

MORE THAN 40 YEARS OF ROCK MUSIC

The first group to be seen in the newspapers in the late 50s were the Teddy Boys. Their clothes were supposed to be similar to those worn in Edwardian England: long jackets with velvet collars, drainpipe trousers and brightly-coloured socks. Their shoes had very thick rubber soles and their hair was swept upwards and backwards. Before the arrival of the Teddy Boys young people had usually worn what their parents wore. Now they wore what they liked.

In the mid-60s the Mods, (so called because of their smart suits) were popular again. But perhaps the Mods' most important possessions were their motor scooters, usually decorated with large number of lights and mirrors.

The Mods' greatest enemies were the Rockers who despised the Mods' scooters and smart clothes. They rode powerful motor-bikes, had long untidy hair, and wore thick leather jackets. At that time 'swinging London' was everybody's idea of heaven! Young people were very clothes-conscious and London's Carnaby Street became the fashion centre of Europe and the world. It attracted thousands of tourists every year.

Towards the end of the 60s a new group appeared, whose ideas started in California, in the U.S.A. The Hippies preached a philosophy of peace and love, wore necklaces of coloured beads, and gave flowers to surprised strangers on the street. Hippies wore simple clothes, blue jeans and open sandals, and grew their hair very long. They often lived together in large communities, sharing their possessions. This was their protest against the materialism of the 60s and also against the increasing military involvement of the United States in Vietnam.

However, the dream of peace and love disappeared in the early 70s as the mood of society changed. People's attention turned to life's more basic problems as the world price of oil increased, causing a fall in living standards and rising inflation.

Skinheads were often racist and violent. The 'uniform' worn by most of them consisted of trousers that were too short, enormous boots, and braces. As their name suggests, they wore their hair extremely short or even shaved it all off.

Towards the end of the 70s another style of music and dress appeared and is still very popular. The word Punk derives from American English and is often used to describe someone who is immoral or worthless. They sing songs about anarchy and destruction and their clothes show a rejection of conventional styles of dress. Their music is loud, fast and tuneless. They feel that the music of the 70s has become too complicated. It has lost touch with the feelings of 'ordinary kids'.

In the 1980s many new bands emerged; and also old ones reappeared. Out of punk grew New Wave music which totally rejects the ideas of the skinheads. The Bikers still enjoy 'heavy metal music' which is easily recognized by its high volume and use of electric guitars. 'Dancing' is simply shaking your head violently to the rhythm of the music.

Many new British bands combine traditional rock music with an infectious reggae beat. From America, a new interest in discotheques and dancing has appeared.

Nowadays many of the new bands have been able to use the changes in technology to develop their music. Computerized drum machines , synthesizers and other electronic instruments are now just as popular as the electric guitar.

Black music has become increasingly important with international stars like Michael Jackson combining the best of modern music with spectacular live performance.'Hip Hop' music has combined fast speaking in rhyme (called 'rapping') with the excitement of the rock beat . Finally, Live Aid and charity records have shown that many modern pop stars are interested in using their talents to help raise money for the poor.