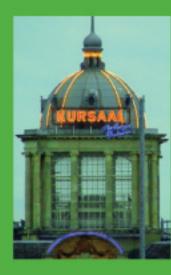
SOUTHEND MUSIC - AN EXHIBITION

This exhibition will reflect the growth, variety and development of popular music by the groups and individuals that grew up and/or lived in the Southend-on-Sea area. From the Rochford Hundred and along the Thames to Canvey, then cutting inland to Basildon.

The exhibits will consist of mainly contemporary photographs - originals, blow-ups or collages. The curator will ultimately be responsible for the selection, creation and production of these exhibits. There will also be posters, album sleeves, handbills and other artwork. As examples, the detachable 'mural' from the *Shades* seafront coffee bar (where the *Paramounts* first performed) still exists, as do *Vivian Stanshall*'s paintings and drawings. There'll be musical instruments and other relevant artefacts such as a Greenop banjolele, manufactured at Norton Greenop's banjo factory in Leigh on sea or Chris Copping's original bass amp that went round the world with *Procol Harum*.

This being a celebration of music, an appropriate, accompanying soundtrack will play throughout. This will be on sale as a set of CD's. A glossy, commemorative book will also be published. There is also Roger Deakin's superb television documentary 'Southend Rock', which could be screened, as well as the Kursaal Flyers 'fly on the wall' television programme.



Intertwined with the exhibition will be live performances at various venues throughout the area. Not many of the older venues survive but we still have the *Kursaal*, the *Cricketers* (still with the same family running it since the '60's), and there is a possibility the *Pier* may have a theatre reinstalled by the time the exhibition opens. Also we have the *Cliff's Pavilion* and the *Palace Theatre*. Who we can get to perform will be clearer after some research. Current performers shouldn't be a problem, though how many of the older acts would be happy to be involved is yet to be established.

The exhibition's start date will be just after the end of the Second World War with the re-opening of The Kursaal - and it's ballroom. The Kursaal dance floor, argued by some to be the best in the land, is a fitting place to start. The job of providing the music was given to Howard Baker, a musical legend at the time. Instrumental in promoting the careers of Vera Lynn, Charlie Kunz, Joe Loss, Norrie Paramour and Dorothy Squires. At first he would play just the sort of



The Cricketer's Inn, circa 1970's

music people wanted before the Feuhrer's interruption but with the explosion of Rock 'n' Roll in the 50's musical tastes begin to change. Indeed, Howard brought in local rockers to augment the night's performance, the Colin Dale Combo being one such group. The Kursaal was just one of many venues providing musical entertainment in our area, there was also the theatre at the end of the Pier, the early on home of the Ben Oakley Orchestra.

The Ritz and Odeon cinemas doubled up as live act venues. Ted Heath and his Music at the Ritz and the Stan Kenton and his Orchestra at the Odeon are among the many. These venues went on to put on shows by the rock 'n' roll stars of the 50's, then in the 60's, Cliff, Everly Brothers, The Beatles, Gerry and the Pacemakers, etc., etc. Westcliff's

Palace Theatre has only put on musical performers comparatively recently; after the war it was mainly an outlet for legitimate theatrical productions but here too were occasional music shows. The *Palace* and *Queens* hotels put on concerts, as did many of the pubs. Pubs also housed folk clubs, in their heyday the most notable were at the *Blue Boar*, the *Railway* and Benfleet's *Hoy and Helmet*. There were other live music venues such as the *Arlington Hall* in Chalkwell.

Since opening in 1964 the Cliffs Pavilion has been the main venue for headline international musical performers. And in Basildon there was the *Locarno*, most renowned in the 60's as the *Dave Clark 5*'s home from home. Then there were the clubs/bars: *The Nightscene*, *The Shades*, *The Studio* and coming up to date, *Club Riga*, *The Sunrooms* and *Chimnery's*.

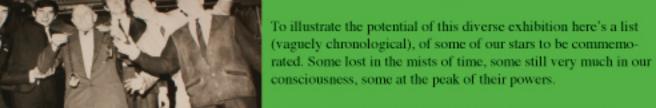
There was on occasions, a floating venue. From 1957 to '63 The Royal Daffodil did 'Rock Across the Channel'. The ship sailed from Southend to Boulogne jammed packed with fans, local bands and others - The Shadows, Gene Vincent and Jerry Lee Lewis being among the guest artists.

Apart from performers and venues another aspect of musical creativity is song writing. One of the most prolific hit composers' of the last century, is Westcliff's own, Geoff Stevens. Geoff has had hits with not only 60/70's groups such as Manfred Mann, Herman's Hermits and The New Seekers but international recording stars such as, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, David Soul and Scott Walker, to name just a few. Not only did Geoff write he also produced, discovered and managed talent. Most famously, Donovan. Geoff also created The New Vaudeville Band. All these artists will feature in 'Geoff's Area' in the exhibition.

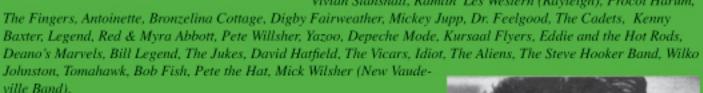
Peter Eden was Geoff's business partner for several years. Peter more or less went straight into the music business soon after leaving Southend art school.

Another worthy in this 'roll call' is Leigh-on-Sea's *David Hatfield*, not only was he in major local bands (*Kursaal Flyers/Hogshead*) he brought over and tour managed top US country acts such as *Arlo Guthrie*, *Peter Rowan*, *Flaco*

Jiminez, Jim Rooney and The Juggernaut String Band. David also ran his own record label, Waterfront.



Howard Baker, Ben Oakley, The Nancy Mount (Peggy's sister) Trio, The Whirlwinds (later, Force Five), The Barracudas, The Colin Dale Combo, The Monotones, Houston Wells and the Marksmen, The Orioles, The Paramounts, The Planets, Ian Gregory, The Dave Clarridge Band, The Problems, Oliver Benson, Geoff Stevens, Peter Eden, Vernon Haddock's Jubilee Lovelies, The Dave Mills Band, Graham Bonney, Nookie Soul, Vivian Stanshall, Ramlin' Les Western (Rayleigh), Procol Harum,



Plus a plethora of Punk Bands:

The Dave Clark 5 at Basildon's Locarno, circa 1964.

retical Girl, Get Cape. Wear Cape. Fly

The Machines, The Vandals, The Spurts, The Psychopaths, Captain
Strange, Deciballs, The Shocks, The Synyx, The Icons, The School Bullies,
The Bleeding Pyles, The Convicted, The Kronstadt Uprising, Allegiance
To No One, Autumn Poison, Burning Idols, Stax Century, The
Prey, Anorexic Dread, Armless Teddies, The Leepers, Speedball, Grinder,
Stripey Zebras, 86-Mix and Taming the Outback.

Moving on:

Danielle Dax, Joy Sarney, Scintillale, Tina Cousins, Ponjo's Stompers, Hogshead, The Hamsters, Frank Mead, The Pilchards, Mo Wittam, Robin



Trower, Alison Moyet, Denise van Outen, Lee Mead, Dave Bronze, Jake Shillingford/My Life Story, These New Puritans, Seb & Barry Philpot (The Hoosiers), Pier Talk, The Violets, The Legendary Undertakers, Neil's Children, The Horrors, The Ugly Guys, Famous Potatoes, Illegal Eagles, Ruckus Juice an' Chitlin's, Dirty Fairies, Seasiders, Theo-

Geoff Stephens, 1964

There are other more spurious Southend musical connections: Status Quo's Francis Rossi is related to our town's ice cream dynasty and Ian Dury reckons he contracted polio in a Southend swimming pool. Joe Brown was a fireman on the Southend/Fenchurch Street Railway and we're sure *Helen Mirren* must have sung sometime in her illustrious career - but maybe that's stretching things a bit. Even so, she is to be approached to open this prestigious event.