammy Davis Jr., an Apollo veteran, was said to be the most successful black entertainer of his day, earning over \$21,000 for a week at the theatre. He could do it all from dancing, to singing, to being a funny man, and although he performed all over the world, the Apollo always held a special place in his heart.

Despite the dominance of rhythm and blues in the '50s, there were still a great variety of acts that continued to play the Apollo. The Christmas 1951 performances of Josephine Baker went down a storm. Now a French citizen, Baker had made her name in Paris in the 1920s with her sensational 'La Revue Negre.' She finally played the Apollo aged 45 and her wardrobe was said to be worth \$250,000! Another black woman who represented a very different world to that of Harlemites was Eartha Kitt. Nevertheless, the Apollo audience immediately warmed to her, proving that it didn't matter where you were from. When you came out on stage at the Apollo, your performance was all that mattered.

Jim McLaren

RATS GIG GUIDE

PLEASE CONTACT VENUE FOR CONFIRMATION.

Thu 1 Dec Charlies Bar 2b Pier Hill Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2AJ Cat & the Hot Tin Trio Radar Record Hop 01268 457767

Thu 1 Dec Hanworth RnR Club Royal Naval Club, Park Road, Hanworth, Midsx record hop only Wildcat Pete 01464 672605

Fri 2 Dec Austin S&S Club 30 Tessall Lane, Longbridge, Bham Juke Box Jive 0121 475 1641
Fri 2 Dec Birdwell Club Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Nr Barnsley, S.Yorks S70 5UY Fever Clive the Jive 01226 742377

Fri 2 Dec Bolton Tonge Ward RnR Club Tonge Ward Labour Club, Ainsworth Lane, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancs Jive Street Jivin' Jim 01204 410483

Fri 2 Dec Daddy Kool's Brackley Town Football Club, Churchill Way, Brackley, Northants Sun-downers Pin-Up Record Hop 01295 276848

Fri 2 Dec Dale Tavern West Street, Worsborough Dale, Barnsley, Yorks S70 5PG Starcats Dave B 01226 205611

Fri 2 Dec High Royds Social Club Menston, Otley, W.Yorks Big Al's Hoodoo Kings Shoe Shine Boy/Tallulah 01943 465457

Fri 2 Dec Rayners Rock'n'Roll Grove WMC, Pen-leys, Grove Street, York, N.Yorks Class Of 58 plus DJ 07752 333094

Fri 2 Dec Rockaboogie Jive Club Victoria Club, Victoria Road, Coulsdon, Surrey record hop only Rockin Robin/Jiveman Pete 020 8681 6583

Fri 2 Dec Rockin' The Fens Hiam Sports & Social Club, Putney Hill Road, Prickwillow, Ely, Cambs Rockin' The Joint Rockabilly Bob 01638 741402

Fri 2 Dec Rosecroft Club Chelsfield Road, Orpington, Kent Shaun Horton & the Tennessee Trio Pete Bruce 01322 407110

Fri 2 Dec St Marys SC - Batley Melton Street, Batley, W.Yorks Some Like It Hot (ticket only) Johnny Whiteshoes 01924 503758

Fri 2 Dec Taunton RnR Club North Petherton RFC, Beggars Brook, North Petherton, Somerset Slammers Maximum Jive Band Tony Sullivan 01823 332180

Fri 2 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Flying Saucers

020 7622 4001

Fri 2 Dec Ye Olde St Annes Castle Main Road, Great Leighs, Essex Record hop only (rock-'n'roll/jive/rockabilly) Maurice's Rocking Machine 01245 361253

Sat 3 Dec Banbury RnR Club General Foods S & S Club, Spiceball Park, Banbury, Oxon Doomsday Rockers Blast From The Past 01295 278127

Dec 3 Jive Romeros Stage One Oxford Street Long Eaton 0115 932 2897

Sat 3 Dec CHSW Charity Dance Pill Memorial Hall, Pill, Easton-in-Gordano, Bristol Jive Street plus DJ 01275 374965

Sat 3 Dec Dexters Bar Castle Street, Dundee, Scotland Accelerators (6pm)

Sat 3 Dec Folkestone RnR Club - DHB Dover Harbour Board SC, White Cliffs Business Pk, Whitfield, Kent Bad Boys plus DJ 01303 257786

Sat 3 Dec Golden Fleece Cattle Market, Stamford, Lincs Red Rockets no details

Sat 3 Dec Halifax RnR Club Siddal Ex-Servicemen's Club, Halifax, W.Yorks HX3 9JS Al Kilvo & the Aces (ticket only event) D. J. the DJ 01422 354876

Sat 3 Dec Horsham RnR Club Drill Hall, Denne Road, Horsham, W.Sussex tba Wildcat Pete 07966 526260

Sat 3 Dec Jeanette & Michelle's RnR Club Weston-Super-Mare FC, Winterstoke Road, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset BS24 9AA Just Rockin' Big Al 07881 912798

Sat 3 Dec Luton RnR Club Roman Way, Tomlinson Avenue, Luton, Beds Flying Saucers Gary Densham 01582 518211

Sat 3 Dec Miners Welfare Club - Staveley Market Street, Staveley, Chesterfield, Derbys Sun-Rays Dino's Good Rockin' Tonite/Edsel 01246 281522

Sat 3 Dec Newtown Social Club Durham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland record hop only (r'n'r/rockabilly/jive) Rockin' Jukebox Record Hop 0191 410 2914

Sat 3 Dec Nifty Fifties RnR Club - IHC Irish World Heritage Centre, 10 Queens Road, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, Lancs Tailshakers (tbc) plus DJ

01942 724166

Sat 3 Dec Rock House Club Sports & Social Club, William Street, Saxilby, Lincoln, Lincs Avengers Be Bop Boogie Boy 07780 833283

Sat 3 Dec Rockabilly Haven Jubilee Hall, East Tuddenham, off A47 near Norwich, Norfolk Small Town Giants 07886 659136

Sat 3 Dec South Coast Rockabilly Club Avon Social Club, 51 Avon Road, Bournemouth, Dorset Sugar Creek Trio Kat Talk Record Hop 01202 589837

Sat 3 Dec Tam O'Shanter Club Hertford Place, Earlsdon, Coventry, W.Midlands Paul Ansell's No 9 Woody 024 7633 6533

Sat 3 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Rat Pack 020 7622 4001

Sat 3 Dec The Village Hop Stockcross Village Hall, near Newbury, Berks record hop only Dave Bratcher 01488 658186

Sat 3 Dec Towcester Conservative Club Watling Street, Towcester, Northants Strollers Dynamite Dave 07860 943334

Sat 3 Dec Wickham Community Centre Mill Lane, near Fareham, Hants Firebirds Wild Wolfie Smith 01329 833688

Sun 4 Dec BAWA Club Bristol Aerospace Welfare Assoc, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol Colin Paul & the Persuaders Slim Reed - Not Before '54 0117 976 8065

Sun 4 Dec Beaconsfield RnR Club Beaconsfield Football Club, Slough Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2SQ Good Rockin' Tonite Wildcat Pete 01494 672605

Sun 4 Dec Beauwaters RnR Club Beauwaters Club, Nelson Road, Northfleet, Kent Blast Off Pete Bruce 01322 407110

Sun 4 Dec Carshalton Ex-Servicemens Club West Street, Carshalton, Surrey Persuaders

Sun 4 Dec Painthorpe House Country Club Painthorpe Lane, Crigglestone, Wakefield, W.Yorks record hop only (rock'n'roll) Brian/John 01977 613841

Tue 6 Dec Parklands Ballroom (ex ICI/Dupont SC), Wheatley Hall Road, Doncaster, S.Yorks Rock n Roll Knights Dave B 01302 884707

Tue 6 Dec Whitesidewalls RnR Club Ashford Community Centre, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx record hop only (jive/bop/stroll) Whitesidewalls RnR Revue 01784 248950

Wed 7 Dec Ace Café Ace Corner, Old North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 record hop only (hot rod night) Little Carl's Record Hop

020 8961 1000

Fri 9 Dec Bankfield Social Club Huddersfield Road, Elland, W.Yorks record hop only DJ the DJ 01422 372580

Fri 9 Dec Birdwell Club Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Nr Barnsley, S.Yorks S70 5UY Juke Box Eddies Clive the Jive 01226 742377

Fri 9 Dec Blue Moon RnR Club New Road, North Walsham, Norfolk Restless/Bleaky and the Bop Cats 01692 500863

Fri 9 Dec Bolton Tonge Ward RnR Club Tonge Ward Labour Club, Ainsworth Lane, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancs Mark Keeleys Good Rockin' Tonight Jivin' Jim 01204 410483

Fri 9 Dec Clitheroe RnR Club Swan & Royal Hotel, Clitheroe, Lancs Cadillacs Revive 45 01200 443480

Fri 9 Dec McCoys Red Hot RnR - BAC Bexhill Athletic Club, Little Common Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, E.Sussex Jive Street Brian (the unknown) 01424 211996

Fri 9 Dec Railway Club - Nottingham Bestwood Road, Bulwell, Nottingham, Notts Hicksville Bombers Paul 07919 120929

Fri 9 Dec Rock-Ola RnR Club The Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey Island, Essex Firebirds Two Houndogs 01268 515696

Dec 9 Colin Paul & The Persuaders Kirkhallam Social Club Dallimore Road Ilkestone Derbys 0115 932 2897

Fri 9 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Alleycats 020 7622 4001

Sat 10 Dec Athletic Club - Kettering Rockingham Road, Kettering, Northants Ramshackle Daddies Dynamite Dave 01536 510779

Sat 10 Dec Coronation Hall Burrowbridge, Somerset TA7 ORJ Persuaders Phil's Roadshow 01823 698618

Sat 10 Dec Cradley RnR Club Cradley Labour Club (Wilson Hall), Colley Gate, Cradley, Halesowen, W.Midlands B63 2BU Darrel Higham & the Enforcers no details 0121 427 9113

Sat 10 Dec Folkestone RnR Club - CLF Village Hall, Capel Le Ferne, Folkestone, Kent Jive Street plus DJ 01303 257786

Sat 10 Dec Gloucester RnR Club YMCA, Sebert Street, Kinsholm, Gloucs Kingcats 01242 232188

Sat 10 Dec Guildford Hot 50's RnR Club Fairlands Hall, Fairlands Avenue, Guildford, Surrey Jets Two Houndogs 01483 772567

Sat 10 Dec Hardy Spicers RnR Club Hardy

Spicers Club, Edgerton Road, Erdington, Bham tba plus DJ 01827 250303

Sat 10 Dec Jukebox RnR Club Spring Lodge Centre, Powers Hall End, Witham, Essex Bill Fadden & the Rhythm Busters Skinny Jim 01245 260506

Sat 10 Dec King Creole RnR Club Biggleswade WMC, Church Street, Biggleswade, Beds Corvettes Kev 07748 306989

Sat 10 Dec Paris Rock Club - WAC Waterloo Action Centre, 14 Baylis Road, London SE1 Russ Be Bop & the Roadrunners Dave 07944 775556

Sat 10 Dec Path Tavern Mid Street, Kirkcaldy, Fife Buick 55s plus DJ

Sat 10 Dec Preston RnR Club Deafway Centre, Brockholes Brow, Preston, Lancs Crowdads/Shawn Horton & the Tennessee Trio Andy Roberts 01253 852594

Sat 10 Dec Ritz Ballroom 73 Bradford Road, Brighouse, W.Yorks Colin Paul & the Persuaders Bradford Dude 01274 392380

Sat 10 Dec Riverside RnR Club Moorlands Club, Newark Road, Lincoln, Lincs Paul Ansell's No 9 Martin 01522 750883

Sat 10 Dec Shoreham RnR Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex Slammers Maximum Jive Band plus DJ 01903 243392

Sat 10 Dec Starfighter RnR Club Village Hall, Wreningham, near Norwich, Norfolk John Lewis Rock'n'Roll Trio Rockin Roland 01508 494735

Sat 10 Dec Strictly Jive Town Hall, High Street, Yeadon, Leeds, W.Yorks Big Boy Bloater & his Southside Stompers plus DJ 01274 611259

Sat 10 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 tba 020 7622 4001

Sun 11 Dec BAWA Club Bristol Aerospace Welfare Assoc, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol Firebirds Rockin' John 0117 976 8065

Sun 11 Dec Carshalton Ex-Servicemens Club West Street, Carshalton, Surrey Good Rockin' Tonite

Sun 11 Dec Erith RnR Club Erith WMC, Valley Road, Erith, Kent Fever Cruising Record Hop 07973 170056

Mon 12 Dec Perth Concert Hall Perth, Scotland Shakin' Stevens 01569 765653

Tue 13 Dec Music Hall Aberdeen, Scotland Shakin' Stevens

Wed 14 Dec King Creole RnR Club Biggleswade WMC, Church Street, Biggleswade, Beds Gregg G & his Crazy Gang Timeshift Record Hop 07748

306989

Thu Dec 15 Arnold Liberal Club, Nottingham Spinning Rock Boogie 01158784935

Thu 15 Dec Hanworth RnR Club Royal Naval Club, Park Road, Hanworth, Midsx record hop only Wildcat Pete 01464 672605

Fri 16 Dec 3R's RnR Club Reading Civil Service Club, James Lane, Burghfield, near Reading, Berks Rockin' The Joint plus DJ

Fri 16 Dec Ashton Rugby Club Ashton, near Milton Keynes (just off A508 2 miles from M1 J15), Northants Jets Bill Guntrip 01908 227540

Fri 16 Dec Badderley Green WMC 922-924 Leek New Road, Badderley Green, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs tba Jukebox Johnny 01782 537292

Fri 16 Dec Birdwell Club Sheffield Road, Birdwell, Nr Barnsley, S.Yorks S70 5UY Juke Box Jive Clive the Jive 01226 742377

Fri 16 Dec Bolton Tonge Ward RnR Club Tonge Ward Labour Club, Ainsworth Lane, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancs Earl Jackson Band Jivin' Jim 01204 410483

Fri 16 Dec Borough Green RnR Club Village Hall, Borough Green, Kent Lee Scott's Jive Mob Two Houndogs 01732 887033

Fri 16 Dec Dance Jive Memorial Hall, Bodhyfrd (off Chester Street), Wrexham, N.Wales tba plus jive DJ 07812 369702

Fri 16 Dec Elvis Touch Queen's Club, 46 Queen Street, Glasgow, Scotland record hop

Fri 16 Dec Houndogs RnR Club Village Hall, Newport, Essex tba plus DJ 01279 654205

Fri 16 Dec Leabrooks Club Greenhill Lane, Leabrooks, Nr Alfreton, Derbys Glenn Darren & the Krew Katz Mr Jive 01773 833035

Fri 16 Dec Rockaboogie Jive Club Victoria Club, Victoria Road, Coulsdon, Surrey record hop only Rockin Robin/Jiveman Pete 020 8681 6583

Fri 16 Dec Rosecroft Club Chelsfield Road, Orpington, Kent Darrel Higham & the Enforcers Pete Bruce 01322 407110

Fri 16 Dec Shifnal RnR Club Memorial Hall, Five-ways, Shifnal, Shrops Shaun Horton & the Tennessee Trio Ramblin' Rich 07890 748716

Fri 16 Dec South Wales RnR Club British Legion Club, Penlline Road, Whitchurch, Cardiff, S.Wales Mark Keeleys Good Rockin' Tonight Crazee Dave 029 2061 9271

Fri 16 Dec Southern Jivers RnR Club Chelmsford Social Club, 55 Springfield Road (behind Tesco), Chelmsford, Essex Jive Romeros Dinger 07748 765546

Fri 16 Dec Taunton RnR Club North Petherton

- RFC, Beggars Brook, North Petherton, Somerset record hop only Tony Thorpe 01823 332180
- Fri 16 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Midnite Flyers n/a 020 7622 4001
- Fri 16 Dec The Swan - Crawley 1 Horsham Road, West Green, Crawley, W.Sussex 80 Cube n/a
- Sat 17 Dec B52 Club Diner Eastern Perimeter Road, Southend Airport, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6YF Rockin Rocket 88 plus DJ 01268 457767
- Dec 17 Rockin The Joint Stage One Oxford Street Long Eaton 0115 932 2897
- Sat 17 Dec Bristol Jive Club - SH Somerset Hall, High Street, Portishead, Bristol Heartbeats Rockin' John 0117 938 0483
- Sat 17 Dec Crescent WMC 8 The Crescent (rear of the Odeon), York, N.Yorks Meanstreak Melbourne 01904 690311
- Sat 17 Dec Crondall RnR Club The Village Hall, Crondall, near Farnham, Surrey GU10 5QG Riot Rockers Wildcat Pete 07903 145018
- Sat 17 Dec Cuxton RnR Club Village Hall, Norman Road, West Malling, Kent Kingcats Pete Bruce 01732 780076
- Sat 17 Dec Flint Street Social Club Grays, Essex Cat & the Hot Tin Trio
- Sat 17 Dec Foresters Arms 19 Hartfield Road, Forest Row, E.Sussex RH18 5DN 80 Cube
- Sat 17 Dec Harston Village Hall Harston, near Cambridge, Cambs Darrel Higham & the Enforcers Juke Joint Joe 01223 573339
- Sat 17 Dec It's Only Rock'n'Roll Sale Masonic Lodge, Sale, Cheshire Colin Paul & the Persuaders Big Jim Killey 0161 929 0413
- Sat 17 Dec Jive Party - Rivoli Rivoli Ballroom, 350 Brockley Road, Crofton Park, London SE2 xmas special Graham/Ken 020 8946 2664
- Sat 17 Dec Melksham RnR Club Assembly Hall, Market Place, Melksham, Wilts Firebirds Cockney Rebel 01225 706463
- Sat 17 Dec Metro Rockabilly Club 19/23 Oxford Street, London W1 Orbi-Tunes Cosmic Keith 020 8925 3050
- Sat 17 Dec New Town Social Club 50 Formby Road, Lower Halling, Rochester, Kent Alleycats n/a 01634 242647
- Sat 17 Dec Newtown Social Club Durham Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland record hop only (r'n'r/rockabilly/jive) Rockin' Jukebox Record Hop 0191 410 2914
- Sat 17 Dec Rockin' At The Legion British Legion, 399 High Road, Tottenham, London N17 5QX Sunrays Dixie Sounds 07759 874167
- Sat 17 Dec Soldiers & Sailors Club Tamworth Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, Notts Rock Of Ages
- Sat 17 Dec Sounds That Swing RnR Club Shrublands Community Centre, Hawthorn Road, Gorleston-on-Sea, Norfolk Rip It Up The Professor/Rockin' Shades 01760 722803
- Sat 17 Dec St Marys SC - IOW Newport, IOW Jets Rockin' Dave
- Sat 17 Dec Stags Head Newport, Lincoln, Lincs Red Rockets
- Sat 17 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Lucky Strike n/a 020 7622 4001
- Sat 17 Dec Triple S Mansfield Road, Skegby, Sutton-In-Ashfield, Notts NG17 3ED Jump & Jive 01623 515533
- Sun 18 Dec Acacia Ballroom Glaxo Wellcome Club, High Street, Dartford, Kent Mark Keeleys Good Rockin' Tonight Pete Bruce 01322 407110
- Sun 18 Dec Ace Café Ace Corner, Old North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 record hop only (rockers & classic bike night) Big Beat Kris 020 8961 1000
- Sun 18 Dec BAWA Club Bristol Aerospace Welfare Assoc, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol Earl Jackson Band Rockin' John 0117 976 8065
- Sun 18 Dec Beaconsfield RnR Club Beaconsfield Football Club, Slough Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2SQ Darrel Higham & the Enforcers Wildcat Pete 01494 672605
- Sun 18 Dec Carshalton Ex-Servicemens Club West Street, Carshalton, Surrey Avengers
- Sun 18 Dec Erith RnR Club Erith WMC, Valley Road, Erith, Kent Flying Saucers Cruising Record Hop 07973 170056
- Sun 18 Dec Pink & Black RnR Club Cadbury Heath Social Club, Warmley, Gloucs Colin Paul & the Persuaders Rockin' Frank 07990 556165
- Sun 18 Dec Stafford RnR Club White Eagle Polish Club, Riverway, Stafford, Staffs Juke Box Jive Jukebox Johnny 01785 240140
- Sun 18 Dec Swann Inn The Street, Hatfield Peverel, Essex Ocean's Seven 01245 380238
- Sun 18 Dec The Annexe Mapperley Plains Social Club, Plains Road, Mapperley, Nottingham, Notts record hop only (40s&50s r'n'r/jive/r&b/stroll) Spinning Rock Boogie 0115 878 4935
- Sun 18 Dec The Sporting Green corner Hertford Road & Green Street, Enfield Highway, Enfield, London Flames 020 8926 8577

- Sun 18 Dec The Woodgrange 62-64 Southchurch Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS1 2RR Alleycats plus DJ 01702 460133
- Tue 20 Dec Parklands Ballroom (ex ICI/Dupont SC), Wheatley Hall Road, Doncaster, S.Yorks Glenn Darren & the Krew Katz Dave B 01302 884707
- Tue 20 Dec Roosters RnR Club - RVH Village Hall, Ryhall, near Stamford, Lincs Wild Poor Boy Paul 01778 560664
- Fri 23 Dec Banbury RnR Club General Foods S & S Club, Spiceball Park, Banbury, Oxon Colin Paul & the Persuaders/Rockin' The Joint Dancin' Dave 01295 278127
- Fri 23 Dec Basingstoke RnR Club Westside Community Association, Paddock Road, South Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QB tba Jimmy Slick 01256 462305
- Fri 23 Dec Bath Pavilion North Parade Road, Bath, Somerset BA2 4EU Rockin V8's
- Fri 23 Dec Bolton Tonge Ward RnR Club Tonge Ward Labour Club, Ainsworth Lane, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancs Juke Box Eddies Jivin' Jim 01204 410483
- Fri 23 Dec Cheshire Bopcats - DLC Denton Labour Club, Ashton Road, Denton, Cheshire Hicksville Bombers Poor Boy Paul 0161 438 0468
- Fri 23 Dec Elvis Aberdeen Scottish Horse Reg Club, Crown Terrace, Aberdeen, Scotland record hop only
- Fri 23 Dec Harold Wood Social Club Old School House, Gubbins Lane, Romford, Essex Flying Saucers n/a 07947 383802
- Fri 23 Dec McCoys Red Hot RnR - BAC Bexhill Athletic Club, Little Common Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, E.Sussex Lucky Strike Pete Bruce 01424 211996
- Fri 23 Dec Nifty Fifties RnR Club - LLC Lowton Labour Club, 214 Newtin Road, Lowton, Cheshire Phil Haley & his Comments (one-off special) plus DJ 01942 724166
- Fri 23 Dec Putney Club Putney, London Cat & the Hot Tin Trio n/a
- Fri 23 Dec Rock Inn RnR Club Railway Club, Hunting Tower Road, Grantham, Lincs Sunrays Koolgents 07974 646258
- Fri 23 Dec Rock-Ola RnR Club The Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey Island, Essex Kingcats Galaxie Bob 01268 515696
- Fri 23 Dec The Mariners The Harbour, Folkestone, Kent Alleycats
- Fri 23 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 TTs n/a 020 7622 4001
- Sat 24 Dec BAWA Club Bristol Aerospace Welfare Assoc, 589 Southmead Road, Filton, Bristol Darrel Higham & the Enforcers Rockin' John 0117 976 8065
- Sat 24 Dec Ex-Servicemens Club - Northampton Sheep Street, Northampton, Northants Dynamite (evening) AJ/JukeBoxQueen/Dynamite Dave 01604 493713
- Sat 24 Dec Jive Inn RnR Club Bridgewater Sport & Social Club, Bath Road, Bridgewater, Somerset Jive Street (ticket only) plus DJ 01823 259193
- Sat Dec 24 Rip It Up Stage One Oxford Street Long Eaton 0115 932 2897
- Sat 24 Dec Pellon Social Club Pellon Lane, Halifax, W.Yorks HX2 0HF Glenn Darren & the Krew Katz DJ the DJ 01422 354876
- Sat 24 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Rhythm Cats n/a 020 7622 4001
- Mon 26 Dec Boston Arms Junction Road, Tufnell Park, London NW5 record hop only Cosmic Keith + guest 020 8925 3050
- Mon 26 Dec British Railway RnR Club Broad Green, Wellingborough, Northants Class Of 58 Skinny Jim 07748 306989
- Mon 26 Dec British Railway RnR Club Broad Green, Wellingborough, Northants tba Jim 07748 306989
- Mon 26 Dec Carshalton Ex-Servicemens Club West Street, Carshalton, Surrey Rockin' The Joint
- Mon 26 Dec House Of Bop Windsor Club, Windsor Road, Neath, Glam Gene Gambler & the Shufflers Simon Flintstone 07815 158585
- Mon 26 Dec The Griffin Earle Street, Earlestown, Newton-Le-Willows, Mersey Spoils
- Mon 26 Dec Welfare Social Club West End Lane, Rossington, Doncaster, S.Yorks Black Raven Ol' Dell Boy 01302 863125
- Tue 27 Dec Stevenage RnR Club Broadhall Suite, Stevenage Borough FC, Broadhall Way, Stevenage, Herts Spitfires Strollin Steve 01763 241301
- Tue 27 Dec Trouville Hotel Esplanade, Sandown, IOW tba see special events 01983 402141
- Wed 28 Dec Cadbury Heath Jive Club Cadbury Heath Social Club, Cadbury Heath Road, Bristol Rockin Dave D' (xmas Elvis night) Will 01179 380483
- Wed 28 Dec Tam O'Shanter Club Hertford Place,

Earlsdon, Coventry, W.Midlands Kingcats Tel'Star 024 7633 6533

Thu 29 Dec Hanworth RnR Club Royal Naval Club, Park Road, Hanworth, Middsx Bernie Woods & the Forest Fires Wildcat Pete 01464 672605

Wed 28 Dec Jive Street Festival Inn Ilkestone Road Trowell Notts 0115 932 2897

Thu 29 Dec JiveSwing - Haileybury Haileybury, London Road, Hertford, Herts SG13 7NU Maria Vincent & the Millionaires various 01438 718906

Fri 30 Dec Bolton Tonge Ward RnR Club Tonge Ward Labour Club, Ainsworth Lane, Tonge Moor, Bolton, Lancs Al Kilvo & the Aces Jivin' Jim 01204 410483

Fri 30 Dec British Railway RnR Club Broad Green, Wellingborough, Northants Rat Pack Strollin Steve 07748 306989

Fri 30 Dec Brooklands Hotel & Restaurant Barnsley Road, Dodworth, Barnsley, S.Yorks Juke Box Jive Brian/John 01977 613841

Fri 30 Dec Nifty Fifties RnR Club - IHC Irish World Heritage Centre, 10 Queens Road, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, Lancs Mike Sanchez & his band plus DJ 01942 724166

Fri 30 Dec The Pavilion 135 Battersea Park Road, Battersea, London SW11 Flames n/a 020 7622 4001

Fri 30 Dec Winding Wheel Hollywell Street, Chesterfield, Derbys Jive Aces Moggie 01246 230576

Sat 31 Dec Ace Café Ace Corner, Old North Circular Road, Stonebridge, London NW10 Paul Ansell's No 9/Blue Flames Bill Guntrip/Little Carl 020 8961 1000

Sat 31 Dec Basingstoke RnR Club Westside Community Association, Paddock Road, South Ham, Basingstoke, Hants RG22 6QB Alleycats Jimmy Slick 01256 462305

Sat 31 Dec Beaconsfield RnR Club Beaconsfield Football Club, Slough Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks HP9 2SQ Something Else/Sundowners Wildcat Pete + guests 01494 672605

Sat 31 Dec Blue Boar Longworth, Oxon Sugar Creek Trio

Sat 31 Dec Clitheroe RnR Club Swan & Royal Hotel, Clitheroe, Lancs Rock Back The Clock Revive 45 01200 443480

Sat 31 Dec De Havilland S & S Club Hatfield Business Park, St Albans Rd, West Hatfield, Herts Flames

Sat 31 Dec D'n'R Live Snig Hill, Sheffield, S.Yorks Tritons/Unchained plus tba Big Daddy/

Go-Go-Gorilla 0114 257 6953

Sat 31 Dec Folkestone RnR Club - HCC Hawkinge Community Centre, Spitfire Way, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent Firebirds Moonshine Mama 01303 257786

Sat 31 Dec Guildford Hot 50's RnR Club Fairlands Hall, Fairlands Avenue, Guildford, Surrey Kingcats Steve's Stack of Wax 01483 772567

Sat 31 Dec Hardy Spicers RnR Club Hardy Spicers Club, Edgerton Road, Erdington, Bham Jive Street plus DJ 01827 250303

Sat 31 Dec Junction 27 RnR Annesley Social Club, Derby Road, Annesley (A611), Notts Glenn Darren & the Krew Katz Dave B 0115 953 4918

Sat 31 Dec Let's Party Village Hall, Gate Helmsley, York, Yorks Rip It Up plus DJ 07752 333094

Sat 31 Dec Northampton RnR Club - SWMC Semilong WMC, St Andrews Road, Northampton, Northants Ramshackle Daddies AJ The Rockin' DJ 01604 713851

Sat 31 Dec Rock-Ola RnR Club The Paddocks, Long Road, Canvey Island, Essex Good Rockin' Tonite (advance tickets only) plus DJ 01268 515696

Sat 31 Dec Starfighter RnR Club Village Hall, Wreningham, near Norwich, Norfolk John Lewis Rock'n'Roll Trio Rockin Roland 01508 494735

Sat 31 Dec Starfighter RnR Club Village Hall, Wreningham, near Norwich, Norfolk Small Town Giants/Fat Cat Trio Rockin Roland 01508 494735

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Sat 31 Dec The Rocket Holloway Road, London record hop only CosmicKeith/Mouse/Dave C

Sat 31 Dec Skyrockers Stage One New Years Party Oxford Street Long Eaton 0115 932 2897

PLEASE NOTE
deadline for gig listings is the
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please mail to
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JUKE JOINT JUMP

The Bus Stops here !

Since the year 1993, Ian (Aitken) Gillon Jnr has been the driving force behind the jump jive & R'n'B band the **Bus Stop Boys**. For the past decade the band have entertained dance crowds across the UK and Europe with their infectious brand of sassy swing and pumping blues and boogie, however Ian has decided to put the bus into the garage and roll out his new six piece outfit called **Juke Joint Jump**.

The new Band consists of Ian on vocals & guitar, plus Bus Stop Boys' Olly Prime on bass, Paul Richardson hitting the skins, 'Big' Al Bland on tenor sax, plus new boys Max Winter on trumpet and Ed Graham on the joanna. Many of the numbers featured in BSB performances are still in the sets but have been given a kick up the zeros with new horn arrangements, more piano led boogie and a new enthusiasm throughout. Covers of dance floor classics such as Big Fat Mamas Are Back In Style Again, Jump Jive & Wail and Reet Petite and Gone are given the treatment too.

JJJ are soon to record their first CD, clips of which will be available online for download at www.jukejointjump.co.uk in the near future. The site will also include images, gig dates and a bio of the Band.



Ian would like to thank all those who have supported the Bus Stop Boys over the years and hopes that fans and promoters will enjoy the sounds of Juke Joint Jump as much, if not more. Promoters who have booked the Bus Stop Boys have been contacted regarding the changes.



For further information, please contact Ian on 01638 750748 or info@jukejointjump.co.uk



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Back To Bassics

Opinions differ on exactly when the Double Bass evolved into the instrument that we know it as today so let's just say it dates back in varying forms to around the 15th / 16th Century. In the modern combo line up of guitar, drums, keyboard and sometimes saxophone, the double bass is one of the oldest instruments on the scene. OK that's its bragging rights out of the way.

Here's the quick bit, its origins are European probably Italian or German and soon became popular in the local folk music of the day. Until the late 1950's the only strings available were gut and instruments had a range of tunings as well as differing numbers of strings, anything from 2 to 6.

During the 16th century the double bass elbowed its way into orchestral music adding depth to the string section and established itself as a vital player in music. Fast forward to the turn of the 20th century and its array of new and exiting music such as Dixieland, Trad (soon to become the popular music of the day), one Charlie Christian and dare I say it "JAZZ", oh yes, and something called electricity? In short, one day god created the world, man invented the wheel, Scott Joplin wrote "The Entertainer", contemporary dance music found its feet and away we went.

By the turn of the 20th century the double bass had become an integral part of popular music and with the drum kit (as we know it) still in its infancy was often the time keeper for the other instruments and dancers. Then it suffered a major set back, the drum kit found its own voice producing many great players and soloists

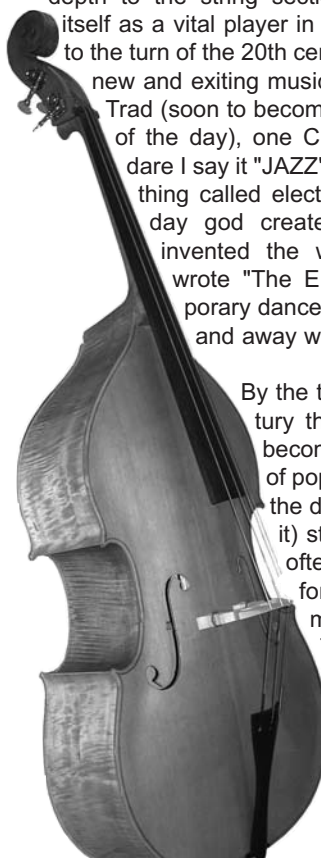
and a man called Charlie Christian turned up for a gig clutching a guitar and a bloody amplifier.

Whilst the drums became a firm allie combining to form the back bone of the rhythm section, bass players now had their work cut out making themselves heard over large brass sections in the new big band era and some players started to adopt the hillbilly or bluegrass style of slapping, as the bass was often positioned close to the drums and back from the horns this style was adopted more out of necessity rather than for effect.

As early as the mid 1920's companies such as Gibson, Regal, Vega and Rickenbacker started producing electric instruments including the (EUB) Electric Upright Bass, this was a slimmed down version of the double bass and was amplified with a magnetic pick up but as there were only gut strings available (steel strings would not appear until the late 1950's) for double/upright bass' the strings had to have a metal coating applied to the strings over the pick up area in order to amplify its sound and it was not until 1949 that the first dedicated pick up for the double bass appeared.

Everett Hull (a bass player) was encouraged by a guitar playing friend Les Paul (sound familiar!) to busy himself with finding a solution to the dilemma, he developed a pick up witch used a microphone attached to the inner end of the peg of the bass thus the name Amplified Peg (Ampeg). Apart from the pick up Hull's company also provided a useable amplifier (dedicated bass amps would not be available for another ten years) and gained some notable endorsers such as Oscar Pettiford (one of the most influential bass players of the early 20th century) Chubby Jackson (Woody Herman Big Band) & Joe Comfort (Nat King Cole) and in the mid 1950's a stereo version came out that included a second pick up on the near side of the bridge, this opened the door for companies such as DeArmond, Kent & Spotlight to further develop double bass pick up's and amplification.

With the demise of the big bands, Blues and jazz with its many offspring became the popu-



lar music of the day with the double bass now playing a major role in popular music and often over shadowed the more regional styles of music such a western Swing, bluegrass and other American and south American music which also featured the double bass heavily.

During the late 1940's new styles were emerging mainly from the US mixing gospel, Swing & Traditional Blues and had been given the tag of R & B. Rhythm & Blues became a launch pad for a lot of the names we now associate with and are inspired by on the rockin' scene today, in the US there was still the great black white divide with blues and R&B denied national air play, fortunately musicians being the kind of animals we are don't really give too much of a s**t about who wrote it (a good tune is a good tune) and some of the new up and coming artists of the early 1950's such as one Mr E Presley & W. Hailey and others, adapted music from their local areas into their own style and with the media keen to find the next big thing, welcomed it with open arms. This had a major effect on the black and other regional styles in the US by exposing the likes of Rockabilly, R'n'R, Bluegrass, R&B and C&W to a wider audience, all of which feature the double bass.

Fast-forward to 1960 and the name Leo Fender, the man who invented the electric bass guitar, that's when it all went belly up. The new electric bass guitar instantly became the mainstay of most popular forms of music for a number of reasons, being a spin off of the solid body guitar it was easier to get around and with a fretted fingerboard was easier to play (which elevated a lot of guitarists to the next level), this kind of drove the double bass underground and became synonymous with jazz and other roots styles.

But the bass guitar did not cross all boundaries as it sounds very different to the double bass and there were also the old school bloody minded players who refused to accept it as a proper bass instrument. All the above reasons and more meant that unlike some other earlier instruments the double bass would not fade into obscurity but remained the preferred instrument within the jazz, bluegrass, rockabilly, hill-billy and other musical circles.

Enter the 1970's The Stray Cats & The Jets and err...The Cellar Men?! Such bands helped to raise the profile of the double bass to a new audience of younger players during the resurgence of the rockin' scene. From time to time the double bass raises its voice in pop music most notably tunes such as Walk on the Wild Side (Lou Reed) & Love Cats (The Cure) and the rash of un-plugged CD's in the 1990's benefited greatly from the use of the double bass but it seems that the jazz and rockin' scenes around the world with their wealth of differing styles, keep the instrument alive in its contemporary setting and accessible to so many players like you and I and without the imagination and forward thinking of the pioneers of early contemporary music as mentioned before, this giant of an instrument might have remained exclusive to the orchestral & classical world, and we can't have that now can we.

On the scene, the regular bass instrument is still the double bass rather than the electric bass, not because one is better than the other but because it is more appropriate to most of types of music played, but when a band takes this music out to new venues and wider audiences such as pubs, social clubs etc; it is usually the sight and sound of the double bass that is the most attractive to the punter, it is worth remembering that the average person will rarely have seen or heard a double bass played live even in the 21st century due in part to successive governments poxy live music policies (thanks for that!)

Ask a casual about the double bass and they will probably say "jazz", ask a player about double bass and they will come back with six or seven styles, all of which can be found on the rockin' scene. Ask anyone why they like or play a double bass and they will tell you it's the most evocative and sexist instrument in the band..... and remember, size does matter.

Steve Ball

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DJ TOP 10

The **Two Moes** hail from the town of Senigalia in the Le Marche region of Italy. One Moe, Angelo Di Liberto is also the organiser of the Summer Jamboree 50s Festival held in August. Check out the website at www.summerjamboree.com for further details.

1. All the Cats Join In - Benny Goodman
2. Come and Get it - Louis Jordan
3. Wham! Bam! Hot Ziggity Zam - Terry Fell
4. You can take Texas out of me - Spade Cooley
5. The Blues Don't Mean a Thing - The Jive Bombers
6. Safronia B - Calvin Boze
7. Joshua Fit the Battle of Jerico - Golden Gate Quartet
8. Take your shoes off Pop - Oscar Mc Lollie
9. Black and Johnny - Ernesto Bonino
10. Pot of Gold - Smith's Ranch Boys

Grazie.



If you are a DJ or band member who would like to publish a Top Ten, please send your entry plus a short bio and picture to mail@madratmag.co.uk.

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Title: Rock Around The EEC Vol.1

Band: Various

Label: Empire Records



The Hometown Gamblers from Belgium kick off this nicely thought out album! What You Think About That? Is a nice paced crossover country ballad harmonica based with some passionate vocals cant say it rocked me, but it wasn't unpleasant and did actually intrigue me enough to check out the band a bit further. Spo Dee O Dee from Germany My Baby's Gone, a cracking hillbilly style fast boppin' but still very much easy listening, toe tappin' at its best. This CD picks up when you get to track three Hick-O-Rhythm,Germany. Red Wine and Reefer, the vocals are strong but not great but this band can rock, more harmonica and fantastic guitar. Lil' Esther & The Tin Stars, Drugstore Rock'n'Roll Netherlands great band, good vocals, phrasing a bit odd must be the accent!!! Enjoyable never the less. Next up Ronnie Nightingale and The Haydocks - Long Blond Hair- FANTASTIC Netherlands. Track 6 Hot Rhythm and Booze - Down On The Farm Boogie, France - Not sure about this one, musically very strong but thought that the vocal mix could have been better but a good song and I'm not a big fan of the yodel. Fireball Steven & The Halebops - Rock Pretty Mama - Sweden, Great Track BRILLIANT!!! In fact play this one loud. Eyeballing Torpedoes - Devil On My Trail -Rawhide a Billy this is an odd one! Distorted vocals, with a country background and a psychobilly edge not unpleasant though if you like you're rockin' fast and furious with lots of effect. Jumpcats - Hoppin and Boppin - Denmark, well backto the traditional - this is good, yeah I really like this, not modern not authentic sounding but somewhere sitting nicely in the middle. Daryl Haywood Combo - Finland I like this too, must be softening.. Strong boppin' from Finland. Atomic Boogie Band - Boogie After Midnight- Finland - really loved this track big band sound, a very endearing accent and lots of good harmonies and backing, musically very strong and not what you would expect from something a band whose title begins with Atomic... Now I've just realised that if I go through the whole 30 tracks you'll be reading this way into the next issue so now I think you have the gist the album really is bands from every country in the EEC and although not all is to my own personal taste it is a damn good album so to save my fingers and your eyes here is my score for this album, which includes our very own Firebirds and The Sabrejets and Italy's Marco Di Maggio. 8/10 The album is well produced and as I said very well thought out, the sleeve notes are informative and I myself will be looking forward to volume two. Definitely one for the Christmas and NewYear's parties!!!!!!

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Beaconsfield Football Club, Slough Road,
Beaconsfield

(A355 south of junction 2

M40 and 100 yards from M40)

SIGNPOSTED "SYCOB" CLUB

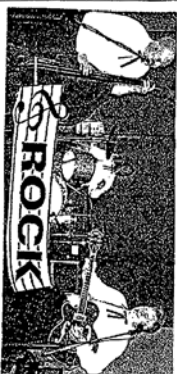
(DOUBLE BILL)



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IN ROLL



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THE DUKE

ROCKABILLY MOMENTS at THE SPEEDFREAKS BALL

As a rule you would never find me at this kind of weekend, I'm purely a rockin' guy. But the offer of working there, the chance to see 'The Go Getters' and 'Restless' on the same bill, and catching up with some old friends swayed it for me. Even more enticing, the whole weekend was being filmed for a documentary/ DVD. Any opportunity for the Duke to be on television is always welcomed, so with that in mind I sprayed my quiff into place and started packing. With the bags finally packed I was off to Pontins at Hemsby. The place was packed, all except 3 or 4 chalets which were booked solid with Psychobillies, Skinheads, Punks, Goths, Mods and Rockabillies, and there was not a bit of trouble all weekend (there was a bit of high jinx in the form of an over excited reveller doing wheel spins on his bike in his chalet in the early hours of Saturday morning. He couldn't understand why he was asked to leave!).

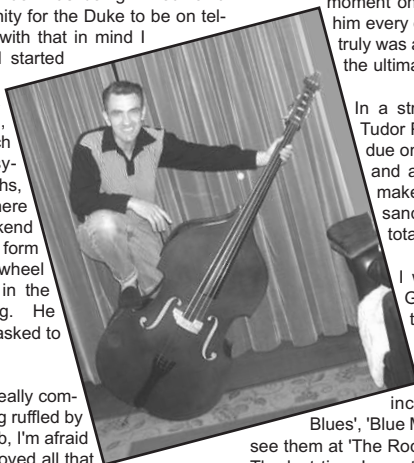
I'm not a 'Meteors' fan so I can't really comment on their set. But after getting ruffled by one of their Kattle for doing my job, I'm afraid my opinion on them has not improved all that much. But I was looking forward to seeing 'The Long Tall Texans' just to see if they differed from the last time I saw them play at the Sussex Rock n Roll appreciation society in Shoreham way back in the mid 80's. But I was put on reception duty (Apparently a few more of the staff wanted to see them as well.) so I missed their set, which included a rhythm guitarist, when I saw them in Shoreham they were a trio.

I was backstage helping out just before the 'Guana Batz' were due on stage, when I heard 'Lawdy Miss Clawdy' being sung very well by the stage door. To my surprise it was Pip (the Batz lead singer) he told me he always prepares his voice before he goes on stage so I told him to carry on and not to mind me. It was about this time that Ray Thomas, the manager of 'Restless' came backstage and promptly joined in singing Eddie's 'Teenage Heaven' much to the surprise of a Showtime security man that just happened to walk through the door at that moment. Pip really has an excellent voice and the highlight of their set for me was Billy Fury's 'Wondrous Place'.

I had a little spare time around midday on the Sunday and I put it to good use by catching 'Little Carl' while he spun the discs in the trader's hall. He had only played two songs when the film crew asked him to stop while they interviewed a trader (the bastards) but once he got going he had most of the hall inhabitants tapping their tootsies with glee. A cool moment came when a Goth trader asked Carl if he did requests. When Carl said yes, the guy replied, "Stay all day and play what you like". Later in the day while Carl was DJ in the main hall a skinhead

came up and asked for 'One Hand Loose' by Charlie Feathers and bopped while it was played. Carl was also the only DJ that people danced to. Now that is getting rockabilly out to the masses.

While going back to my chalet in the early hours of Sunday morning I noticed Peter and Ross of 'The Go Getters' chatting to some guys two doors down from me. So I took some Jack Daniels and some glasses (cheers Phil, I owe you a bottle of JD), and joined in the conversation. I wanted to know more about Peter's association with Ronnie Dawson. He had received a phone call out of the blue from Ronnie asking them to back him on the gigs he was doing in Sweden, and from that moment on he was like an uncle to Peter. Ringing him every other day asking how his family were. He truly was a nice guy who played constantly and was the ultimate rocker. RIP Ronnie.



In a strange way I was looking forward to Ed Tudor Pole's set. Fifteen minutes before he was due on stage I was sent on a beer run (bugger), and as I was working I couldn't refuse. I did make it back in time for his 'Swords of a Thousand Men'. The guy is a showman and is totally insane.

I was more than impressed with 'The Go Getters' set (although the guitarist was a little too heavy for me at times). It was the first time I'd seen them live and the crowd loved them. But why were they not filmed? A few of tunes from their set included; 'Hipshakin' Baby', 'Mad Man Blues', 'Blue Moon Baby' and 'No Breaks'. I can't wait to see them at 'The Rockabilly Rave' in March.

The last time I saw the original line up of 'Restless' was way back in 1981 in a club in Feltham, Middlesex. I loved their debut album 'Why Don't You Just Rock!' and the gig back then was amazing. I really enjoyed their set this time too (after a few sound problems to start with) my only gripe being that they played the tunes way too fast. And I still enjoyed when they doubled up on the double bass that impressed my fellow stagehands. For those of you who like drum solos, Ben Cooper attacked a full kit with venom. And he was sitting down for the set (must be his age) last time I saw him he was whacking on a snare drum and bopping around. I saw him back stage after the gig and I was telling him about the last time I saw the original line up when I noticed he was backing away from me. I told him not to worry I wasn't some crazed fan who wanted a piece of him. That's when I noticed he was halfway through getting out of his stage clothes and was balancing on one leg in his boxers. I bought him a beer later that night as a peace offering.

Just got to say 'Hi' to Yan and Phil, my roommates for having to listen to me going on about everything over the few days we were camped together. And to 50's Phil for saving my life backstage, thanks buddy...

A cool moment I'll remember for a while was seeing three Punks boppin' like crazy to Kick Em' Jenny's 'Stressed Up'. And to Mick (The SpeedsFreak) "It was awesome man, I had a ball..."

The Duke



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