



# **THE CAVERN, LIVERPOOL**

WRITTEN BY JONATHON WILD

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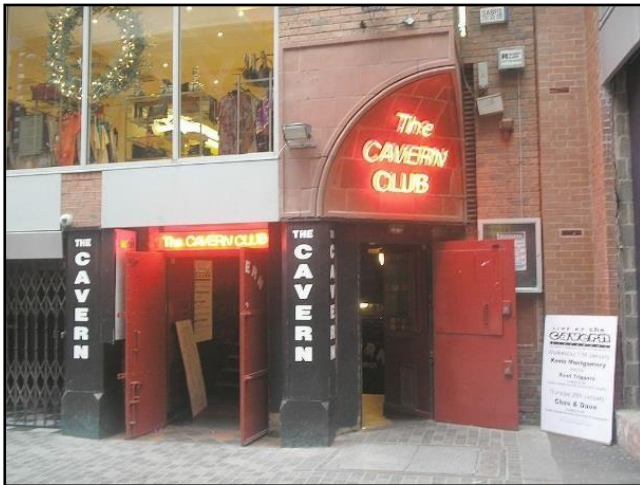
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## CAVERN WALKS – BRIEF OVERVIEW

The City of Liverpool is famous for many reasons and includes some world firsts, as well as being noted for its music, history and its involvement in shipping. The area has grown from being named after a small creek (Liuerpul) to one of the largest shipping ports in the World. It boasts two Cathedrals, the largest underground folly in the UK, numerous listed buildings, links to the Titanic and the White Star line, the world's first tunnel under a tidal estuary, highest and heaviest peal of bells in the world, first lending library, and the UK's oldest surviving classical orchestra. This list is almost endless, and Liverpool is famed for much much more.

However, there is one music group that put Liverpool firmly on the map. The Beatles. They were a group of 4 lads from Liverpool who took on the musical world and won. A rock band formed in Liverpool in the 1960's and put the city amongst the places to visit – from the 1960's to today, the centre of Liverpool is packed full of tourists interested in the sights and sounds. The Beatles played in the Cavern Club in the Mathew Street area of Liverpool and yet this site closed and was partially demolished in 1973, only being excavated in re-opened in 1984 though, not the original footprint.



*The Cavern Club – Copyright Wikipedia.com*

Cavern Walks was constructed after the demolition of the former warehouses in Mathew Street. Many stating that this should never have happened, and that the demolition took no consideration of the Cavern Club. The bulldozers moved in on this property in 1973 and while the building above ground was demolished, the Cavern Club cellars were not destroyed, simply backfilled with rubble.

However, the demolition that took place made the original cellars unstable and as such, the original Cavern Club footprint would never be used again in its originality. Cavern Walks was completed and opened on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 1994 and included the redesigned Cavern Club, restaurant and memorabilia shop. Cavern Walks is host to two galleries of exclusive designer shops, all completely under cover and away from the hustle and bustle of the main Liverpool's busy streets.

Cavern Walks, while only 35 years old, has been through periods of neglect and has fallen out of the footfall since the shopping complex Liverpool 1 opened.

David Backhouse was the architect tasked with the design of the shopping centre. He was told on the day that John Lennon had been shot and was dead. *"That morning, he said, I completed the designs for Cavern Walks and Mathew Street's renaissance."* Placed above the Mathew Street entrance is a dove; an allusion and tribute to John Lennon's enduring desire for peace.

## MATHEW STREET HISTORY



Mathew Street is in Liverpool (L2) and connects North John Street with Rainford Square, Temple Court and Stanley Street. The Street is one of the most famous streets in Liverpool, and if you know of the Beatles history, one of the most famous streets in the world.

The block that Cavern Walks now stands on is surrounded by Mathew Street, Rainford Square, North John Street and Harrington Street. Mathew Street was originally called Mathew Pluckington Street after a famous Liverpool Merchant, but the name was shortened to Mathew Street.

*Mathew Street 1847 - Copyright [historic-liverpool.co.uk](http://historic-liverpool.co.uk)*

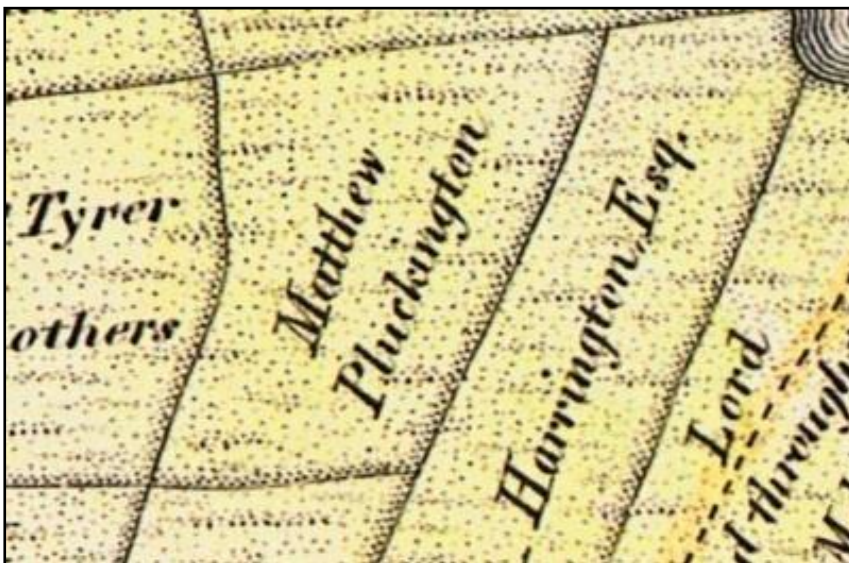
Throughout the history of Liverpool in its time, the history of Georgian Liverpool is as important as any other history section of Liverpool. Perhaps more so as it began to shape the streets of Liverpool, and made the City grow by its trading and residents.

Mathew Pluckington, a local trader living in Liverpool saw this plot as a valuable space, not too far from the waters of the Mersey, and right in the centre of Liverpool. He purchased this plot of land and the thoroughfare was named after him as Pluckington's Alley.

In 1766 the list of inhabitants was: John Fairfax, Merchant. James Foden, Tallow Chandler & Soap Boiler. Rauthmell Gildard & Co., Sugar Bakers. Captain Gill, Ship's Carpenter. William Hambleton, Slater & Plaisterer. William Brundrett, Slater & Plaisterer. John Maine, Merchant. Captain George Matthews, Captain. John Milligan, Linen Draper & Milliner. Hugh Williams, Merchant. Mr. William Statham, Attorney-at-Law.

In the Baptism records of St Peter in the City of Liverpool, there is a baptism record on the 29<sup>th</sup> March 1747 of William Pluckington, son of Matthew Pluckington. The 'Abode' was Matthew Street and the Occupation was a Mariner.

It is interesting to note that the spelling of Mathew Street over the years. A map of 1785 notes the area of Mathew Street as we know it now as 'Pluckington's Land'. However, Eyes map has this area as 'Matthew Street.' A Collins map of 1851 shows this with two letter T's. It is only when the Brittons map of 1807 and the Kayes map of 1810 show the spelling with one letter T. *Does the City Council take this spelling from the two middle maps? If so, why? The later map shows the correct spelling as does the earlier map.*



The map on the left is the 1650 Map of Liverpool and shows the parcels of land at the time before the roads were constructed.

The Matthew Pluckington parcel of land and the Harrington plot were named and yet, the names have continued as Mathew Street and Harrington Street.

The Harrington parcel of land bordered Castle Street and the boundary of Liverpool Castle.

*1650 Map of Liverpool  
Copyright  
[liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com](http://liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com)*

The parcel of land that Matthew Pluckington owned was named as Pluckington's Alley, for this alley ran from North John Street to what is now known as Stanley street. On the other side of the land would be the border for (the now) Victoria Street.



An early view of Button Street and Rainford Square showing original warehouses (left). Warehouses in Liverpool in the 1900's would have been in their high hundreds. Today, there are fewer than 100 dotted around the city.

The loss of some of the later warehouses such as the Goree provoked an outcry, for even the Art Historian, Nikolaus Pevsner who stated 'The magnificent classic warehouse of Duke's Dock of 1811, one of the oldest preserved examples of this type in Liverpool was needlessly destroyed in 1966.'

*Image to the left - Copyright Liverpool City Council*

Either side of this alley were warehouses built either side for local trade and produce. The tall narrow warehouses would be filled with local produce and local tradesmen and would have been a very busy and narrow thoroughfare to other parts of the town. Matthew Pluckington certainly had his eye on the ball when it came to purchase the right plot of land but would have not realised the infamous history behind his patch of land to this day.

In 1863, James Stonehouse wrote about the History of Liverpool and could not have summed up the warehouses of this area in a more suitable note: *(Copyright James Stonehouse, Recollections of Old Liverpool)*

*Could we draw aside the thick veil that hides the future from us, we might perhaps behold our great seaport swelling into a metropolis, in size and importance, its suburbs creeping out to an undreamt-of distance from its centre; or we might, reversing the picture, behold Liverpool by some unthought-of calamity—some fatal, unforeseen mischance, some concatenation of calamities—dwindled down to its former insignificance: its docks ship less, its warehouses in ruins, its streets moss-grown, and in its decay like some bye-gone cities of the east, that once sent out their vessels laden with "cloth of blue, and red barbaric gold." Under which of these two fates will Liverpool find its lot some centuries hence? —which of these two pictures will it then present?*



On the left shows the G. F. Hayward & Co Fruit Merchants on Mathew Street. The building was then transformed into the Liverpool School of Language, Music, Dream and Pun and then turned in to Flanagan's Public House.

Mathew Street was lined with its original warehouses and some still survive to this day, however they are a shadow of their former self with the original workings removed. The warehouses in this area are now home to flats rather than original working businesses.

*Image copyright - Liverpool City Council*



The image left shows Mathew Street looking down towards Stanley Street.

On the right-hand side are the original Warehouses that housed the Cavern Club. This view taken in 1925.

This would have been a view that Alan Sytner would have seen before his purchase of the Cavern.

*Copyright – Liverpool City Council.*



Above, shows the bottom on Mathew Street towards Stanley Street. The building on the right is now Flanagan's Apple, formerly the G. F. Hayward & Co Fruit Merchants. 1925. *Copyright Liverpool City Council*



The newly constructed Cavern Walks on Mathew Street. 1984. *Copyright Liverpool City Council.*

The fate of Mathew Street was also summed up by the psychoanalyst in 1927. Carl Jung had never been to Liverpool, but it was a dream he had that pointed towards Liverpool. In his dream, he found himself in a dirty sooty city on a dark night. He saw the vision of a small island and *“On it stood a single tree, a magnolia, in a shower of reddish blossoms. It was as though the tree stood in the sunlight and was at the same time the source of light.”* He described the city as the ‘Pool of Life’.

*“I had the feeling that we were coming up from the harbour, and that the real city was actually up above, on the cliffs. We climbed up there. When we reached the plateau, we found a broad square, dimly illuminated by streetlights, into which many streets converged.”*



Peter O'Halligan, a local poet decided to decipher the 'broad square.... into which many streets converged' and determined that this could only be where Mathew Street meets Temple Court and Rainford Square back in 1974. He was influenced that much on the dream and the 'broad square' that he rented a run-down Warehouse on Mathew Street. O'Halligan saw the fruits of his labour and made the warehouse his business. With the help of his family and local people, he set up The Liverpool School of Language, Music, Dream and Pun.



The Liverpool School of Language, Music, Dream and Pun (left)

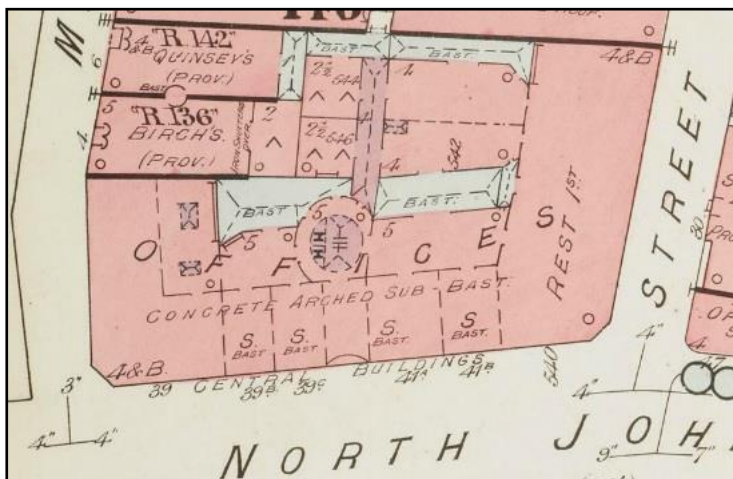
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The building now houses the Flanagan's Apple Public House and the entrance and general layout is virtually the same as the Liverpool School. A ground floor, upstairs rooms and basement area.

Image to the far left: Copyright – Google Maps

The ex-fruit warehouse was 'the place to go' and was the first 'indie market' of its kind outside of London. This was in 1974 and yet the building and street is as popular now as it was then. Aunt Twacky's was the place to go for the 'free thinker' who could go to dream up their domination plans over a cup of tea. However, there was opposition to this 'indie market' and the owner was hauled into court for refusing to pay business rates for the property. He was jailed for 6 weeks but once he returned, the debt was cleared. The building was no longer the ex-fruit warehouse but The Liverpool School of Language, Music, Dream and Pun.

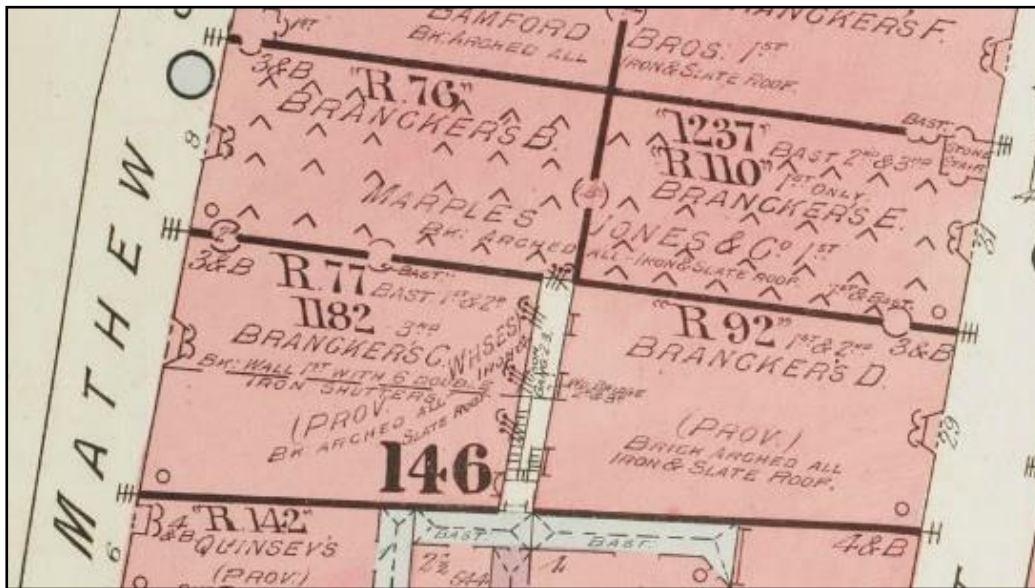
On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1976, the first bust of Carl Jung and plaque was unveiled which read, "Liverpool is the pool of life C. G. Jung. 1927". The Mathew Street Woodwind ensemble, the Mathew Street Brass Band, Deaf School and Yachts took to the temporary stage. The business survived by it being managed well, and the money was banked correctly. In its later years, it was taken over as Armadillo Tea Rooms and this area was the Triangle of Liverpool punk. Returning to 1888, the whole of Liverpool City Centre was mapped out by Chas E Goad Limited in a series of Fire Insurance Maps. These key maps were crucial to companies for assessing fire risks in the area and provided a footprint of the buildings use. These could be for commercial or residential use, and provided the number of floors in the building, as well as the height and what the building was constructed from, and whether it was fire resistant or not. Plans for these maps were created for major cities in the UK at the scale of 1 inch to 40 feet.



Goad 1888 Insurance Map of Liverpool – Copyright bl.uk

The map on the left shows the corner of Mathew Street, North John Street and Harrington Street and provides interesting reading of 'Concrete Arched Sub Basement' for '39 Central Buildings. The general layout at the top of North John Street is still the same and yet both sides of Cavern Walks and Harrington Street have completely changed, both above ground and underground.

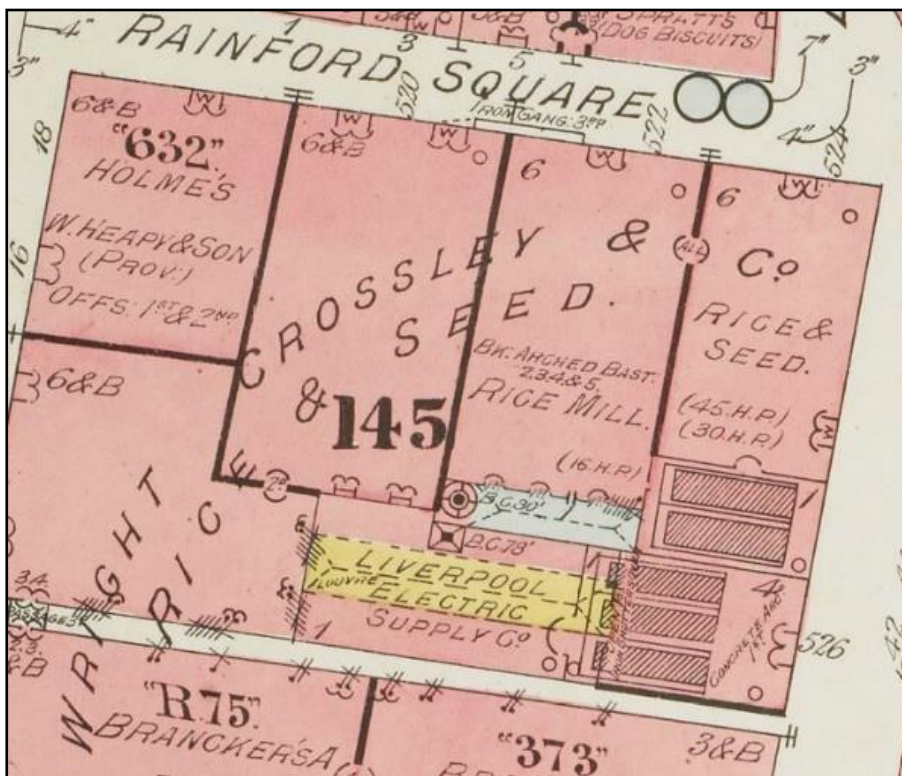




Goad 1888 Insurance Map of Liverpool

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The central part of Mathew Street showing Branker's A, B, C & D. 'Brick Arched' with 'stone staircases' on either side. This is the central part of the Cavern Club at the time.



Goad 1888 Insurance Map of Liverpool – Copyright bl.uk

The top part of Mathew Street and Rainford Square shows the Wright Crossley & Co – Rice & Seed Mills.

The maps also provide details of the Liverpool Electric Supply Company.

Noted is also a small passage in the centre to gain access from Mathew Street to Harrington Street although this would have been a very small alleyway.

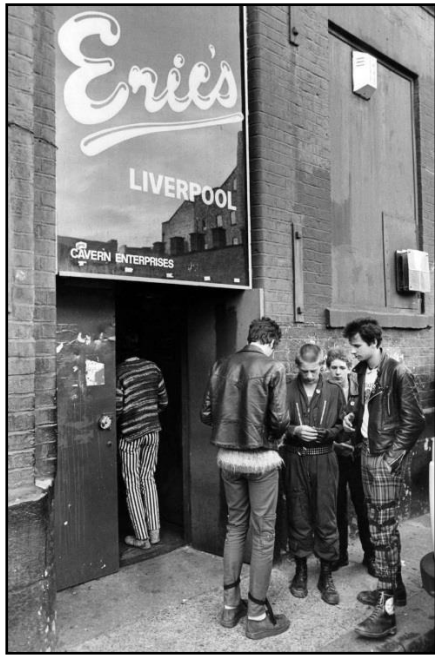
The intense growth of industrialised towns and cities in late Victorian Britain created a new demand for mapping details of urban structures and land use. Centres of industry and trade were burgeoning throughout the midlands and coastal ports; within the city of Liverpool alone, the population increased from 80,000 in 1801 to over 700,000 in 1901.

The high-density of building and dangerous industrial activities in these centres made the outbreak of fire more likely and presented a high risk to commercial interests.

While not the first to produce maps to aid insurance companies in assessing fire risks, the Chas E Goad Co was the largest and most prolific such endeavour in Britain. The large-scale plans of urban areas – which ranged in size from eight sheets for Dover and over 500 for London – includes footprints and addresses for each building, with its use (commercial, residential, educational etc.) and the height of the building. Construction materials were identified (and thus its risk of burning), as were special fire hazards, such as chemicals, kilns, and ovens.

## ERIC'S CLUB

Eric's club situated on Mathew Street opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1976. The club was positioned in a basement of a building opposite the Cavern Club.



Copyright Liverpool Echo.

The idea behind Eric's was by Roger Eagle and Ken Testi. Ken was the manager of Liverpool Band Deaf School (formed in 1973) and it was Ken who formed the name Eric's as an anecdote to disco clubs with similar names such as Tiffany's and Samantha's.

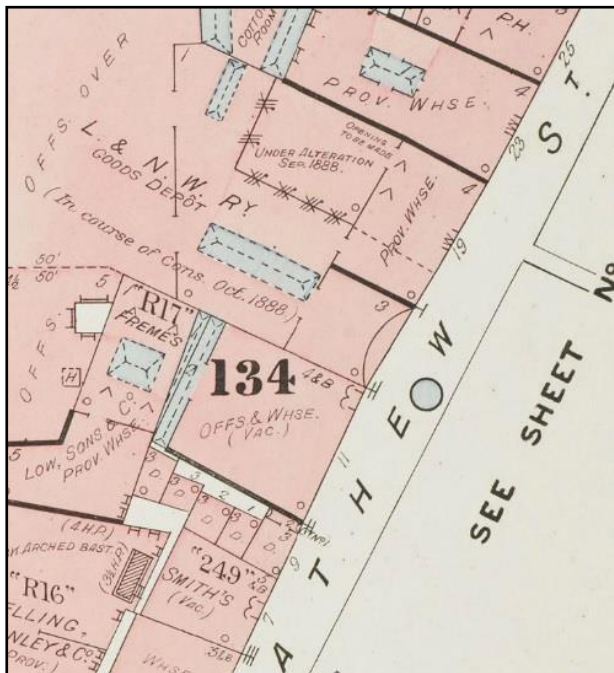
Eric's club was not a rival for the Cavern Club as such but catered for the punk and post-punk bands of the era. As with the Cavern, Eric's hosted many big named groups and people (Elvis Costello, The Clash, Sex Pistols, Ultravox, XTC etc).

The position of the club in Liverpool formed as a catchment area for local musicians. Some of these groups were unknown at the time but became big names in the industry (including Echo and the Bunnymen and OMD).

It was a Members only club and to join, one had to take out a yearly membership to gain access to the building. However, the management also decided that under 18's should be allowed to attend on special occasions so they could understand the ambiance of the club on special days.

The venue opening to under 18's was a marketing ploy, but a good one at that, as it allowed the venue to become a meeting place and a social networking venue for all ages. Eric's club lasted till the early 1980's when it was raided by the Police. The session that took place was Wah! Heat. This was officially recorded to be used on a John Peel session. Later in Eric's history, the club reopened as Bradys for a short time.

In 2011, Eric's was 'reopened' under the original name but had no connection with the original name, style or management of the building. The locals were not happy, and this venture didn't last long. However, the building was opened yet again under the Eric's name and now provides live music each night as Eric's used to.



Goad 1888 Insurance Map of Liverpool – Copyright bl.uk

This part of the 1888 Insurance Map provides the location of Eric's as noted as a Warehouse. The whole area was littered with narrow yet tall warehouses with arched basement area, of which the music scene took full advantage of.

The acoustics of the brick walls and the curved shaped cellar systems gave way to a unique sound that is not normally found within the standard studio setting. Bands that played in both the Cavern and Eric's would have noticed the difference in acoustics and would have incorporated them into their standard 'sound'.

The Italian born Francesco Mellina photographed the Liverpool scene from 1978 to 1982 and his collection remained unseen for 30 years before being published again.

## HARRINGTON STREET



Harrington Street is bordered with Button Street, Rainford Square, Dorans Lane, and North John Street. Its continuation to Castle Street once gave its name as The Castle Hey.

The 1650 Map of Liverpool – (*Copyright liverpool1207blog.wordpress.com*) shows the patch of land as Harrington Esq.

Back in 1593, Edward Tarleton lived at Aigburth Hall. He was constantly pursued by the sheriff of Liverpool who had led previous unsuccessful raids on his home. So, they turned to their attention to his son, Edward and was more successful managing to take two thirds of his estate as part of the overall debt. Edward was succeeded by his son who was to be the last Tarleton at Aigburth. It was his daughter and heiress, Dorothy, carried the estate in marriage to her husband John Harrington of Huyton Hall.

The Harrington's of Huyton made Aigburth their home and Richard Norris was asked to keep watch on John Harrington by the government who were suspect of having been involved in Jacobite plots in 1694.

Moving forward to 1713, John Harrington petitioned to the Lords to sell his wife's property consisting of 43 tenements in Liverpool. Part of this land was Harrington's in Liverpool City Centre and this is where the street takes its name from.

The earliest reference to Castle Hey is an undated note by Ralph Ectellston stating, *“For four lands in the Castle Hey, five groats a year. These are those lands I pay three pence burgage for, according to my acquittance: vide my memorandums of Pool Lane, on the other side of the leaf, concerning this field, Mr Tarrelton's land; and do as I direct, if you can buy it. My rent at present is only 1s 8d. Remember, here is for ever a footway in this field, common for all the king's liege people”*



Of note is the Harrington Chambers on the corner of Harrington Street and North John Street.

Described by Historic England (*Copyright*) as *Office building. 1840s, roof altered late C19. Stucco, slate roof. 4 storeys and attic, 13 bays, curved corner bay, 1 bay to Harrington Street. 1:5:5:1 bay divided by panelled giant pilasters. Sill bands to 1st and 2nd floors cornice and parapet. Ground floor has C20 shop fronts and 2 pedimented granite entrances and pediments on consoles.*

*All windows sashed. Lettering over 2nd floor: "HARRINGTON CHAMBERS". Gambrel roof has dormers with alternate segmental and triangular pediments, some later round ones.*

The area would have been noted for its individual shops with large windows to show off their produce. The building still dominates the road of North John Street and is a recognised building in the area. Yet most will fail to walk past the building and look up to see the ornate windows, the circular window on the corner and the curved brickwork. There was a slower pace of life back then and perhaps people had the time to view the beauty of the building's architecture.



The image to the left is taken from the bombed view of Lord Street looking towards Harrington Street in the 1950's.

The image shows the building on the right which was once part of the rear of the Cavern buildings.

This building has now been demolished and the footprint of Cavern Walks is now in its place.

*Copyright – Liverpool City*



A close-up of the above building showing the view of Harrington Street taken in 1973. The view would change completely with the demolition of these properties and the closure of the Cavern Club on the other side.

*Copyright – Liverpool City Council.*



Above is the newly constructed Cavern Walks, taken from Dorans Lane and Harrington Street, 1984. *Copyright Liverpool City Council*



Above is the newly constructed Cavern Walks, taken from Dorans Lane and Harrington Street, 1984. *Copyright Liverpool City Council*

## THE CAVERN CLUB

The Cavern Club is listed at no 10 Mathew Street. Its history is as eclectic as the bands who played there, yet for periods of its life, it was little more than an abandoned warehouse before and after the rise of the Beatles.



Mathew Street in the 1970's. The view is taken from the top of Mathew street showing the original Cavern Club and warehouses on the right-hand side.

The building would soon be demolished in 1973 and the Cavern filled in.

*Copyright cavernclub.com*

The idea behind the Cavern Club stems from the Le Caveau de la Huchette Jazz Club in the Latin Quarter of Paris. The building was a meeting place for the Rosicrucian's and Templars and was transformed into a secret Freemason's Lodge. Its history dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century and originally part of a labyrinth, the Jazz Club came to light in 1949 and has continued to trade as a Jazz Club to the present day.

It was during the revolutionary period in the late 1700's, people accessed the system and converted it into a makeshift tavern to drink, sing and discuss their freedom. When Paris celebrated its newfound freedom, Jazz Music from across the Atlantic and invaded the cellars of Paris.



*The Le Caveau de la Huchette Jazz Club – Copyright mycityhighlight.com*

It is considered one of the best Music Venues for the acoustics which the brickwork does not deaden the soundwaves and is the original 'Cavern systems' before the Liverpool Mathew Street Cavern. However, it is easy to understand where the focus point comes from. With the abandoned basement cellar systems of the warehouses above, it was not only a unique talking point, but was built on the success of the Jazz Club in Paris as a tried and tested music venue.

If Liverpool could replicate this and bring local music to their people, then it would be a win-win scenario. An unusual venue, great acoustics, and a place that you 'needed to know the location to'. In some sense, the hidden aspect of the Cavern made it even more appealing. As if you had to know its location and discover what was happening underground as opposed to walking into a pub and being able to see the location from the street view. Little did Liverpool know what they were about to create. As the greatest ideas are usually formed over a drink, it was a chance comment over a drink in the famous The Grapes Pub on Mathew Street.



The image to the left shows the same location as the Grapes Pub but in the 1920's.

The Grapes Pub is only a stones-throw from the Cavern Club across the street and it is little more than good fortune that the Cavern was almost stumbled upon after a good drink in this pub.

Had this not had happened, would the Cavern club been let to someone else for business use?

*Copyright Pinterest.*

Alan Sytner and good friend, Peter Morris were drinking in the Grapes Pub in the 1950's.

Peter had previously visited Le Caveau de la Huchette Jazz Club in Paris and remarked that he would love to find a similar venue that mirrored the Paris Clubs and their unique location. He knew that they were an attraction and felt that Liverpool needed something similar.



An un-posed image of Alan Sytner in the Cavern Club.  
*Copyright Liverpool Echo.*

After leaving the pub, one of them looked across at a set of warehouses across the road in Mathew Street, and saw a sign saying, “**Basement for Sale, Or Let**”.

Only the next day when they met up again for a lunchtime pint, Alan Sytner simply stated, “*Got that place, I’ve bought it!*”.

Would Alan have known the impact this purchase would make on the Liverpool music scene as well as The Beatles?



*Le Caveau de la Huchette – Copyright bbc.co.uk*



*The Cavern Club – Copyright bbc.co.uk*

## ALAN SYTNER

A note or two must be written on Alan Sytner, who founded the world-famous Cavern Club and shaped the music scene of Liverpool. He was born in February 1935 and was the son of a noted docklands Doctor Joe Sytner. He was not to follow in the profession and at the early age of 14, he spent school holidays in Paris and stumbled upon the cellar club Le Caveau. He saw the future of Jazz at an early age and this would shape him and make him world famous – perhaps only in retrospect.

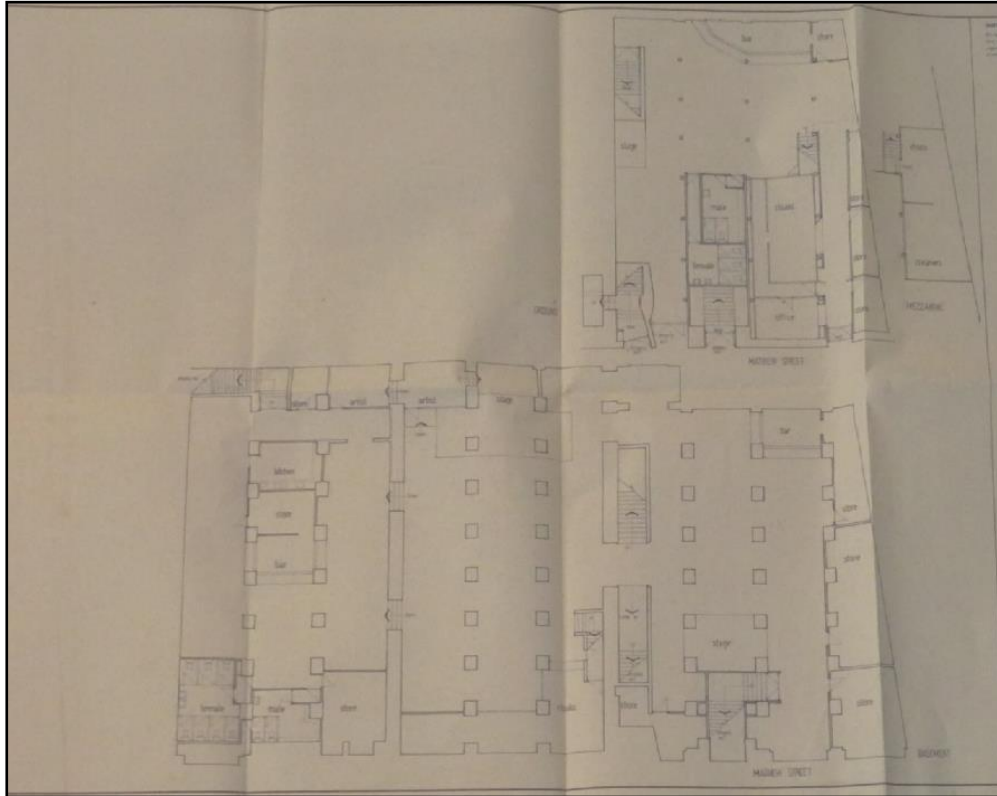
When he reached the age of 21, an insurance policy matured, and he received £400. Knowing how to spend this newfound wealth, he started the 21 Jazz Club in Croxteth Road, not too far from the city centre of Liverpool. This club was a popular hit with the locals of Liverpool and yet it was too far out of the city for a central location.

He knew that he wanted to build a purpose style Jazz Club in the centre of Liverpool and it was perhaps fate, and a good pub lunch, that when he rolled out of The Grapes on Mathew Street with friend Peter Morris, they noticed a sign across the road on one of the warehouses ‘Basement for Sale, Or Let’. A purchase took place that very day after inspection. He saw the exact potential of the location which would mirror Le Caveau in Paris, purchased the property and made a bold statement refusing a drinks licence. It would make the club safer, less administration and made the punter there for the music only.

Sytner would later fall foul of the ventilation requirements for health and safety and after several money worries, sold the club to one of the auditors and realised that Jazz was losing its charm, and that rock and roll was in. Alan then joined his brother, Frank Sytner and went into a BMW dealership partnership. Alan passed away in Cannes in January 2006.

## THE CAVERN CLUB – THE START

After the purchase of the warehouse basement, the basement was originally three cellar rooms. Peter Morris reflected on the manual labour to open the club on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1957. Alan's infamous words were, *"What we need is one big room, so these walls will have to come down. I'll get a sledgehammer and a barrel of ale and we'll all go down one night and knock these walls down"*



The document to the left is a rare 30" by 22" floor plan of the original Cavern Club from 1972 by Dishman Woodward & Partners, Architects of Liverpool.

Together with an accompany letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 1972 signed by K. Woodward and an invoice for £67.

This was sold at auction in 2015 and is possibly the last drawn plan of the original Cavern.

*Copyright invaluable.com*

The first opening night of the Cavern Club was 16<sup>th</sup> January 1957.



It was the dream of Alan Sytner for this to become 'the' Jazz Club in Central Liverpool and it showed on the first night.

3 Jazz groups appeared on the bill for the first night and yet for some people, the Cavern wasn't deemed important enough for some and yet for the revellers, they couldn't wait to get in!

*Image copyright beatlesbible.com*

On the opening night of the Cavern, the bill was for Merseysippi Jazz Band, The Wall City Jazzmen, the Ralph Watmough Jazz Band and the Coney Island Skiffle Group. The headline act was to be fronted by a drummer known as the Earl of Wharncliffe.



The ticket allocation was 652, but arriving at Mathew Street in 1957, the club turned away more people than got in.

The crowd lined up and down Mathew Street and beyond for half a mile to wait to get in.

*Copyright cavernclub.com*



Alan Sytner remarked that out of the people that lined up to get in, more than half the group were turned away. They went home and there was no trouble seeing as there was mounted Police attending to help with the crowds. It was often stated that 600 people was the 'maximum' in the club, yet there were occasions when they did get near to the 650 but it was a rare occasion.

It must have been an eyeopener on the first night. 600 people crowded into a basement cellar system with no real ventilation for the club, and probably no contingency for an emergency. The warehouse basement would have soon filled up with the heat of the crowds dancing and there would have been little fresh air ventilation in or out of the club. Yet this did not bother the 600 people who filled up the club on many an occasion wanting to be seen in the up and coming Liverpool Jazz Club!

The basement measurements were 58 feet by 39 feet and was 11 feet below street level. 600 people were crammed into this small venue, yet this was the place to be! The acoustics in the venue were fantastic and before the opening of the Cavern, as stated above, bricks had to be knocked out of the walls to create a more open space. However, the owner learnt that this would be a full-time job.

The Warehouse was converted into a World War 2 air raid shelter as were many basement systems within Liverpool that would stand a better chance of survival underground than on the ground. Extra brickwork was brought in to strengthen the walls of the cellar system and these needed to be removed. However, the loss of the extra wall resulted in lots of spare bricks, and it was decided to build a small stage out of these bricks. Straight away, the area went from a vaulted cellar system into a club!



One of the first photos of the original Cavern Club which shows the raised platform built from the additional bricks from the reinforced walls.

*Copyright tripadvisor.nl*

Before Paul McCartney played at the club, his nephew, Harry Harris, and Harry's son, carpentered the stage with a wood floor, altered the original staircase and created a women's toilet. However, it was a massive fire hazard, health and safety didn't really exist, and it was fortunate that there was nothing combustible in the cellar system. There was one exit/entrance so if that was blocked, that would have been it.

The heat in there would have been incredible. 600 bodies moving in a close environment against stone walls. On the first night, it was quoted by Roger Planche of the Coney Island Skiffle Group that the first night showed the restrictions of the venue when it was full. (*Copyright beatlesbible.com*):

*"We went into Mathew Street at 6.45pm and there was a queue from the Cavern entrance down to Whitechapel. We managed to get in with our instruments and we made our way to the band room at the side of the stage.*

*It was already full of musical instruments which belonged to the other bands. At one stage I thought that there must be a leak in the premises above as water was pouring down the walls, but it was caused by 600 bodies in close confinement. Roger Baskerfield [of the Coney Island Skiffle Group] passed out at one stage and he had to be carried over heads to the door to recover!"*

## Merseysippi Jazz Band



On the opening night of the Cavern, the Merseysippi Jazz Band were on the bill to play.

They would have played in one of the most unusual venue's up to this time. They started out in the late 1940's as the Wallasey Rhythm Kings.

Little more than schoolboys, the band consisted of Ken Baldwin (Banjo), Frank Robinson (Piano), Wally Fisher (Trumpet), Dennis Gracey (Trombone), Pat Evans (Clarinet) Dick Goodwin (bass) and Ken Metcalfe (Drums). Valentine's Day 1949 was their first performance at the Grosvenor Ballroom, Wallasey.

*Copyright – discogs.com*

The Bass player was the driving force behind the band and successfully promoted the band at Merseyside's First Jazz Band Ball. The night was a great success and with the band in profit for the night, Frank Robinson decided on more suitable name for the band and came up with The Merseysippi Jazz Band name.

They were influenced by the Louis Armstrong Jazz tunes of the day and a London Trumpet player called Peter Daniels heard the band and was very impressed. He took a recording of the band from the BBC and travelled up to Liverpool to speak to them. The band liked Peter, Peter liked the band and he was soon in. The two-tone horn sound that the MJB band was created and was a regular sound.

Liverpool became the focal point of Jazz in the 1950's, already seen by the foresight of Alan Sytner and with the past experiences of the Le Caveau club in Paris, the band was top of the bill for Jazz performances.

In 1950, Kenro Productions promoted a Festival of Jazz at the Liverpool Stadium and the MJB played there. They also played at the Picton Hall in Liverpool and this led to their greatest day when in 1957, they played alongside Louis Armstrong.

## The Wall City Jazz Band



The Wall City Jazz Band were a band that started out in 1954. They made their debut in Chester and their 'sound' was mainstream jazz.

The original line up of the band was an amalgamation of the Stan Roberts Dance Band.

The line-up consisted of Stan Roberts (Piano), Tom Jones (Trumpet), Ian Ashworth (Trombone), John Nutthall (Double Bass), Alan Lewis (Drums) and Paul Blake on Clarinet.

*Image Copyright jazznorthwest.co.uk*

In 1958, Trish Fields joined the band being impressed by their line up and later she turned professional in a different band, Whiskey Mac.



(On the Wall of Fame at Liverpool's Cavern, both the Wall City Jazzmen and Trish have their name in bricks as well as the Merseysippi Jazz Band).

Their note in history came in 1957 when they were part of the opening scene of the Cavern Club alongside the Merseysippi Jazz Band.

The Wall City Jazzmen continue to play to this day and recently celebrated a main Anniversary in 2018.

*Copyright – Liverpool Echo*

## The Ralph Watmough Band.



The Ralph Watmough Band was formed on the back of the breakup of the Tishomingo Jazz Band in the 1950's. The Tishomingo band, amongst others, consisted of Bob Wright (Trumpet), Martin Downer (Clarinet), Fred Robinson (Trombone) and Ron Cooper on Drums.

Ralph Watmough joined up on Banjo and he was promoted to the lead of the group and had to both lead and organise the group. Because of this, he dropped the Tishomingo tag and renamed the group as the Ralph Watmough Band. Fred Robinson later resigned from the group and Martin headed up on alto sax and Bob on the Clarinet. There was a turnover of people in the band during its years and, but they were considered grand enough to be at the opening of the Cavern in 1957 to support the main act.

The above picture shows Adrian (Bob) Allen (centre) playing his guitar with an unknown group. It is not a picture of the Ralph Watmough Band, but Bob used to play with the Ralph Watmough Band – *copyright stephenlewis2016.wordpress.com*

## Coney Island Skiffle Group



The Coney Island Skiffle Group was formed in 1955 and was a 6-piece band. Formed with the help of Roger Baskeyfield, (who was 16 at the time). They formed after listening to the likes of Johnny Ray and Frankie Lane but wanted to go in their own direction and play rather than listen.

The group consisted of Brian Curtis on Lead Guitar, Colin Rimmer on Vocals & Guitar, Neil Short on Washboard, Roger Baskeyfield on Banjo, Derick Haines on Piano.

*Copyright – phop.co.uk*

Although there were over 200 skiffle groups in Liverpool, the skiffle craze only lasted about 3 years before Rock and Roll took over. The Coney Island Skiffle Group were picked to perform at the opening bill of the Cavern in 1957. This would have been such an achievement on the opening night of a new club.

## Big Bill Broonzy



Big Bill Broonzy was an American blues singer who was born in 1903. His full name was Lee Conley Bradley. At a young age, he discovered music and at the age of 10, he made his own violin and learnt how to play folk music from his Uncle (Jerry Belcher).

While his music was his first love, he also became a preacher until one day he was offered \$50 and a new violin if he would play for 4 days at a local venue.

He served his time in the first world war and learnt how to play the guitar. His big break was to obtain an auction at with Paramount, but many considered his style as poor.

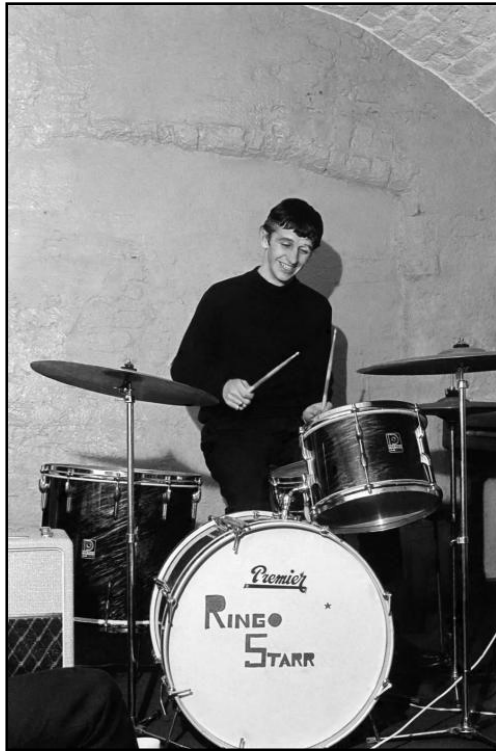
In the 1930's he travelled to New York and started to record for the American Record Corporation and these records started to sell better. His fame started to grow.

Moving forward to the late 30's, he was asked to perform at Carnegie Hall and this lead to further success with a small part role in a Jazz adaptation, which also featured Louis Armstrong. In the 1940's, he expanded his skills and produced a wider spectrum range to cover more styles of music. His recent exposure made it possible for him to tour Europe in 1951.

*Copyright – Wikipedia.com*

On Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March, he performed at the Cavern Club in Liverpool. He would be the first of many blues artists to perform at the club. Sadly, only a year later after this performance, Big Bill Broonzy would pass away from Throat Cancer and the Cavern would not see him perform again.

## Richard Starkey



Richard Starkey, better known as Ringo Starr, was born in the Dingle in Liverpool in 1940. Naturally he is known as the drummer for the Beatles, but before his international fame, he was interested in the Skiffle scene in the late 50's.

Aged only 17, he set up his own group called the Eddie Clayton Skiffle Group and played at numerous occasions before the American Rock and Roll came in to play at the end of the 50's.

The band was also known as Eddie Clayton and the Clayton Squares after the Liverpool area. It was Christmas 1957 when he was given a drum kit, and this enabled him to practice as a musician while promoting the Eddie Clayton Band.

On Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1957, Ringo Starr was invited along with the Eddie Clayton Band to perform at the Cavern Club in Mathew Street. It would be his first billing there as part of his co-formed group and it would be one of many performances there at the Cavern, but with a different band.

The Cavern welcomed the Jazz Groups, but this was being turned in to a Skiffle phase based on the sway of the public.

*Copyright beatlesbible.com*



The image on the left shows Ringo Starr playing with the Eddie Clayton Skiffle Group on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1957.

They are located at the Wilson Hall in Speke Road, Liverpool.

*Copyright thecosmicempire.com*

Ringo's Starr's musical history straightforward. In 1956, he met Roy Trafford while working as an apprentice in a factory. Ringo, Roy and a neighbour Eddie Miles (who renamed himself Eddie Clayton). After his performance at the Cavern, he joined Al Caldwell's Texan's who eventually changed their name to Rory Storm and the Hurricanes. His drum solos were billed as 'Starr Time'.

It was during this time that the band went to Hamburg for performances that The Beatles were also at. There were times where he filled in for the Beatles and Starr quit the Hurricanes to join the Beatles in 1962 after Brian Epstein fired Pete Best from the band. This would have a major impact on the music scene with crowds of people outside Pete Best's house after a performance at the Cavern shouting 'Pete Forever, Ringo never.'

## The Quarrymen



(Left) - A posed undated photo of The Quarry Men in Mathew Street outside the Cavern.

*Copyright vintag.es*

(Above) – A rare undated photo of The Quarry Men performing in the Cavern.

*Copyright vintag.es*

On the 7<sup>th</sup> August 1957, the Quarry Men Skiffle Group made their first appearance at the Cavern Club. With Skiffle being the main genre at the time, the Quarry Men were an excellent group to portray the Skiffle image of the Cavern. The band was formed by John Lennon in November 1956 and this band would eventually evolve into the Beatles. John Lennon was 16 at the time of the formation of the Quarry Men and the band consisted of Lennon and several of his school friends. The name simply coming from a line in the school song of Quarry Bank High School in Liverpool. It was down to John's mum who taught John the Banjo and showed him how to tune guitars in the same way.

The Quarrymen consisted of John Lennon and Eric Griffiths (both on guitars), Pete Shotton on washboard, and school friend Bill Smith on tea chest bass. The group played everywhere. School dances, parties, cinema's and amateur skiffle contests. This attracted the later attention of Paul McCartney, another Beatles member to cross the groups. Perhaps the Cavern club was home from home as the band first practiced in Shotton's corrugated air-raid shelter at the back of the garden. The sound would have been similar and of course, the shape of the air-raid shelter and the Cavern were very similar!



Considered to be the birth of the Beatles, on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 1957, The Quarrymen were playing at their local garden party in Woolton. Paul McCartney was also at the same fete and saw the Quarry Men perform. Later, in the day, Ivan Vaughan introduced McCartney to Lennon. They chatted for a few minutes, but history does not recall the conversation. Later in the evening, Shotton and Lennon talked about inviting McCartney into the band.

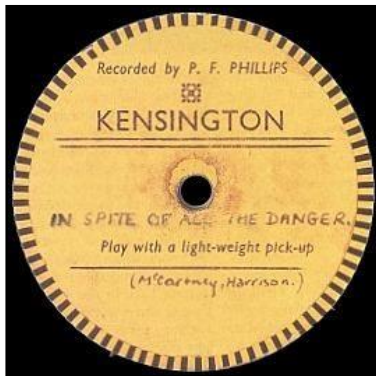
In August, of that year, Shotton and Lennon disbanded from the group stating that the style of the group was moving away from skiffle and towards rock.

*Copyright cavernclub.com*

It was a new time for the Quarry Men. McCartney joined the band and played their first debut in Liverpool in 1957. They relied on mainly covers and yet they started to achieve their own harmony and style by the harmony of Lennon and McCartney. It was this time that the partnership would complement each other and they both realised that they could achieve more in this band. They started writing songs together and their partnership would take them far over the achievements of the Quarry Men.

After the first debut with McCartney in Liverpool, the band weren't overly impressed with his performance on lead guitar and the band decided to enlist the help of McCartney's school friend, George Harrison. George was only 14 at the time but continued to impress and had his audition in 1958 at Rory's Storm's Morgue Skiffle Club. Still considering him too young, a second audition was held on the top deck of a bus! This proved a success so Harrison, aged just 15, was to join the Quarry Men as lead guitarist.

Later, in March, McCartney purchased an Elpico amplifier and he and George added pickups to their guitars, giving the electric sound of the Quarry Men for the first time.



In Kensington, Liverpool, Percy Phillips operated a sound recording studio in which the Quarry Men wanted to use. They booked their first recording session on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 1958. This recording went straight to record and was passed around by the group until considered lost to history. It was discovered in 1981 and sold on to McCartney.

*Copyright Wikipedia.com*

At the end of 1958, there was little movement on the Quarry Men. John Lennon's mother had been killed in an accident and the remaining trio, Lennon, McCartney and Harrison only met up socially.

They were to perform at the end of the year for an audition and changed their name to Johnny and the Moondogs. They changed their name again to Japage3, but this dried up too. Little did they know that after these false starts, they would go on to be a very successful band.

Back in the summer of '59, Mona Best, (Pete Best's mum) opened up a new music venue in the cellar of her home. The Les Stewart Quartet was offered a residency if they would help to convert the cellar. However, things did not go to plan. Harrison and Ken Brown missed the first debut, and this angered Les Stewart. He fired them both and dropped the residency. Greatly frustrated at this, Harrison enlisted the help of Lennon and McCartney to play and the return of the Quarry Men's name returned for the first time in a long time. The band consisted of Lennon, McCartney, Harrison and Ken Brown.



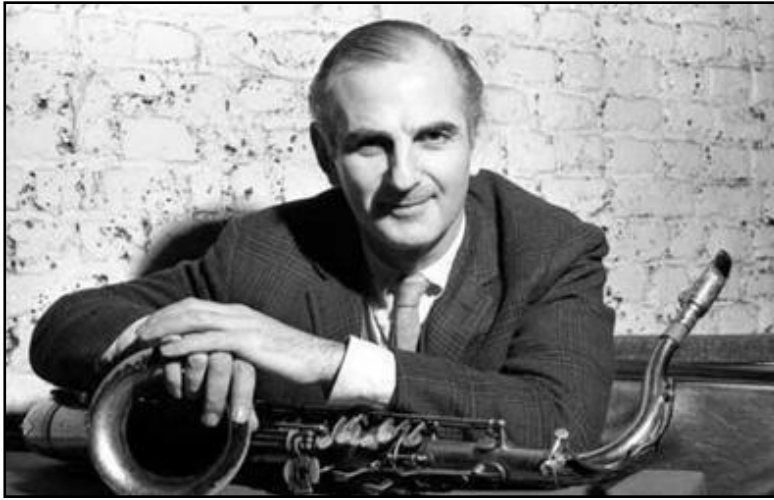
The opening night of the Casbah Club was a success. 300 teenagers went to see the band play in August 1959. In the new year, Ken Brown was too ill to play and the band lost residency in the club again. They enlisted fellow art school student Stuart Sutcliffe to purchase a Bass guitar.

In the early 1960's, Lennon's song, "One after 909" was recorded (the recording does not survive). The group would write letters to secure bookings and presented themselves as the Quarry Men.

However, they started to dislike the name and went through several other names including Los Paranoias. In 1960 Lennon and Sutcliffe decided on the new name for the band, a name which is as famous as the Cavern Club itself. They called themselves The Beatles.

*Copyright Wikipedia.com*

## Ronnie Scott & The Jazz Couriers



Thursday Evening's at the Cavern Club were Modern Jazz Night's and attracted some of the big names of the Jazz Scene. On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 1957, it was the debut performance of modern British performer, Ronnie Scott.

Ronald Scott was born in 1927 in Aldergate and when he was 16, started performing in small jazz clubs. He maintained that was taught to play by Vera Lynn's father in law! Yet from humble beginnings, Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club would be a well-known place to go!

*Copyright – Wikipedia*

Ronnie Scott also worked on the Queen Mary in the late 1940's and visited New York to hear the newer form of Jazz being played across the water. In the early 1950's, he joined up with Jack Parnell's orchestra and co-led the Jazz Couriers with Tubby Hayes from 1957/1959.



Ronnie Scott was also known for forming the Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, which was opened in October 1959, a couple of years after his performance at the Cavern Club.

Again, this was in a basement property, like the Cavern club.

Ronnie Scott was linked to many band line-up's, including Alan Dean's Beboppers, Ronnie Scott Orchestra, Ronnie Scott Quintet, Ronnie Scott Big Band, The Jazz Couriers, Ronnie Scott Quartet, Ronnie Scott Trio and Ronnie Scott Quintet.

*Copyright londonegeographies.com*

## Mr Acker Bilk's Paramount Jazz Band.



Bernard Bilk was born in Somerset in 1929. The nickname 'Acker' comes from the local slang for 'mate'.

As a young boy, his parents tried to teach him to play the piano, but Acker felt that it restricted what he loved best – the outdoors. However, it was the outdoors that would catch up with him, losing his front teeth in a fight and losing part of his finger – both of which he said held him back in his Clarinet playing. He learnt to play the Clarinet while serving National Service and improvised without a reed – designing his own makeshift one.

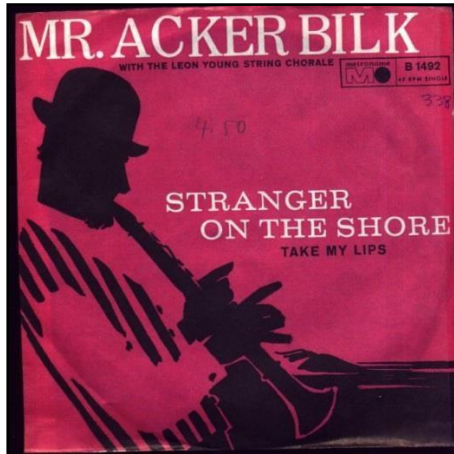
*Copyright telegraph.co.uk*

He moved to London in the early 1950's but felt that he couldn't settle there and moved back to the west country to form his own band, the Chew Valley Jazzmen. This band would be renamed the Bristol Paramount Jazz Band when they moved to London in 1951.



From London, his band played in many Jazz Clubs and from here, Bilk was part of the boom in trad jazz in the UK at this time.

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February 1958, Acker Bill's Paramount Jazz Band performed at the Cavern Club. However, Acker Bill was not that well known at the time. It was not until 1962 where he composed a melody entitled 'Jenny' but was asked to change the title to 'Stranger on the Shore' for use in British TV. This was an instant hit and stayed on the charts for 55 weeks!



This track helped put Acker Bilk on the map. He appeared on *This is Your Life*, topped the American charts, sold a million copies, and was awarded a gold disk for this. He then went on to appear in two films, *It's Trad, Dad!* and *Band of Thieves*. In 1977, Bilk and his Paramount Jazz Band also performed as the interval act for the Eurovision Song Contest. Bilk was awarded the MBE in 2001 and stated that after being known for his most famous track, he was fed up with playing it.

It is testament to the Cavern that he was able to play there when he was relatively unknown, but the Cavern knew of his skills. One wonders whether during his fame, would he have entertained the Cavern again, or whether this would have been too small a club for him.

*Copyright stereogum.com*

### Ray McFall – The Cavern Club's new owner



Ray McFall was born in November 1926.

With the Cavern Club opening in 1957, by Liverpool stockbroker Alan Sytner, Ray McFall was the Cavern Club's accountant and looked after the club's finances. Ray would have seen the rise and fall of the club during the start of the Cavern club, its success and then subsequent financial troubles.

During 1959, it was clear that the club was in trouble financially. Whether this was down to poor management is not clear.

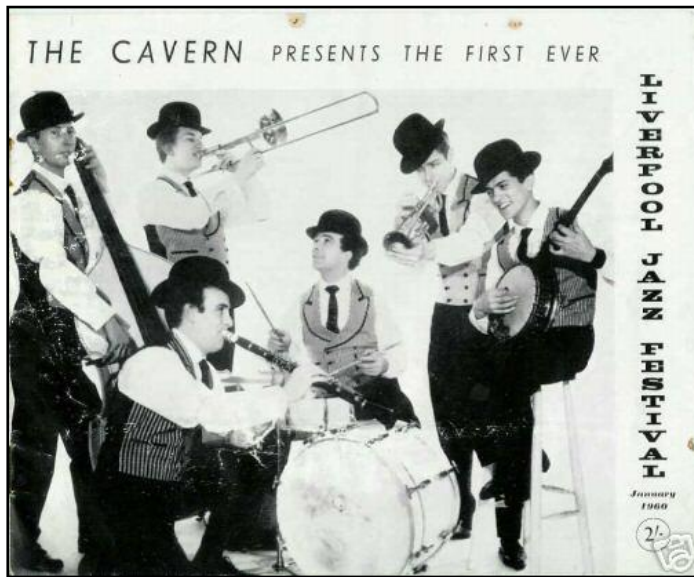
Ray had no real experience of the Cavern Club or running a club in general. He knew the accounts well but may not have known how to run the club. Nevertheless, Ray paid £2,750 for the Cavern Club in 1959.

He took it over with a statement in that, *"he wanted to put Liverpool on the map as the leading Jazz centre in the country, outside of London."*

*Image above and right – Copyright telegraph.co.uk*



He took the club over and started out well. On the opening night under Ray's control, Acker Bilk and his Paramount Jazz Band were top of the billing.



Ray may have not known the Cavern inside and out, but he did know his music. He could see that the finances were not good in the club, yet he could see that the future of the business was in Beat music.

There were top names on the billing with Terry Lightfoot's New Orleans Jazzmen, the Alex Welsh Dixielanders, George Melly and Ronnie Scott but he knew that this would soon be replaced by the likes of Rory Storm and the Hurricanes featuring Ringo Starr on drums who made their Cavern debut in May 1960.

He held a conversation with the Club's DJ who advised him to book the Beatles. However, '*they were a scruffy lot*'. Ray said that the doormen would not allow people in that were scruffy so neither should the Beatles be dressed as they are.

McFall was not impressed with the Beatles. He didn't like their style; their singing was out of tune and they didn't come across as a polished band. However, they pulled in the crowds! It was by chance that Brian Epstein visited the Cavern club in November 1961 and knew he was on to something special. He couldn't wait to sign them up so he could manage them and signed them the following month. The Beatles auditioned for Decca Records on New Year's Day 1962 and failed to impress them!

Fast forward in the timeframe of the Cavern Club and the Beatles grew so popular that they had outgrown the venue. The Cavern's golden ticket would soon be stopped and with poor takings as well as a large repair bill for £3,500 to update the drains, he was forced to declare bankruptcy, selling the club in 1966.

Born in Garston, Liverpool, he moved to Maghull and attended the Catholic School in Crosby. In the second world war, he worked at the Clock Face, St Helens and was later involved in a firm of accountants as a clerk.

Even with a packed club, the bankruptcy loomed and had overall debts of £11,000. He always regretted not creating the business into a limited company, so he wasn't personally liable for its debts. He later moved to London and sold insurance until he retired in 1999. Ray passed away in 2015.

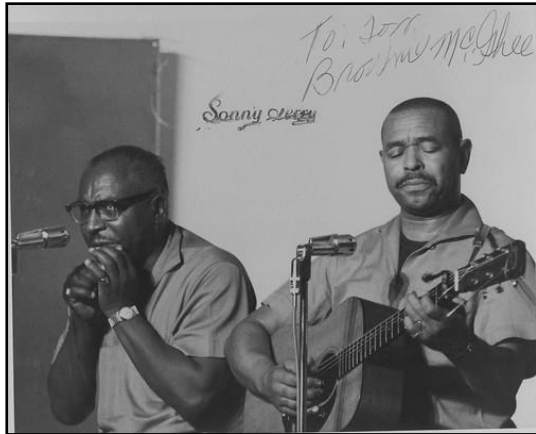


*Image Top Left – Copyright  
beatlesauction.co.uk*

*Image Left – Copyright  
Newslocker.com*

Despite the Cavern Club being a top billing venue, and being 'the' club to go to, it has always had issues with finance, and multiple owners. Was it the owners at fault or a change in trend? Was its management? The fate of the Cavern was not sealed yet.

## Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee



On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1959, under the new management of Ray McFall, his opening night featured both Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee. It was under Ray's control that the Cavern club moved from that of a Jazz scene to the growing beat music in the city.

Sonny Terry was born in Georgia, USA in 1911. He came to prominence as a Piedmont blues and folk musician and was well known for his energetic blues harmonica style.

At an early age, his father taught him to play blues harp at an early age, however by the time he was 16, he had sustained damage to his eyes and went blind. *Image - Copyright toddtarantino.com*

He played in the trio with Blind Boy Fuller and when Fuller passed away in 1941, Sonny formed a long-lasting partnership with Brownie McGhee. They recorded numerous records together in their time.

Brownie McGee was born in Knoxville, USA in 1915. As with Sonny Terry, he was a Piedmont blues singer and guitarist and was best known for his long partnership with Sonny Terry. He spent much of his youth singing with a local harmony group, the Golden Voices Gospel Quartet and taught himself to play guitar.

At a young age, he became a travelling musician and worked with Blind Boy Fuller. After Fuller's death, Brownie moved to New York in 1942 and teamed up with Sonny Terry. This was a great success, and as a well-known duo, they partnered together from the late 1950's to the early 80's spending much of the year touring and recording albums. *Image copyright acousticguitar.com*



After playing at the Cavern club in 1959, they toured on concert and music festivals in the early 1960's. Later, in their career, McGee and Terry had cameo appearances on TV and McGee's greatest performance was in Angel Heart.

## Rory storm and the Hurricanes.



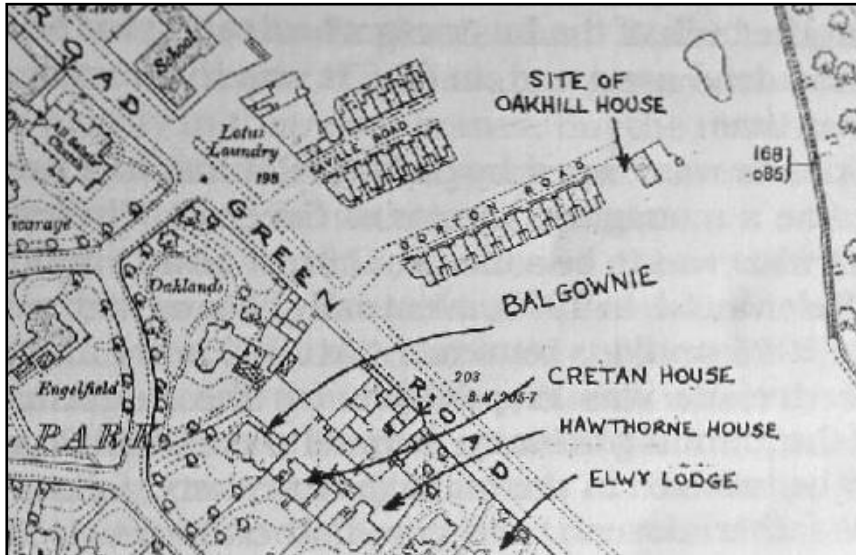
Alan Ernest Caldwell was born in January 1938 in Stonycroft, Liverpool. His family did not come from a music background and yet Alan found favour with both music and sports. He played football and was Captain of Mersey Beat magazine's football team.

He started out as a Cotton Salesman before forming a skiffle group.

Rory Storm was the stage name for Alan Caldwell and started off his music career with many group names. His first being 'Dracula & the Werewolves' but then this didn't sit well and went with Al Caldwell's Texan's.

*Image copyright garyrocks.wordpress.com*

On the 13<sup>th</sup> March 1958, Rory Storm opened the Morgue Skiffle Club in the cellar of Balgownie at 25 Oakhill Park, Broadgreen. The Morgue Skiffle Club was short lived club held in the basement of a large Victorian house at 25 Oakhill Park in Broadgreen. Oakhill Park was a road off Broadgreen Road and large mansion houses such as Balgownie, Cretan House, Hawthorne House, Oak Dene, Grange House, Elwy Lodge, Dallington and Spekeldands were named.



*Image Copyright  
beatleslocations.blogspot.com*

The opening night of The Morgue Skiffle Club was on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> March 1958. It was to be another underground club very much like the dark cellar of the Cavern Club.

The bands played on the night included The Texans and The Quarrymen. It was stated that over 100 people crammed into the cellar, and with just the one lightbulb, and no toilets, it would have been an interesting viewpoint. The Cavern would have been palatial in comparison of this.

However, the Morgue was short lived and was closed by the Police on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1958 only a few weeks after its opening. There was only live music played at the venue. It is interesting to note that while the building was demolished in the 1960's, the stone wall and entrance pillar still remain, still bearing the name Balgownie. It would be interesting to note whether the cellars were filled it or still accessible under the garden.



*Image (left) – Copyright Google Maps  
Image (above) – Copyright  
beatlesliverpoollocations.blogspot.com*

From 1960 to 1963, Rory Storm and his band were a key group in Liverpool. Headed up by Alan Caldwell, and accompanied by guitarists John Byrne, Chas O'Brien, Wally Egmond (on Bass) and Ringo Starr on Drums. Ringo Star would leave the band in 1962. Balgownie would be closed by the Police in April of 1958 but Rory reopened this on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April. It would be in this location that George Harrison auditioned for the Quarrymen.

John Byrne also lived in Oakhill Park and he kept a diary for this period of his life. It makes some interesting reading on Balgownie.

(Taken from oldswanthenandnow)

**Thursday 2 January 1958** - Back to work. Practised in cellar for Cavern. This was the cellar of a nursing home at 'Balgownie', 25 Oakhill Park, a few doors away from Johnny's semi, though this was a big old house. Its owner, Mrs Thompson, was to be persuaded to open it for public performances but this is to come. "It looked like a haunted house as it had a decrepit look about it. You wouldn't have wanted to place even your worst relative in that place," says Johnny's brother, Pat.

**Tuesday 11 March 1958** - Snowed. Went around to cellar. Ken and Paul Murphy put up strip light. Cost £3.

**Wednesday 12 March 1958** - Clearing up cellar for opening tomorrow night. Some art students were helping Alan and Johnny. They created rudimentary ultra-violet effects. In the dark you could see white skeletons on the wall. Johnny's love of sci-fi horror is shown both in the effects and the name for the club – *The Morgue*.

**Thursday 13 March 1958** - *Morgue Skiffle Cellar* opens. Good night. This is a considerable achievement for Alan and Johnny but there was little money to be made. They had no licence and couldn't charge for entry but everyone who came had to buy a Coke or a fizzy orange. The *Quarrymen*, who became the *Beatles*, and the *Texans* played on the opening night. Club nights were Tuesdays and Thursdays.

**Thursday 27 March 1958** - Played at cellar. Took Pat. Got a big crowd. *Bluegenes* were playing. *Bluegenes* was a jazz/skiffle outfit who became, in 1963, the *Swinging Blue Jeans*. Ray Ennis remembers: "The *Morgue* was just around the corner from Rory's house. There was a mother and her daughter, and she had persuaded her mother to let Rory and Johnny have a club there. They couldn't charge for entry, but they did pass a teapot round and collected donations in it. I doubt if there were more than 30 there when we played."

**Thursday 3 April 1958** - Bought fan for cellar, £9. Alan removed boards. Leaves more room. Rory Storm's sister, Iris Caldwell: "They had the *Beatles* on there for 30 bob (£1.50), but George Harrison wasn't with them then. George was my boyfriend: we were kids, but we were seeing each other. I was 13 and desperately wanted to go and Rory did let me go one night. I was not well developed and so I got a lot of cotton wool and shoved it down my bra and thought I looked older and off I went. Just as big brothers do, Rory announced that Iris was at the back and had cotton wool down her bra, and that broke my heart. I ran out of there sobbing and George chased me right round *Oakhill Park* and gave me my very first kiss when he caught me. The only thing between us was cotton wool."

**Sunday 6 April 1958** - Went to *Cavern* with Pat to see Beryl Bryden. Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Mick Mulligan also turned up. The previous night Beryl Bryden had been at *Le Caveau in Paris* for '6.5 Special' and here she was with the *Merseysippi Jazz Band* at both the *Cavern* and the *New Shakespeare* night club. Alan Sytner, the owner of the *Cavern*, had banned snogging at the *Cavern* and even employed an anti-smooch girl (though it wasn't serious). Hope Johnny and Pat found a dark corner.

**Wednesday 23 April 1958** - Mr Brown and Co came around to Mrs Thompson's to say that the cellar must end. What did I tell you? The 1958 version of a neighbourhood watch: Douglas Brown lived next door at No. 23 and the neighbours objected to Coke bottles being thrown into their gardens. The *Morgue* had only lasted six weeks but it changed music history. On one of the evenings, 15-year-old George Harrison auditioned for the *Quarrymen* by playing 'Raunchy'.

Rory Storm had met Ringo Starr at a talent contest called "6.5 Special". Ringo had previously played with Eddie Clayton and then played drums for 'Darktown Skiffle' and then later joined Rory Storm. Ringo's first concert with Rory Storm was in March 1959 at the *Mardi Gras Club* in Mount Pleasant.



*Image (Left) – Copyright – Liverpool History in Pictures (this shows the Mardi Gras club when it was an Auction House.*

*Image (above) – Copyright tracks.co.uk*

Rory Storm went through many different names during his time with the band. He changed the name to “Al Storm and the Hurricanes”, then “Jett Storm and the Hurricanes” and finally “Rory Storm and the Hurricanes”. The band line up at the time of the Cavern was Storm, Byrne, O’Brien, Walters and Ringo Starr. Rory Storm and the Hurricanes played at the Cavern on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1960 together with the Cy Laurie Jazz Band.



*Image (Left) – Rory Storm and the Hurricanes – Copyright garyrocks.wordpress.com*

*Image (above) – Rory Storm and the Hurricanes – Copyright youtube.com*

However, the playing at the Cavern didn’t go down too well with the crowds or management. Rock and Roll music was not really the “in” music at the time. It was not accepted by either the paying punters or the owners of the Cavern. When they played again on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 1960, they started off well playing ‘Cumberland Gap’ which was a skiffle song, but then decided to move on to “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On”. The crowd were not happy – they were outraged! They booed and threw copper coins at the group. It was said that Ray McFall fined the band six shillings, but coins collected from the stage floor were more than the fines!

By 1967, Storm disbanded the Hurricanes and became a DJ working at the Silver Blades Ice Rink in Liverpool. On the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1972, Storm was found dead at Hurricaneville. His post-mortem revealed that Storm had alcohol and sleeping pills in his blood but not enough to cause his death.

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*Image (Left) – Copyright - garyrockswordpress.com*

*Image (above) – Copyright - garyrockswordpress.com*

## Liverpool Jazz Festival



The Cavern Club hosted the first ever Liverpool Jazz Festival on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 1960.

Various bands played at the Cavern during the week but also included:

*The Swinging Blue Genes (McCaskill, Braid, Ellis, Ennis, Hughes, King) will be playing on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January.*

*Hank Walters and the Dusty Road Ramblers (Walters, Thomas, Goldie, Perkins, Cooper) will be playing on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January and Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January.*

*Johnny Goode and his Country Kinfolk (Goode, Berry, Moss, Moffatt) will be playing on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January.*

Rory Storm and the Hurricanes (Storm, Guitar, Egmond, O'Brien, Starr), will be playing on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> January. *Image Copyright – beatlesauction.co.uk*

## Bob Wooler



Frederick James Wooler was born in Liverpool in January 1926. He was most noted for being the leading person to introduce The Beatles to their new Manager, Brian Epstein.

'Bob' was also resident DJ at the Club. At a young age, he lived in Garston and started to manage a skiffle group called The Kingstrums. He entered them in a talent contest at the Gateacre Labour Club, but the competition was won by a group called The Mars Bars (these later became Gerry and the Pacemakers).

In the late 1950's, the Kingstrums disbanded and this led to Bob being drawn to be a compere rather than a manager.

*Imagine Copyright – worthpoint.com*

Wooler had a massive knowledge on the local scene and was soon 'the' person to go to for advice. He was always immaculately dressed and started off a Compere in the Cavern Club. He had previously turned down a role at the Top Ten Club and after a fire had destroyed the building, the proprietor, Alan Williams, directed Bob towards a potential management spot with The Beatles. His trademark was his introduction "*We've got the hi-fi high & the lights down low, so here we go, with the Big Three Show*".

In 1963, Wooler was famously attacked by John Lennon at Paul McCartney's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday party. Lennon, being slightly the worse for alcohol, was incensed over a remark made by Wooler over John Lennon going on holiday with Brian Epstein.

Wooler would remain at the Cavern club till 1967 and passed away in Liverpool in 2002.

## The Beatles.

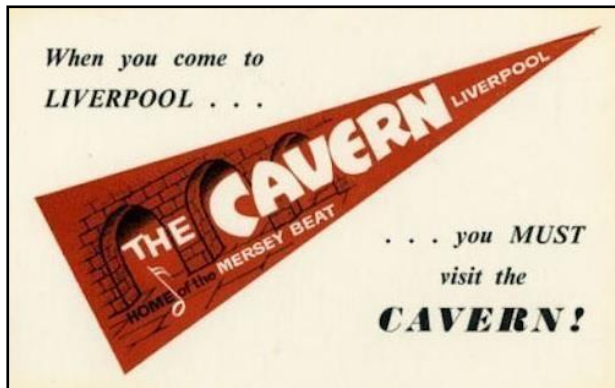


Image – Copyright Alamy.com



Image – Copyright youtube.com

The Beatles, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr were a rock band formed in Liverpool in the 1960's. They have been regarded as the most influential band of all time. They not only put themselves on the Map, but also Liverpool, as well as the Cavern Club. Their music, their influence and their style produced a following not seen since their era. And yet, they had already begun playing in other groups before they formed into The Beatles.

Prior to the Beatles, as previously mentioned John Lennon (aged 16) formed The Quarrymen together with other members of the group. Shortly after in 1957, Paul McCartney also joined the group and later in 1958, George Harrison further completed the line-up with becoming the lead guitar for the group.

By 1959, John Lennon's former bandmates from the Quarrymen had disbanded and at least three times, the trio had called themselves 'Johnny and the Moondogs'.

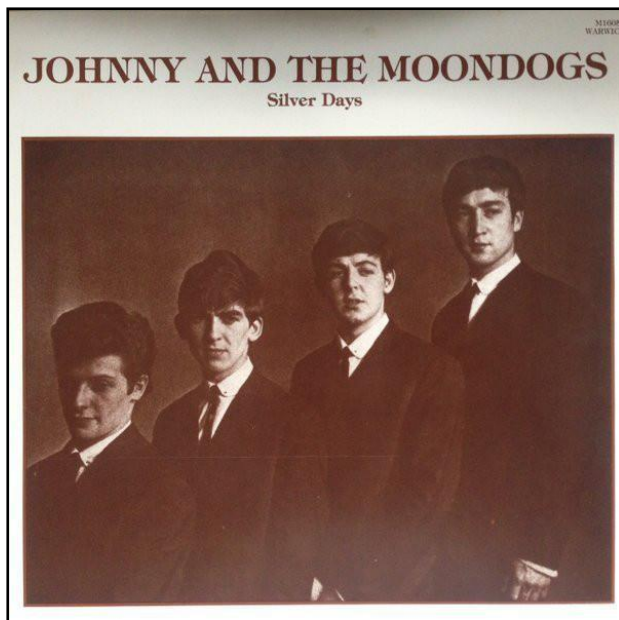


Image (left) – copyright discogs.com

Further to this, the group played when they could find a drummer, and this was usually left until the last minute. Stuart Sutcliffe joined the band in January 1960, and it was suggested that they rename the band's name to Beatal. This would be a nod to Buddy Holly and the Crickets. That name was used for a short time until they renamed again and called themselves the Silver Beetles. Image (below) – copyright reddit.com



Again, they changed their name, this time to the Silver Beatles and later in 1960, renamed themselves to 'The Beatles'.

Allan Williams would be their first Booking Agent and Manager of The Beatles. Allan was born in Bootle, Liverpool in 1930. By 1958, he wanted to run a Coffee Bar. He was listed as a 'Talent Manager' and found that a former watch-repair shop in Slater Street was up for lease. He would name this Bar the Jacaranda after an exotic species of a flowering tree. This bar opened in 1958.





*Image – The original Jacaranda Club on Slater Street – Copyright flickr.com*

In this Bar, the Beatles were frequent customers as they were all local to the area with their local collages and Institute. They asked Allan for a chance to play in his club but instead, he made them redecorate the venue! Things played out well as Allan was able to secure several bookings for The Beatles as well as them continuing to play in the Jacaranda. *Image (below) Copyright – wikipedia.com*



The band lacked a full-time drummer and auditioned Pete Best in August 1960. Allan had arranged a residency for them in Hamburg. Arriving in Hamburg on the 17<sup>th</sup> August, this tour didn't go down well. They moved around different clubs due to noise complaints and then the club owner Bruno Koschminder found that they had been playing at a rival club and was not happy. This was in breach of their contract, gave the band one month's termination notice. He also reported Harrison for being underage and reported McCartney and Best for setting fire to a condom in a corridor. John Lennon returned to Liverpool in December while Stuart Sutcliffe remained in Hamburg with his fiancé who took the first semi-professional photos of the Beatles.



*Image – The Beatles captured by Astrid Kirchherr – copyright bolognawelcome.com*

In 1961 Kirchherr cut Sutcliffe's hair in the 'exi' style, later adopted by all the Beatles. However, Sutcliffe decided to leave the band in 1961 and McCartney took up the Bass.

The Producer Bert Kaempfert contracted them until 1962 and later, the Beatles were contracted for one year with Polydor.

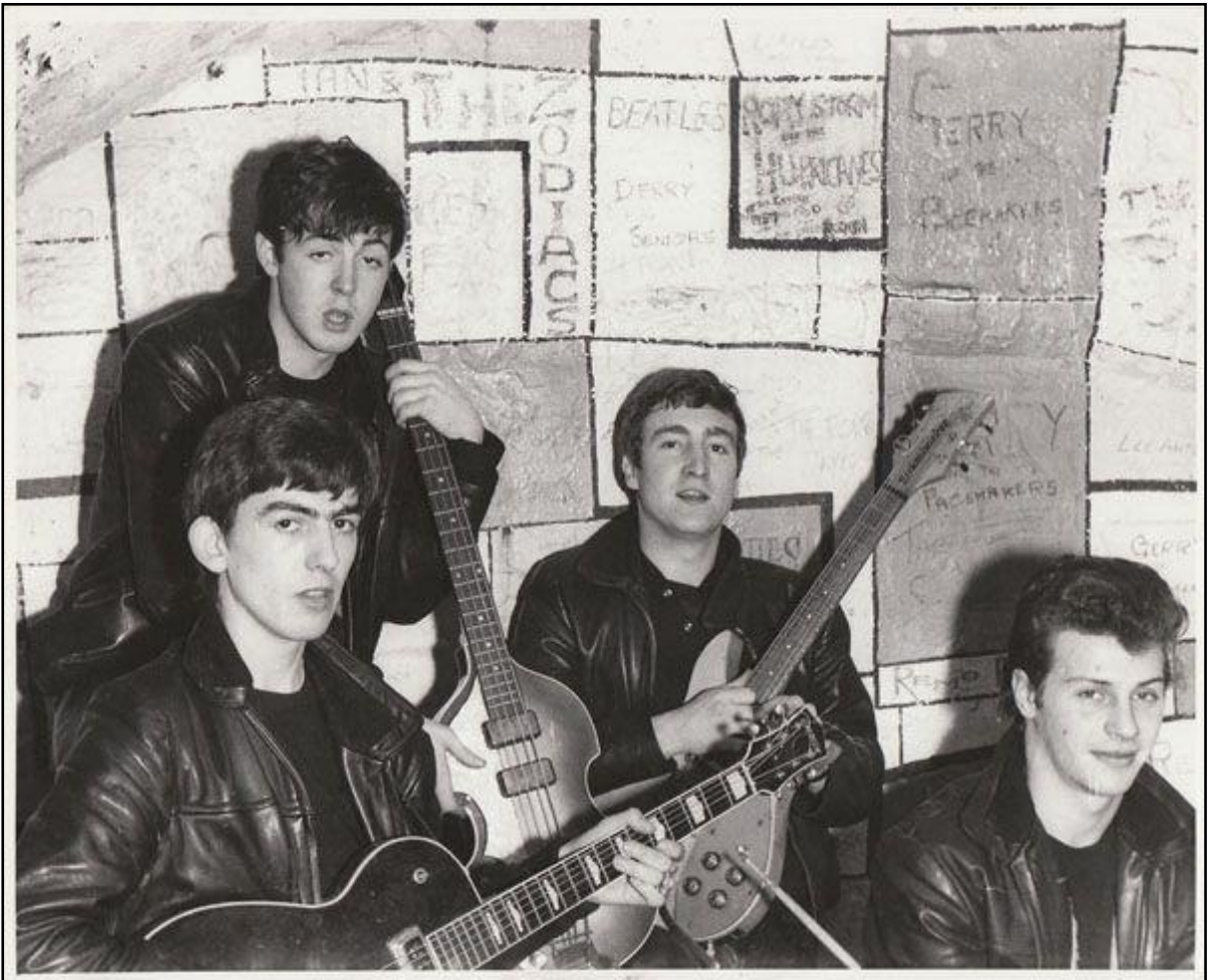
It was during this time that The Beatles would start to play in the Cavern Club.

We must go back to 1957 for the start of the links between the Beatles and the Cavern Club. In August of that year, while playing Golf at the Childwall Golf Club with Alan Sytner's father, Joseph, a friend of John Lennon asked Joseph Sytner if his son would book the Quarrymen at the Cavern Club. Dr Sytner demanded that they play at the Golf Club first so he could assess whether they would be a suitable band. The Group were happy to perform and set up their amps. Was their performance a success? Yes, as the hat was passed around and they collected £15 – much more than other groups also playing. Sytner offered the group a spot!

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 1961, The Beatles performed their first gig at the Cavern Club. They were John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Stuart Sutcliffe and Pete Best on Drums.



*Image – Copyright cavernclub.com*



*Image – Copyright pinterest.com – The first gig at the Cavern for The Beatles.*

They could not decide what to play, and a row broke out as rock and roll songs were not allowed in the Cavern Club. They started their performance with a skiffle song but then Lennon cracked on with 'Don't be Cruel' by Elvis Presley. As Lennon had started the song himself, he forced the others to join in to complete the track.

It took the club's owner, Alan Sytner to push to the front and hand a note to John Lennon which said, 'Cut out the bloody rock and roll'.

## Brian Epstein



*Image (left) – Brian Epstein on the Steps of the Cavern Club stage. Copyright Wikipedia.com*

Brian Epstein was born in 1934 in Rodney Street, Liverpool. His parents moved to Queens Drive after the war. Epstein wasn't suited to life at boarding schools. He was expelled twice and was then conscripted to do National Service. When returning to Liverpool, he was made a director of NEMS (North End Music Stores) of his family owned stores.

It was during this time that Brian Epstein started to notice The Beatles' name in issues of Mersey Beat as well as the many flyers around Liverpool. Eager to find out more, he spoke to Bill Harry who was the editor of Mersey Beat. It was if that Brian knew who the Beatles were but wanted further information, whether to learn more or to take further details before he thought about assisting them or managing them further. He then started what would be a regular column in Mersey Beat called 'Stop the World – and Listen to Everything In it'.

The Beatles would soon be performing for Brian Epstein.

In November 1961, the Beatles were due to perform a lunchtime concert at the Cavern Club. It was Brian who spoke to Mersey Beat, Bill Harry who asked if he could watch the Beatles perform to see for himself what they were all about. Epstein was given VIP treatment and lead straight into the Club. The Cavern were obviously expecting him as the tannoy from Bob Wooler, the resident DJ announced, "We have someone rather famous in the club today, Mr Brian Epstein, the owner of NEMS.

Epstein was impressed! He liked their music, the beat and the general aura of the band. He was given further VIP treatment by being allowed to go backstage to meet the Beatles. Being regular customers, they recognised him, but it would be George Harrison who would start the conversation and state, 'And what brings Mr Epstein here'. Brian merely stated that he enjoyed their performance. He left to take lunch with his assistant and remarked that he thought they were tremendous!



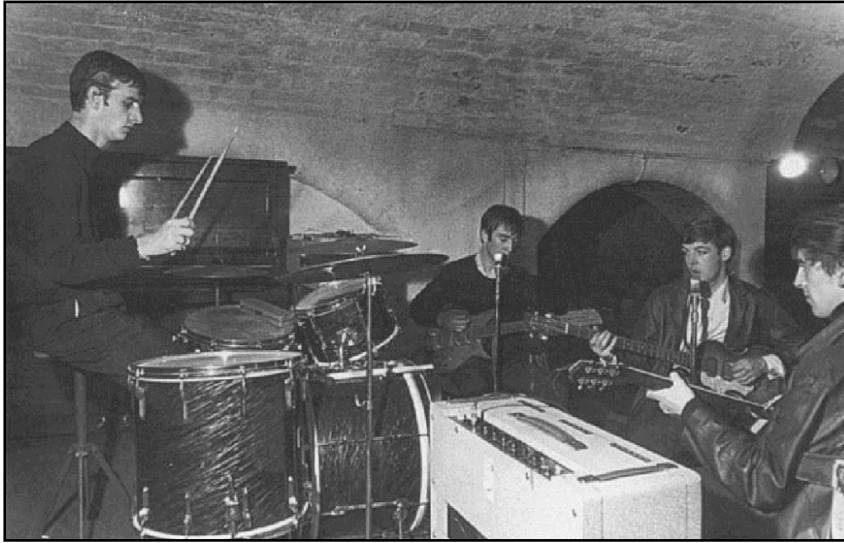
In December 1961, Epstein proposed the management of The Beatles at NEMS.

McCartney, Harrison and Best were under 21 and therefore needed consent of their parents. But they were all impressed with Epstein, the way he dressed, his large car and his attitude towards the band.

It was a successful meeting and after further meetings with him, the Beatles signed a 5-year contract on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1962.

*Image copyright beneaththebeatblogspot.com*

With Epstein now managing the Beatles, he ordered them to sort themselves out with a change of clothes and a change of attitude towards the punters. They smartened themselves up, started to wear suits and overhauled their image towards their own style.



*The Beatles rehearsing in the Cavern Club – Image (Left and below) Copyright – medium.com*

In June 1962, during their 'Welcome Home' session, the band gave a fantastic performance, probably their greatest performance to date. It drew a feverish reaction in which Beatlemania broke out a few months later.

The world would soon discover the Beatles and the Beatlemania that went with the group.

The small Cavern Club was firmly established on the map of both Liverpool and the Rock and Roll Scene!

It was also noted that even when The Beatles weren't playing in The Cavern, they would still be seen in the club, either talking to the punters or propping up the Coke Bar.

When the Cavern enlarged and a recording studio and new stage built, it took the club 4 months to process all the orders from the wood from the old stage from people who wanted to buy a piece!





According to the resident DJ, Dave Wooler, the Beatles made a total of 292 appearances at the Cavern Club.

Their first appearance was the 21<sup>st</sup> February 1961. Their last appearance was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1963.

However, their first live performance under 'The Beatles' was on the 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 1961 at Litherland Town Hall.

*Image Copyright – slicethelife.com*

A brief list of The Beatles Cavern appearances taken from Wikipedia.com

- **21 February 1961** - The Beatles made their first appearance. As a jazz club, it is experimenting with allowing rock 'n roll, at lunchtimes only.
- **21 March 1961** - Second appearance by the Beatles. Tuesday had become "Blue Jeans Guest Night". The evening featured Dale Roberts & The Jay Walkers, The Remo Four and the Beatles.
- **14 July 1961** - The Beatles' "Welcome Home" session (after their first Hamburg residency), which also featured Johnny Sandon and The Remo Four and The White Eagles Jazz Band.
- **25 July 1961** - Another "Blue Jeans Guest Night", when the Beatles performed with Gerry & The Pacemakers and the Remo Four.
- **2 August 1961** - The first of a long series of the Beatles' resident nights.
- **1 September 1961** - During a traditional jazz evening, the Beatles performed in the interval as the only rock group.
- **23 December 1961** - During an all-night session, including jazz, the Beatles performed along with Gerry & the Pacemakers and Johnny Sandon and the Searchers.
- **28 February 1962** - The Beatles appeared along with Gerry & the Pacemakers and Johnny Sandon and the Searchers.
- **5 April 1962** - The Beatles' fan club night, which also featured a performance by the Four Jays.
- **7 April 1962** - Between two sets by the Saints Jazz Band, the Beatles gave a two-hour performance.
- **9 June 1962** - The Beatles "Welcome Home" session after their second Hamburg residency.
- **1 July 1962** - The first Cavern evening with no jazz. Performing are the Beatles, the Swinging Blue Jeans, Gene Vincent, and Sounds Incorporated.
- **1 August 1962** - The Beatles, with Gerry & the Pacemakers and the Merseybeats.
- **28 August 1962** - Another "Blue Jeans Guest Night". The Beatles performed along with the first Birmingham group to feature, Gerry Levene and the Avengers.
- **9 September 1962** - The Beatles, with Billy J. Kramer and the Coasters, and a novelty singer, Clinton Ford
- **12 September 1962** - A London singer, Simone Jackson, performed with the Beatles as her backing group.
- **12 October 1962** - The Beatles perform along with Little Richard
- **5 December 1962** - The Beatles, and Gerry & the Pacemakers.
- **20 January 1963** - The Beatles, with the Dennisons, the Swinging Blue Jeans and the Merseybeats.
- **3 February 1963** - The Cavern's "Rhythm & Blues Marathon": the Beatles, the Hollies, the Merseybeats, the Fourmost, the Swinging Blue Jeans and Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes.
- **12 April 1963** - The Cavern's Good Friday session, headed by the Beatles and featuring seven other local bands, among them the Road Runners, Faron's Flamingos and the Dennisons
- **3 August 1963** - The Beatles make their final and 292nd appearance at the club. They received a fee of £300 pounds for the performance

## The Mastersounds



The Mastersounds were originally called Buddy Dean & The Teachers in 1962 by Mal Jefferson (He was a friend of George Harrison) and Tony Cockayne.

They then took the name of an American Jazz Quartet who were the first jazz group to use a fender precision guitar. When they disbanded, the Mastersounds were born.

Previously to this, both Buddy Dean and the teachers had deputised for The Beatles on occasions. Their first full gig was at the Iron Door.

*Image Copyright – thefootballvoice.com*

Their sound leaned towards blues, country blues, and rock and roll. They had an unusual style which led them to become popular and were noted for the same billing as the Rolling Stones. When the Beatles had left the Cavern, Bob Wooler transferred all the Beatles dates to The Mastersounds.

*A note from Mal Jefferson stated: Among the forgotten stars of Merseybeat, my band, the Mastersounds, are probably most forgotten. I saw Cilla Black audition at The Cavern with Brian Epstein, where she was backed by The Beatles. But they were not, however, proficient at backing solo singers, mainly because of guitarist George Harrison's instrumental shortcomings. The audition was a disaster and Brian didn't offer her a contract. Some weeks later, she approached me in the Blue Angel Club where my band had a residency, backing solo singers on most nights. Cilla told me she wanted to sing, and I agreed to write the music to rehearse it with the band. Shortly afterwards, she came in with Brian and told him she was going to sing with us. I counted the song in, we had the correct keys and the audition was a great success. Brian offered her a contract – and that was the last we saw of her.*

## Gerry and the Pacemakers



Gerry and the Pacemakers were a band that was active in the 1960's from Liverpool. They were part of the Merseybeat scene and were also managed by Brian Epstein.

The band was formed in Liverpool in 1959 and Gerry Marsden created the group alongside his brother Fred, Les Chadwick, and Arthur McMahon. Interestingly, for some of their career, and even when managed by the same manager as the Beatles, they were a sort of rival group for The Beatles.

Their early name was Gerry Marsden and the Mars Bars, but the Mars Company interjected and advised them to change their name from this. They were signed to Columbia Records and began recording in early 1963 with 'How Do You Do It'. It was a number 1 hit in the UK and was the first by a Brian Epstein managed group.

*Image shows Gerry and the Pacemakers at the Cavern. Copyright liverpoolmuseums.org.uk*

The group also recorded "You'll Never Walk Alone" which again reached number 1 in the UK Charts. The song was later adopted by the Liverpool Football Club as their signature tune in which other teams also adopted this well-known song and the song remains a well-known football anthem.

Apart from this early start with the group, they never achieve the same success with the UK charts and would never have a number 1 again. In 1965, the group starred in a film 'Ferry Cross the Mersey'. Marsden would write much of the soundtrack.



On October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1960, Gerry and the Pacemakers made their debut at the Cavern Club.

Further to this, the group also played at the Cavern Club on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1961.

*Image (Left) copyright wirralglobe.co.uk*

*Image (below) copyright twitter*



## Billy J Kramer



William Howard Ashton was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> August 1943 in Bootle, Liverpool. Managed by Brian Epstein, he was better known as Billy J Kramer.

He started life working on the Railways and in his spare time, he learnt the rhythm guitar and started off a group called The Coasters. His name was apparently picked from random from a telephone book and John Lennon suggested to add the letter J give his name a sharper sound.

He wanted to turn professional, but his group didn't have the same need for this and thus Billy parted company. Managed by Brian Epstein, he partnered Billy with the Dakotas.

However, the Dakotas did not want to be tied to Billy and thus while they partnered, they kept their own identity and the group was called Billy J Kramer and The Dakotas.

*Image – Copyright dannyfriar.wordpress.com* – He came to light when record producer George Martin provided an unreleased tune from The Beatles "I'll be on my way". Another Lennon-McCartney paring saw an impressive number one in the charts. Moving forward, Kramer was given further songs written by Lennon and McCartney and this propelled him into stardom.

Despite a virtually guaranteed progression with the next Lennon-McCartney song, he was advised that he would always be one step behind the Shadows unless he did something new. When a newly written song from McCartney – Lennon was offered, he turned this down. He insisted on recording the Stateside hit, 'Little Children'.

This was to become his second greatest hit. However, this would not keep him in the manor of which he was accustomed to and his next song only produced a top 10 hit. To this day Billy J Kramer is still active. *Image Copyright – nostalgacentral.com*



## The Searchers



*Image (above) Copyright – Wikipedia.com*

They produced their first single “Sweets for my Sweets” and this went straight to number 1 in the UK charts.

*Image (right) – copyright mikependersearchers.co.uk*



The band changed its members over the years with people leaving and newcomers. Chris Curtis left in 1966 to be replaced by John Blunt. However, The Searchers did not move their music with the times. They played in the Cavern in 1963 and further hits followed with ‘Needles and Pins’ (co-written by Sonny Bono with Jack Nitzsche) and “Don’t Throw your Love Away”, both achieving No 1 spot in the UK charts in 1964.



*Image (left) showing the cover of their First Album in 1963. Copyright – thefootballvoice.com*

With Chris Curtis leaving the group, the group lost their direction. At the time, he was the major songwriter and would trawl Brian Epstein’s Shop, NEMS, or local record shops for B sides.

Despite some promise and further singles issued by Pye, the chart success of the group had really come to an end.

They didn’t disband like many other groups had done in the 1960’s, however they were more of a cabaret act for the remainder of their time. From the dizzy heights of their Number 1 status and the Cavern billing, they would only perform on the local circuit.

The Searchers were a skiffle band formed in 1959 by John McNally and Mike Pender. The name of the group was taken by the 1956 John Ford Western film, ‘The Searchers’.

Part of the Merseybeat scene, they were a Liverpool band and were active at the time of The Beatles, and the Merseybeats.

They were originally part of an earlier group that started in 1957 but this disbanded early on. McNally then asked his neighbour Mike Pender to join the group. The original foursome of the group was John McNally, Frank Allen, Spencer James & Scott Ottaway.

Starting in July 1962, the band had negotiated a residency with the Star-Club in Hamburg for 128 days. At the time they were performing 3 one-hour sessions per night.

When they returned to Liverpool, they were resident at the Iron Door Club (Temple Street) and they tape recorded their sessions that led to a Pye Records contract with the group.



## Cilla Black



*Image (left) – Cilla Black in the Cavern 1963 – copyright [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)*

Priscilla Maria Veronica White was born in Vauxhall, Liverpool on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 1943.

Growing up in the Scotland Road area of Liverpool, with parents John and Priscilla. Schooled at St Anthony's school, she later went to Anfield College to learn Office Skills.

Cilla Black was determined to become an entertainer. It was something she had wanted to all her life, yet she had to work from the bottom up to earn her trade. Early on in 1967, Cilla Black went into a contract with her long-time friend and neighbour Terry McCann, but this contract was never honoured as she was underage at the time (with the consent then being 21). Her father, who had connections with Brian Epstein, managed to speak to him and ask for his advice. Brian stated that she would need to audition to see how good she really is.



*Image (left) – Cilla Black in the Cavern as a part time cloakroom attendant in 1962. Copyright [Daily Mail](http://Daily Mail).*

John Lennon heard about Cilla Black looking to audition via his aunty Mimi. She wanted him to promote Cilla to Brian Epstein. However, Epstein wasn't interested. He already had many local groups under his belt.

Building herself up for her first audition, she decided that she would perform her favourite song 'Summertime', but she would soon learn to regret this. She hadn't practiced this with The Beatles and to her horror, they started to play in the wrong key

It was a poor performance. Realising her error too late, she soldered on until the end of the song, but it was too late. The audition was over, and she wasn't good enough. Later, in the year, Brian Epstein would bump into Cilla Black in the Blue Angel Jazz Club and liked what he heard. She had greatly improved, and he decided to sign her up under contract in September 1963.



*Image Copyright [the-paulmccartney-project.com](http://the-paulmccartney-project.com)*

Her debut single written by Lennon and McCartney was named "Love of the Loved" but would go on to perform poorly going to only 35 in the UK charts. This would be in great contrast to Epstein's other bands who were used to far greater achievements.

However, this would be turned around with her second single 'Anyone who had a Heart'. This was to be written for Dionne Warwick and beat her recording in to the charts where it went to Number 1. It sold over 800,000 copies. She would take further achievement with her next number 1, "You're my World".



*Image (left) – Bob Wooler & Cilla Black at the Cavern 1963.*

Cilla Black enjoyed great success in the early part of her career. She was recognised alongside Dusty Springfield, Sandie Shaw, Marianne Faithfull and Lulu.

She continued to perform songs written by Phil Spector and when she performed a cover of “I’ve been wrong before”, Randy Newman was quoted by saying that it was the best cover he’s ever heard.

To go from a part-time cloakroom assistant to a full-time singer in little over a couple of years, Cilla Black’s name was well known in the Cavern for all the right reasons.

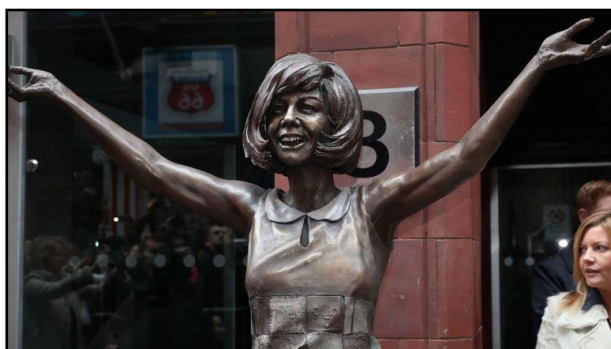
*Image (right) showing Cilla Black in the Cavern – copyright Liverpool Echo.*

She recorded a cover of “You’ve lost that loving feeling” which went straight to number 2 and being closely associated with the Beatles, she became one of the select artists to perform Lennon-McCartney songs.

Later, in the 1960’s. Cilla Black would appear on TV and be a guest on both The Eamonn Andrews Show, Not Only...But Also (Peter Cook/Dudley Moore) and starred as a TV special, Cilla at the Savoy.



Brian Epstein saw his chance to promote her into a film star, but this did not bear fruit. She had a cameo in “Ferry ‘Cross the Mersey” and she was asked to star in The Italian Job, but this did not take place. Cilla Black felt that Brian Epstein had lost interest in her when her singles started to score poorly in the charts. “A Fool I am” went to number 13, and “What Good am I” went to number 24.



However, after Brian Epstein died, Cilla’s boyfriend Bobby Willis took responsibility of her career and she continued to be associated with the Beatles. She went on holiday with George Harrison and Ringo Starr and during this time, “Photograph” was written at this time but was recorded by Starr in the end.

Cilla Black would continue to be successful and recognised – a statue was installed in Mathew Street in her honour to recognise her association with the Cavern.

## The Fourmost



The Fourmost were a band from Liverpool, forming in 1959 originally as the Two Jays, starting with Brian O'Hara and friend Joey Bower. Both from Liverpool, they change the name of the band to the Four Jays when Billy Hatton and Brian Redman joined the group.

The Four Jays performed at the Cavern on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1961.



Further enhancements to the group were from Mike Millward and Dave Lovelady in September 1962. As there was further change to the band line up, the band changed its name to the Fourmost in October 1962.

They were managed by Brian Epstein in 1963.

*Image – Copyright alchetrion.com*

The beauty of being managed by Brian Epstein is that the band had access to early Lennon-McCartney compositions and the first two singles were written by John Lennon. This was one of the earliest songs written by Lennon in 1957 and reached no 9 in the charts. The follow up song, "I'm in Love" was one of the earliest known Beatles written songs to be released in the USA.

However, in 1966, the death of vocalist Mike Millward rocked the band. He was to be eventually replaced but wouldn't have the same prominence as the group had originally. The band are still playing but the original line-up no longer exists.

## The Swinging Blue Jeans



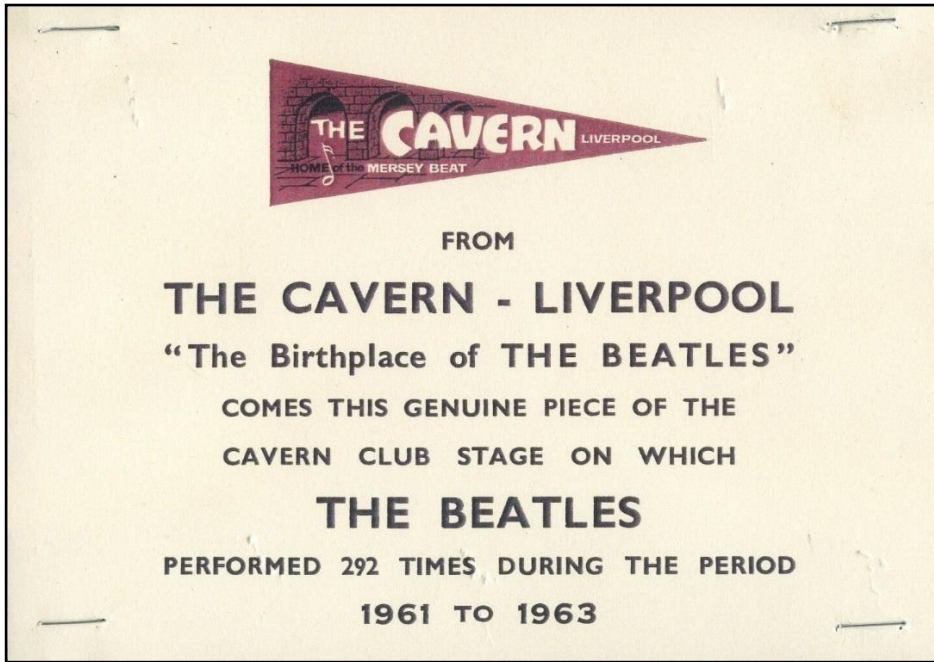
The Swinging Blue Jeans are a Liverpool Band, and still performing to the present day. They started out as a skiffle sextet group called the Bluegenes back in 1957. Bruce McCaskill and the original line up also included Tommy Hughes, Norman Kuhlke and Spud Ward.

Despite further changes to the line-up, they were a fully formed group by 1962 and played skiffle at venue's in Liverpool.

After a brief spell in Germany, they changed direction to Rock and Roll and renamed themselves as the Swinging Blue Jeans. This followed with a contract with HMV and their first recording made the top 30 in the charts.

Their appearance mirrored the Shadows with two guitars, a bass guitar, and drums and they had a 3-year success with the Merseybeat itself.

*Image – Copyright Liverpool Echo* – The Swinging Blue Jeans also played at The Cavern and the Mardi Gras club. Despite their fame at the Cavern, the band would never achieve the dizzy heights of the Beatles and failing to gain any new ground, the band retired to the cabaret circuit.



Before the opening night of the relaunched Cavern Club, the old stage that the Beatles performed on was renewed. It was decided to raise money for Liverpool's Freedom from hunger Campaign and the above images are the original card and piece of wood from the stage (*images copyright e-bay.co.uk*)



## Ken Dodd

For anyone living in Liverpool, Ken Dodd needs no introduction! Born in 1927 in Knotty Ash (home of the Jam Butty Mines) his stage career lasted over 60 years and he continued to perform in to his late 80's.

He started as an entertainer in the mid 1950's after being schooled locally and this was after he saw an advert for Show Business that was titled: "Fool your teachers, amaze your friends—send 6d in stamps and become a ventriloquist! He did just that and with the help of his father who bought him a dummy, he started off in the local orphanages plying his new showbusiness trade.

However, in 1954, his big break came while he was 26. He made his professional show-business debut in the Nottingham Empire as Professor Yaffle Chucklebutty and Sausage Knotter! And he never looked back from then, he toured up and down the UK and by 1958, he was top billing at Blackpool. Everyone who knew Ken Dodd described him as 'The last Great Music Hall Entertainer'. His stand-up comedy was fast one liner, and despite his comedy acts and self-styled hair, he had a fantastic baritone voice.

Away from the Theatres, he was also no stranger to the recording studio. His love of singing made him appear in the top UK 40 in 18 separate occasions. His first single 'Love is like a Violin' charted in at number 8 in the charts straight away. Again, a cover of the song 'Happiness' was Dodd's signature tune. In 1965, Ken Dodd recorded 'Tears' and this stayed in the charts for 5 weeks. It was the biggest hit single in the UK for that year and put Ken Dodd right on the map. His fame in the 1960's was that strong in that he rivalled the Beatles as a household name.



In 1964, Ken Dodd stepped on to the Cavern's stage in January. He became the Cavern's first ever honorary Life Member.

As true to his style, he signed his membership application on the back of a girl in the audience and began to mime with an electric guitar.

The crowd absolutely loved Ken Dodd and he could entertain anyone.

*Images copyright inolstagia.co.uk*



On the left shows Ken Dodd signing his Cavern Club Application Card on the back of Margaret Johnson, 19, from Anfield.

Doddy was presented with an OBE from the Queen for services to show business and his charity work. He was further knighted in the 2017 New Year's Honours for services to entertainment and charity.

In 2018, after many years of stage shows and TV appearances, Ken Dodd was admitted to hospital and passed away in March 2018 after a chest infection. Liverpool stopped to pay their regards to Ken after his funeral cortege toured Liverpool before stopping at Liverpool Cathedral. It was stated that 'Ken Dodd was the greatest live performer we ever saw on stage, anywhere!

On the same billing as Ken Dodd on the same night, writer and composer Lionel Bart and Beatles manager, Brian Epstein stood on stage.

Bart was well known for a series of hits including 'Living Doll' for Cliff Richard. He was noted as being one of the first to transfer from the UK to Broadway and continue his success.



For the 1965 fund raiser Liverpool's Freedom from Hunger Campaign, 25 bands played at the Cavern in July 1965.

*Images copyright inolstasia.co.uk*

Further celebrities visited the Cavern before closure including Anna Neagle and actors John Alderton and Terence Edmond.

Alderton was well-known for playing Dr Richard Moone in the TV drama Emergency Ward 10. He later established himself as hapless teacher Mr Hedges in the comedy series Please Sir. Edmond played PC Ian Sweet in 78 episodes of the Merseyside police drama Z-Cars. His character's death, trying to save a drowning boy, left many fans in shock in 1964.



Image Above Left – Lionel Bart (Centre) and Brian Epstein right in January 1964. Image above right Anna Neagle with John Alderton and Terence Edmond - *Images copyright inolstasia.co.uk*

## The Merseybeats



*Image (above left and above right) – The Merseybeats at the Cavern*

The Merseybeats (also known as The Mavericks and The Merseys), are a band that started in 1961. They were originally known as the Mavericks and was formed by Tony Crane and Billy Kinsley. In September of that year they renamed themselves as The Pacifics. During their tenure at the Cavern in 1962, Bob Wooley renamed them as the Mersey Beats and then in April 1962, they became the Merseybeats. Several name changes even before they had really started off in the business!

Fontana Records provided them with a contract and their first hit single in 1963 with 'It's Love that Really Counts'. This would follow by their million selling 'I Think of You'.



In February 1964, Billy Kinsley left the band to form his own band, the Kinsley's and was replaced by Johnny Gustafson. Under the band change, they had two further hits with 'Don't turn around' and 'Wishin' and Hopin'. They were good enough for Kinsley to re-join the group in 1964!

The band were regulars at the Cavern Club, and it is stated that they have appeared there with the Beatles more than any other band from that Era. Even to this day, the Merseybeats still perform after reforming back in 1993. *Image Copyright kesteloo.net*

### Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 1965.

On Friday, the Liverpool City Council discussed the fate of the Cavern. Before this, there was a one-off inspection of the ablutions in the Cavern and found they were not up to standard. They were so poor that it was described as "a catchpit acting as a cesspool" and this was in violation of the Public Health Act, 1936.

It was stated that the club's owner, Ray, was not aware that the club's toilets were not connected to the sewers, but this fell on deaf ears. He and the Cavern Club were served with a statutory notice to provide the paying public the use of proper facilities with toilets that were connected to the proper drainage.

The cost of this would be upwards of £3,500 simply because the toilets were below the level of the sewers of the street and Ray could not afford this. He pleaded with the Council to pay this back over time and then stated that he had to meet previous demands enlisted on him to install a fire escape on the previous year. This £4,000 bill was largely unpaid at the time.

It was stated that Ray McFall should have issued a counterclaim against the Council. The original system was designed for only drawing water from melting ice in the cold store. He argued that the toilets were installed by the Ministry of Food in 1948/1949 and should have been properly inspected before the Cavern opened. The Committee was not prepared to carry out the works and even the Liverpool Daily Post suggested that the Beatles should pay for improvements.

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February 1966



Image (left) shows a sit-down protest in response to the Cavern Club being closed. *Copyright nme.com*

Billy Butler described the scenes from the news that the Cavern Club was to close. Ray had advised that this would be the club's last session before closure. He and Chris Wharton went all around the local Liverpool clubs and pubs to advise that this may well be the last time 'people get the chance to play in the Cavern'.

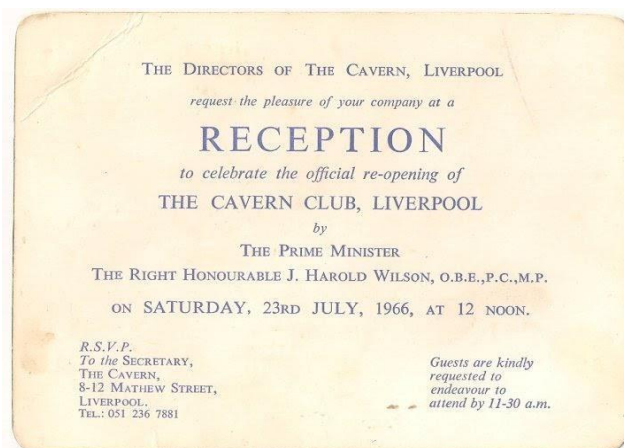
With the momentum building up, the entrance was blocked with chairs.

The Bailiffs turned up on Monday morning 28<sup>th</sup> February 1966. Even though the Cavern had been in constant use from 3pm on the Sunday afternoon to 8am on Monday morning, and the punters had barricaded the stairs with chairs. The final set was being played by Rory Storm and the Hurricanes. When they had finished playing, Rory went up to Bob Wooler and asked him for the money for the set. There was no money left in the pot. "We were simply in a list of creditors waiting to receive our £15." Ray McFall would not oversee the Cavern again.

## The New Cavern Owners – Joe Davey and Alf Geoghegan

In April 1966, the Cavern Club was sold by the Court receiver after bankruptcy proceedings. This was the lease for numbers 8, 10, 12 Mathew Street, plus the very name of the Club. A local business owner, Joe Davey, who ran Joe's Café locally decided to purchase the lease. The land was owned by British Rail and strangely, the lease for this would run out in 1972.

He decided to bring in a partner, Alf Geoghegan, a past butcher. It is interesting to understand how an ex butcher and ex café owner would see in the bankrupt club. But they did, and they did it well. They gave the club a minor facelift and corrected the drains in the toilets. Downstairs, the club was the same as previous, however a café was introduced at street level but there was no booze. There was even a boutique and souvenir shop.



On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1966, the Cavern club was re-opened. There were various invitations sent out to 'dignitaries' and the Prime Minister was even sent his own invitation.

This was an important event in the Cavern's history – a club that was important and recognised enough even for the Prime Minister!

There would have been visits by the Council to have signed off the drains so this would have been printed out well in advance knowing of the importance of the invitation. – *Image copyright beatlesauction.co.uk*





The British Prime Minister walking down Mathew Street and inside the Cavern, alongside Bessie Braddock, Giles Wilson, Mrs Wilson and Ken Dodd. (*Image Left – copyright alamy.com/image right copyright gettyimages.com*)

Alf Geoghegan knew he was on to the right deal with the partnership with Joe. Alf's daughter virtually lived at the Cavern and she knew the place like the back of her hand. She went to both daily sessions, saw the Beatles regularly, understood the venue and the punters and was there to advise. Further to this, Debbie asked her father to take her on in the Cavern, such was her knowledge. The take-over of the Cavern included the use of the basements of 8, 10 and 12 Mathew street. No 8 was the original Cavern Club. No 10 housed the Cavern Sound Studio's and in no 12, behind a brick wall, was another dusty empty basement with an alleyway behind this.

The new proprietors set to work straight away. They made the entrance wider, installed better electrical facilities and finally got to work on the cesspit toilets.

Debbie published a book on the events of the Cavern, 'Cavern Club: The Inside Story' and it makes interesting reading, simply because it was coming from a true source. There were many unique stories, the tour of the closed Cavern, lanterns in hand. The guest appearance by the Prime Minister. She mentions the newly installed Hammond and the organist who entertained the kids at times or when Chuck Berry who sat in his car in the middle of Mathew Street and wouldn't budge until he was paid.



*A General scene inside the original Cavern.*

*Image copyright – Liverpool Echo.*

*Image (next page) – copyright Jewish Telegraph*

# Debbie shares inside story of club The Beatles made famous

BY SIMON YAFFE

THERE are a few well-known Jewish links to The Beatles. The most obvious being Brian Epstein, the Fab Four's manager at the height of their stardom, and Linda McCartney (nee Eastman), the haimishe girl from New York who captured Paul's heart.

But perhaps less conspicuous are the Jewish strands which connects The Beatles and Liverpool's world-famous Cavern Club.

The popular night spot, the birth place of The Beatles, was originally owned by Alan Sytner, a Liverpudlian Jewish businessman.

The history of the club is recounted in Debbie Greenberg's *Cavern Club — The Inside Story* (Jorvik Press, £17.25).

Her father, Alf Geoghegan, later owned the club, while her now-husband, Nigel, owned a recording studio in the building.

"Alan chose the cellar that became the Cavern because he had been to a club on the Left Bank, in Paris, which was called 'Le Cavo'," Debbie said.

"He wanted to replicate it in Liverpool."

Nigel, who was raised in the Allerton area of Liverpool, initially trained as a radio and television engineer.

"When I was 20, Peter Hepworth, another local Jewish boy, and I started a company which manufactured sound equipment for pop groups," Nigel said.

"It was the 1960s and everybody needed an amplifier."

Nigel and Peter opened a recording studio, Cavern Sound, in the basement of an adjoining building.

Debbie's father, Alf, ran the club from 1966, renovating and upgrading it.

And, at its relaunch ceremony, which was captured by the world's press, and included such prestigious guests as Prime Minister Harold Wilson, the electricity went down.

Cue Nigel.

He recalled: "Someone shouted, 'Is there an electrician in the house?'"



**FAMOUS FRIENDS:** Nigel and Debbie Greenberg with Sir Paul McCartney and his late wife Linda

"I put my hand up and went to sort it out and temporarily got it all back up and running."

Nigel, now 74, also knew Epstein.

He said: "Brian was a charming gentleman, though quite unsuited to the world of showbusiness and entertainment."

"However, he recognised The Beatles' potential and got them a recording deal after Decca had turned them down."

Debbie, who comes from an Irish family, and Nigel, were set up by accountant Edward Robinson, who was also Jewish, and his wife Eunice, in 1981.

Debbie recalled: "Eunice invited me round for dinner and asked if I would mind another guest coming who, I was told, was a 'nice, Jewish guy, who was divorced with two kids'."

"I expected a Jewish man with a large black hat and peyot, so I was pleasantly surprised."

She added: "By 2am, Nigel and I were still talking and Eunice and Edward were falling asleep."

"Edward had a golf tournament in the morning, so he gave us the house keys and told us to lock up and push them through the letterbox."

Debbie was amazed to discover Nigel's links to the Cavern and the fact that he knew her father well, too.

The Cavern's days at its original site were numbered when it was made the subject of a compulsory purchase order by British Railways, which wanted to build a ventilation shaft for the Merseyrail underground loop.

The club closed in March, 1973 and while the ventilation shaft was never built, the Cavern was filled in during construction work.

"There have been lots of rumours flying around Liverpool and probably further afield about what happened to the Cavern, so I wanted to set the record straight," Debbie explained.

"Dad is not here to defend himself."

These days, Debbie and Nigel run a security company in Liverpool.

Nigel volunteered for Israel during the Six-Day War, working on a kibbutz attached to a military unit on the Golan Heights.

He went on to live in Israel for three years and his daughter, Rinat, who now resides in Hollywood, was born there.

Nigel's son, Paul, also lives in Hollywood.

Nigel has seven grandchildren, including Yoni Greenberg, who recently started a year's study at a yeshiva in Jerusalem.

## Rufus Thomas

On the re-opening of the Cavern Club on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1966, the top billing were Rufus Thomas and Solomon Burke.

Rufus Thomas, known as Mr Swing, was born on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 1917 in Mississippi USA. He was known as an American rhythm and blues, funk and soul singer and was under multiple labels for Chess, Sun, Stax and AVI.

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**CONTRACT**

No. 22215

**An Agreement** made the 11th day of July 1966

BETWEEN Mr. Bob Wagner (hereinafter called "the Management")  
of the one part and Cavern Club, Liverpool  
Global Promotions Ltd.  
(hereinafter called "the Artiste/Artistes") of the other part.

WITNESSETH that the Management hereby engages the Artiste and the Artiste agrees to present/appear as: Rufus Thomas & The Rock House Band

(or in his usual entertainment) at the Theatre/Ballroom and from the dates for the periods and at the salaries stated in the schedule hereto, upon and subject to the terms and conditions of Schedule I of the Ordinary form of Contract contained in the Award of Mr. A. J. Ashton, K.C. dated 22nd September 1919.

**SCHEDULE**

The Artiste agrees to appear at 1 evening performances at a salary of £ 50 : 0 : 0  
(cash settlement to be made to the Artiste within seven days of performance).

July 23rd at Cavern Club, Liverpool commencing 4 o'clock 1966  
Rehearsal at group to appear for  
1 x 45 mins.  
at RUFUS THOMAS to  
commencing appear 1966  
1 x 30 mins.

Rehearsal at \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ commencing \_\_\_\_\_ 1966

Rehearsal at \_\_\_\_\_

Bill Matter, etc., to be sent to \_\_\_\_\_ to arrive at \_\_\_\_\_  
not later than twenty-one days before performance.

Signature [Signature]  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Image (left) shows the contract between the Cavern Club and Rufus Thomas for July 1966.  
*Copyright – beatlesauction.co.uk*

He started off in the business at a young age. He performed in a local performance at the age of 6 and by 10 years old, he was a small time tap dancer.

After school, he began performing in travelling tent shows. Married in 1940 and then later formed a duo Rufus & Bones with Robert "Bones" Couch.

His influences were amongst Louis Armstrong and Fats Weller and during the 1940's, he was a regular performer in nightclubs. He always stated that he never wanted to get rich, just to be recognised by his talents and his opportunity to perform.

Fast forward to the 1960's and he started recording with his daughter. Some of these were regional hits and this prompted a deal with Atlantic Records who started the ball rolling for further billings.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July 1966, Rufus Thomas & The Rock House Band were contracted to play at The Cavern alongside Soloman Burke on the same billing.

Rufus always described himself as the World's oldest Teenager and would certainly put on a good show with his quick steps on the dancefloor. In the 1980's he was instrumental in the Stax reunion and was regularly appearing on TV. At his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday he had a road name changed to his name known as Rufus Thomas Boulevard. Rufus died at the age of 84 in Memphis and was described as "His music... brought a great deal of joy to the world, but his personality brought even more, conveying a message of grit, determination, indomitability, above all a bottomless appreciation for the human comedy that left little room for the drab or the dreary in his presence.

## Solomon Burke

Licensed by the Westminster City Council.

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**CONTRACT**      No. 22216

An Agreement made the 11th day of July 1966  
BETWEEN Bob Wooler (hereinafter called "the Management")  
of the one part and Cavern Club, Liverpool Global Promotions Ltd.  
(hereinafter called "the Artiste/Artists") of the other part

WITNESSETH that the Management hereby engages the Artiste and the Artiste agrees to  
present/appear as Solomon Burke & The Senate featuring Sol Byron  
(or in his usual entertainment) at the Theatre/Ballroom and from the dates for the periods and  
at the salaries stated in the schedule hereto, upon and subject to the terms and conditions  
of Schedule 1 of the Ordinary Form of Contract contained in the Award of Mr. A. J. Ashton, K.C.  
dated 22nd September 1919.

---

**SCHEDULE**

The Artiste agrees to appear at 1 evening performances at a salary of £ 100: 0: 0  
(cash settlement to be made to the Artiste within seven days of performance).

July 23rd at Cavern Club, Liverpool commencing 3 o'clock 1966  
group to appear for  
Rehearsal at 1 x 45 mins.  
SOLOMON BURKE to appear  
at \_\_\_\_\_ commencing for 1 x 30 mins. 1966

Rehearsal at \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ commencing \_\_\_\_\_ 1966

Rehearsal at \_\_\_\_\_

Bill Matter, etc., to be sent to \_\_\_\_\_ to arrive at \_\_\_\_\_  
not later than twenty-one days before performance.

Signature [Signature]  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Copyright – [beatlesauction.co.uk](http://beatlesauction.co.uk)

Solomon Burke was born either on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1936 or 1940. His birth name was James Solomon McDonald and he was noted as one of the founding fathers of soul music in the 1960's.

He had multiple hits such as 'Cry to Me', 'If You Need Me' and 'Everybody Needs Somebody to Love'.

He was one of the 1960's most underrated performers due to his minimum chart success compared to the greats such as James Brown, Wilson Pickett, and Otis Redding, however other people noted him as one of the greatest soul singers of all time.

His most famous recordings really spanned 5 years in the 1960's and he was instrumental in bridging the gap between mainstream R&B and the grittier R&B of the day.

He performed for over 55 years in his career and released 38 studio albums.

In the 1960's he signed up with Atlantic records and he was lauded as a saviour of the company seeing as Bobby Dan and Ray Charles had departed.

Solomon Burke was contracted by The Cavern Club/Global Promotions Ltd to perform at the Cavern Club on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 1966.

## Billy Butler

William George Butler was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 1942 in Wales. He visited the Cavern on many occasions while Bob Wooler was resident DJ. However, by July 1966, Bob Wooler had less and less involvement with the Cavern Club after the re-opening of the Club.

Under the new ownership, Bob Wooler took a step down from being DJ and Billy Butler was installed as resident DJ and compere. Billy Butler was a well-known person on the scene and apart from appearing at the Cavern Club, he has also appeared on BBC Radio Merseyside and appeared on TV. He is probably most famous for the Radio quiz show, 'Hold Your Plums' which was hosted by Billy Butler and Wally Scott and was broadcast live from Liverpool at the Radio Merseyside HQ.

Once in the Cavern club, there was a card you could fill in and pass to Billy Butler with the name of the record you wanted playing, the name of the person dedicated this to and who it was from.

However, it would have been Bob Wooler who would have announced The Beatles nearly 400 times from their time at the Cavern from 1961 to 1963.

## Paul McCartney

On the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1968, Paul McCartney was in Liverpool city centre showing his girlfriend, Linda Eastman, around the city. He decided to venture into the Cavern Club unannounced and caused quite a stir as no one was expecting him. Once inside, he told the owners (Alf Geoghegan) this his girlfriend was outside and that he would like to bring her in to show her where it all started off for him. Permission was granted and Paul and Linda entered the Cavern.



To the left shows Paul McCartney on the drums in the Cavern with The Curiosity Shop Band in Oct 1968. *Copyright wogew.blogspot.com*

At the time, the band, The Curiosity Shop were playing, and Paul couldn't resist taking up the piano to start with 'Hey Jude' and then continued to perform with the band. It was the part owner of the club, Alf, who rushed out to buy a camera and took photos of Paul on the drums with the band.

The band would have had no prior knowledge that Paul would have turned up and would have been more shocked that he offered to play with them.

## Spike Milligan

The late great entertainer Spike Milligan has also ventured into the Cavern in an impromptu visit while performing at a local venue in 1967.

He was involved in "The Bed Sitting Room" in Liverpool and popped into the Cavern, much like Paul McCartney, unannounced. Spike was known as a teetotaller but still danced and took in the atmosphere of the club. Alf (the club's owner), and daughter took Spike upstairs for a good long chat.

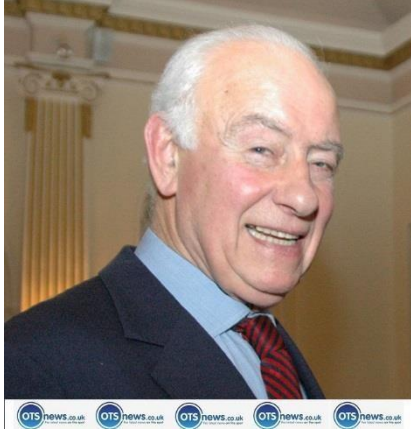


The three of them were said to be in discussion on a wide range of subjects until the early hours of the morning. It would be a rare treat to have spoken to Spike Milligan in a serious way as he was well known for his comedy act and not a person to be seen without the continuation of his act in public.

*Image copyright Debbie Greenberg.*

## A Change of Ownership

Alf Geoghegan had part owned the Cavern since the take over from Ray McFall, but he felt that in 1970, he wanted to take retirement and take it a little easier for a while. He sold his company Cavern Enterprises Ltd to Harry Waterman and Roy Adams.



Roy Adams didn't just appear at the Cavern and decide to take it over on a whim, he already had his own club Chequers. He ventured further in to Clubland and purchased the Iron Door (once remained the Pyramid). As he was local to clubland, he had heard that Alf had wanted to sell up and made him an offer to take over the Cavern.

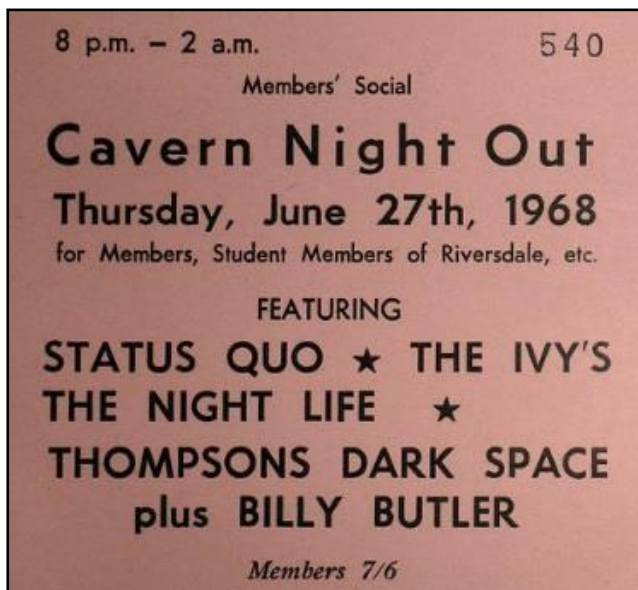
In 1970, Roy Adams became the new owner – and last owner of the original Cavern Club. *Image copyright – otsnews.co.uk*

Roy took over the business and was licenced for 400 people and yet, due to the fame of the club, over 800 would regularly turn up. He stated that they once had 1600 people in the Cavern club and used to have 12 bouncers to deal with everyone. 1600 people in the cavern has not been repeated!

## Status Quo

Status Quo were originally known as The Spectres and were formed by Francis Rossi and Alan Lancaster in 1962 while they were still at school. In their early years there were several changes to the line-up of the band, however in 1967 they renamed themselves as The Status Quo and Status Quo in 1969. Rick Parfitt joined the band after leaving a band called The Highlights and the two front men were firmly established at the front row.

However, their second Album, Spare Parts, failed commercially. They reviewed their options and left the psychedelic era behind in exchange for hard rock style. In came the denims and T-shirts and they were back on the scene. Their change in stance was one of the reasons why the Cavern wanted them on the bill. With the Cavern no longer being the skiffle scene, and rock and roll was coming in to play, they were the natural choice for the punters. They were also the choice for Liverpool Stadium as they came back to Liverpool on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1972 to perform there.



Status Quo played at the Cavern on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1968. They also played at the Cavern on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 1970. *Image copyright twitter.com*

Their road manager, Bob Young, stated that they loved the Cavern as it was where the Beatles had played, but they found the stage slightly too small for their usual running around on the stage.

Considering they nearly tripped up over each other when they started on their first act for Live aid in 1984 and had the entire stage to themselves, the Cavern Club would have been a very tight squeeze.



## Queen

Perhaps one of the most famous bands behind The Beatles, Queen played in the Cavern Club on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1970. It was their second local concert after playing at St Helens Tech in October 1970 before going on to the Cavern Club at the end of the month. It was reported that they only played to 100 people as they were unknown at the time.



*Image copyright cavernclub.com*

Before Queen, Roger Taylor and Brian May formed a band called Smile in 1968. They played locally until the line-up changed with Freddie Bulsara joining the group. It was Freddie who changed the direction of the band. Not only did he change his name to Mercury but also renamed the Band 'Queen'. It may have been a straightforward name change but local history may have had a hand in this.

In 1969, Freddie Mercury was part of a band called IbeX and later named Wreckage. The band didn't take off but as it was a local band, Freddie Mercury for a short time, lived in Liverpool. He lived in a flat above Dovedale Towers, which was a pub at the time. Upon joining up with the band Smile, he changed the name to Queen. His official version of this name change was, *"Years ago I thought up the name 'Queen'... It's just a name, but it's very regal obviously, and it sounds splendid...It's a strong name, very universal and immediate."*

Freddie was at Art College when he designed the Queen Logo. He incorporated the star signs of the four band members and it also bears a resemblance to the Royal Coat of Arms. However, Freddie Mercury would have walked down Dale Street nearly 50 years ago and seen the Queen Insurance Building. Did Freddie Mercury take his inspiration from the band name and the logo from looking up in the sky?



*Image Copyright – cavernclub.com*



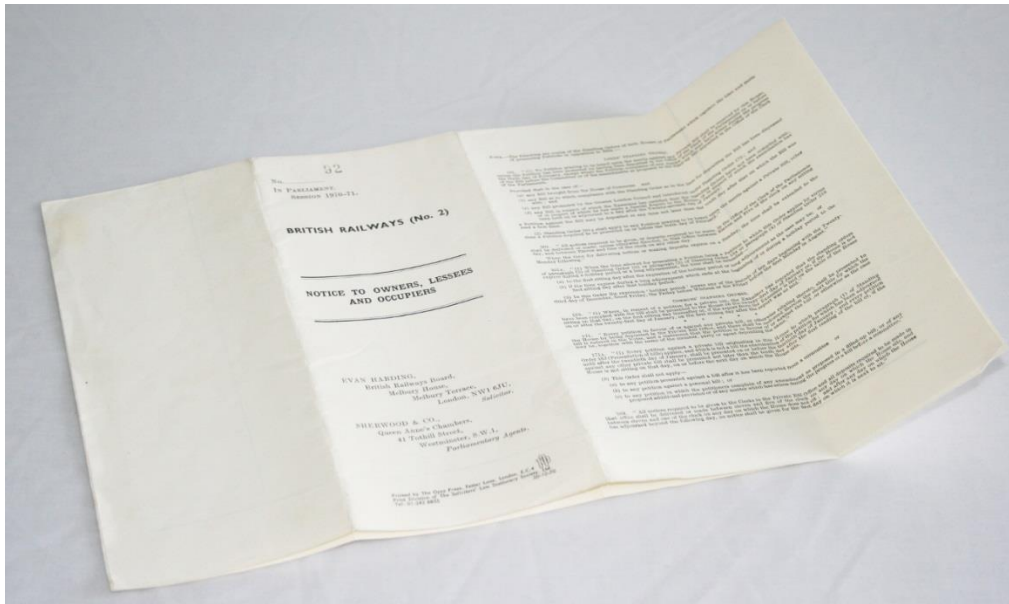
Dovedale Towers on the left off Penny Lane – another musical connection to the Cavern with The Beatles and Queen.

Queen continued their affiliation with Liverpool throughout the 1970s, playing over ten gigs at venues such as the Cavern Club, Liverpool Stadium, Liverpool University and Liverpool Empire Theatre. In fact, the first time the band performed Bohemian Rhapsody in front of a live audience was in Liverpool, at the Empire Theatre in November 1975.

*Image Copyright – livertoursliverpool.com*







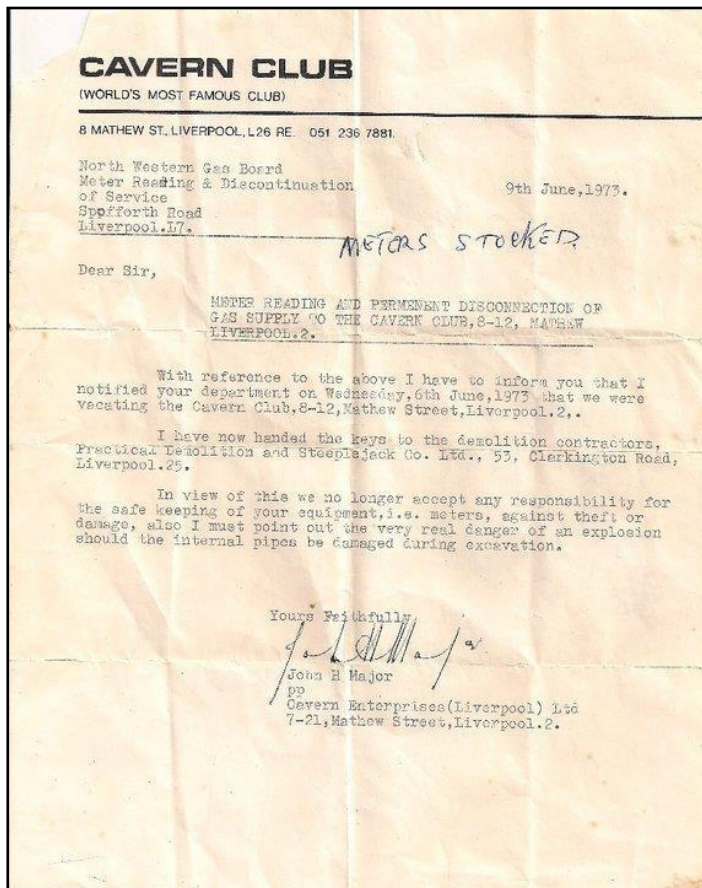
Images Copyright - pfauctions.com

In a strange twist of fate, the Cavern Club could have been saved from demolition for just £500.

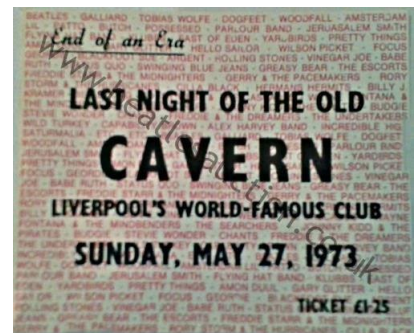
British rail was prepared to move the shaft at the cost of just £500. The money wasn't there. Roy pleaded with friends to help him raise the money to do just this, but no one was interested.

### The Final Night at the Cavern

The final night of the Cavern was Sunday May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1973. Despite the good intentions of the owners looking to raise money, this didn't happen, and the Cavern was due to close in 1973. Days before the closure of the Cavern, Roy was quoted in the Liverpool Echo stating that *"it would be a sad and nostalgic occasion. I would like to see part of the cellar preserved as a tourist attraction. I think it could be done but that plea too would fall on deaf ears"*.



One of the main reasons why this occurred was down to Liverpool City Council. They considered that the Cavern had no potential value for Liverpool's Heritage and didn't like The Beatles.



Images copyright beatlesauction.co.uk



## The Demolition of the Cavern Club



With the 'new' Cavern Club re-opening across the road at 7-15 Mathew Street, the fate of the original Cavern Club was sealed.

The Cavern Club signs were taken down above the entrance of the original location and transferred across the road to no 7 Mathew Street.

*Images Copyright - mathewstreet.co.uk*

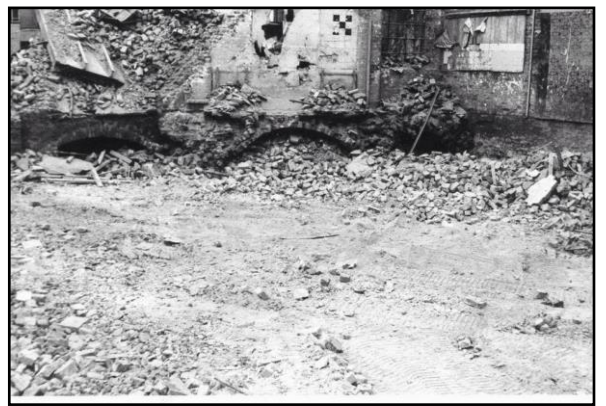
The Cavern Club sign being removed from the side of the original Cavern Club wall.

*Images Copyright - mathewstreet.co.uk*





*Images Copyright - mathewstreet.co.uk*



1. Above – The Cavern Warehouses under demolition – copyright baffledspirit.blogspot.com
2. Above Right – Cavern Club arches after demolition – copyright twitter.com
3. Right – The Car Park on top of the Cavern Club – copyright pinterest.com

## The Beatles Statue



On the 20<sup>th</sup> April 1974, local sculptor Arthur Dooley installed his latest creation, The Beatles Statue. The event was well publicised, and many Beatles fans gathered in Mathew Street for the unveiling.

The sculpture was a statue of a woman holding 3 babies with a fourth baby with wings on its back on the wall next to the statue.

There is no face on the figure, and it depicts ropes or spiders' webs on its body.

Originally there was a Beatle Cherub – they say if you zoom in to the faces you can see a likeness of the Beatles. However, just one year after the sculpture was installed, the Beatle Cherub was apparently stolen and left in a garage for 40 years before being ‘discovered’ and left outside the Cavern Club in a bag.

Only 6 years later, the death of John Lennon shook the world. Crowds formed outside Mathew Street to find a meeting point, and this seemed to be the central location for people to pay their respects. The sculpture was again changed, this time a cherub (without the wings) was added on the right-hand side of the statue in a representation of John Lennon in swaddling clothes. A veil was added as was a halo, and the inscription simply reads “Lennon Lives.” Above images: *copyright - thenumbnineblog.wordpress.com*

## The Cavern Club / Eric's

As per page 10, The Cavern Club name was disbanded in March 1976. The Beatles had disbanded, and the original club wasn't there anymore, so a name change was made in order to provide its new identity. The Cavern Club was now to be called The Revolution Club and they hosted a music appreciation club called Eric's. Did this the name change that stopped people visiting, or did they miss the ambiance of the Cavern? If so, the new club didn't rise to the original venue as the Revolution stopped trading in April 1976.



Revolution closed in April 1976 and Liverpool had lost another club on Mathew Street. With a car park all to show for The Cavern, and the Revolution closed, the memory of the Beatles and all that played in the clubs were lost for a time.

It was only 5 months later that the Revolution reopened and was called Eric's. They hosted many famous names such as Big in Japan, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, and the KLF. This was a different time and a different era than the skiffle bands of the Cavern, rock and roll and punk were the in bands now and this is where they performed.

*Image copyright bombedoutpunk.com*

## The Cavern's Second Chance

On the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1981, there were plans to excavate the buried remains of the Cavern Club. The Council had formed a plan to transform Mathew Street from a car park on the former warehouse site to a £7-million redevelopment project.



Image left – foundations being constructed for the new Cavern Walks. The Arches of the former Cavern Club can clearly be seen in the centre of the picture.

*Copyright twitter.com*

For anyone to have seen this image, this would have given false hope that the Cavern Club would be restored to its former glory.

Sadly, most of the Cavern was cleared away in this picture when work had progressed to stabilise the ground.

The Architect David Backhouse had reviewed the structure of the Cavern Club and found it to have serious structural issues. The arches that were still standing were structurally unsafe as the warehouse above had been flattened with no regards for the cellar system, even though the cellar system was to be covered over. The original Cavern Club would be no more.

In August 1983, it was planned to excavate the remaining bricks from the Cavern Club.

At £5 each, you could own part of the Cavern. They were individually signed and plated signed by Ray McFall and proceeds went to Strawberry Field Children's Home.

*Image copyright – Facebook.*



A further 15,000 bricks of the 20,000 reclaimed bricks were to be used on the authentic reconstruction of the new Cavern Club within the Cavern Walks redevelopment.



In this hard to place picture at first, there are no real surrounding buildings to place where we are.

This is the start of the 1980's and takes a good detective to get your bearings.

The buildings at the rear are on Harrington Street, the alley way heading to Church Street.

The road in the foreground is Mathew Street and shows the size of plot of Cavern Walks.

*Image copyright twitter.com*

## Cavern Walks

Between 1981 and 1984, Cavern Walks were constructed on the site of the Cavern Club, and previous car park. The construction of the building was held by the Architect David Backhouse and he had to put Mathew Street right back on the map. The mapping out of this building took ownership of when Backhouse heard about John Lennon having been shot dead. The very morning, he completed the design work for the designs for Cavern Walks and Mathew Street. He needed to make sure that the link to the Beatles didn't disappear and that he had to make sure that it was a working design.

He went on site to review the foundations and came across a brick wall of broken arches from the back wall of the Cavern. This had all the bands names on but was broken to comply with health and safety.

However, the biggest surprise was that he found that the Beatles could walk on water! He came across five water wells cut 40 feet into a reservoir. This would have been from the mid 1800's to supply the local area with water at the time. He reveals that he was lowered in to the biggest one about 8 ft across and about 40ft down, there was a cavern – literally a cavern beneath the cavern.

The design of Cavern walks was crucial to the modern 1980's architecture at the time. Backhouse knew that he didn't want a glass box, nor did he want something that was dark and depressing for people working there. And so, he designed the Walks with a central atrium with light pouring into this area. He also made specialist spaces for shops, so they were in a boutique style. Backhouse was a Potter by previous trade, and this shows in the building if you know where to look. He came across a terracotta works in Leicestershire and worked clay panels into the brickwork around the shop fronts.

Cynthia Lennon also had a hand in the design of some of the relief's around the shops. She designed peace and love in the form of doves and roses.

However, there were small designs that you really must look closely at the building to understand. The roof is not a standard roofline but will stagger at the 1<sup>st</sup> business level. The building has many windows in the roofline and yet one must really find a spot to look at the building to take it all in as it is so squashed against the other buildings in Mathew Street.

The building of Cavern Walks would change the outlook of Mathew Street as much as the demolition of the previous warehouses did.



The image to the left shows the construction of Cavern Walks in December 1983. It shows a then near completed interior still with panelling to be finished.

*Image copyright gettyimages.com*



*Image Right – the newly built Cavern Walks from Harrington Street – 1984. Copyright Liverpool City Council*



*Image Left – the newly built Cavern Walks from Harrington Street – 1984. Copyright Liverpool City Council*



The image bottom right on the previous page is an interesting image. When Backhouse was designing the Cavern Walks, he wanted to decorate the building in his own style. However, it was a well voiced critic who stated that “art is to architecture like lipstick is to a gorilla”. He knew that there was only one thing that could be done, and he installed a Gorilla on the Harrington Street side of the building putting lipstick on! *Image copyright alansblogspot.wordpress.com*



The Image on the left is the nearly finished Cavern Walks taken from Matthew Street in 1984. Only minor works were needed at this point before the opening of Cavern Walks on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1984.

*Copyright Liverpool City Council*

The Royal Life Insurance were the landlords of the Cavern Club and they leased The Cavern Club to former Liverpool FC player Tommy Smith and his business partner, George Downey. This was a brand-new venture, although the Cavern Club name and the general location was much the same, albeit a few metres up in Mathew Street.



Above is a “Then and Now” of Mathew Street showing the original entrance to the *Cavern* – *copyright Keith Jones*.



Queues outside Cavern Walks which began on Christmas Eve December 1985.

*Copyright – Gettyimages.com*





Shops in Cavern Walks on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1987.

Looking through the windows at the Christopher James Jewellers.

*Image Copyright  
gettyimages.com*

Listed as  
Liverpool Cavern  
Walks.

This view shows  
the ground and  
first floor  
shopping  
complex and is  
set up for  
Christmas as this  
was taken 3<sup>rd</sup>  
December 1984.

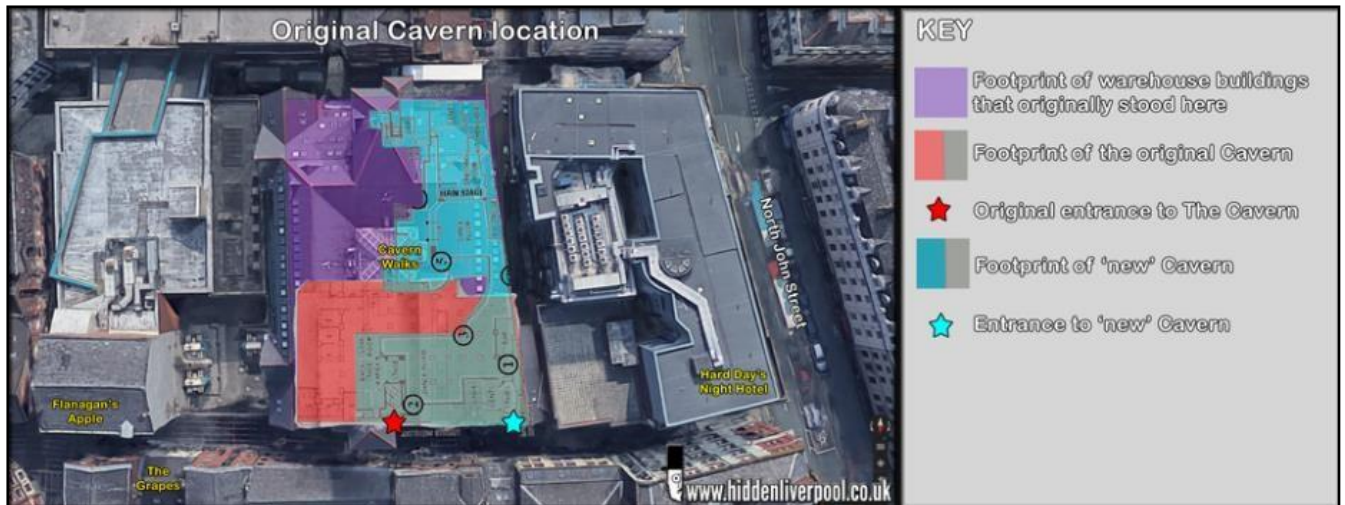
*Copyright  
gettyimages.com*



When Cavern Walks opened in 1984, the main 'go to' area in Liverpool was Church Street. Bold Street was still a mixture of shops and still didn't have its identity yet, and both Liverpool 1 and the Metquarter were not yet constructed.

Cavern Walks was the place to be seen. One of the newest retail spaces yet it had a touch of class. Large shopping windows, great names, and an easy to navigate area. The best part was the glass lifts where you could travel between floors and look out of the window as you looked down on the shoppers below. It was also undercover and therefore you could shop in all weathers!

## The Redesigned Cavern Club



The above map shows a 'Then and Now' of the original Cavern Club footprint to that of today's Cavern Club. One can see that the entrance of the club has move further to the right, higher up on Mathew Street. However, most people who venture down into the Cavern still don't know that this is not the 'original' Cavern. But they won't let that get in the way of business. The Cavern Club is still visited by many hundreds of thousands of people each year who want to take a glimpse of the most famous club in the world. Sadly, with the demolition of the original Cavern Club (Liverpool City Council did the same with the Cream nightclub – will we regret that in years to come?), the location may not be the same, but the bands return – as has Paul McCartney!

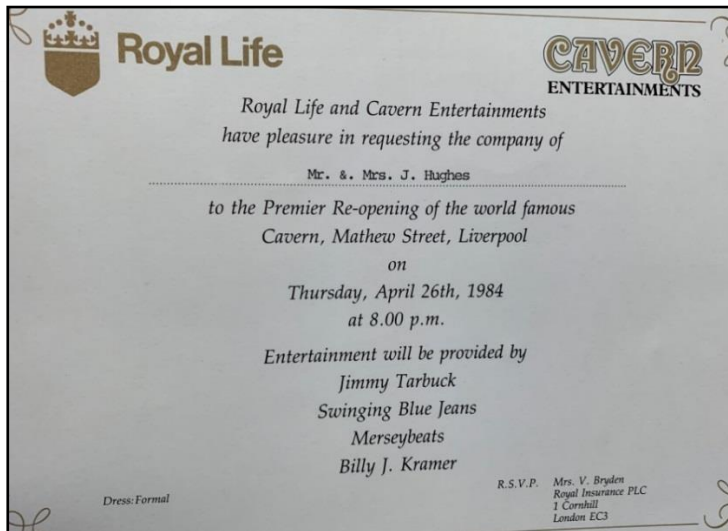


In March 1984, prior to the Cavern Club reopening, over 100 musicians descended on the Cavern Club to sign the wall at the back of the Cavern Club.

This was a tradition that started in the 1960's and has continued to this day. Amongst the bands that took part where the Swinging Blue Jeans, Lee Curtis and the All Stars, The Undertakers and many more.

*Copyright facebook.com*

The opening of the Cavern and Cavern Walks put Mathew Street firmly back on the map again. For years it had been a derelict car park and there was no incentive to go and stand there as there was nothing to see – not even a plaque stating where the Cavern had been. Now once again, one can travel down Mathew Street to visit the Cavern Club.



For the re-opening of the Cavern Club, there was excellent entertainment laid on including, Jimmy Tarbuck, the Swinging Blue Jeans, The Merseybeats and Billy J Kramer.

Invitations were sent out for VIP guests and this was to be a new era for the Cavern Club.

*Copyright Liverpool City Record Office.*

*Below: The Cavern Club as seen today. Copyright Wikipedia.com*



On the 25<sup>th</sup> August 1985, the Cavern City Tours presented their first event at the Cavern Club. This took place over the Beatles Convention Weekend and was very popular with people local and far.

The event included a Beatles disco and tribute bands which included The Fab Four and Mojo Filter. *Copyright collectors.com*



If the rise of the Cavern Club was a success, then it didn't take long for the fortunes of this club to hit a rocky patch. It was reported in the local press that in October 1985, The Cavern Club and Abbey Road Pub had been sold on and that the new owners weren't interested in the Beatles history. They felt that the Beatles time had come and gone, and they promoted the Club as a modern Disco theme. Although this was the 80's, it didn't work and within only 18 months, the lease had changed again.

Moving forward in February 1987, the Club would appear in the news again. Again just 3 years after it being built, a local company called Goldaden took over the Club as well as the combined ownership of the Abbey Road Pub. However, within weeks of this happening, the business had gone into receivership. It was fortunate that both locations were kept running under a local accountancy firm on behalf of the receivership firm who was handling everything.

Royal Life weren't happy with the running of both businesses and decided to separate them. The Lease from the Abbey Road Pub and the Cavern Club became separate and could be managed independently.

In 1987, James McVitie became the new owner of the Cavern and he set about introducing different styles of music. He would be another owner of the Cavern club and a long line of owners. Was the fortune of the Cavern Club finally being turned around to favour the Club's history and showcase the fantastic venue again for Liverpool or would the fate of the Cavern history repeat itself and provide another long list of owners?

December 1989 would be remembered for a serious assault on a reveller at the Club resulting in Jail for the owners. Again, the Cavern Club lost its licence and was closed. It was a sad end to the decade.

## Cavern City Tours

It took from December 1989 to July 1991 to reopen the Cavern Club. History does not record the reason why it took so long but it is presumed that there were lots of legal issues over the licence. The landlords would not be making the same mistake as previous and would want to be certain that the new owners were suitable.

It was a resounding success! Only a month later into the ownership, the Cavern club was open six days a week and three nights to cope with demand. The new owners were looking to promote the club as a live venue, in a bid to get away from the past Disco music that brought the Cavern club down in the 1980's. Considering how many times the Cavern had changed its style, from Skiffle to Rock and Roll, from Dance to Live Music, the place has evolved over the years. Sometimes to keep in with the contemporary music, sometimes it was ahead of the times, and sometimes it just wasn't suited.



Roag Best is Pete Best's half-brother. He set up Roag Best's Splash Productions to bring new and live bands into the Cavern. He would be no stranger to Live Music after watching his half-brother in the Beatles in the early years, and would have known the Cavern well, both pre demolition and post demolition.

Roag Best introduced many Live bands into the venue and brought in some names that may not have been at the height of their fame at the time, but they would soon be as famous, if not more famous than The Cavern Club itself.

He would have consulted his half-brother over some of the bands and together with the knowledge of what the punters wanted, he brought new acts into the Club.

Again, as per the previous history of the Cavern, this could have been a risky move. The Cavern doesn't like change, but Roag pulled this off successfully and from 1991 to 1995, he promoted his Splash Productions successfully.

*Image copyright dailymail.co.uk*

## Oasis

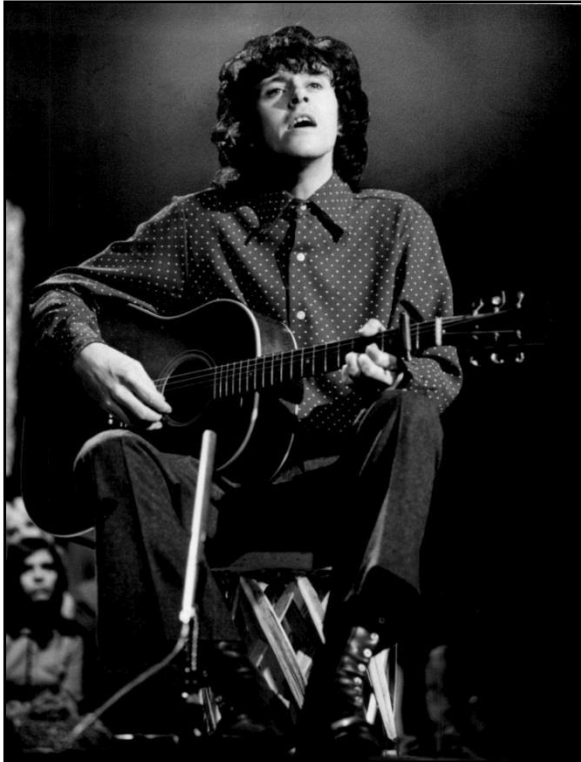
Oasis were a band who were formed in Manchester in 1991. Fronted by brothers Liam and Noel Gallagher, they were one of the biggest rock/britpop groups of their time. Although there have been various line up's in the band, it has always held a consistent sound and the band were well known in the 1990's. Both Liam and Noel's lyrics have always lent on The Beatles and this would have come as no surprise that they wanted a crack at the Cavern Club.

While Oasis were formed in 1991, it took them till 1992 to be invited to play at the Cavern Club. They were unknown at the time and weren't even signed up to a record label at the time, however they played for live shows, and had recorded demos at the time.

In the summer of 1992, Oasis were on the bill to play at the Cavern, organised by Roag Best and his company. Had this been 2002, then it would have been a complete sell out and probably surpassed the original 1600 people in the cavern – if that was possible, but being unknown at the time, they played to the standard regulars at the Cavern.

It is stated that upon finishing the set, Noel Gallagher was not impressed with the venue. He voiced his opinion and said it was like playing in a Wine Bar. Perhaps he would have liked the pre-demolished cavern better with its rougher edges and better acoustics!

## Donovan



Donovan Philips Leitch or Donovan as he was more well known as, was born in Scotland in 1946. His family loved folk music and he was drawn into this at an early age.

When he was 14, he dropped out of school and started to form his career at an early age. He wanted to be on the open road touring and set his sights on doing just this.

Donovan spent months playing folk music locally to his area and his blended music style of folk, pop, psychedelia, and world music would interest those who saw him perform.

In 1964, he recorded a 10-track demo tape under Pye Records, and this put him on the map. People had not heard such an eclectic mix of music from the one person. He was the original Flower Power and released *Mellow Yellow* in 1966. It featured Paul McCartney on backing vocals!

In 1990, he released a live album featuring new performances of classic songs. It was down to this continued fame that he was able to perform in the Cavern club and Donovan appeared at the Cavern Club on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1992. It was also at this time that the Cavern facilitated the use of a larger stage alongside a new Band Room to assist with further live concerts.

*Image Wikipedia.com*

## Ringo Starr

Ringo Starr is no stranger to the Cavern Club. He needs no introduction as part of the Beatles. In September 1992, he was making a documentary in Liverpool based on 'Going Home' for the Disney Channel and it was decided that he would also visit the Cavern Club.

While he was at the Cavern, he gave a wink to the camera when on film, and stated, 'This will be a nice surprise for the lads' as he turned around and signed two squares on the stage wall, as many people had done before him. He signed this for both The Beatles and for Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, however it was many months before anyone knew what he had done on the wall!

## Mathew Street Festival



The Mathew Street Festival is a yearly pilgrimage to Mathew Street to celebrate the life and times of the whole Cavern/Beatles way of life, as well as the many other bands that played there over the years.

The start of the Mathew Street Festival was the 28<sup>th</sup> August 1993. As there is limited room in the Cavern, a live stage was used on the open space of the Car Park adjacent to the Cavern club and local bars also played Live Music. This is a festival that now takes place yearly.

*Image copyright – Liverpool Echo*

## Bill Heckle & Dave Jones

When Tommy Smith took over the Club, it ran for from 1984 to 1989. However, such as Liverpool in the 1980's, the club came under financial pressure and it closed for 18 months. In 1991, two schoolfriends Bill Heckle & Dave Jones formed a business partnership and reopened it, alongside George Guinness.



Pete Best, alongside with Bill Heckle in a posed photo.  
*Copyright facebook.com*

Bill Heckle and Dave Jones have been instrumental in forming the direction of the Cavern Club and keeping it running since 1991. During the 90's, the music era changed yet again with more "superclubs" appearing on the scene. Cream, the 051 and the latter parts of the 1980's clubs didn't deter Bill and Dave and they continued to promote the Cavern club.

Bill and Dave would have taken notes from previous owners and decided how to run the club differently from them. It is a testament that this club is still running.

## The Cavern Pub

While one side of Mathew Street was converted in to Cavern Walks, the other side of the road was still part warehouses. They would still hold their basement cellars untouched and were ripe for opening for various uses. The Cavern City Tours would decide that in August 1994, they would convert one of the cellar systems across the road from the Cavern Club and name it the Cavern Pub. It would be very similar to that of the Cavern, its theme, its decoration and that people could now have a choice of going into The Cavern Club or the Cavern Pub. The Cavern Pub would take on live music as much as possible, and gave the punter the choice of their venue, depending on which one was the most, or least busy!

## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cavern Club – 16<sup>th</sup> Jan 1997

With the original Cavern Club no longer physically there, there was no actual 'go-to' place to understand who played at the Cavern over the years. There would have been hundreds of different groups or singers, but no one had really investigated this – until now. A tribute to the many performers who played or sang at the Cavern, the Cavern Wall of Fame was added. It covered the entire frontage of the Cavern Pub and each of the 1801 bricks in the wall feature the name of the act who played there over the years. Gerry Marsden was on hand to unveil the Wall followed by Billy K Kramer who unveiled a life size statue of John Lennon leaning against the wall outside of the Cavern Pub.



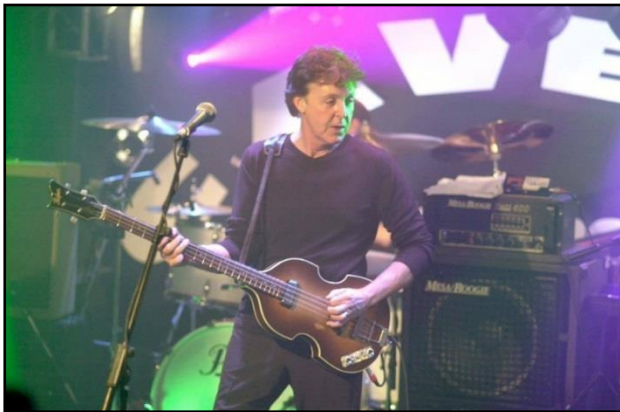
*Copyright left, right and far right – beatlesnow.com*

## Paul McCartney – Live in the Cavern

On the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1999, Paul McCartney played Live at the Cavern Club. He stated himself that he couldn't think of a better place to play to see out the final days of the millennium and he knew the Cavern club very well! Once news broke that he would return to the Cavern, this would be the gigs to end all gigs. And the waiting punters knew it! It was also recorded and turned in to a DVD which was released in 2000. On stage with Paul McCartney were David Gilmour, Mick Green, Ian Paice, Pete Wingfield and Chris Hall.

There were 13 tracks in total on the DVD and it earned Gold Status in Australia, as he was so popular. In his first Cavern appearance since 1963, the gig was only subject to 300 tickets available as an intimate concert. However, the Cavern wasn't the first choice. They were going to film this in Gambier Terrace where John Lennon used to live but the price would have been very high.

At first, when the Cavern club was spoken about, Paul had his reservations. He believed that it was on the wrong side of the road and not how he remember and it was only when he was told about the exact layout of the Club and that it featured 50% of the original club, he was happy to go back and play again.



Half of the tickets were in a raffle to keep it all fair and above board and this was handled by HMV. Bill Heckle, the Cavern Club owner said that there was massive interest from all over the world. To have one of the Beatles come back and play at the original Cavern club was a major scoop!

One of the most bizarre episodes in this was that when Paul went to the Cavern to set up, he was told that Bob Wooler was across the road in the Grapes. He was hastily fetched over to the Cavern and both Bob and Paul hugged and spoke about the years gone by.

Paul asked Bob to introduce him on the billing for 'one last time' and Bob was delighted. However, much like Bob, he went over to the Grapes and carried on drinking. So much so that he was unable to make it over to the Cavern to perform his duty! *Image above – copyright cavernclub.com*

## Paul Rodgers

Paul Rodgers was born in Middlesbrough in 1949. At an early age he played Bass Guitar for a band called the Roadrunners and was also convinced to sing up front in the group to assist other band members. In 1968, he joined a band called Free and he co-wrote the famous 'All Right Now' song. This was a number 1 hit and they were well known all around the world.

After a further group change with Peace, he then formed his next band, Bad Company and brought in other team members from other groups, including some of his former band mates too. He was well known in music circles and on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2000, he was invited to play at the Cavern club. He states this as one of his favourite gigs as he wanted to play there in such an intimate place and even after larger group tours with Queen, he still favours his Cavern Gig.

## Lonnie Donegan

Lonnie Donegan was born in Scotland in 1931. Known as the King of Skiffle, he was influential with many UK singers who took part in the skiffle era. Up until the Beatles came on the scene, he was Britain's most successful and influential artist, and this showed in his stats. 31 UK Top 30 singles with 3 at number 1.

At an early age, he was interested in swing jazz and vocal acts and had many associations with bands during his early years. In 1952, he formed the Tony Donegan Jazzband and was successful up to around 1962 before the Beatles came on the scene. During the latter 1960's and 1970's he was not the choice artist but continued to record. In 1978 he recorded with Ringo Starr, Elton John and Brian May.



*Image Copyright Liverpool Echo.* – The image shows Lonnie Donegan on the right playing with Liverpool’s Coney Island Skiffle Group after a concert in 1956.

In 2000, he appeared on Van Morrison’s Album, the Skiffle Sessions – Live in Belfast 1998.

It would be 45 years after his first number one that Lonnie was invited to play at the Cavern. He had visited the club previously and was delighted to finally play at the Cavern. Even though he was in his 70’s at the time, he put on an excellent performance, remembered by many!

## Bo Diddley



On the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2001, Bo Diddley performed at the Cavern despite being 73 years of age.

Born in 1928 in USA, he was instrumental in the transition from blues to rock and roll and was noted for his use of African rhythms and his own signature beat. He had major success in the 1950’s and 1960’s and wrote many songs for himself as well as others upon request. He moved around the USA and set up his own recording studio. He was noted for playing at any size gig, whether a local intimate showing or a full concert.

*Image copyright alamy.com*

His performance at the Cavern in 2001 despite being 73, showed him full of energy. He enthralled the crowd with two 70 min sets in the one evening. On the second sitting, he extended this to a further 30 mins much to the delight of the crowd. Bo Diddley passed away in 2008 at the age of 79 and will be well remembered for his occasion in to moving from blues in to rock and roll and creating a new hard-edged sound, which many people followed suit.

## George Harrison & Tom Robinson.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2001, Tom Robinson played at the Cavern Club. Born in 1950 in Cambridge, Tom started off in the music business by forming a trio at school called The Inquisition. When he was 13, he fell in love with another boy and by 16 had a nervous breakdown and attempted suicide. He was moved across to Finchden Manor and he spent the next 6 years being schooled there. While he was there, he listened to John Peel’s The Perfumed Garden and he know from then that everything became clear – he knew what he wanted to do in his life moving forward.

In 1976, he set up the Tom Robinson Band and in the following year he released the infamous single “2-4-6-8-Motorway”. This was a major hit for the UK charts, and it peaked at no 5. It is well remembered song! However, after two further albums, the band broke up and headed in their separate ways. He teamed up with Elton John and co-wrote several songs with him. After this era, the work dried up and he moved across to Germany to regroup. He wrote the song War Baby, and this put him right back on the map. The song going to No 1 in the Indie Charts.



In the 1980's he was offered a slot on Radio and has been a regular on Radio since. On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2001, Tom Robinson was playing at the Cavern Club when news broke that George Harrison had passed away from the cancer he had been suffering from sometime.

The following morning, the Cavern Club opened a book of condolence and it was signed by over 5000 people.

## BBC Radio 2



On the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2004, two concerts were presented by Mark Radcliffe featuring Travis and supported by K T Tunstall. This feature was performed from the smaller stage while the bands performed in the Live Lounge.

Later, in the year on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2005, the Arctic Monkeys supported by The Little Flames appeared at the Cavern Club.

Did the Cavern club have an influence on the band? The band was just beginning to break at the time and only two weeks after their performance at the Cavern, their single went straight in to No 1. Not only this but their debut album was the fastest selling for an album in the UK. *Image copyright – flickr.*

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cavern Club

On the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007, it was the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cavern Club. This was a party to end all parties and the line-up was fantastic. The night was geared towards the early Jazz scene of the Cavern club to focus on the original style of music. Even more fantastic was the announcement of the Merseysippi Jazz Band who decided to perform the same set they played on the opening night of the Cavern in 1957!



In August 2007, EMI and Universal in a joint venture released a 3 CD set to commemorate the Cavern's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

This compilation Album was the first to ever feature a Beatles Track in a compilation and as this was a rare one, it featured similar bands who wouldn't normally be found on compilation albums.

The Rolling Stones, The Who, Queen, Oasis etc.

There was also a book written by Spencer Leigh and the foreword was written by none other than Paul McCartney.

## Adele



Adele needs little introduction. Multiple awards, Bond theme Tune singer for Skyfall, and an MBE to her name. She was born as Adele Laurie Blue Adkins in London in 1988.

At an early age she began to sing and spent her early years moving around due to family issues. She graduated from the BRIT school for Performing Arts & Technology in Croydon in May 2006 and then spent further time recording her own songs which were published on-line. These were successfully and attracted the boss of XL recordings who signed her up.

Her first two albums, 19 and 21 were massive hits with 19 entering the charts at no 1 for the albums. She was nominated for a Mercury Prize in 2008 for 19 and attracted many followers to her name. She received further awards and toured the USA adding further followers to her music.

In January 2011, she was offered to attend the Cavern to perform for an exclusive gig and it was a perfect way to start the Cavern off for the year.

*Image copyright – cavernclub.com*

Adele's concert was intimate. It was in partnership with Smooth FM and she performed several hits from both of her 19 and 21 albums. As ever, her performance was spot on. Her voice was well suited to the Cavern's acoustics. The gig was followed by a relaxed Q&A session in the Cavern Club.

## James McCartney



James McCartney is the son of Paul McCartney. Born in 1977 to Paul and Linda, he started life on the road as his parents were touring at the time with their band, Wings. Early on in his life, he saw Michael J Fox in Back to the Future and knew what he wanted to do – play the guitar.

James has also performed with his dad on some of his father's solo albums and has also co-written some songs too.

Despite being from the UK, his debut was in the USA in September 2009 and performed under the pseudonym Light. There has always been talk of getting together with fellow sons of former Beatles, but this has not happened so far. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2012, James performed a sell-out show at the Cavern Club and this was half a century after Paul performed at the same venue. *Image copyright dailymail.com*

## Yoko Ono.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013, Yoko Ono was in Liverpool to promote and launch the John Lennon Educational Tour Bus. The same day, she visited the Cavern Club to see where her late husband had performed over 200 times with The Beatles. This was an un-announced visit and yet word quickly got around. When she came out of the main stage, she ran in to room of screaming fans in the Live Lounge and was asked to get up and say a few words on stage.

## 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cavern Club

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cavern Club was celebrated. It was celebrated with a new feature outside the Cavern Club – Cilla! A bronze statue was unveiled in Mathew Street, at the same spot as the original entrance to the Cavern Club.



Cilla was well known for her connections to the Cavern Club. She worked there, sang there and had many friends there who would support her during her life. The commission took place by her 3 sons and the ceremony marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cavern Club itself.

*Image Copyright itv.com*

In the Cavern Club itself, there was a raft of live music followed by the unveiling of a new 6ft by 4ft painting in the Live Lounge.

In the evening we celebrated with a special VIP party where the future of Rock 'N' Roll Louis Berry performed live along with the Quarrymen (who made their debut at the Cavern 60 years earlier!), Gilbert O'Sullivan, Supercharge, the Dany Doris Band from Le Caveau de la Huchette, Chris Farlowe and Cavern resident musicians.

## Selected overview of Bands who played at the Cavern

Details below have been taken from *The Cavern Club: The Rise of the Beatles and Merseybeat*.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 1957** – Merseysippi Jazz Band, Wall City Jazzmen, The Ralph Watmough Jazz Band, The Coney Island Skiffle Group, The Earl of Wharncliffe.

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> January 1957** – Muskrat Jazz Band, Liverpool University Band, Gin Mill Skiffle Group.

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January 1957** – The Panama, The Dolphins, Ralph Watmough, Peter Galvin's.

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 1957** – Ron McKay's Skiffle Group.

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1957** – Ralph Watmough Jazz Band, The Panama Jazz Band, Ron McKay's Skiffle Group.

**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1957** – Eddie Condon and his All Stars

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 1957** – White Eagle Jazz Band.

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 1957** – Dizzy Reece.

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 1957** – Eric Batty's Jazz Aces.

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 1957** – Don Rendell

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – Merseysippi Jazz Band, Ron McKay's Skiffle Group.

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – Joe Harriott (Father of Ainsley Harriott!)

**Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – The South Side Stompers, Ron McKay Skiffle Group, Paul Beattie Skiffle Group.

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – Big Bill Broonzy, Merseysippi Jazz Band

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – Tubby Hayes All Star Quartet

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March 1957** – Dickie Bishop Skiffle Group, West Coast Skiffle Group

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 1957** – Johnny Duncan and the Blue Grass Boys.

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1957** – Alex Welsh Dixielanders

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May 1957** – Alan Branscombe, Bobby Orr, Stuart Hammer.

**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 1957** – The Muskrat Jazz Band with the Gin Mill and Texans skiffle group. Rory Storm.

**Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May 1957** – Dickie Bishop (Sunday), Ron McKay (Wednesday and Friday), the Smokey River Skiffle Group (Friday).

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1957** – Bruce Turner

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 1957** – Gin Mill.

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1957** – Gin Mill. Black Cat and Mathew Street skifflers

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July 1957** – Merseysippi and Ralph Watmough Jazz Bands.

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July 1957** – Hank Walters and his Dusty Road Ramblers.

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July 1957** – Merseysippi and Panama Jazz Bands.

**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July 1957** – Eddie Clayton (with Ringo Starr on Drums), Ray Ennis, Norman Kuhlke.

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August 1957** – The Quarry Men

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September 1957** – The Merseysippi's with the Royal Caribbean Calypso Steel Band.

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1961** – The Beatles, Derry and the Seniors, the Four Jays, Cliff Roberts and the Rockers.

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 1961** – Blue Genes, The Pressmen, Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes.

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – The Searchers.

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – Bob Wallis and the Storyville Jazzmen with Dale Roberts and the Jaywalkers.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – Humphrey Lyttelton Jazz Band with the Swinging Blue Genes.

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – Blue Genes with Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes.

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – Blue Genes with Johnny Sandon and the Searchers and the Remo Four.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – The Pressman with Faron's Tempest Tornadoes

**Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 1961** – Yorkshire Jazz Band with Kingsize Taylors and the Dominoes.

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April 1961** – Blue Genes with Gerry and the Pacemakers and Robin and the Ravens.

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May 1961** – The White Eagles Jaz Band with Ian and the Zodiacs.

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1961** – Cy Laurie Jazz Band supported by the Swinging Blue Genes.

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June 1961** – The Remo Four, The Four Jays and the Rockin' Blackcats

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 1961** – Humphrey Lyttelton and his Jazz Band plus the Swinging Blue Genes

**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 1961** – Gerry and the Pacemakers, Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes, Robin and the Ravens, and the Galvinisers.

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> June 1961** – Mark Peters and the Cyclones.

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 1961** – Gerry and the Pacemakers, Yorkshire Jazz Band with the Strangers.

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 1961** – Karl Terry and the Cruisers

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July 1961** – The Beatles (after Hamburg).

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1961** – The Remo four, Mark Peters and the Cyclones, and Clay Ellis and the Raiders.

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> October 1961** – Bob Wallis and his Storyville Jazzmen. Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee.

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 1962** – Mickey Ashman's Ragtime Jazz Band.

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> January 1962** – Ken Colyer Jazz Band

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 1962** – Red River Jazzmen, Pete Maclaime and the Dakotas.

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May 1962** – Mike Daniels Delta Jazz Band.

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 1962** – Johnny Kidd and the Pirates

**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December 1964** – Radio Luxembourg with Steve Aldo, The Jokers, The Griff Parry Five, The Fontanas, the Kubas and St Louis Checks.

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December 1964** – Undertakers, Riot Squad, Pawns, Kirkby's, Hideaways, Tabs, Georgians, Nightwalkers, and Michael Allen Group.

**Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> December 1964** – Escorts, Notions, Earl Preston's Realms, Kirkby's, Clayton Squares, Pretenders, Hideaways and Kinsleys.

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January 1965** – The Brian Auger Trinity, The Clayton Squares and the Almost Blues.

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January 1965** – Kris Ryan and the Questions, Victor Brox Blues Train, and Rory Storm.

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 1965** – Pete Best Combo, Easybeats, Poets and Feelgoods.

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March 1965** – The Lawbreakers, Denny Mitchell SoundStation's, and Amos Bonney and Karl Terry with the TT's.

**Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 1965** – Phil Brady and the Ranchers, Coins, Hideaways, Tiffany and Four Dimensions.

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March 1965** – Annette and the Riverdales, Sheffields, Masterminds and Blue Angels.

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 1965** – Two Earls, Preston and Royce

**Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March** – Live French TV station broadcasting with Gene Vincent, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Manfred Mann, Sandie Shaw and the Clayton Squares.

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> May 1965** – Merseybeats, Terry Hines Sextet, Clayton Squares, Earl Preston's Realms, The Blue Lotus Jazzmen, The Easybeats, The Defenders.

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1965** – The Feelgoods, The Warriors and the Measles.

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 1965** – Johnny Gus Set, Blues Angels, Dimensions, Earl Preston's Realms.

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 1965** – Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band, Richmond Group, Exit.

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 1965** – The Four Just Men, The Pretenders and Tiffany's Thoughts.

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 1965** – Coming from London, The Thee, Nothing new about the The The Then.

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July 1965** – Steve Aldo, Blue Secrets, Boomerangs, Clayton Squares, Connoisseurs, Cresters, Dimensions, Escorts, Five Aces, Hideaways, Hobos, Lancastrians, Manchester Playboys, Masterminds, Measles, Power House Six, Earl Preston's Realms, Richmond Group, Kris Ryan and the questions, Scaffold, Spinners, Undertakes, Hank Walters and the Dusty Road Ramblers and the Warriors.

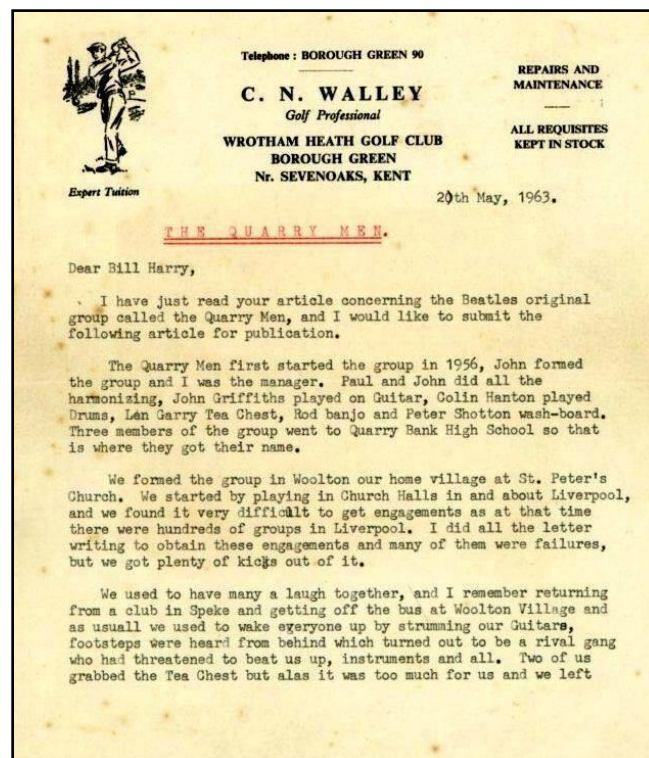
Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 1966 – Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, The Big Three, The Cryin' Shames, The Kwans, the Rekords, The Richmond Group, The Dark Ages, the Sect, The Hideaways, Rigg, The Runaways, Earl Preston's Realms, and the Protems.

This would be the last set of the original Cavern Club.

Rory Storm was one of the final groups to play at the original Cavern and then chairs and tables were stacked at the bottom of the stairs and nobody could get in or out. Rory went up to Bob Wooler to ask him for payment and at that time, Ray McFall had gone bust and there was no money left in the put. We were just a line of creditors trying to obtain our £15.

We never got it.

An interesting letter appeared on E-bay recently and this has been reproduced below. It was written by Nigel Walley who was the first manager of The Quarry Men and is a letter to Bill Harry.





Telephone : BOROUG GREEN 90

**C. N. WALLEY**

*Golf Professional*

WROTHAM HEATH GOLF CLUB  
BOROUGH GREEN  
Nr. SEVENOAKS, KENT

REPAIRS AND  
MAINTENANCE

ALL REQUISITES  
KEPT IN STOCK

20th May, 1963.

2.

it in the High Street and fled for our lives. We used to argue over the money we received, and if anyone failed to turn up for practise it was dotted off the following weeks wages, in those days Sunday afternoons at Paul's and John's house were our practise grounds.

John was a born comic and he was also good at poetry, and even in those days John and Paul wrote their own numbers, which they had a flare for and the natural talent to put them over. I distinctly remember the groups first official appearance at St. Peters Garden Fete, our local church; dressed in tight jeans and sideboards, we banged away at such numbers as Sweet Sixteen, John Henry, Freight Train, Cumberland Gap, Jessie James, Warbash Cannonball and Down by the Riverside. The enclosed photograph was the first ever taken, and I would be grateful if you would return it, also enclosed are two original business cards, and notice the way Quarry Men is laid out.

We started playing regularly at the Wilson Hall in Garston, also St. Barnabus Hall in Allerton. I got in touch with Allan Sytner to see if we could play at the Gavern, we got our chance and we went down well, so well that we were invited to return. The next occasion we were asked to leave, as we had run out of Skiffle numbers and started playing all Rock numbers, and in those days the Gavern was strictly skiffle and jazz. In those days we received £3 to £5 between us.



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3.

I was then serving an apprenticeship as an assistant golf professional and was finding it difficult to fit the two jobs together, it was also interfering with my health, two very strenuous jobs, so I decided reluctantly to give up the manager-ship of the Quarry Men and concentrate on my Golf career.

Towards the end of 1959 a lot of argument started between ourselves and the Quarry Men started splitting up through lack of engagements. By this time George Harrison had joined the group which then left John, Paul, George and myself in the group. Then John got hold of a Jerry Lee Lewis pianist but that did not last very long. Then we met Stuart. It was about this time that I decided to leave. Then they changed their name to John Lennon and the Moon Dogs, but later changed it again to their now famous name the Beatles.

Even though I now have no connections with the group I still follow them very closely, and my brother sends me your magazine regularly, any more information you would like I will gladly give.

Yours truly,

Nigel Walley.  
Professional Golfer.

Encs.

