

MERTHYR TYDFIL 1955-75

MEMORIES OF POPULAR MUSIC
ATGOFION O GERDDORIAETH BOBLOGAIDD

THE SMALL FACES, CLIFF BENNETT AND THE REBEL ROUSERS, LYN AND THE JUST FOUR, THE CHEATIN' HARTS: ABC (CASTLE) CINEMA, DECEMBER 4, 1966



Steve Marriott and Ronnie Lane speak to a Member of Staff from the ABC Cinema (Courtesy Steve Shipman)

The Small Faces, Cliff Bennett and the Rebel Rousers and local bands The Cheatin' Harts and Lyn and the Just Four (from Aberfan) performed at the ABC Cinema on Sunday, December 4th 1966. Although the Express described the audience screams as drowning out the singing, the band reportedly were not happy with their performance. As their equipment was 'stuck in Sweden', they had to borrow it (from London based band Sound City). The Small Faces at the time featured Steve Marriott (vocals and guitar), Ronnie Lane (bass), Kenny Jones (drums) and Ian McLagan (keyboards). This show was their last show of 1966, prior to their performance at The Royal Albert Hall in aid of the Aberfan Disaster. According to Phillip Howells, the 30 minute set the band performed included songs such as 'Hey Girl!', 'All or Nothing', 'Watcha Gonna do About it' and 'My Mind's Eye', which was number four in the charts at the time. The Express article does not include much information on Cliff Bennett and the Rebel Rousers, aside from the fact that there were considered an 'older group' with an average age of 25! The show was promoted by the entertainments committee of Merthyr Council, with Pete Lovis (from The Spirals) reported as comparing it.

"John Reddy was Mayor at the time and he invited me to the mayors parlour for a drink with the Small Faces."

"I was there. Kenny Jones broke his drum stick and threw it into the audience and I caught it!"

"Jeff Lewis borrowed my boots for the show. He swapped my boots for Steve Marriott 's white shoes, which I ended up with."

"Steve Marriott was on top form and was everyone's highlight of the night. I was only thirteen at the time but remember it well."

"My friend ran down the front and tried to jump on the stage, she was so excited. It was a fabulous show."

"I was 16 at the time and seeing these bands, 1966 was a brilliant time."

"I had a great time being introduced to The Small Faces backstage, as my brother in law was in charge of tickets and passes backstage.

"It was wonderful!!! I took my sister. We were so young!!!!"

They were so good, think Itchycoo Park!!! It was packed and we were all outside waiting for them!!!!"

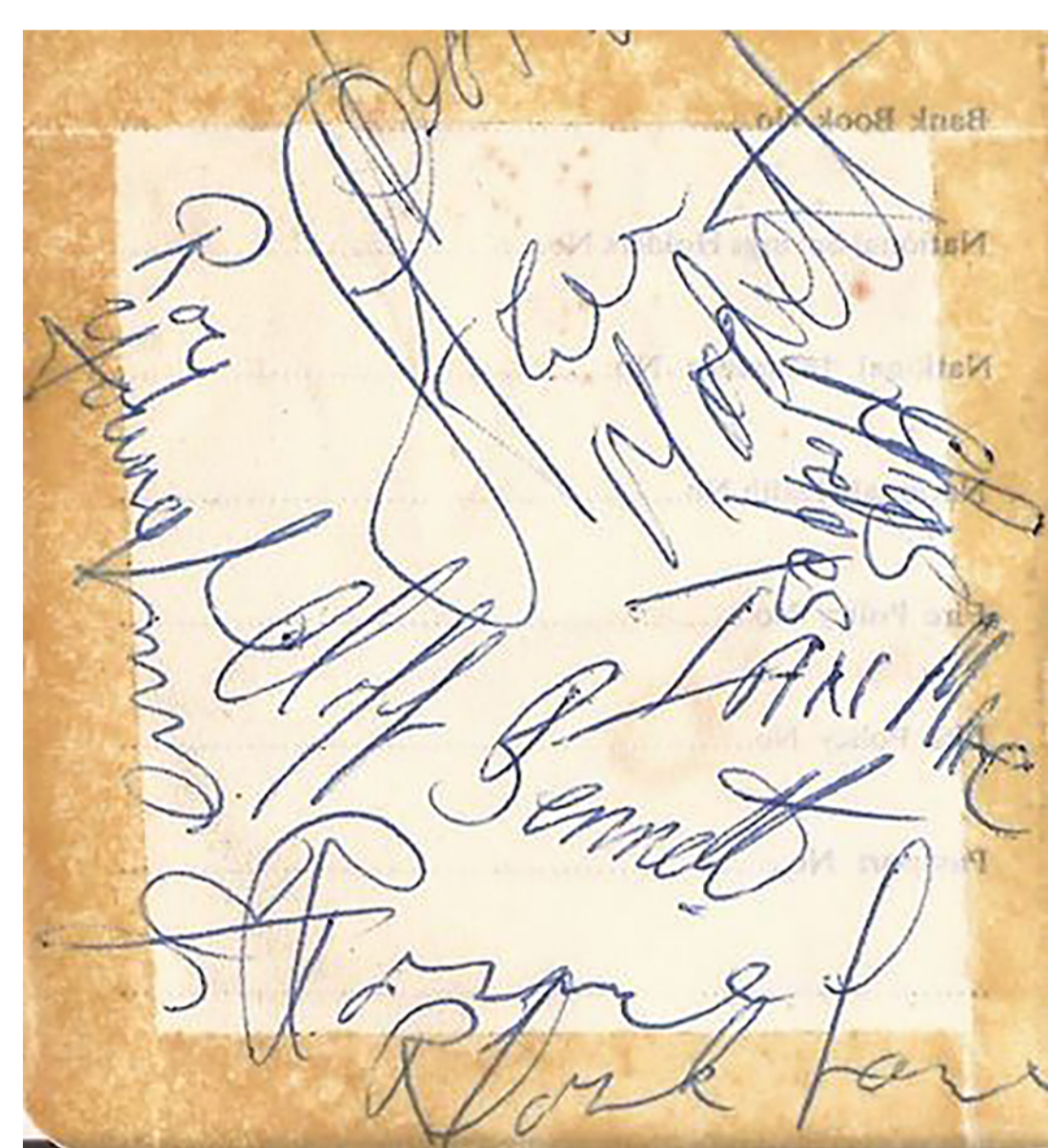
"I loved the Small Faces. [I had] Steve Marriott pictures all over my bedroom wall. I went to see them in Castle Cinema, screamed my head off."

"I had a drink (Bacardi and Coke) in the Mayors Parlour with the Small Faces before the gig. John Reddy was the Mayor. Steve Marriott took ages combing his hair then stuck his hat on."

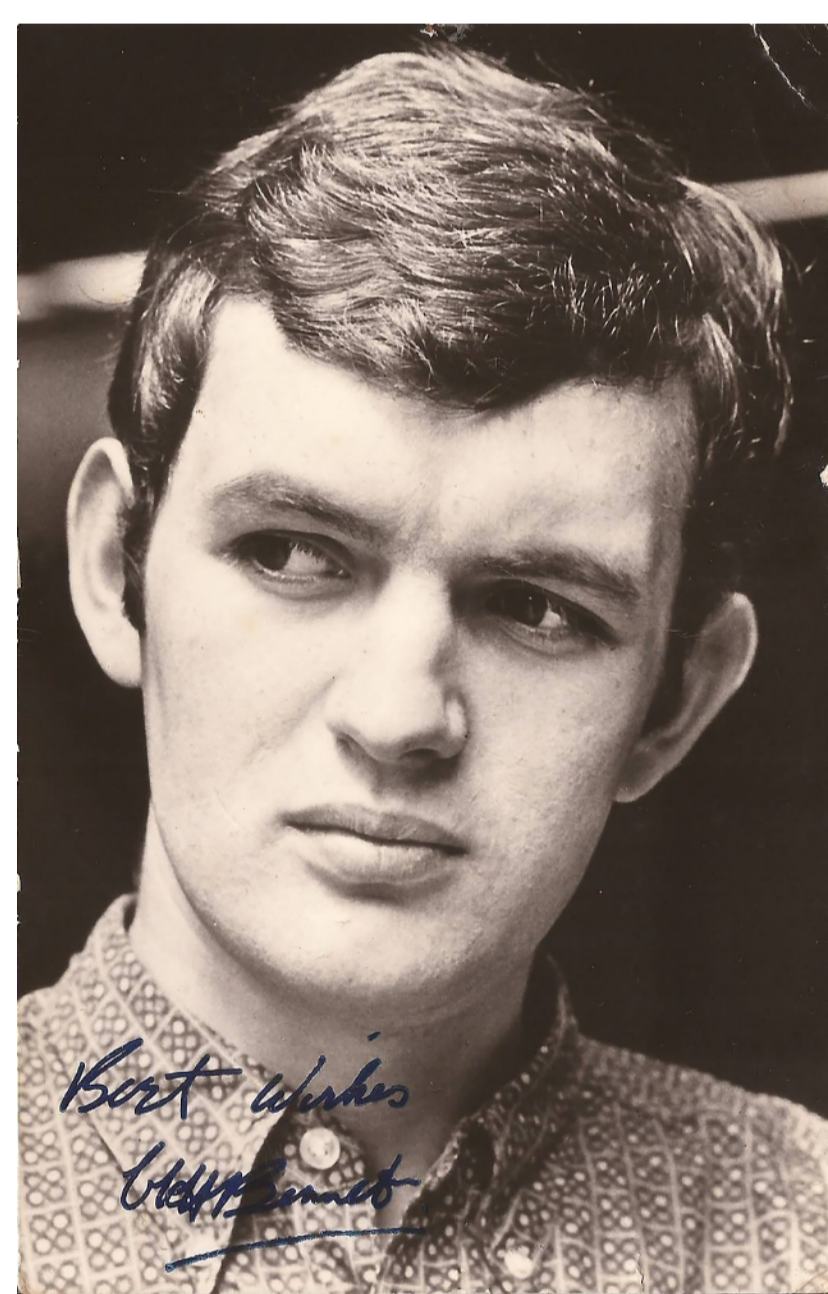
"I almost joined the Small Faces in 1965 when we did a movie called 'Be My Guest'. Steve Marriott is the 'cheeky chappie' who says "They're playing our song!". I'm the keyboard player in our band The Niteshades and, after the take, Steve Marriott told me he was forming a new group and did I want the job. "No," says I, "The Niteshades are just breaking, I'm happy where I am".

Famous last words. The Niteshades were based out of Stevenage, Hertfordshire, where I did most of my growing up. But being Twynrobyn born, you can take the boy out of Merthyr, but you can't take Merthyr out of the boy - as the saying goes. I am still Welsh at heart. I still have family in the town, but it's once in a blue moon for me these days, I'm afraid."

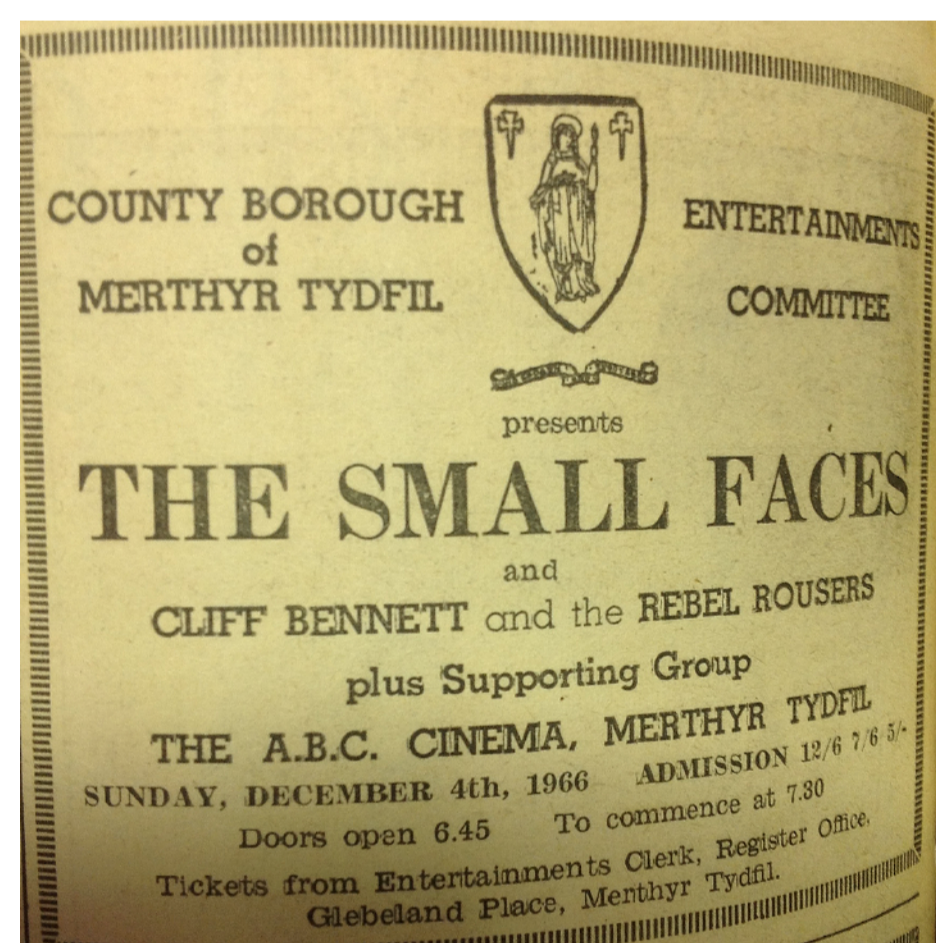
"Doing the backing vocals that night for The Small Faces were the duo Twice as Much, they had a hit at the time with 'Sitting on a Fence. They were hiding behind Steve Marriott's stack with their mics."



Signed Small Faces Photo Given to Alan Crompton of The Cheatin' Harts (Courtesy Alan Crompton)



Signed Photo of Cliff Bennett (Courtesy Alan Crompton)



Advert of Concert From The Express (Courtesy Merthyr Express)



To see a clip of Be My Guest, scan the QR Code above.

