

THIS WEEK IN THE PAST



Front page news...

May 26, 1969, overcast skies and persistent rain kept many West Riding holidaymakers indoors. What should have been a busy bank holiday had ended with a series of deserted beaches, a lack of sports events and grounded aeroplanes. Meanwhile, the wet weather did stop the competitors of the annual Bradford Walk from making the most of the event.

Top of the charts...

- 2009: Black Eyed Peas - Boom Boom Pow
- 1999: B*itched - Blame It On The Weatherman
- 1989: The Christians, Holly Johnson, Paul McCartney, Gerry Marsden, Stock Aitken & Waterman - Ferry 'Cross The Mersey

TRUE ROCK 'N' ROLL HERO

REMEMBER WHEN

MUSIC historian DEREK AJ Lister remembers rock 'n' roll pianist Dave Lee - known as 'Bradford's Jerry Lee Lewis':

David Harper, aka Dave Lee was born in Bradford in 1940 and attended Buttershaw School. Aged 12, in 1952, he joined the local Salvation Army band, learning to play the cornet. During his time with the band, he taught himself to play the piano and by the age of 16 had become proficient. The 1950s saw him playing rock n' roll music in pubs and clubs in and around Bradford.

At this time Dave worked in the warehouse of Ringtons Tea in Ashton Street. By 1958, now married, he joined wool merchant William Bussey.

In the 1960s Dave's rock n' roll style was beginning to be admired by teenagers and the public. Dave not only sounded like his idol, Jerry Lee Lewis, but also looked like him. In 1968 he turned professional and formed the band Dave Lee Sound with Dave De Courcey on bass and Andy Greaves on drums. In 1968 Andy left and Malcolm (Mal) Crossley joined.



Dave Lee at the piano at the Blue Moon pub in Stanningley, with Mick Craven on drums and Brian Haw on bass

In 1970, with a new line-up, the group came second on Hughie Green's Opportunity Knocks but the highlight of Dave's career was undoubtedly meeting Jerry Lee Lewis in Manchester in 1971 when he joined him on stage as well as having a drink backstage after the show.

In the 1970s the band was based in Bingley and had its own record

label, Throstles Nest, releasing three LPs and two EPs. In 1993 Dave played Jerry Lee Lewis in the musical Lipstick on Your Collar, before moving to Benidorm, where he performed solo at clubs in the resort.

It was Dave Lee who virtually single-handedly kept the authentic 1950s rock n' roll revival scene alive not only in Bradford but throughout

the UK and abroad, for over four decades. Sadly, Dave passed away in 2004. He was a brilliant showman and musician, missed by his many friends and fans.

Throughout his rock n' roll years many local musicians formed part of the 'Dave Lee Sound', among them Dave De Courcey, Andy Greaves, Mick Craven, Mal Crossley, Brian Haw, Johnnie Rickman, Eric Saunders, Kim Jacques, Charlie Chuck. Other musicians named in the book When Bradford Rocked did session work with Dave.

Dave's daughter Susan Trudgill, aka 'Swinging Sue', was born in the 50s and grew up with rock 'n' roll. Inspired by her father's music, she danced from the age of six. She was later successful in competitions and trained to teach rock 'n' roll dancing. Like her father, who gave her the name 'Swinging Sue', she's kept the authentic 1950s rock 'n' roll revival to a new generation of dancers. Sue also attended many local rock 'n' roll reunions as DJ. * Derek, a DJ at Bradford's Gaumont and Majestic ballrooms, has collaborated with Reuben Davison on a website - whenbradfordrocked - celebrating the city's rock 'n' roll era.

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