

A POCKET GUIDE TO SHADOW MUSIC



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**With contributions by
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Foreword by Colin Pryce-Jones**

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FOREWORD

by COLIN PRYCE-JONES

We all have certain occasions etched in our memories. One of my most vivid is the summer of 1960 when I placed a threepenny bit into the coin slot of a chrome laden juke box and heard the satisfying clunk as the money dropped and the mechanism sprang into action to play 'Apache'. My life dramatically changed direction from that moment. Something about that sound convinced me that I had to play the guitar.

Certainly that record led me to become a professional guitarist and bass player within the entertainment industry for which I am extremely grateful. Music is such a fulfilling pleasure to me that my living is also my hobby and a great passion. I could never have imagined back in the 1960s that I would become friends with The Shadows, let alone work with Jet Harris. Jet, along with Hank Marvin, Bruce Welch and Tony Meehan was an enormous influence on my whole career. Over the last ten years or so my group, The Rapiers, have become more associated with the music of The Shadows and we have toured many countries meeting hundreds of people who share our love of all things Shadows! The Rapiers have also had the enormous privilege of being included on the bill at all of Bruce Welch's Shadowmania events to date. The sound of The Shadows has without a doubt influenced musicians for almost fifty years as could be witnessed at concerts on their final tour where many famous musicians could be seen watching their mentors.

The Shadows seem to be the only group that inspire their fans to such a degree of exactitude, which is shown in the work done on this book by Malcolm, Les and Rob. They have invested literally thousands of hours on this project to ensure that every detail is correct. I am certain that, like myself, you will find yourselves saying over and over again "I didn't know that!" This opus is an inspiration to all those of us who have a deep rooted love of The Shadows, especially given that there will probably be little or no financial reward for all the time spent researching, writing and re-writing. But, there will be heartfelt thanks from Shadows fans everywhere – especially those dedicated Shadows Crusaders affectionately known as The Trainspotters! This was a phrase coined by the group themselves and is amusingly used in this text as a reference to additional information/trivia.

Most of you who buy this book will probably already own projects written by Malcolm Campbell. Malcolm has compiled several definitive Shadows discographies which are indispensable to each of us within our own preferred area/era of interest. Malcolm has also written many fine articles and reviews for *Shadsfax* as well as sleeve-notes and other projects for The Shadows themselves. Les Woosey played a vital and integral part in Malcolm's last book and he's been a major force in helping to compile this one. He's done brilliant work on background research and context as well as spending hundreds of hours re-listening to the music intently. Les too, has contributed scholarly 'essays' to *Shadsfax* and *SCOFA* (its Australian predecessor). Like Malcolm and Rob, Les is a lifelong Shadows fan. Rob Bradford has become a wonderful friend to me during the past twenty or so years. I know just how much time, pride and care he takes over each and every project that he undertakes, like his superb John Rostill biography for example. Rob's excellent Shadows reviews and articles have regularly appeared in *Pipeline*, *Shadsfax* and *Record Collector*. He's also worked with the group and he's written many copious LP/CD sleeve-notes for both The Shadows and The Rapiers.

Without the dedication of people like Malcolm, Les and Rob we would never have a publication such as this as the national music press seems to have largely dismissed The Shadows' momentous contribution to the history of British popular music. So, God bless them for their enormous effort in coming up with this excellent and informative book about, in my opinion, the best and greatest group that Great Britain ever produced.

Colin V. Pryce-Jones, June 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Shadows' high standing and enduring influence in the field of beat instrumental, both as performers and as composers, cannot be seriously contested. The corpus of their recorded work is, like that of The Ventures, who also hit the big time at the dawn of the 1960s, substantial and wide-ranging: over a span of four decades and more they have imprinted their own distinctive style on music of every complexion (something their less successful early contemporaries very often signally failed to do); more than that, they have carried their ability to shift records in quantity into this new millennium, their Albums enjoying chart success in Britain and elsewhere.

While much light has been shed over the years in record annotation on aspects of their considerable output (notably the classic Singles and EP tracks), there is much (nearly all the primary Albums, *Shadow Music* or *Rockin' With Curly Leads* or *Shades Of Rock*, just about any of them in fact) where there is little or nothing, most often nothing, in the way of systematic documentation. True, there are valuable bits and pieces of Shadows lore relating to all of the aforementioned recordings, and more, dotted about here there and everywhere in books, trade papers, magazines, fanzines, tour programmes and of course the Internet, so there was a certain amount that needed to be pulled together and evaluated, and this we have attempted to do. For the most part though we have been on our own — no bad thing in a sense, since we were obliged to look hard and to think hard at every turn about what needed to be said.

The end result is a track-by-track profile of The Shadows' recorded work as it became commercially available, taking in anything from anecdote and press reportage to musical history and personal reminiscences, together with analysis and assessment both of individual songs and of the succession of primary Albums — the kind of coverage if you like provided from different angles on Beatles musicology by Ian MacDonald, Steve Turner, David Rowley and John Robertson/Patrick Humphries. Interspersed among the pages devoted to the 572 individual numbers from the years 1959 to 2004 are over 300 greyscale cover scans of analogue and digital product, many furnished with commentary on various aspects of the group's evolving worldwide discography. A complementary website has been designed to provide high quality colour scans of all illustrations:

<http://www.malcolmcampbell.me.uk/book5/>

At the same time, it is only fair to say that as we are not offering a work of encyclopedic proportions, there are peripheral but important areas that we have only touched upon incidentally: echoes and imitations of the group's music the world over, for example, or their busy schedules on radio, TV and concerts, or the changing styles and attitudes of the popular music press in successive decades, any of which topics could fill a book with ease.

Another subject that could occupy a book, and a big book at that, has to be broached briefly here. It is worth emphasising The Shadows' stature and influence in the light of the recurrent rewriting of history that pictures, often in lurid and far-fetched terms, a lull in creativity in the world of popular music between the (alleged) cooling-off of rock 'n' roll and the appearance of The Beatles. The arguments put about by the immensely entertaining but sorely blinkered Nik Cohn (1960: "Rue Morgue; everyone had gone to the moon") and writers of that mould, and wheeled out with depressing repetitiousness and regularity to explain away the vibrancy of pop in this so-called interregnum, run counter to fact and to common sense. An eloquent and cogent attack on conventional wisdom (to use a charitable term) has been provided by Mike Brocken of The Institute Of Popular Music, University of Liverpool, by way of

preface to Spencer Leigh's book *Halfway To Paradise* referred to in entry [21] below: he sees the alleged "uneventfulness" of the pre-Beatles period as pandering to "the illusion that the Fab Four were something of an immaculate conception." It is worth remaining within this field of religious imagery to see what we are dealing with here. It is not by any means confined to the writings of Timothy Leary, with his risible "Divine Messiahs", "Divine Incarnate" and similar claptrap appellations. David Rowley referred to above, in *Beatles For Sale*, explains earnestly that he has written his book from the perspective of The Beatles "not as four gods, but as four highly motivated, but otherwise normal, Liverpool lads". Of course there is nothing preternatural about these individuals, astonishingly talented as they were, but the fact that Rowley, who shows himself elsewhere in the book to be a sober enough critic, felt the need to express himself in such a way (both here and elsewhere in his discourse) simply goes to demonstrate the depths of inanity plumbed by popular music writers.

Devotees of deified Liverpoolians, accustomed as they are to vilify or (more often perhaps) simply ignore the pre-Beatles scene, are unlikely to respond to counter examples adduced by unbelievers, who might, among other things, cite a host of finely crafted/performed pop songs from the early 60s that have stood the test of time. It is worth looking however at the insidious methods brought to bear to strengthen the message. As their gods need to be regarded with unquestioning awe, commonly, whether by design or through ignorance, or a combination of both, they are represented as prime movers across the board, having assigned to them, as is regularly if not invariably the lot of religious figures, whether historical or imaginary, attributes already in evidence among their forerunners. Let us pluck a few excerpts from the late Ian MacDonald's book on The Beatles *Revolution In The Head*, updated ed. 1997, to witness the technique of myth-building:

— "...the idea that one could write and play one's own music was startling ... in 1962–1963" (p.10); "... for an 'artist' ... to try to write anything at all in those days [1963] of dependence on professional songwriters was considered positively eccentric" (p.62). Not so. As early as 1959 the group were, with Norrie Paramor's blessing, active in writing their own material, presently following up with egregious hit records — the cream one might say of the UK-generated crop — both for themselves and for Cliff Richard. A very notable example of their involvement in this particular sphere is the splendid and much admired Album *Me And My Shadows*, see the Introduction on 1960 below, and also *The Shadows At EMI*, pp.59–60, 72–74, for an appraisal.

— The Beatles were essentially [*sic*] the first to be at the receiving end of the "orgiastic release of erotic energy dammed up during the repressive Fifties – a ceaseless avian shrilling ..." (p.71). Both Cliff and The Shadows (and some artists before them of course) were very much at the receiving end of unrestrained displays of near mass hysteria. One might think, as only two instances out of very many, of the tumultuous scenes that greeted them on their South Africa visit in 1961, or the audience reaction recorded for posterity in the Kingston set from the year after that.

— "... for the first time, a pop phenomenon which thrilled the country's youngsters became ruefully acknowledged by their parents" (p.75). Many readers of this book will surely recall that both Cliff and the group struck a chord with parents early on, certainly after the initial brush with seriously heavy rock 'n' roll had given way to more balanced fare! Nor was this parental attitude markedly characterised by "ruefulness", either towards The Shadows or The Beatles who appeared in their wake.

— On top of that, it is asserted more than once by MacDonald that here, for the first time, was a group whose individual members were known by name to fans and the public at large. A great deal of the writing on pre-Beatles popular music thrives on assertion, much of it woefully myopic and even outrageous, here as much as anywhere. Cliff, Hank, Bruce, Jet and Tony initially, the two Brians not that long after, and of course ‘Jet & Tony’ in their own right in 1962, were all readily identifiable by the record-buying public in this country and indeed in many another.

In sum then, although shifts in musical trends and public taste did undeniably occur from 1963, not a single one of the above pronouncements squares with what occurred in the real world of pop in the UK *circa* 1959–1962. Indeed, there has been exaggeration and distortion even at a behavioural or presentational level. One of the most ingenious, prolific and erudite writers on popular music, Alan Clayson (*The Beat Merchants* p.101), represents The Beatles as “the anarchic inverse of Cliff and The Shadows”, a snide reference in part at least to their “clean-cut” image in contradistinction to the mop-top appearance and relentlessly “cheeky chappie” repartee of the northerners (an aspect of their behaviour that from time to time elicited well merited yawns from even the most ardent admirers of their actual musical skills: how much affectedly plebeian back-chat can one take in the course of a relatively short interview?).

In fact, in the early years at any rate of The Beatles’ career as high-flying musicians, they were encouraged to exude sartorial elegance and behave with reasonable decorum before Queen and Country, with The Shadows adduced by Brian Epstein as the act not merely to note but actually to imitate. After all, their credentials as the UK’s premier group were second to none with a range of ‘firsts’ to their name even as early as 1962 (often chronicled, no more thoroughly than in the detailed surveys in Rob Bradford’s liner notes to all three of See For Miles Shadows’ *EP Collections* released on CD between 1990 and 1993). Their achievements proved to be all the more impressive given the thriving and fiercely competitive pop market of the day — in particular, a constant stream of class American acts, with powerful record company publicity and enthusiastic input from the influential UK music press backing them up, claimed high placings in our charts.

To represent Cliff and The Shadows as being supplanted by a crowd of unruly invaders, impertinent rowdies spearheaded by irreverent, lippy beatboys who changed the face of music forever, is a patent nonsense. In keeping with the times, The Shadows, already practised beat merchants, assimilated even more markedly the vocal beat idiom themselves to an appreciable degree in a number of the songs they performed from 1964 on both with Cliff Richard and without him — side by side with a host of other smartly turned out guitar based groups, certain members of whom in any case associated with or indeed were influenced by them: The Hollies, The Searchers, The Swinging Blue Jeans and many many more.

That everything was sweetness and light with the advent of The Beatles after the allegedly sour and dark years that immediately preceded them is another myth (designed to lionise them as being the source of all blessings), one that deserves to be punctured. While their towering status can hardly be questioned, it is also incontrovertible that much of the baggage they brought with them in the form of other groups and solo artists was not pop but pap. At any rate, just as the mumbo jumbo of the 60s counterculture and its trappings died a very rapid, ignominious and well deserved death, so innumerable performers of the period have now slipped into total or near oblivion, memories of them precariously perpetuated by tired concentrations

of various artist compilations from labels both major and minor and from the new pop powerbrokers, the big supermarket chains. The Shadows on the other hand are still with us, pretty well, and are still exerting an influence on music-makers around the world. They may not aspire to the global stature of The Beatles (who can?), but they do occupy a key position both as performers and, just as importantly, as sources of inspiration in the development of popular music in the UK and beyond.

We must leave the matter there, though there are of course numerous other aspects of the Beatles/ Shadows question that merit scrutiny. We reiterate however the overarching point that UK pop in the half decade or so running up to the emergence of The Beatles as superstars does not deserve to be — and surely must not be — written off out of hand, on the basis of blind assertion with not a shred of evidence adduced in support.

It remains to express our joint thanks to a number of members of the Shadows community who helped us in our enterprise by contributing valuable and constructive comments, criticisms and insights. We submitted a working draft of the entire book for comment to **Stuart Duffy, Mo Foster, George Geddes, Ulrich Sasu and Ray Steer**, and we are deeply grateful to them all for finding the time amid their busy schedules to advise us. They have most certainly enriched the book and they have rescued us from errors. To provide a glimpse of the perceptions of a different culture, **Mike McWilliams** contributed a translation from Japanese to form Appendix 4, while **Yaeko Sata** advised on a number of points relating to releases by The Shadows arising from their visit to Japan in 1967. We are grateful too to **David Hawley** for providing first-rate scans of sheet music and other material from his extensive archive, and for input of various kinds to **Brian & Warren Bennett, Jan Arne Flatby, Dave Herbert, Tony Hoffman, Ivo Koers, John Panteny, Colin Pryce-Jones, Pierre Teodori, Paul Rumbol, Ian Sanders, Giorgio Sguigna and Bruce Welch**, and also to **Sonita Cox** at EMI Archives, Hayes. A special mention too for **Pat & John Read** at that incomparable resource for Shadows fans everywhere, Leo's Den, and for all the help and advice provided by **Allan Lynn, Darren Turner** and the rest of the team at Azure Printing (formerly SHAW Printing), Pegswood.

Finally, for their support and assistance MC would like to thank **Dorothy and Richard**, who advised on many aspects of book production and designed the front and back covers, and also, for helpful comment on that other great guitar group, The Ventures, instrumental savants **Dave Burke, Dave Peckett, Alan Taylor and Gerry Woodage**; RB to acknowledge personally the support, help, advice and information given to him down the years by **Jet & Janet Harris, Dave Herbert, Tony Hoffman, Hank Marvin, Jim Nugent, Colin & Janet Pryce-Jones and relatives and friends of the late John Rostill**; and LW to acknowledge the great help offered by his good friend **Uli Sasu** and also the generous love and long-suffering support provided by his wife **Anita** over nearly five years committed to the writing of this book and before that the *CD Guide*.

MC/RB/LW, September 2006

Editor's Note An initial draft of this book was submitted by MC in the course of 2005 to RB and LW for comment; a revised version was subsequently circulated to the five main contributors mentioned above for their input, with a succession of further drafts circulated among the three authors over the first half of 2006. Clearly some differences of opinion were bound to arise in the process, though these rarely proved to be profound (see under 1984, pp.1ff. for the most notable exception) and not all of them are aired in detail, the editor accepting ultimate responsibility for any views expressed.

1959

It was not until the start of 1959 that the four Drifters who were presently to assume the name of The Shadows — Hank Marvin, Bruce Welch, Jet Harris and Tony Meehan — actually made a record together: the Single [1] FEELIN' FINE. Neither this nor their two Singles later in the year boded well for the group as an independent recording force, since not one of them made the Top 30 of the day, though the third, [9] SATURDAY DANCE, “crept up to number 31 before it stopped. We had very nearly made it” (The Shadows in 1961).

In the wake of securing a short-term recording contract through Norrie Paramor, the group did in fact enjoy, by the standards of the time, a reasonable degree of record company publicity for their early offerings. Indeed, they performed their first Single on the prestigious TV series *Oh Boy!* on 28 March (surviving documentation for the show throws up many uncertainties, but this particular date is all but certain). The problem lay with the material, which was simply not strong enough (neither Ian Samwell nor Pete Chester was destined to provide the group with hit songs, though Cliff Richard was well served by both). No move was made, it seems, to consider outside compositions, despite the fact that Cliff and the group were reaping dividends throughout 1959 from recording a succession of songs sourced from top-flight, mainly American writers. (As a consequence of the runaway success of Samwell's ‘Move It!’, the Cliff stable under Norrie Paramor's direction deliberately steered clear of Singles offering straight covers of high-performing American hits of the kind picked up in the course of 1959 by Tommy Steele, Marty Wilde, Craig Douglas and Anthony Newley — a practice frequently deplored by the music press on both sides of the Atlantic.) In any event, the group's composing activities over 1959, though confined to their own, non-charting, releases for the time being, established a working-pattern that would pay rich dividends in the ensuing golden years both for themselves and for Cliff.

Of the four vocals, [9] SATURDAY DANCE (which received a fair amount of airplay) was the best by a fair margin. But it was hardly exceptional, and certainly did not justify Jack Good's pronouncement that The Shadows were “the most commercial vocal group in Britain”, a sweeping claim which in the event would never be put fully to the test.

The two instrumentals were clearly not distinctive enough to attract widespread attention. In any case, many of the young record buyers required to get strictly pop material into the charts of the time would already have possessed both of these numbers, performed live, on the best-selling *Cliff* LP from three months before, or else on the *Cliff No.1/No.2* EPs from June/ July. (The extent to which LPs sales in the late 50s/ early 60s were dictated by grown-ups, to use a term in vogue at the time, has been much exaggerated. Album chart penetration by Elvis and Cliff, to take two notable examples, came about as a result of a steadily growing youth market for which stalwarts such as *South Pacific* and Frank Sinatra had minimal or more often no appeal.)

In fact, in 1959 the group experienced vicarious chart success in a big way, as Cliff Richard's backing group, and they were clearly too buoyed up by this and by their hectic touring commitments throughout the year to allow themselves to be too distracted or dejected: as Hank Marvin said of Single No.1, “... we were playing very much as a team with Cliff, and so it didn't seem to matter that much”. (During the

month of September, they laid down twelve tracks for Cliff releases, against only one of their own.)

In particular, by April the *Cliff* Album had charted, peaking at No.4; by the end of July 'Living Doll' was at No.1 and stayed there for a further five weeks; 'Travellin' Light' hit the top in October, and was there for four more weeks; the Album *Cliff Sings* charted in November and made No.2.

Even more significant for the future direction of the group was Hank Marvin's switch from Antoria to Fender Stratocaster. It was heard first on 'Travellin' Light', recorded in July and released three months later, when the Columbia label sported the name of The Shadows for the first time. If the Strat did not do much to enliven [9] SATURDAY DANCE, its resonant, upfront, dynamic sound would rapidly make a profound impression through such numbers as 'Dynamite', 'A Voice In The Wilderness', 'Fall In Love With You' and 'Willie And The Hand Jive', all of which were in the can before year-end. It was no idle boast when Cliff, his enthusiasm throwing linguistic variation to the winds, exclaimed (*It's Great To Be Young*, Souvenir Press p.80): "The group generates this fabulous beat and I'm the vocal instrument ... Ricky Nelson has fabulous backing but I feel sure nothing has the fabulous sound that the boys have now got". It is emphatically not the group's 1959 Singles, but their performances on these Cliff numbers, and others like them, that are the true precursors of their first smash hit. The Shadows were on their way to bigger things.

The Drifters

February 1959 Single, Columbia 45-DB 4263 Mono

[1] FEELIN' FINE

(Ian Samwell; rec. 9/1/59)

[2] DON'T BE A FOOL (WITH LOVE)

(Peter Chester; rec. 9/1/59)



1

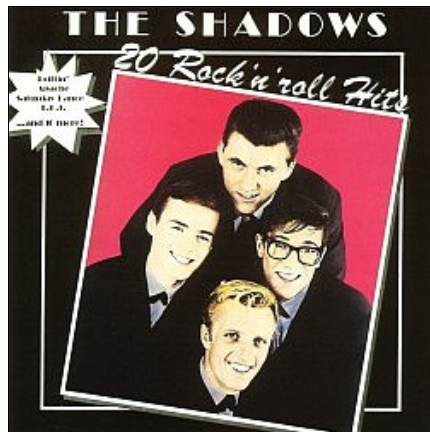
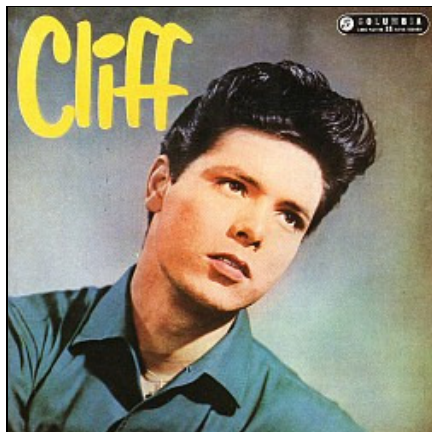
The Drifters' first offering (also on 78rpm, like the other two Singles of 1959) was a double-sided vocal, originally performed at a "makeshift" audition in Norrie Paramor's London office and leading to a short-term contract with Columbia drawn up on 5 February (Bruce Welch, *Rock 'n' Roll ...*, pp.95-96). They had had to come up with something quickly and they were not completely satisfied with the end results. Comparisons with Buddy Holly, The Everly Brothers and Gene Vincent show

the derivation quite well. The group admitted that they were “trying to achieve that authentic American sound”. FEELIN’ FINE, a simple teenage declaration of awakening love, boasts quite a spirited guitar solo from Hank, who somehow manages to inject some sting into his dreaded Antoria (see below on the Single [7] JET BLACK / [8] DRIFTIN’)!

DON’T BE A FOOL (WITH LOVE), an exhortation to listen to sage advice from one who knows, was their preferred side, though whoever relegated it to the flipside made a wise choice: it sounds altogether too chirpy given its theme, and the vocal harmonies do not compare especially favourably with their American counterparts. The group’s own appraisal at the time was far from favourable: “That particular record didn’t please us, it was terrible ... It wasn’t released – it escaped!” (*The Shadows By Themselves*, pp.52–53). Years later, Hank Marvin, wryly claiming “I can never remember whether it sold eleven or twelve copies”, pronounced that FEELIN’ FINE was “Awful. One of the worst records ever made.”

The Drifters (3 tracks)
April 1959 LP
Columbia 33 SX 1147 Mono
Cliff Richard
Cliff
(Rec. 9–10/2/59)

In the wake of Cliff Richard’s enormously successful tour which kicked off in January 1959, Norrie Paramor conceived the idea of recapturing the electrifying atmosphere generated everywhere by taping a live Album of Cliff Richard and his backing group The Drifters, by then consisting of Marvin, Welch, Harris and Meehan (in the original tape housed in EMI Archives, Norrie can be heard to say to the young female fans as they leave the studio: “Goodnight. Thank you for coming. Don’t forget to collect your signed photograph of Cliff on the way out”!). The recordings were made on 9–10 February at Abbey Road’s Studio 2 before a wildly excited crowd of fans. Three years later George Martin, despite his well documented dislike of Cliff, but fully aware of the effectiveness and commercial success of Norrie Paramor’s ploy, planned to have The Beatles record their debut Album in front of a group of dedicated fans in the very same studio and was only prevented by the tightness of his timetable from doing so (David Rowley, *Beatles For Sale* [Mainstream Publishing 2002], pp.27–28).



The audience numbers for the Cliff performances vary in different accounts (around 200 seems favourite; “nearly 300” Bruce Welch, *Rock 'n' Roll ...* p.98); about the fans’ unrestrained vocal contributions there can be no dispute, and there were problems with the sound balance. That was not the only difficulty: Cliff was suffering from a severe throat infection (“That’s his excuse — we can’t make any for ourselves”, quipped Hank), group and singer at times did not seem to lock together well, and there were fluffs in the accompaniment. For all that, the recording from start to finish exudes a raw energy that can only be regarded as awesome, setting this recording, in particular the up-tempo numbers from Cliff and the group together, among the very finest surviving examples of late 1950s rock ‘n’ roll. Stuart Duffy: “At the height of Peter Green’s period with Fleetwood Mac I had the pleasure of attending a party at his house with a friend of mine who was roadie for a blues guy named Duster Bennett. Whilst there Peter put the *Cliff* album on and said that this was one of the best Albums in his collection. He enthused about it and stated that ‘Every guitarist should have this because it’s pure rock and roll played live just as it should be.’ I was delighted of course, but there were a few other people there who were surprised, given Peter’s background, that he should be so taken with it.”

[3] JET BLACK Live
(Jet Harris)

[4] DRIFTIN’ Live
(Hank Marvin)

The two Shadows instrumentals, considered in greater detail below under their remakes for the Single market, are more notable for the atmosphere they generate than for their technical skills: the moodiness of JET BLACK, penned by the ultra-moody-looking guy in the line-up, the raw exuberance of the driving Marvin opus DRIFTIN’, an exuberance that never deserted him when he moved on shortly to more expensive and immensely more sophisticated and versatile equipment.

[5] BE-BOP-A-LULA Live
(Gene Vincent/ ‘Sheriff’ Tex Davis)

Hastily introduced into the set on the second day of recording to afford ailing vocalist Cliff a respite, this 1956 Gene Vincent hit, his first million-seller (USA No.7/ UK No.16), featured in the movie ‘The Girl Can’t Help It’, was covered as early as 1958 by The Everly Brothers, a version clearly imitated here by The Drifters, who speed the song up even further, while the first verse is simply repeated, the second, “Well, she’s the woman that’s got that beat ...”, disregarded or forgotten.

BE-BOP-A-LULA is now regarded as one of the true classics of the genre. *Record Collector* once advised that fans of Gene Vincent interested in the history of the song should avoid this version. In absolute or purist terms, they had a point. Vocal delivery and general articulation are pretty desperate, even for what is plainly an under-rehearsed number, and Hank’s flailing guitar solos (particularly the second) strike the ear as pretty unpolished. But given the highly charged atmosphere and in the context of the show as a whole, it performs its function adequately enough.

Colin Pryce-ones provides a guitarist’s perspective: “I would agree that the soloing is quite primitive and unsophisticated compared to what we know Hank can do nowadays. But we have to bear in mind the circumstances. It must have been a very exciting, yet highly pressurised atmosphere, a live recording with little or no time for

any rehearsals and probably no possibility of re-takes. Hank had only just turned seventeen years of age. As we all know, The Drifters were not originally due to record anything in their own right on those two evenings. Given the unexpected, unplanned nature of the recordings and the pressure and excitement of the occasion, I think that Hank's spontaneous soloing is actually very rock 'n' roll. Under the circumstances, I don't think that he could have done much better." See further on [7/8] below, Colin's remarks on the Antoria.

Trainspotter's Note After [12] APACHE and the succeeding run of instrumental hits, it was to be expected that EMI would show little or no interest in very early *vocal* offerings. Here is a case in point: the two instrumentals above soon appeared in *stereo*, on two distinct Cliff EPs from June and July 1959, whereas this track had to wait 39 years to receive similar treatment (on the UK Digipak CD *Cliff*, June 1998). A related time-lapse: both sides of the first Single were only aired on a UK compilation over two decades further on — on the LP *The Shadows Vocals* in 1984; the brighter, more successful, Shadows-credited third Single on the other hand (December 1959) was revived in 1969 on *Somethin' Else!!*, the first relatively wide-ranging UK compilation Shadows LP after the premium *Greatest Hits* of 1963 and *More Hits!* of 1965.



4 5

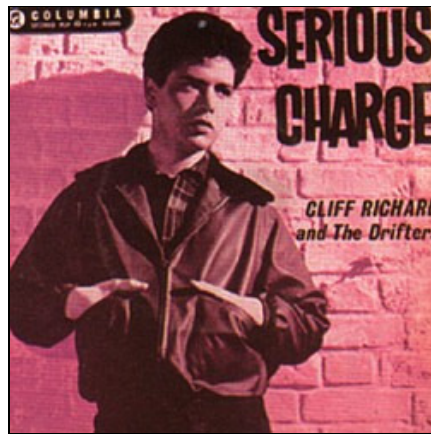
The Drifters
 May 1959 EP
 Columbia SEG 7895 Mono
 Cliff Richard,
Serious Charge

[6] CHINCHILLA
 (Randy Starr/ Dick Wolf; rec. 28/4/59)

An unusual little item. 'Serious Charge' (on general release in June 1959), dealing with the (then) taboo subject of homosexuality, provided Cliff with his first film role, although the real stars were Anthony Quayle, Andrew Ray and Sarah Churchill. The melody is played many times throughout the film, though never by The Drifters themselves: with swirling strings over the opening sequences, in a coffee shop to a jazzy beat rhythm, as a slow smooch and also in full jazz styling. Cliff remarked in

1959: “My group didn’t back me in the picture..... I did the numbers in the film with a group attached to the film unit..... when my boys heard the tapes they weren’t all that impressed. Obviously, we had to back the picture with an EP and now I had my own group.” Hence when Cliff & The Drifters came to support the film with a record release, they rearranged and re-recorded the songs and the group taped their rendition of CHINCHILLA based closely on the arrangement of the American version from 1958 by The X-Rays (theirs vibes-led) — nothing like it is heard in the film!

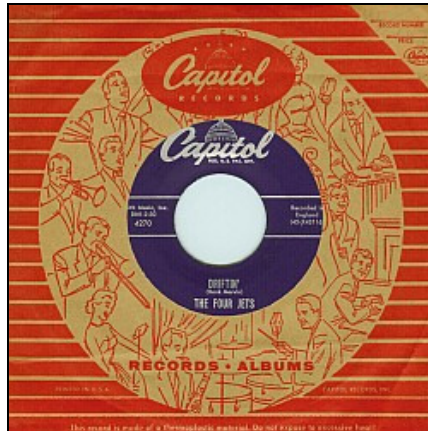
Norrie’s sparkling piano continuo is nicely offset by Hank and Jet’s ‘sparring’ on bass and lead respectively. There are a few bars where the two instruments are briefly in unison. Jet’s bass is sometimes on the dominant note of the chord an octave below Hank’s lead on the tonic note. Then they interchange with Hank dominating on mediant passages with Jet’s bass dropping to the tonic note an eleventh below. This allows scope for some simple but effective harmonies. This is the pattern for the ‘verses’ with the middle-eight being an ensemble workout for lead, bass, rhythm and drums. All in all a charming confection.



6

The Drifters (USA Canada Italy: ‘The Four Jets’)
July 1959 Single, Columbia 45-DB 4325 Mono
[7] JET BLACK : [8] DRIFTIN’
Studio Versions (rec. 25/5/59)

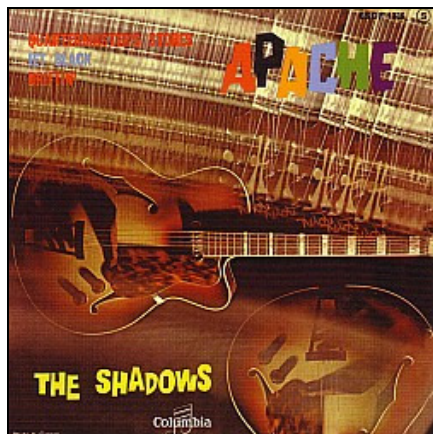
These are studio remakes of the live numbers ([3] and [4]) discussed above. The reasons for this initiative are chronicled in *The Shadows By Themselves* p.53: “On Cliff’s first LP, we had featured two numbers we had written ourselves... To our surprise, there were a number of requests for these tracks to be issued as a Single. We were surprised because the trend then wasn’t for instrumental discs at all. We thought we stood more chance of success by recording Singles as a vocal group. We re-recorded... To this day we still don’t know which one was the ‘A’ side.”



7

These studio takes show slight differences in detail and performance as compared to the live versions. **JET BLACK**, Jet Harris' only non-collaborative composition for the group, was unusual in that it featured his electric bass as the lead instrument (another first), with Hank harmonising and improvising on the treble strings above. Jet had written the number on a long coach journey to a gig at Grimsby, the title suggested to him by the colour of Cliff's hair (Cliff's initial suggestion was 'Jet Dream'!). It's an atmospheric, brooding, moody piece. Occasionally the lads yell out "Jet Black!" in a descending scale from a high falsetto to a low bass growl.

Of this studio version of **JET BLACK**, Jet recalls: "When we came to re-record it, as the live version wasn't really good enough, it took over ninety attempts to get it right" — a point reiterated in recent live appearances. And Bruce in connection with this same track: "Hank was a marvellous guitarist, but so erratic sometimes. We'd record a three-and-a-half-minute song and he'd screw up the last note, which meant doing the whole thing again."



8 9

On **DRIFTIN'**, a title inspired by their soon to be discarded group name (they were renamed 'The Four Jets' for North America, see Pic 7), Bruce's strong rhythm offsets Hank's riff-like passages. Hank's playing has a harsh menacing tone, a raw feisty sound — partly due to his guitar at the time, a cheap Antoria, which lacked a tremolo

arm, and which he was later to describe as a ‘plank’ (for a profile of the Antoria consult Jim Nugent, *Shadsfax* 12 [1997] pp.16–18). Colin Pryce-Jones offers these observations on the instrument: “Shortly before he sadly passed away, Roberto Pistolesi, who was a first-rate, fabulous luthier, had just finished restoring a vintage Antoria which, in a very roundabout way, I’d acquired from Japan. The Antoria for all of its faults is very much a part of that 1959 Cliff/Drifters sound. It has that very distinctive percussive, metallic ‘clunking’ tone ... Roberto was a master craftsman. He spent an enormous amount of time setting up the guitar, including the action. He noticed that, no matter what he or anyone else could do, whenever you played certain notes in several different positions, there was nothing you could do to prevent the guitar strings physically striking the pick-ups. This would inadvertently create all manner of different tones and sounds.”

Not a hit — but a great brace of original instrumentals. In the mid-1960s, the American group The Sandals featured both tracks on an Album release for the soundtrack of ‘Endless Summer’ (for background see *Pipeline* 57 [2002] pp.18–19; 60 [2003] pp.44–45).

**FROM THIS POINT ON
ALL TRACKS ARE TO BE CREDITED TO
THE SHADOWS**

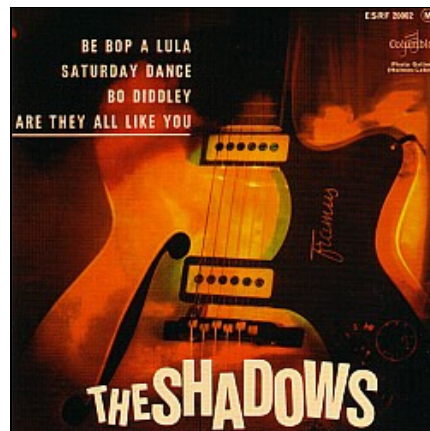
December 1959 Single, Columbia 45-DB 4387 Mono

[9] SATURDAY DANCE

(Peter Chester/ Hank Marvin; rec. 25/8/59)

[10] LONESOME FELLA

(Peter Chester; rec. 13/9/59)



10

The Shadows, as they were now known, were still searching for the right formula and were undecided about whether to record vocals or instrumentals. Despite the growing popularity of the latter, with Duane Eddy in particular riding high in the UK charts, they decided upon another double vocal release, once again making use of original material. SATURDAY DANCE, the first Shadows’ track to feature the famous Strat, had been written about a year earlier by Hank and Pete Chester. Described by Jet Harris shortly before its release as a “bright rocker”, it was a lively number, but still

derivative of the American sound, full of Dion & The Belmonts-type chiming doo-wop vocal harmonies with crisp Buddy Holly-like guitar breaks. Full of American imagery too, hot-rod cars, school hops, etc., broadly comparable in theme to songs recorded at the time with Cliff, 'The Snake And The Bookworm', 'Here Comes Summer' and so on — highly enjoyable.

Pete Chester alone was responsible for the dreamy, wistful flipside, which highlighted Jet's (reluctant) vocal lead ("He couldn't stand hearing himself on LONESOME FELLA!", the group in 1961). He had a very distinctive voice — described by Jack Good (later, at the time of his solo 45s) as "A sort of male Ann-Margret"! Hank and Bruce provide busy vocal support in a number that was very much a child of its times. The next Single in the group's discography would be startlingly different.

Trainspotter's Note As stereo was finally becoming accepted as the norm in the UK towards the end of the 1960s, EMI prepared 'mock stereo' versions of both these tracks (the only vocals from the group to be so treated) for release on the 1969 budget compilation LP *Somethin' Else!!*, the mono master tape being reprocessed to give a limited stereo effect. Such manipulations are rarely satisfactory, a good case in point being the standard version of [20] FBI (see the entry under 1961), which is far inferior to an EMI UK-sourced mono implementation.