

NOSTALGIA



Staff on a Grattan trip, which Derek (front row, right) said was a chance to meet up with the office girls, whom he'd only seen from afar

My happy rock 'n' roll years working at Grattan



By Derek AJ Lister

Community Content

I JOINED the well-known Grattan warehouse, at the mail order firm, on leaving the Army in 1959.

Actually, it was quite a good start as a stop gap, to leave when you had found your niche for better careers.

Highlights of my time at Grattan in Bradford were the works day trip on Saturdays to Blackpool, taking more than 1,000 employees on three trains from the Exchange station, and later having fish and chips at one of the large fish restaurants.

It was also a chance to meet up with the girls from the offices whom you had only seen from afar, in the canteen, or nodded to in passing.

On the following Monday, rumours were rife: "Who met who?", "Who got drunk and shown up?" and "What romances were made?" This did happen - "How

many missed the train home?"

There was always the staff dance at the Queen's Hall in Bradford, modern dancing to an orchestra, and a rock 'n' roll group for the teenagers. As can be seen from the promotional poster on this page, my group, Dal Stevens and the Four Dukes, were asked to play.

It had to be said that Grattan did look after its staff. I was paid £10 in 1960 - £294 in today's money.

During my time at Grattan, from 1959-1960, there was quite a semblance of rock 'n' roll musicians who worked there, here are just a few that you may remember of that time:

Dave Arran, vocalist in the Dakotas;

Harry Unsworth, bass guitarist in The Del Fi's;

Drew Charles, who played piano in The Mel Clarke Four;

Dennis (Duane) Oliver, bass guitarist and vocals for The Four

Dukes, Crusaders;

John Lund, rhythm guitarist with The Four Dukes;

Mick Kershaw, aka Mick Novac, vocals in The Tornados;

Tony Minchella on drums with The Hi-Ti's;

Brendan Crowe on rhythm guitar with Mick and the Tornados and The Rattlers;

Josie McCann, a vocalist for many groups;

Alfred Nurse, drummer with Billy Royal and the Four Aces;

Derek A J Lister, aka Dal Stevens, vocals with The Blue Jays, The Four Dukes.

● As Dal Stevens, Derek AJ Lister was DJ at Bradford's Gaumont and Majestic ballrooms for six years from 1959, a DJ at the Gaumont and Majestic ballrooms.

His books, Bradford's Rock 'n' Roll and When Bradford Rocked, contain detailed profiles of the many bands and solo acts that were well known

SOME SMART STEPPING by THE LOREEN BUNN TROUPE

THE SHOWMEN TAKE THE STAGE

THE RELIEF OF RHUBARB COLIN and IRENE

OUR DANCE STYLIST OLYWEN WORBY

MEMORIES OF A STAR, No. 2. - - - THE OLD MAN
with ERIC, CLIFF, KEN and LINDA

OUR GUEST ARTISTE

Dal Stevens and the Four Dukes

SHORT SKETCH CONVERSATION PIECE

Promotional poster for a Grattan dance that featured Derek's group, Dal Stevens and the Four Dukes. Above: The Grattan building

on Bradford's music scene.

Now all that information, along with the energy and the sights and sounds of that era, have been made available for a new generation

in the 21st century in a website painstakingly put together by Derek and his friend and collaborator Reuben Davison. Visit www.whenbradfordrocked.co.uk.