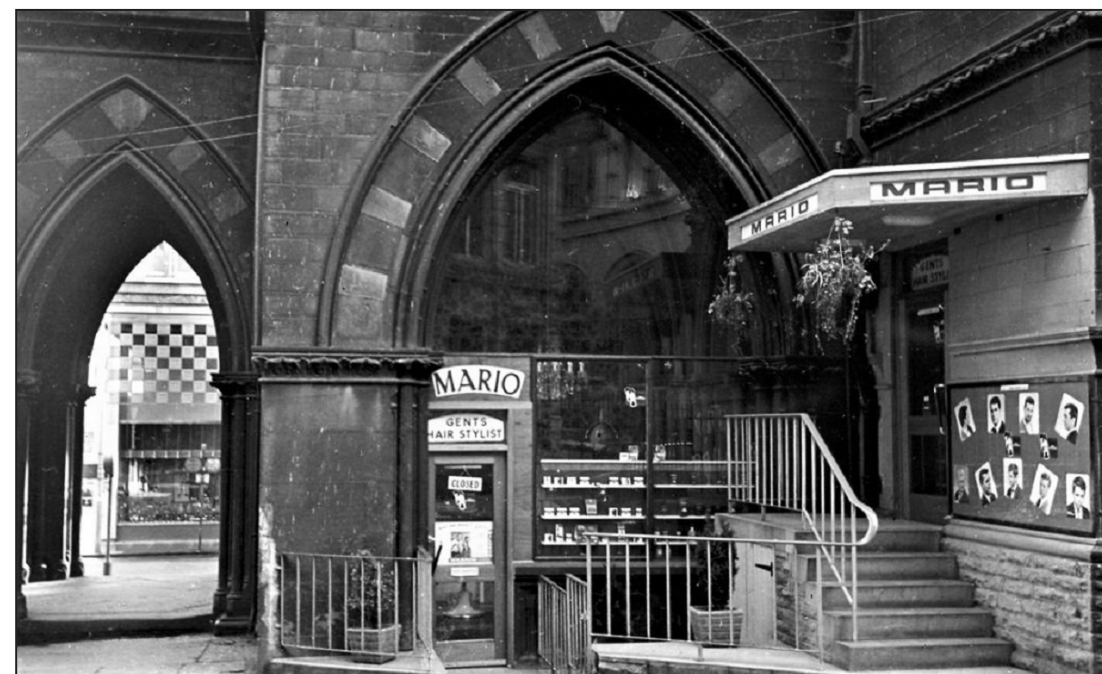


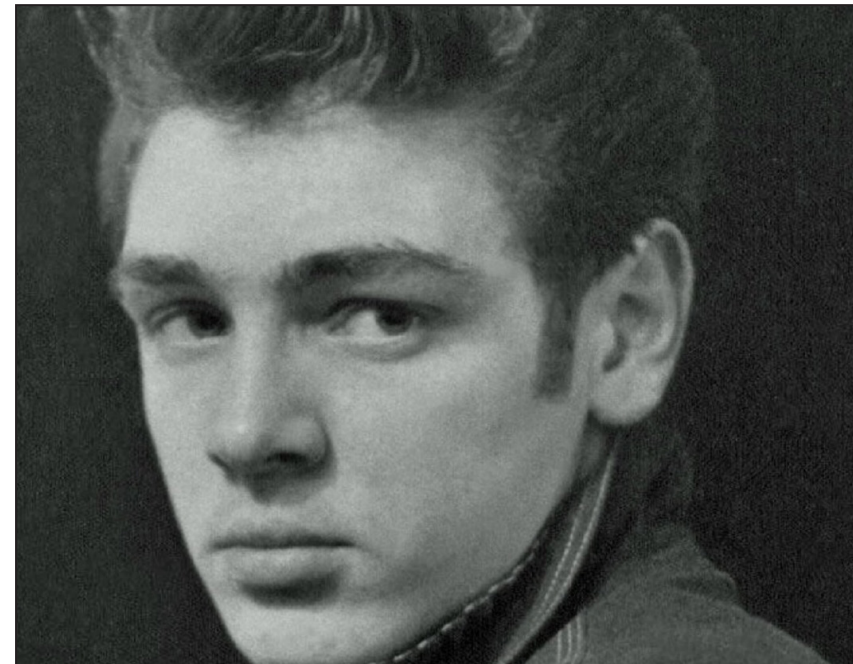
A stylish chap called James Bordass who was, says Derek, well known in Bradford



Diana and Jill modelling their early 60s look



Mario's, where many cool dudes had their hair cut. The family salon opened in the 1960s



James Bordass working his quiff



Bradford singer Sandie Anstey in the classic 1950s A-line dress

# QUIFFS AND CIRCLE SKIRTS - STYLISH TEENS OF THE 1950S

DEREK AJ LISTER looks back at Teddy Boys and other Fifties styles for fashionable teens

THE British Teddy Boy subculture was typified by young men wearing clothes inspired by the styles of the Edwardian period.

The group got its name after a 1953 newspaper headline shortened Edward to 'Teddy' and coined the term 'Teddy Boy', (also known as TED). The subculture started in London in the 1950s and rapidly spread across the UK, soon becoming strongly associated with American rock and roll music of the period. Teddy Boys were the first youth group in England to differentiate themselves as teenagers, thus helping to create a youth market.

The US film Blackboard Jungle with the introduction of Bill Haley's Rock around the Clock in the opening sequence marked a watershed in the UK. When shown at local cinemas, teenagers in the audience began to riot, tearing up seats and dancing in the aisles. At the time it was stated that it was in most cases it was Teddy boys who began to riot, which was often exaggerated in the popular Press.

After spending £20 to £30 on an outfit, when wages were probably no more than £3-10s a week, who would contemplate rolling around in the gutter, fighting or ripping seats out of a cinema? This did not happen, at least not in Bradford, for the simple reason that the film and original 'Teddy Boys' were not in the same time frame.

Teddy Boys made it acceptable for young people to care about what they looked like all the time and dress purely for show, instead of just having work clothes for Sunday best. This trend arose as young people's disposable income increased during the post war years. Teddy Boy clothing consisted of: long drape jackets, usually in dark shades, sometimes with velvet collar and pocket flaps; high waste 'drainpipe' trousers, often showing brightly coloured socks. Favoured footwear was chunky brogues, large crepe-soled shoes, often suede (known as 'brothel creepers'). Plus a high-necked loose collar and a white shirt, a narrow 'Slim Jim' tie and a brocade waistcoat.

These clothes were mostly tailor-made at great expense and paid for through many weekly instalments. Preferred hairstyles include long, strongly-moulded greased-up hair with a quiff at the front and the side combed back to form a DA (Duck's Arse) at the rear of the head. Another hairstyle was the Boston, in which the hair was greased straight back and cut square across the nape of the neck.

The girls adopted a style similar to Teddy Boys; they wore items such as drape jackets, hobble skirts, long plaits, straw boater hats, cameo brooches, and coolie hats. Later they adopted the American fashions of reodorant pants, voluminous skirts and hair in a ponytail.

With the advent of more dance venues opening in Bradford and other cities from the mid-1950s onwards, at last they had



Students in Bradford wearing Winkle Picker shoes. Teen fashions of the 1950s are featured on the We Bradford Rocked website

somewhere to jive relax and show off a style of fashion we would never see again.

As with all fashion, something always comes along to take its place, as in the late 1950s. Italian suits with short jackets, narrow trousers and the famous winkle pickers soon took over and Teddy boys and girls were few and far between. Some of the old guard did survive and kept faith with their fashion well into the 1960s, but by then most had disappeared.

Female teenagers started to look less like their mothers in the later part of the 1950s. Brightly patterned dresses with tight waists and wide skirts were popular. The effect could only be achieved with a stiff starched petticoat. For rock 'n' roll and jive dancing, the circle skirt swirled up, reflecting the energy of the dance, in many cases showing stocking tops. It was highly fashionable. Coloured patterned and pleated skirts made from then new fabric Terylene were worn for more casual occasions and pullovers were becoming more popular for women. 'Teens wore scoop-necked blouses, tight polo-necks or three quarter sleeve white fitting shirts, often with a scarf knotted around their neck. Teen clothing fashions that had originated in America filtered down to Britain in watered down fashion.

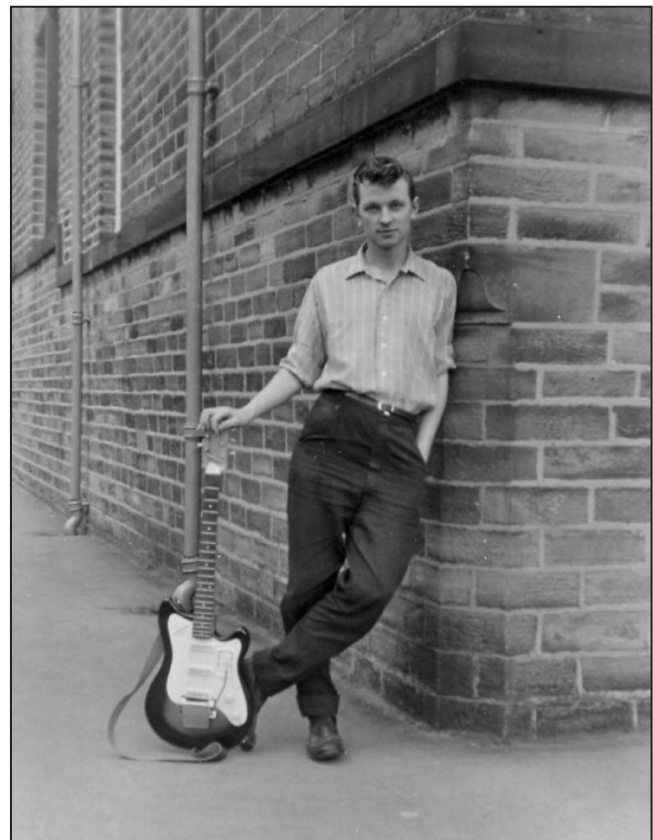
By the early 1960s, although hairstyles were almost the same, hem lines had been rising since the end of the 50s, and by 1963 they were just above the knee. By the end of 1965 the mini skirt really took off and had climbed 6ins or more above the knee. This was considered incredibly shocking by some sections of society. Traditional

stockings began to be replaced by one-piece tights, in a range of ever-more outrageous colours, allowing women to wear shorter skirts.

Fashion for men in the 1950s usually meant a trip to Burton's for new suits, generally conventional in appearance in sober colours such as grey, black or navy. Suits were worn for nights out and for most social occasions, however casual clothes for men were also starting to make an appearance such as the blazer or sports jacket which was with non matching trousers. This looked less formal than a suit.

With the advent of rock 'n' roll in the mid-1950s fashion was well catered for, especially if you wanted 'with it' gear. For men, Hargreaves Outfitters in Sunbridge Road offered a nice selection of frilled fronted shirts, string ties and popular luminous socks, lime-green being their speciality, which brought a shake of the head and a frown from elderly people. Wallis Outfitters, at the bottom of Manchester Road, offered trendy rock 'n' roll ware, but not as expensive as Hargreaves. There was an assortment of footwear, the most popular being crepe bottomed shoes, although most teenagers still wore standard leather shoes. Later, Winkle Pickers with Cuban heels would take over well into the Sixties.

\* Derek AJ Lister, resident DJ at the Gaumont and Majestic, and his friend and collaborator, musician Reuben Davison have profiled singers, bands and musicians from Bradford's 1950s and 60s music scene in their website, When Bradford Rocked. Visit www.whenbradfordrocked.co.uk



Glyn Whiteoak of Bradford group The Flamingos