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Earlier Times of MICKEY JUPP's JUPPANESE LEGEND by ANXIOUS STAN WELLS

Mickey Jupp is Southend's most important songwriter and one of Britain's best. His reputation has grown recently with his work for Stiff Records but should be bigger. Prior to Stiff he'd made three albums with the band 'Legend'. So here is some lowdown on how he spent his earlier days. He's never had a hit record, except for one in Italy, and he should have had at least a hatful? In 1963 he was guitarist with his first band, the Black Diamonds Robin Trower, then with the Paramounts, later to evolve into Procul Harum, had heard that Mick could play piano and told him about a new band. Mickey got the job and Gary Brooker dubbed them the Orioles.

The Orioles 1963-65

At a rehearsal Mickey sang Barrett Strong's Money and was spontaneously elected vocalist. Jupp remained with the group throughout its life but other members moved on as the years passed. Bob Clouter replacing Tony Diamond (drums). Mo Witham replacing Dougie Sheldrake (guitar) and Barry Scanling took Ada Baggerly's place (bass). The group took over the Paramounts residency at the Cricketers in Southend where they played for two years up to four nights a

week and engendered a devoted following for their R&B based repertoire. Jupp says the band folded when he was jailed for non-payment of maintenance.

The Jam 1966

Mickey rehearsed with this band, formed by Robin Trower. They never got off the ground and Jupp never performed publicly with them. The other members of the abortive band were Dave Johnson (bass) and Tommy Berry (drums).

Legend 1968-72

Mickey lived in Bath for a time but returned to Southend to form the first Legend. Nobody seems sure how he managed to get a recording contract. The other musicians were Chris East (guitar/vocals), Nigel Dunbar (bass) and Steve Geere (drums). They never played in public but survived long enough to make an album called Legend (Bell:SBLL 115), released in March 1969. They folded on completing the L.P. Jupp was back in Bath when he heard that Dave Knights had left Procul to enter management and wanted Mickey to form a band. This second Legend featured Mo Witham (guitar), Bill Fifield (drums) and John Bobbin (bass), the latter

played briefly with the Orioles. Knights managed to do a deal with Vertigo and the second album entitled 'Legend' (Vertigo: 6360 019) hit the shops in 1970. It didn't sell and Bill Fifield left to join T.Rex at the behest of Tony Visconti, producer for both Legend and Bolan. Bob Clouter took over the drum kit making the group all ex-Orioles. This line up made a final album 'Moonshins' (Vertigo:6360 063). Legend scored an Italian hit with a song called 'Life' from the Moonshine sessions. They went over to Italy but were treated badly and came home dispirited. Clouter and Bobin left and Barney James (drums) and Phil Mitchell (bass) took over. But time had run out and the band folded.

Kilroy 1972

Jupp returned to Southend, got married and a job in a music shop. Apart from a few rehearsals with a band called Kilroy, he had left the stage.

Mickey Jupp Band 1975-?

In July 1975, egged on by the success of his fans the Feelgoods and Kursaal's, he formed a new band. They began playing the London pub circuit and attracted some attention. The band had over ten members

including Mickey's old friends Clouter and Kitchell. They mixed Mickey's songs with some of the R&B numbers the Orioles might have done. On Bank Holiday Monday 1976 an all day concert took place at Southend headlined by Alvin Lee. Among the many bands listed in the ads. for the show, the Mickey Jupp Band had bracketed after the name (say farewell) which must have meant they were splitting up and that is what happened. In 1977 he released a single under his own name on Arista (136) called 'Nature's Radio' which is ace truly ace. Then he went to Stiff and the rest is well documented.



Much of the information for this article has been gleaned from an NME study of Jupp by Max Bell and a Zigzag family tree by Pete Frame, both published in 1975. I offer both of them thanks and apologies.