



1960s Blues Boom Page 1



The 1960s Blues Boom By John Power

THE 1960S BLUES BOOM

GEORGIE FAME AND THE BLUE FLAMES



GENO WASHINGTON AND THE RAM JAM BAND



THEYARDBIRDS

SPENCER DAVIS GROUP



ALL THESE BANDS PLAYED AT
CHELMSFORD CORN EXCHANGE IN THE '60s.
AS DID MANY MORE DISCUSSED BELOW,
OFTEN FREQUENTLY.

THE 1960s BLUES BOOM *Alexis Korner, Cyril Davies
and Blues Incorporated Jazz and Soul Based Bands:

* Artwoods * Graham Bond Organisation * Georgie Fame and the
Blue Flames * * Herbie Goins and the Night-timers * Zoot Money
and the Big Roll Band * * Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds *
Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band * * Steampacket *
Shotgun Express * Small Faces

Guitar Based Bands

* The Rolling Stones * The Pretty Things * The Yardbirds * John
Mayall's Bluesbreakers * * Cream/Blind Faith * Spencer Davis
Group * Cheynes/Fleetwood Mac * * Chicken Shack * Savoy
Brown Blues Band * The Bo Street Runners * The Birds * *
Creation * The Paramounts * The Fairies * The Action * Gary Farr
and the Tee Bones * * The Clique * Climax Chicago Blues Band *
Free * The Groundhogs

Pop Success, and Northern Bands

Manfred Mann * The Who * The Kinks * The Ani

mals * * Joe Cocker and the Grease Band * Victor Brox Blues
Train * Them/ Van Morrison * Thin Lizzy * Taste/ Rory Gallagher *
Eire Apparent * Horslips * * Lulu and the Luvvers * Frankie Miller
Band * Nazereth * Alex Harvey Soul Band * * Stone the Crows *
Ten Years After * Moody Blues

*Also Rans...

The 1960s British R&B and Blues Boom

When tracing the evolution of '50's rock 'n' roll in the U.K. it can be seen how Chris Barber had invited over from the U.S. black r&b and blues artists and supported them on tours, while Alexis Korner and Cyril Davies at the Blues and Barrelhouse sessions at Wardour Street's Roundhouse pub had been a pivotal venue for the emerging blues fan base to see and perform the music of their American cousins. Both Chris Barber's Jazz Band and Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated, formed in '62, were pivotal in the '60s boom, and Alexis' Band in particular became the first breeding ground for musicians that emerged to lead the way. Their first gig was in Ealing, then the National Jazz Foundation offered them a regular slot at the Marquee Club, then still in Oxford Street. 'R&B at the Marquee' was their first groundbreaking album, and featured Cyril Davies on vocals and harmonica, Korner on vocals and guitar, with Dick Heckstall-Smith on sax. These three regulars were joined on that occasion by Chris Burbage, from the Chris Barber Band, on drums [who had eared his stripes playing with Muddy Waters in the States]; Spike Heatly on bass, from Johnny Dankworth's Big Band; and Keith Scott on piano. Long John Baldry sang vocals on three tracks. It can be seen how old jazzers were looking for alternative fields of work as big bands were being overshadowed by rock groups and also proved more expensive to run. This led to a two-pronged style of blues and r&b. Although guitar groups eventually came to dominate, equally there were r&b groups with brass sections that also took inspiration from American Soul and Tamla Motown artists too. Dick Heckstall-Smith moved to join



another Alexis Korner protégé, Graham Bond, in the Graham Bond Organisation, then later Colosseum, and soon in Wardour Street's Flamingo Club groups like Georgie Fame's Blue Flames, Zoot Money's Big Roll Band, Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band, Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds, and Herbie Goins and the Night-Timers: had bands with brass sections to boast, that formed the first wave of Mod music.



It was certainly the Rolling Stones who brought blues music to the public's attention, but Jagger, Brian Jones, and other would-be Stones had all sat in with Alexis. Jagger even learned harmonica from Cyril Davies. But soon other groups grew up in the wake of the Stones. The Pretty Things shared an Art School education with Keith Richard, and their guitarist, Dick Taylor had been in an early line-up of the Stones. The Yardbirds, playing the same kind of Eel Pie Island circuit, soon spawned Eric Clapton and then Jeff Beck before session musician Jimmy Page joined and changed the New Yardbirds into Led Zeppelin. Chicken Shack gave us guitarist Stan Webb and pianist Christine McVie [ne. Perfect] who later joined Fleetwood Mac. Peter Green, who founded the group had learned his licks in the Cheynes; then Shotgun Express with Liverpoolian veteran Beryl Marsden and Rod Stewart after Rod had left Long John Baldry's Steampacket that had replaced the Hoochie Coochie Men; and by replacing Eric Clapton in John Mayall's Bluesbreakers.

Northerners like John Mayall, with his Bluesbreakers and the Spencer Davis Group, with child prodigy Stevie Winwood soon joined the fray. The Bluesbreakers proved good training grounds for Eric Clapton, Peter Green, and Rolling Stone Mick Taylor. The Animals, from Newcastle brought their heavy Ray Charles inspired r&b, and many like them on the fringe of pop success drew inspiration from those already mentioned: groups like the Kinks, Small Faces and in their own power chord manner, the full-on Who trading on Mod fashion of the era.

Many bands were to evolve from these innovator's example, like the Savoy Brown Blues Band, Bo Street Runners, Free, Artwoods, Birds and Creation that spawned Ronnie Wood, in a way that fills many pages of Rock Family Trees, inspired not only by each other but by the American black artists whose music they admired. Howlin' Wolf, Sonny Boy Williamson, John Lee Hooker, Bo Diddley and many more were soon touring the U.K., often supported by their admirers. In the States too white blues musicians began to appear. First and foremost of these being the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, who legendarily teamed up with Bob Dylan when he went electric at Newport Folk Festival and managed to draw the enmity of white folkies who had only been dipping into Delta blues, not the electric Chicago Big City blues. Mike Bloomfield, the Butterfield guitarist's spin-off band and Canned Heat were other early examples to appear as musical category boundaries began to soften.

We can now begin to look closer at these key groups and some of the others that evolved out of, or beside, them. The pivotal position of Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated, will naturally take us through the jazz fringed r&b that brought Soul and Tamla Motown into the scene as well.

Alexis Korner and Blues Incorporated. '61-'66

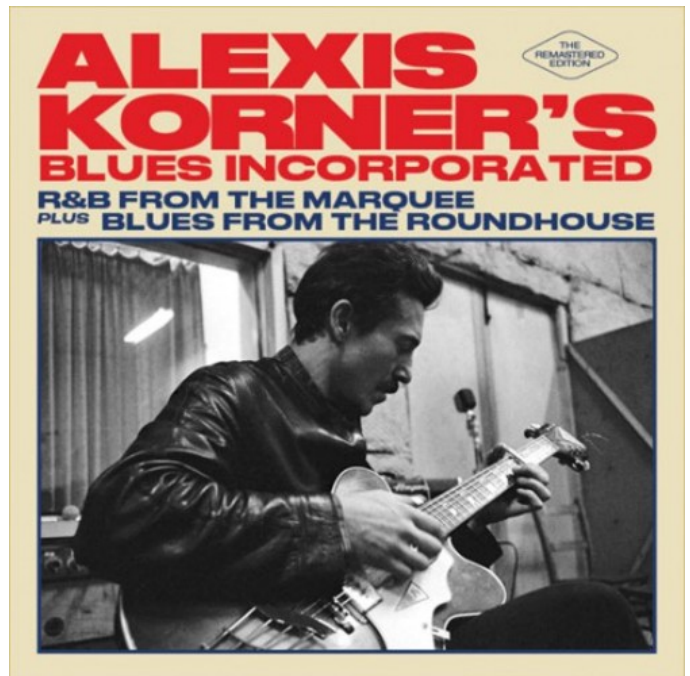
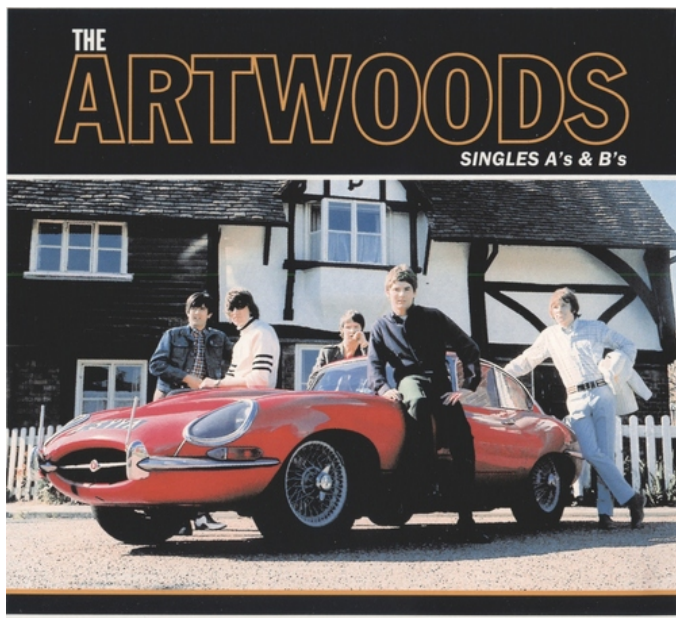
A list of who played with Blues Incorporated in the five years that it lasted includes most of the notable characters that created the blues boom of the '60s: Alexis, Cyril Davies, Long John Baldry, Dick Heckstall Smith, Jack Bruce, Charlie Watts, followed by Ginger Baker, on Drums when Charlie became a Rolling Stone, Graham Bond, Art Wood [Ronnie's Brother], Herbie Goins [black U.S. serviceman], Danny Thompson [double bass player, later for Donovan, and Pentangle, and Master of Ceremonies for Fairport Union re-unions, amongst other jobs], Duffy Power ['50s rocker], Johnny Parker and Malcolm Cecil.

Those also known to have played with them for ad hoc sessions at Ealing Jazz Club were Mick Jagger, Keith Richard, Brian Jones, Eric Clapton, Rod Stewart, Paul Jones [from Manfred Mann], John Mayall, Zoot Money, and Jimmy Page. Their residency at Ealing got them a second regular slot at the Marquee club where rock genius producer Jack Good organised the recording of their first groundbreaking amplified blues album, mentioned above, for Decca Records in 1961.

Alexis and Cyril's Blues and Barrelhouse Club had previously featured Charlie Watt, Jack Bruce, and John Baldry as regulars.

After the Live at the Marquee album the founding trio of Blues Inc: Alex on guitar, Cyril on Harmonica and Dick Heckstall-Smith on sax, was more permanently augmented by John Baldrey, followed Art Woods, Ronnie's brother, as vocalist, Charlie Watts on drums and Jack Bruce on bass in initial line-ups. In '62 Cyril Davies decided he didn't like the brass section sound and formed the Cyril Davies All Stars to return to more rootsy blues. Unfortunately he died in a car crash in '64, aged only 32, but songs by Muddy Waters, like 'Mojo Working' and 'Hoochie Coochie Man' and from other heroes, like Leadbelly's 'Sweet Mary' became standards in the repertoire of most other emerging groups. Korner, Davies and Baldry also penned their own songs in blues style too. Graham Bond took Davies place in Blues Inc. before forming the Graham Bond Organisation with Jack Bruce, Ginger Baker and then Dick Heckstall-Smith when Blues Inc. disbanded in '66. Blues Inc also played Wardour Streets Flamingo Club, which had been a jazz club, so opening the way for the r&b of Georgie Fame, Zoot Money and Geno Washington as the original Mod music.

Blues Inc. did a couple of singles for Parlophone: 'I Need Your Loving' 'Please, Please, Please, Please' ['64] and 'Little Baby'/'Roberta' ['65]. There were a couple of other albums too in '64: 'At the Cavern' and 'Red Hot from Alex'. At that time the group featured Herbie Goins on vocals, and Danny Thompson on bass. In '65 the album 'Sky High' had '50s rocker, Duffy Power, on vocals.



The Artwoods

Formed by Art Woods, Ronnie Woods brother, in '63 after having been one of the many members of Korner's Blues Inc. during '62. At the same time he had been running the Art Woods Combo, then, when keyboardist Jon Lord, later of Deep Purple and White Snake, and guitarist Derek Griffiths joined they changed the name. Further additions of Keef Hartley on drums [straddling a past with Merseybeat band, Rory Storm and the Hurricanes, and a future with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers and Chicken Shack, and then running his own band] and Malcolm Pool from the Roadrunners on bass, they got a contract from Decca Records. Colin Martin, later of Blossom Toes, was also a member before becoming a Radio 2 producer.

Leadbelly's 'Sweet Mary' was their debut single and led to a spot on ATV's trendy music programme, Ready, Steady Go and much live work. The follow up, 'Oh My Love', failed to chart, but then 'I Take What I Want' reached no.28 in '66'. 'What Shall I Do?' on Parlophone in '67 didn't chart. A final single on Fontana attributed to The St. Valentines Day Massacre, after they had split, wasn't promoted. Art went back to college to study commercial art..

There are three compilations: '100 Oxford St', '63, 'Singles, 'a's and 'b's', 2000, and 'Steady Getting It', Recordings '64-67'. 'Art Gallery' album of '66 and 'Live at Klooks Kleek' re-released '95 and '16.

The Graham Bond Organisation '64 -'67

The Graham Bond Organisation '64 -'67 The band consisted of Bond on vocals keyboards and alto sax, Jack Bruce on bass, Ginger Baker on drums, Dick Heckstall-Smith on tenor and soprano saxes, and John MacLaughlin on guitar for a large part of their existence. All except John had served their musical apprenticeship with Alexis Korner's Blues Inc, and all came from jazz backgrounds. Graham had grown up in a children's home in Romford and shown an early aptitude for music. He got early jazz experience in Goudic Charles Quartet in 1960, then in the Don Rendell Quartet, playing alto sax.

The hub of the group that formed from Blue's Inc. backed Winston G and then a Chuck Berry tour for rock impresario Robert Stigwood, before assuming their own identity and the Graham Bond Organisation name when they got a Decca Records contract in '64 for two singles: 'Long Tall Shorty'/'Long Legged Lady' and 'Tammy'/'Wade in the Water', other versions of which also appeared on their first album, 'Sound of '65' released by EMI. At that Stage they flirted with commercialism, encouraged by the record company. 'Tammy' was a ballad for a film theme and not representative of their usual sound but did enter the charts. They also appeared in a dreadful rock movie of the time, 'Gonks Go Beat'. Gonks were a cuddly toy craze at the time!

The real music that they became well known for in clubs was driven by the heavy pounding of Bond's Hammond organ. But he did also pioneer the use of a new keyboard instrument called the



Melotron, which incorporated taped sounds and could create the sound of a whole orchestra, for instance. Bond was seen demonstrating it on Ready Steady Go, the cool teen music show of the Mod era. It was put to use on a single 'Lease of Love'/'My Heart's in Little Pieces' and the band's second album 'There's a Bond Between Us'. Other groups to feature the Melotron were later the Beatles, Manfred Mann and Moody Blues. In '64, but but released in '66 the real sound of the band came out as the album 'Live at Klooks Kleek'.

Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker had longstanding disagreements, often over Baker's heroin addiction, and Bruce left to join Manfred Mann and then John Mayall's Bluesbreakers until he patched things up with Ginger and Jack and Ginger joined Eric Clapton to form blues/jazz/psychedelia band Cream in '67. Three singles, were released in the U.S. without Bruce to little effect. The Organisation had a short-lived reformation in '67 with John Hiseman taking over on drums from Ginger and with Heckstall Smith as a trio, and they released a single written by Bond: 'You've Got to Have Love Baby'/'I Love You', for Page One Records. John MacLaughlin formed jazz/mystic band MahaVishnu Orchestra. As the psychedelic era began Bond found himself out of fashion and went to America where he did session work with the likes of Dr. John [Mack Rebenack] and brought out a couple of magick albums himself: 'Love is the Law' ['67] and 'The Mighty Grahame Bond' ['68]. They were not released in Europe until 2004, posthumously, as CDs. Hiseman and Heckstall-Smith joined John Mayall for long enough to appear on the Bluesbreaker's album 'Bare Wires' before forming Coliseum, with Chis Farlowe on vocals Tony Reeves on bass and Dave Greenslade on keyboards in a very jazz orientated band.

On his return from the States in 1970 Bond joined Ginger Baker's Airforce and released two more albums for Vertigo records himself, again on the themes of esoteric Magic: 'Holy Magic' and 'We Put Our Magic on You', as well as 'Solid Bond' a double album of unreleased studio recordings by the classic Organisation line-ups of himself, Bruce, Baker, Heckstall-Smith, MacLaughlin and John Hiseman. He also worked in partnership with poet Pete Brown, who had written songs with Jack Bruce for Cream, in Bond and Brown. He fell under a tube train at Finsbury Park tube station in 1974. He was very overweight, leading to mobility difficulties, and like Ginger Baker had problems with heroin, so no one knows for sure if he fell or if it was suicide.



Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames '61-'66

Georgie had a rock history before he became an early Mod hero in London clubs: he had been in the Larry Parnes stable of artists when he picked up the 'Fame' name in exchange for his given name of Clive Powell, and played piano in Billy Fury's backing band, the Blue Flames. Fury thought they were too jazzy and hired the Tornados instead. So Georgie took over vocals. With guitarist Colin Green, and Red Reece on bass he had also backed Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran on tour, as Colin Green's Beat Boys. Still as Blue Flames the enlarged band got a three year residency at Wardour Street's Flamingo Club in Soho. When Georgie heard Booker T. and the MGs instrumental 'Green Onions' he changed from piano to Hammond Organ. From hanging out with Jamaicans from Ladbroke Grove he heard Ska/Bluebeat music and trumpeter Eddie Thornton helped him introduce aspects of it into their music. Speedy Acquaye on congas added to the sound, and when the Mod revival occurred in the Two Tone era of the late '70s it was this influence that the younger generation particularly picked up on, more than the brass and Hammond r&b sound. By '61 Alan Watson had joined on sax and vocals too, but Colin Green left to be replaced by Joe Moretta, then John MacLaughlin, until '63 when he went to the Graham Bond Organisation. Rod Slade took over on bass. Mick Eve became the second sax player in '62 and finally Johnny Marshall brought the band up to full strength in the rhythm section.

'63 also saw Rick Gunnell from the Flamingo become their manager and in September of that year Ian Samwell and Glyn Johns recorded 'Rhythm and Blues at the Flamingo' for Columbia Records. That proved to be the seminal Mod record well before the Who bought their amphetamine fuelled brand of electric r&b and Pop Art icons into the arena. A period of successful releases put the band into pop charts. Although a single, 'Do the Dog' first failed to chart, 'Do Re Me' and 'Bend a Little' from the album did. Georgie's smooth vocals in the style of Mose Allison, rather than soulful shouting also appealed to the pop audience.

In '64 Peter Coe replaced Marshall and Glenn Hughes added a baritone sax to the line up, while Eddie Thornton, who had been only an occasional member before, on trumpet, joined full time,

while Colin Green rejoined on guitar. Jimmy Nicol, famous as a fifth Beatle when Ringo was ill, replaced Reece, the then drummer rather than bassist, for a while until Bill Eden became full time drummer. Also in '64 the album 'Fame at Last' reached no.15 in the album charts, and the single 'Yeh Yeh' reached no 1, followed by 'In the Meantime' into the Top 20. Two flipos followed but then 'Getaway' reached no.1 again in '66. This success caused Georgie to sign a new contract with CBS Records for the album 'Sweet Thing', but as a solo artist. The Blue Flames kept going for a while but disbanded later in the year, as psychedelia began to appear on the scene.

Georgie continues to perform, usually in a quartet, to this day at the time of writing. The group had several residencies at other clubs like the Whiskey a Go Go, Klooks Kleek, and the Roaring Twenties in Carnaby St. They were the only English group to be invited onto the Motown Review in the mid '60s.

Herbie Goins and the Nighttimers:

Herbie was born in Florida, and like many coloured singers learned to sing in church choirs. Then it was in a group called the Teen Kings, before moving to New York, where he supported B.B.King, Bobby Bland, and Sam Cooke amongst others, before he was drafted in the late '50s and sent to Germany as part of the G.I. Medical Core. After his de-mob he joined the Eric Delaney Band and travelled back to England with them. Moving away from jazz, and looking more for his blues roots he sang with the Chris Barber Jazz Band in '63 and then Alexis Korner's Blues Incorporated. He appears on 'Live at the Cavern' and 'Red Hot from Alex'.

In '65 he left Alexis to front the Nighttimers in place of Ronnie Jones. At that time the rest of the band was Mick Eve on tenor sax, Mike Carr on keyboards, Harry Beckett on trumpet, David Price on bass, Bill Stephens on drums, and Speedy Acquaye on congas. A cover of Motown group, the Monitors, 'Number One in Your Heart' was a trendy hit with Mods. By '66 John MacLaughlan was on guitar and they supported Otis Redding on tour. They did regular slots at the Flamingo Club in Wardour St. and Marquee in Oxford St. with the likes of Jimi Hendrix, and John Lee Hooker who they travelled in Europe with. An album, 'Soul,Soul,Soul' was released in Europe, later in the '60s there was a fusion album with Wynder K.Frogg. After a trip to Italy in '71 Herbie decided to stay, but the band returned to England. Herbie worked as a songwriter and record producer and for a T.V. Company. He released his own funk records in the '80s, with the Herbie Goins Soul Band in Europe and the U.S. In 2009 he toured with Chris Farlowe, Cliff Bennett and the Norman Beaker Band in an r&b revival. He died in Italy in 2015, aged 76.



Zoot Money and the Big Roll Band

Zoot [George Bruno Mooney] and Andy Sommers moved up from local gigs around the South Coast to take London by storm. 1961 saw the first line up of the Big Roll Band, with himself on vocals, Roger Collis on guitar, Al Kirtley on piano, Mike Montgomery on bass and Johnny Hammond on drums. Their first gig was at Bournemouth's Downstairs Club. In '62 Pete Brooks took over on drums, Johnny King took over on bass and Kevin Drake joined on sax. When Kirtley left Zoot took over on keyboards with a Hammond organ.

Late '63 saw more changes when old mate Andy Sommers, who had been playing in the Don Robb Band, joined, starting a long musical career with Zoot not only in the Big Roll Band, but in Dantalion's Chariot in the psychedelic era, and after a couple of similar groups again in Eric Burden's New Animals before the post-punk band Police made him an international star. Paul Williams, on bass and on some featured vocals, joined around the same time, and later became vocalist for Juicy Lucy. Nick Newall joined on sax, and played in versions of the Big Roll Band until he died in 2017, and Clive Burrows joined on additional saxes, before joining Geno Washington's Ram Jam Band, while Johnny Almond took his place. Colin Allen was on drums. That was then the classic line-up that that drew in the crowds at the Flamingo and around the country from '64. Zoot was a great showman as well as a fine musician and they rode the wave until the dawn of psychedelia. They were signed by Decca and did the single 'The Uncle Willie/'Zoot Suit' before switching to Columbia in '65 for four more singles and their first album 'It Shoulda Been Me'. Singles included a cover of Sam Cooke's 'Bring it On Home to Me', 'Gin House', with Paul Williams singing, and 'Big Time Operator' which made no.25 in the charts, even though they were more of a cult than a chart band. 'Live at Klooks Kleek, their second album reached no.23 in the album charts in October'66.

Zoot was also asked if he would like to join the original, Newcastle, Animals on keyboards in place of Alan Price, but wanted to carry on singing too. Zoot and Eric Burden were great drinking pals.

In '67 as psychedelia started to spread from the U.S. The band were on the cusp of eras and played at the first ever rock music festival in Spalding in Lincolnshire where they found themselves with Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band on the same bill as Jimi Hendrix, Cream, and some newcomers called Pink Floyd. Realising that they could become 'has beens' to fashion, after a short stint with Alexis Korner's Blues Inc. Zoot took some LSD and formed his own psychedelic group, Dantillions Chariot in '67: a four piece band without saxes, but with Andy Sommers on experimental guitar, which later saw him joining Soft Machine. The light show was the best I ever saw with group and instruments in white with a white background over all of which a bubble light show was projected. The group couldn't face the audience for fear of being blinded by the light projector. By '69 the novelty was wearing thin and Zoot did join the Animals: but the New Animals, Stateside with old mate Eric Burden. Andy Sommers joined later after more psychedelic experiments. Long instrumental versions of Eric's hits were what were the flavour of the day.

Zoot diverged into an acting career for a while, and has a lengthy catalogue of albums, alone or with various bands, and a version of the Big Roll Band was still touring at the time of writing in 2018.

Chris Farlowe and the Thunderbirds

Another favourite act at the Flamingo Club and around the music circuit was fronted by a lad from Islington with amazing voice for soul and blues singing called Chris Farlowe. In '57 he had begun singing in the John Henry Skiffle group. By '58 he was in the Johnny Burns R&B Quartet. The Thunderbirds weren't formed as a backing group for Chris, but a pre existing outfit that Bob Taylor introduced him to, and did five songs for them on Columbia Records. A later song 'Stormy Monday Blues' by him under the alias of Little Joe Cook on Island record had him mistaken for a black singer because of the strength of his voice.

When Mick Jagger heard him he got him onto the Stone's then manager Andrew Loog Oldham's label, Immediate, for who he did eleven songs which included 'Think', 'Ride On Baby', 'Paint it Black' and 'Satisfaction', old Stones songs, 'What Becomes of the Brokenhearted', a cover of Tamla Motown star Jimmy Ruffin's song, 'Out of Time', which reached no.1 in the singles charts, 'Mike D'Abo's 'Handbags and Gladrags, before anyone else had covered it, 'All Part of My Way of Giving', a Small Faces, Marriot/Lane, song of another Immediate group, and a superb album 'The Art of Chris Farlowe'.

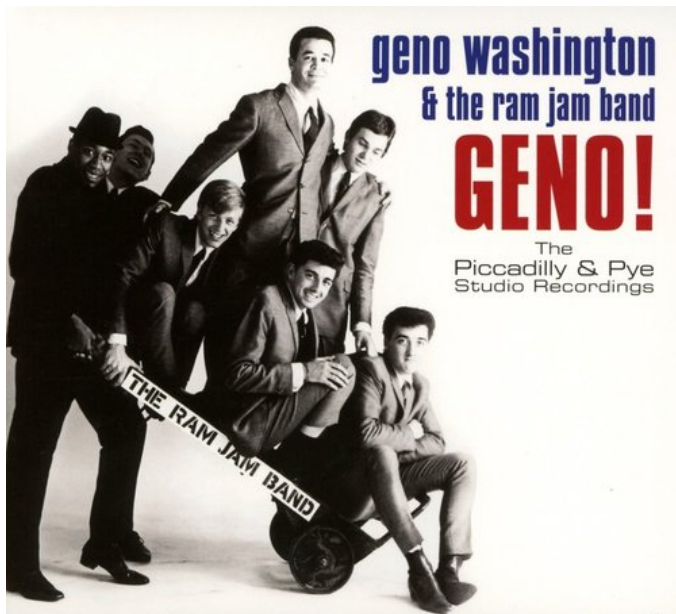
In 1970 he was featured singer for jazz-blues crossover band Colosseum on a live album and two studio albums. In '72 he joined prog group Atomic Rooster for the 'Made in England' album of that year and the 'Nice and Greasy' album of '73. Alongside his music Chris also ran a war memorabilia shop in London. His voice has seen him guesting with other musicians like Jimmy Page and Van Morrison, and he toured Germany with the Hamburg Blues Band. In 1994 Colosseum reformed for a while. In 2009 he was part of the Maximum R&B Tour with Maggie Bell. He continues to tour with the Norman Beaker Band and also on the bill of '60s Experience tours with multi artist line-ups, at the time of writing.

Foremost in members of the Thunderbirds to make a name for himself is Albert Lee, who went down the Country and Western route to back Emmylou Harris in her Hot Band, amongst others, and to have is own American Band, as well as having featured in the all star line-up of Bill Wyman 'Rhythm Kings', live and on albums.



Geno Washington and the Ram Jam Band.

Many black American G.I.s stationed in England in the early '60s found their way to Soho and its Wardour Street Flamingo Club and loved its lively well packed all nighters, and Geno was notable among them. Stationed at U.S.A.F. Bentwaters in Suffolk he would use his leave to visit, and soon perform on Soul and Tamla Motown songs at the club. The Ram Jam band had been formed in '64 by Pete Gage and Geoff Pullam with a Jamaican Bluebeat singer, Errol Dixon, as vocalist. The name Ram Jam was taken from an pub on the old A1 road. Gage saw Geno jamming and offered to pay his de-mob dues back in the States if he



returned to front the band to give it an authentic U.S. sound, which he did, and Errol Brown left the line-up in '65.

Their first single with Geno, 'Shake, Shake, Senora'/'Akinla' failed to have any chart success, but albums were taking over from singles with more affluent teenagers of the era. With Geno's hard-hitting live act it seemed best to try to capture that on record to live up party-goers sounds, and 'Hand Clappin, Foot Stompin, Funky Butt Live' was the first of three of these. It reached the top 5 in the album charts in '66, to stay there for 38 weeks at the height of the Mod fashion era. 'Hipsters, Flipsters and Finger-Poppin Daddies' followed in '67 and reached no.8. Capitalising on the band's success Pye Records also released four singles: 'Water', 'Hi Hi Hazel', 'Que Sera, Sera' and 'Michael' but they made little impact compared to the albums of Soul covers. Jimmy James and the Vagabonds were also on Pye and similarly fronted by a black singer, Jimmy, and equally popular with Mods as a live act.

By '68 the third Live album 'Running Wild' reflected a change in the mode of the music as psychedelia made soul music sound old-fashioned and the brass section of the band was dropped. The sales were not as good and in '69 Geno continued solo for a while before returning to the States. He returned in '71 as part of a four piece band of Dave Watts on organ, Mike Jopp on guitar, and Grant Surpall on drums. As the post Mod revival took hold in the late '70s Dexies Midnight Runners listened to his old albums and came up with a tribute song that hit the charts, but when they heard him live wondered what had happened to the old maestro's sound.

However there were to be other Mod revivals for nostalgia for two generations of fans and after 2005 a Ram Jam Band reformed with Stuart Dixon on guitar, Steve Bingham on bass, Geoff Hensley on drums and Alan Weton and Allesandro Carnevali on saxes. Similar line-ups continue to the time of writing and Geno is still in great demand on the live gig circuits. Past members have also included Pete Gage, Lionel Kingham, Buddy Beadle, Jeff Wright, John Roberts and Herb Prestidge.

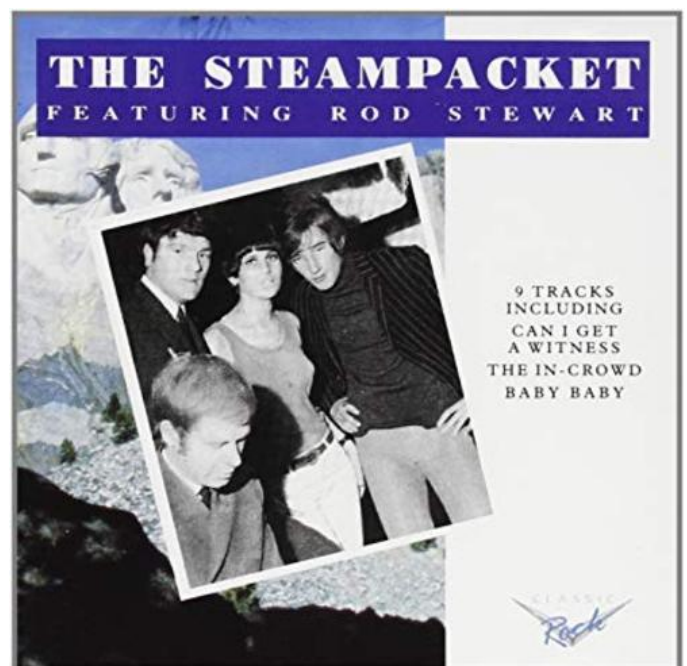
Steampacket

We have previously seen how Long John Baldrey worked with Alexis Korner's Blues Inc. and Cyril Davis' All Stars before founding his own Hoochie Coochie Men. When this in turn broke up in '65 he formed a new kind of group: a musical revue to feature different members of the band. He had found a bedraggled beatnik on a railway station singing and strumming a guitar on his way home from a C.N.D. 'Ban the Bomb' march, who's singing he liked, and who was to become well known through John's patronage, as singer Rod Stewart. His soulful voice, which also got a hearing in Jimmy Powell's Five Dimensions was only one of the talents on display in Steampacket. Besides John and Rod, Julie Driscoll shared vocal honours. They were ably backed by what had previously been known as the Brian Auger Trinity and Oblivian Express, consisting of Brian on Hammond organ, Vic Briggs on guitar, Ricky Fenton on bass and Micky Waller on drums. They had played a highly instrumental repertoire especially based on the work of jazz organists like Jimmy Smith. Giorgio Gomelsky, who was an early manager for the Rolling Stones and Yardbirds also became their manager. They supported the Stones on their '65 tour.

Steam Packet proved a very popular act with the Mod era crowds but proved difficult to get recordings published for, due to previous contracts of members. A later C.D. of nine demos and rehearsals 'Repertoire Records 1991, was created long after the band split and four of the songs also appear on a double compilation called 'Rod Stewart 1964-69' put out in 1999. Anyone who only caught up with Rod's later pop career may be surprised to see on those albums the names of Peter Green, Beryl Marsden, P.P.Arnold, Keith Emerson, John Paul Jones, Keith Richard, Ron Wood and Art Woods, and Mick Jagger for producing a track, named in the credits, as well as all the Steampacket members.

In '66 Rod left to form a similar revue style team with Beryl Marsden, a Merseybeat blues belter, Peter Green, and Them organist Peter Bardens, called the Shotgun Express. John Baldrey left soon after to join Bluesology with an unknown Elton John on piano. After that John moved out of character when tempted to record ballads like 'Let the Heartaches Begin' which provided chart hits but alienated his former fan base.

Julie, who had by then become a fashion icon too, Brian, and Vic Briggs regrouped the Brian Auger Trinity before Briggs joined



Eric Burden's New Animals. In '68 they scored a top 5 hit with Bob Dylan's 'Wheels on Fire", later revived as the theme tune of 'Abs Fab', the Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley comedy series. After Shotgun Express Rod joined old mate Ronnie Wood in the Jeff Beck group in '67 and then the Faces when Steve Marriott left, prompting a name change from Small Faces, as Rod and Ronnie were too tall to fit the job description for the original band name, before Rod went solo.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW PAGE 2 OF THE 1960s BLUES BOOM](#)