

THE BRITISH INVASION 1964-1966



THE TIME-LIFE HISTORY OF

ROCK 'N' ROLL

The British Invasion 1964-1966

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2. **Do Wah Diddy Diddy** ☆ Manfred Mann
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THE TIME LIFE HISTORY OF
ROCK 'N' ROLL

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British Invasion
1964-1966

Freddie and the Dreamers



Freddie Garrity (*bottom*) capitalized on the nerd look and pop sound of Buddy Holly to win over fans and briefly keep them dancing with the stork-like motions of “The Freddie”.

The Yardbirds

READY STEADY GO



“Having a rave up” describes a typical incendiary live Yardbirds set ca. early 1966 sparked by lead vocalist-harp player Keith Relf and guitar phenom Jeff Beck (*far right*).

The onslaught may have taken place nearly 200 years after the Revolution of 1776, but it is a historical fact that, in 1964, British troops reclaimed England's rule over the American colonies.

This time around, the attackers came from across the sea sporting mop-top haircuts instead of powdered wigs, and brandishing guitars instead of muskets. They came, they played, they conquered—and rock 'n' roll was never the same. They, of course, were the Beatles—and the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, the Searchers, the Hollies and all the other hit-making squadrons who together comprised the British Invasion, as remarkable an event as has ever happened in pop music.

Before 1964, the only British records to top the U.S. Billboard charts were Acker Bilk's *Stranger on the Shore* in 1962 and *Telstar* by the Tornados later that same year. But after the Beatles appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in February of 1964 and *I Want to Hold Your Hand* rocketed to No. 1, singles by British artists held

down the top slot for an astonishing 50 of the next 100 weeks!

The Beatles were not the only ones responsible, either. Peter and Gordon, the Animals, Manfred Mann, Freddie and the Dreamers, Herman's Hermits, Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders, the Rolling Stones and the Dave Clark Five all hit No. 1, too—even though virtually no one in the U.S. had ever heard of any of them before Liverpool's Fab Four landed on American shores and began the triumphant charge of the sound brigade. The British rock 'n' roll



war machine's first rumblings were felt in England in the mid-'50s, when a fad called skiffle—a raucous hodgepodge of American folk and blues played in a manner relying more on enthusiasm than talent—began to loosen the United Kingdom's traditionally stiff upper musical lip. Skiffle's pied piper was Lonnie Donegan, a veteran of London's music halls whose infectious style, exemplified by his 1956 hit version of folk giant Leadbelly's *Rock Island Line*, inspired countless British kids to start banging

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out rhythms on acoustic guitars, washboards and anything else they could find that made noise.

While skiffle music made barely a ripple in America—Donegan's biggest U.S. success was the post-skiffle novelty hit, *Does Your Chewing Gum Lose Its Flavor (On the Bedpost Over Night)*—America's noisy musical export, rock 'n' roll, registered in England on a Richter-worthy level. Young skiffers from Nottingham to Newcastle began combing their hair into Elvis Presley duck-tails and trying to perfect the Chuck Berry duck-walk. And, while skiffle was generally viewed by most adult royal subjects as bad but harmless music, rock 'n' roll was immediately denounced as not just awful, but dangerous to boot. Few American rockers got to tour the British Isles in the late '50s, but those that did—Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, the Everly Brothers, Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran—became as gods. The governmentally-controlled BBC airwaves banned American rock 'n' roll, but that only caused pirate radio stations to start broadcasting from international waters, and their playlists—Memphis rockabilly, New Orleans R&B and Chicago bar blues—became as gospel.

From gods and gospel come priests and parishioners, and before long England began developing its own rocking young congregation. At first, the eager worshipers knelt before such

homegrown teen idols as singers Cliff Richard and Tommy Steele—handsome, cheery blokes who, if not Elvis or even Fabian, at least sufficiently looked the part. But as the '60s dawned and the demand for “real” rock 'n' roll increased (especially at the dance clubs that began sprouting up all over the country), the skiffle kids turned in their acoustic guitars for electric ones, and their washboards for drum kits—and began churning out American-derived rock 'n' roll to their own high-energy U.K. beat

By 1963, scenes had developed in different cities: Liverpool had the big-rhythmed “Merseybeat” groups—the Beatles, the Pacemakers and the Searchers; Manchester was home to pop bands such as the Hollies and the Dreamers; and London nurtured the bluesy sounds of the Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds and the Kinks. As the groups began to make records, the pressured BBC surrendered the airwaves, and once the Beatles put the crowning touch on the legitimization of British rock with a much-vaunted appearance at lofty Albert Hall, it was clear that this new rock 'n' roll was poised to conquer new ears.

And if ever there were ears ripe for the conquering, it was in the United States. By the start of 1964, America was still reeling from the recent assassination of President John Kennedy,

and its tender youth were in sore need of some kind of inspiration. Their musical spirit—the spirit of rock 'n' roll—likewise was reeling in the years. The generals who had led the original revolution of the '50s had vanished from the front: Rock 'n' roll had lost Jerry Lee Lewis to scandal, Little Richard to God, Chuck Berry to prison, Buddy Holly to a plane crash and commander in chief Elvis to first, Uncle Sam, and worse, Hollywood. In their stead had come the uptown R&B sounds of the Shirelles and the Drifters, the first stirrings of Motown and Stax soul, such dance crazes as the twist and the mashed potato and California's surf music.

The American sounds were just fragments, though. The groups of the British Invasion supplied the glue to hold it together. They came at America with everything that rock once had and then lost—Presley's rebelliousness, Berry's faith, Holly's exuberance, Muddy Waters' swagger, the Everlys' lilt—and, in their merry conquest, re-deposited all of it on its original soil, where it once again took root. Before long, American folk-rock groups such as the Byrds and garage-rock groups like the Seeds were trying hard to sound like the English groups who had been trying so hard to sound like Americans. And to think, it all started with the Magna Carta.

1. You Really Got Me The Kinks (Davies) *Original issue: Reprise 0306. Peak position: No. 7 (11-28-64)*. With their Edwardian suits and frilly shirts, the Kinks looked like British dandies, but once they let loose, all notions of gentility were buried under an avalanche of power chords and thundering drums. Led by singer Ray Davies and his lead guitarist brother, Dave, the Kinks blasted into the limelight with *You Really Got Me*—a still-hot slice of rock 'n' roll chaos often viewed as the birthplace of hard rock. Legend has it that an in-session fraternal tiff led to Dave's frantic, weapon-like solo.

2. Do Wah Diddy Diddy Manfred Mann (Barry-Greenwich) *Ascot 2157. No. 1 (10-17-64)*. Born Michael Lubowitz, keyboardist Manfred Mann was fronting an eight-piece jazz combo when the success of his more pop-oriented colleagues led him to turn his band into an R&B-flavored quintet. Fronted by singer and onetime Oxford student Paul Jones, the Manfreds hit it big when the British teen TV show, *Ready Steady Go*, tapped their *5-4-3-2-1* for its theme. The infectious sing-along *Do Wah Diddy Diddy* was their first U.S. hit, penned (as were a surprising number of British Invasion songs) by Americans—in this case, Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich.

Manfred Mann

Serious jazz cat Manfred Mann (*far right*) and vocalist extraordinaire Paul Jones (*center*) retooled a minor 1964 hit and rode it to the top in staking their group's American claim with *Do Wah Diddy Diddy*.



The Moody Blues



3. Have I the Right The Honeycombs (Blaikley-Blaikley) *Interphon 7707. No. 5 (11-14-64)*. London's Honeycombs were a one-hit wonder whose main claim to fame was their female drummer—Ann “Honey” Lantree. Honey looked good behind the traps, and the 'Combs, led by ex-skiffle guitarist Martin Murray and singer Dennis Dalziel, did their best to look good buzzing around her. The hook-filled *Have I the Right*, with its stingingly effective guitar line and Lantree's hearty four-on-the-floor pounding, helped the Honeycombs fly, albeit briefly, to the top of the pop music hive.

4. Needles and Pins The Searchers (Bono-Nitzsche) *Kapp 577. No. 13 (4-11-64)*. One of the best of Liverpool's beat groups, the Searchers' specialty was the tightly-arranged, harmony-filled ballad, such as this heartbreak special authored by Jack Nitzsche and Sonny Bono. Sporting a classic guitar hook that Jim McGuinn later stole for the Byrds' *Feel a Whole Lot Better*, *Needles and Pins* has always been cited as one of the harbingers of the U.S. folk-rock sound of 1965. In truth, the Searchers had foreshadowed the genre as early as 1963; their debut album featured an electric version of Pete Seeger's protest classic, *Where Have all the Flowers Gone*.

5. A World without Love
Peter and Gordon

(Lennon-McCartney) *Capitol 5175. No. 1 (6-27-64)*. Peter Asher and Gordon Waller met at a London boarding school, where they discovered that singing Everly Brothers songs was much more fun than doing homework. Paul McCartney, who was dating Peter's sister, Jane, offered the two his *A World without Love*, and the song became their first hit, as did several other McCartney tunes the duo recorded. After the team's 1968 breakup, Peter went on to become an extremely successful manager and producer for such artists as James Taylor and Linda Ronstadt.

6. Go Now! The Moody Blues (Bennett-Banks) *London 9726. No. 10 (4-17-65)*. Named after a song by Louisiana's Slim Harpo, the Moody Blues were first led by Denny Laine, whose impassioned vocal on *Go Now!* helped propel the obscure American R&B tune into the top 10. Not long afterward, though, Laine departed, and it looked as if the group was going to be just another one-hit wonder. Then came *Days of Future Passed*, their London Festival Orchestra-aided foray into classical music, which many credit (or is that blame?) for the start of progressive rock. Laine went on to become one of Paul McCartney's



The Swinging Blue Jeans

This group took the newly-emerging Mersey-beat sound to the level of a rockin' party with the raucous rave up, *Hippy Hippy Shake*.

Wings, and the graybearded Moodies are still riding their seesaw.

7. Hippy Hippy Shake

The Swinging Blue Jeans

(Romero) *Imperial 66021. No. 24 (4-4-64)*. Liver-

pudlian ex-skiffers Ralph Ellis and Ray Ennis

helped make the Swinging Blue

Jeans' reworking of Chan

Romero's 1959 British hit, *Hippy*

Hippy Shake, perhaps the quin-

tesential British Invasion party

song—featuring Ellis' aggres-

sive, Chuck Berry-flavored gui-

tar solo and Ennis' wild, fin-

ger-in-the-socket lead vocal.

The group kept swinging un-

til 1968, when Terry

Sylvester left them to re-

place Graham Nash in the

Hollies, and the Jeans quietly

faded away.

8. I'm Telling You Now

Freddie and the Dreamers

(Garrity-Murray) *Tower 125. No. 1 (4-10-65)*. In

the early '60s, a lot of old folks thought the twist

was the silliest dance they had ever seen. Then

ex-Manchester milkman Freddie Garrity started stiffly waving his arms and legs while he sang, and the result was an even sillier dance called, appropriately enough, "The Freddie." The bespectacled Garrity and his Dreamers Freddied their way to U.S. stardom with both *Do the Freddie* and the chipper *I'm Telling You Now*, which was recorded in 1963, but hit No. 1 in 1965.



9. Little Children

Billy J. Kramer with
the Dakotas

(Shuman-McFarland) *Impe-*
rial 66027 No. 7 (6-13-64).

Talk about a little help from your friends: Liverpool's Billy J. Kramer was managed by Beatles impresario Brian Epstein, produced by their studio whiz George Martin and bequeathed a host of songs by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. On-stage, all he had to do was wave

and try to sing on-key—and with most of the girls in the audience screaming nonstop, he did not even have to do much of that. Still, Billy J.'s records carried a disarming humility about them, such as his biggest non-Beatle-authored hit, *Little*



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Children, which ingratiated him to every female baby-sitter on the planet.

10. Girl Don't Come Sandie Shaw
 (Andrews) *Reprise 0342. No. 42 (4-24-65)*. It was a mod mod mod mod world in 1965—and nobody was more mod than Sandie Shaw, the 18-year-old beauty whose sultry voice and bohemian manner (she often performed barefoot) made her the darling of England's coolest heads. *Girl Don't Come* was her signature tune—an aloof nod to all the lovesick fools that femmes fatales such as Shaw ate for breakfast. Shaw attempted several comebacks in the '80s, but, alas, the closest she came to revisiting the charts was as the stylistic godmother to the Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde.

11. Ferry Cross the Mersey
 Gerry and the Pacemakers
 (Marsden) *Laurie 3284. No. 6 (3-20-65)*. Singer-guitarist Gerry Marsden and his Pacemakers were yet another jewel in the Epstein-Martin Liverpool crown. In fact, they had the distinction of being the first Merseybeat group to hit the No. 1 spot on the English charts in 1963 with Mitch Murray's *How Do You Do It?* (The Beatles had passed on the song.) Tremendous fan favorites in the U.S., the Pacemakers scored an impressive string of

KINKS



hits—none more memorable than the then jet-setting Gerry's pastoral lovesick letter to home, which was turned into a semiautobiographical feature film in 1965.

12. Wild Thing The Troggs

(Taylor) *Fontana 1548. No. 1 (7-30-66)*. The Troggs—as in the prehistoric cave dweller, the troglodyte—reportedly took just 20 minutes to record *Wild Thing*, American Chip Taylor's ode to man's lusty basic instincts. By the end of 1966, this debut single by Hampshire's merry band of primitives had sold some five million copies. Between Chris Britton's psycho guitar, Ronnie Bond's headbanging drums and Reg Presley's leery singing, *Wild Thing* presaged metal, punk and power-pop—in other words, nearly everything important that happened in rock during the next decade. Not bad for 20 minutes' work.

13. Don't Bring Me Down The Animals

(Goffin-King) *MGM 13514. No. 12 (7-2-66)*. The Animals were true working class heroes. Hailing from Newcastle, they were originally called the Alan Price Combo after their keyboardist, but once Eric Burdon muscled his way aboard, fans started calling the scruffy quintet the Animals, and it stuck. They struck gold in 1964 with the

American classic, *The House of the Rising Sun*, which they had learned from a Bob Dylan album. Two other American classics, songwriters Gerry Goffin and Carole King, composed *Don't Bring Me Down*. With its pulsating rhythm, Hilton Valentine's ominous guitar and Burdon's characteristic back-to-the-wall vocal, the song was one of the Animals' best recordings.

14. Yeh, Yeh

Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames (Grant-Patrick-Hendricks) *Imperial 66086. No. 21 (3-27-65)*. Keyboardist Clive Powell was just 17 when manager Larry Parnes renamed him Georgie Fame in 1960 and put him in charge of teen idol Billy Fury's backing band, the Blue Flames. Two years later, the increasingly jazz-leaning Fame left to go solo, and the Blue Flames followed him straight to hitsville. The eminently hip *Yeh, Yeh*, with its smooth horn charts and Georgie boy's even smoother vocal, made Fame quite famous—as did such later smashes as *Get Away*, and his biggest U.S. hit, 1968's music hall-like *Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde*.

15. She's Not There The Zombies

(Argent) *Parrot 9695. No. 2 (12-12-64)*. One of a number of English bands that formed in the wake

of the British Invasion's first wave, the Zombies were one of the most distinctive, and underrated, groups of the mid-'60s. *She's Not There*, with its deft drumming, lead singer Colin Blunstone's breathy, haunting vocals and Rod Argent's virtuosic jazz-rock electric piano solo, neatly showcased their intelligent, bittersweet sound. The group broke up in 1967, but, like their name, returned from the dead in 1969 with the posthumous hit, *Time of the Season*.

16. You Don't Have to Say You Love Me Dusty Springfield

(Donaggio/Pallavicini/Wickham/Napier-Bell) *Philips 40371. No. 4 (7-16-66)*. Springfield had the hair—blond and perfectly coiffed; she had the look—enough eye makeup to launch a thousand male sighs; and she had the voice—a tough-yet-tender instrument that smoked with soul. Dusty had been a member of the pop-folk group the Springfields before going on to spectacular success as a solo artist. As on many of her hits, *I Only Want to Be with You* finds Springfield successfully combining the girl-group style of the early '60s with the burgeoning Motown sound. As evidenced by her terrific '80s cameo on the Pet Shop Boys' *What Have I Done to Deserve This?*, she is still launching those sighs.

17. Bus Stop The Hollies

(Gouldman) *Imperial 66186. No. 5 (9-17-66)*. Manchester's Hollies never said they named themselves after Buddy Holly, but their effervescent music undoubtedly took a good measure of inspiration (as did virtually all of England's pop bands) from him. Led by prototypical Brit-rock vocalist Allan Clarke and harmony singer extraordinaire Graham Nash, the Hollies took a while to get rolling in the U.S., but *Bus Stop* reserved them a prime spot on the hit parade, where, even after Nash's defection to Crosby, Stills and Nash, they remained parked until well into the mid-'70s.

18. Sunshine Superman Donovan

(Leitch) *Epic 10045. No. 1 (9-3-66)*. When 19-year-old folksinger Donovan became an overnight sensation in 1965, England thought it had found its own Bob Dylan. Within a year, though, the Glasgow-born troubadour had traded his corduroy cap for a garland of flowers, and protest songs such as *Universal Soldier* for psychedelia like *Sunshine Superman*. Abounding with such up-and-coming hippie terminology as "tripped out" and "blow your mind," this cosmic blues tune became a counterculture anthem—until Donovan, listening to his mentor, the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, dropped the drug references, and began to just naturally wear his love like heaven.

The Mindbenders

After frontman Wayne Fontana left for a solo career, the Mindbenders carried on with future 10cc stalwart Eric Stewart (*right*) at the helm.



19. For Your Love The Yardbirds (Gouldman) *Epic 9790. No. 6 (7-3-65)*. Outside of the Beatles and Stones, there was not a more influential '60s group than London's hard-rock pioneers, the Yardbirds. During their stormy five years together, they featured three of the greatest electric guitarists ever—Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page. Clapton was the first, but the young blues purist found *For Your Love*, a harpsichord and bongo-dominated pop tune, a flat-out insult, and he left soon after he and his chart-hungry mates recorded the song. Of course, had Clapton stayed, there might never have been a Cream, a Jeff Beck Group with Rod Stewart or a Led Zeppelin. Those rock gods *do* move in mysterious ways.

20. Game of Love

Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders (Ballard Jr.) *Fontana 1509. No. 1 (4-24-65)*. Manchester's Mindbenders were led by Glyn Ellis, who auditioned for a Philips Records subsidiary in 1963 and was given a contract on the condition that he change his name to that of the label's. So was born Wayne Fontana, who scored one monster U.S. hit with his primitive, swaggering *Game of Love*. The Mindbenders, sans Wayne, registered one smash, too—1966's *A Groovy Kind of Love*,

featuring vocals by bandmember Eric Stewart, a future member of 10cc.

21. The Crying Game Dave Berry (Stephens) *London 9698. Did not chart (1964)*. In 1992, this song became known as the title of a very successful, offbeat cinematic thriller. In 1964, it was the title of a very successful record by the very offbeat singer Dave Berry. One of the first English performers to understand the visual impact of a television performance, Berry showed up on *Ready Steady Go* dressed completely in black, hid his face behind the upturned collar of his leather jacket and prowled around the stage like a caged panther. The audience ate it up, and the notoriety helped make *The Crying Game*, a wistful ballad featuring the visionary guitar playing of 20-year-old Jimmy Page, a U.K. classic.

—Billy Altman

The Troggs

It only took minutes for ocarina virtuoso Reg Presley (*second from left*) and the boys to knock out *Wild Thing*, which joined *Louie, Louie* and *Gloria* in rock 'n' roll's unholy trio of the greatest three-chord anthems.





George Fame

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Billy J. Kramer
with the Dakotas





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The Zombies

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THE ZOMBIES

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TELL HER NO



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YOU'VE REALLY GOT A HOLD ON ME • WOMAN • SUMMERTIME • I DON'T WANT TO KNOW
WORK 'N' PLAY • CAN'T NOBODY LOVE YOU • SOMETIMES • I'VE GOT MY MOJO WORKING

She's Not There, with its deft drumming, lead singer Colin Blunstone's breathy, haunting vocals and Rod Argent's virtuosic jazz-rock electric piano solo, neatly showcased the Zombies' intelligent, bittersweet sound.