

## Review from Dave Berry

English pop singer and former teen idol of the 1960s

### *When The Stars Came To Town*

For groups like us, spending nights on the road with other artists, some of who had influenced our own music, was an enormous advantage. I feel really grateful to have been part of these wonderful, but extremely gruelling, tours.

I think a book like this has been long overdue. As well as capturing the exciting memories of the people that were in the audience it chronicles a period of change within the music business which would influence popular culture around the world.

*Dave Berry*

## Customer review on Amazon

**Top customer review 5.0 out of 5 stars**

By Music Journalist and Author, Richard Cox

### *When The Stars Came To Town*

**An era of music unveiled with memories and humour**

When The Stars Came To Town encapsulates an era of pop and rock stars appeared in a busy, Midlands town, Derby. Every entry is matched by a personal memory of those who were actually there, and the effect is to cast a ray of humour and reality onto a musically formative experience.

Roger Smith's wonderfully compiled and produced book crosses the divide between celebrity adoration and deep research of music. It is a snapshot of two decades that fashioned the lives of, probably, thousands in an industrial town.

The author is a musician of that era, but also a fan and someone who stayed close to the sounds that fashioned the future.

The format for When The Stars Came To Town has a simplicity that, on first sight, could seem amateurish, but it's been designed for a purpose, and even a cursory glance exhibits a professionalism that enhances every page. At its most basic there is a date, the star or stars and their background, and what they played, but look to the 'I Was There' words, and it is a shaft of sunlight that strips away staid historical reminiscences and cascades incandescent droplets of personality.

These people really were there when history was made. "Susan was so embarrassed when Little Richard took his short off during his performance. She said: 'Ooo! If my mum knew he was going to do that she wouldn't have let me come.' My dad picked us up after the show, but we didn't mention the strip show." It's comments like that from Barbara Zoppi that makes this book so special. And Cherrylin Stockley about her idol Adam Faith. "As we

walked away to catch our bus we were so excited by the experience of meeting our star, but at the same time so angry that we had acted like stupid little children and didn't make the most of our opportunity."

The list of 'I Was There' contributors also includes some of the great reporters I developed a continuing reverence for, including Lucy and John Orgill, Lynne Dixon, Neil Hallam; Barbara Jones, and Rod Lyons. The formal, newspaper style gives way to reminiscences and these trained writers are joined by many who just say it how they remember it – joyously and exuberantly.

The photographs by Eric Chapman are magnificent, and perhaps there is room for another book and all those other posed pictures of stars against the same exceedingly tatty wallpaper of The Gaumont – a sadly long gone venue. I'll not go into the stars in this wonderful catalogue, but just think of Cliff Richard and Lonnie Donnegan through to The Walker Brothers and The Who.

*Richard Cox*

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