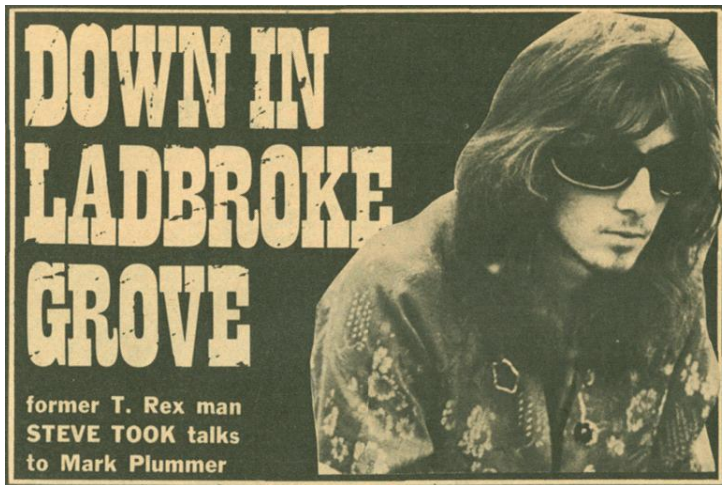


NOTTING HILL HISTORY TIMELINE

13 UNDERGROUND OVERGROUND 1972-76



Steve Peregrin Took *Melody Maker* 1972/Pink Fairies 'What a Bunch of Sweeties' sleeve

1972 As the Pink Fairies did the street hippy 'Portobello Shuffle' on their 'What a Bunch of Sweeties' album, Nick Kent called the group 'Ladbroke Grove's red peril' and Charles Shaar Murray described their music as 'classic British punk rock'.

'Portobello Shuffle' is a proto-Motörhead 'footstompin' boogie' freak rallying cry, to 'roll out of your seats, get out in the streets, there's a new day a-comin'.' The preceding track, 'Right On, Fight On' was inspired by a Fairies and Hawkwind 'Pinkwind' gig broken up by police under the Westway.

The Grove underground scene in the early to mid-70s, as recalled by Mick Farren, consisted of die-hard "post-hippies out of money, wandering round wondering what had happened to flower power in worn-out velvet pants, furious amounts of drugs – people were shooting heroin by then, post hippy junkies."

At the height of glam rock, when T Rex were number 1 with 'Telegram Sam', Steve Peregrin Took was featured in a *Melody Maker* article entitled 'Down in Ladbroke Grove'. The reporter Mark Plummer found him in 'a rundown Ladbroke Grove flat with a mattress on the floor to sit and sleep and think on, a few strips of carpet and the sight of a motorway staring at him as he looks out the window...'

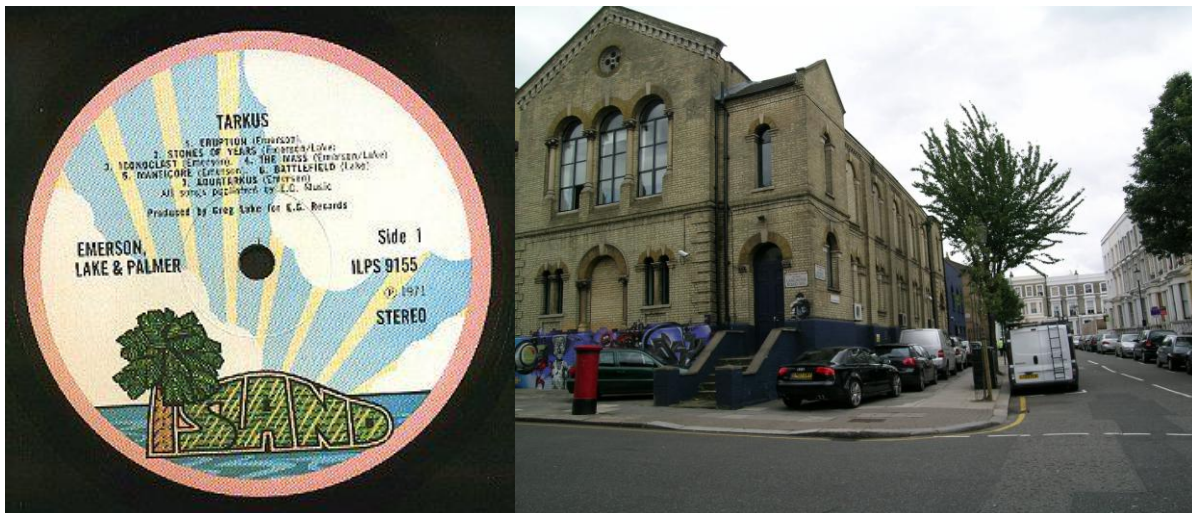
In *Bolan: 20th Century Boy* by Mark Paytress, Took goes from 'eternally drifting along Ladbroke Grove in a Tolkienesque haze' to representing 'the darker underbelly of Ladbroke Grove alternative culture.' In his post-Tyrannosaurus Rex cosmic/acid-punk role of 'Shagrat the Vagrant', a malign orc 'dark lord of the black land' in *Lord of the Rings*, he was a proto-Sid Vicious rock casualty waiting to happen.

On Steve Took's demise in 1980 from drugs misadventure at 100 Cambridge Gardens, Charles Shaar Murray wrote that his 'post-Rex career was unproductive to say the very least... bands were formed and re-formed in Ladbroke Grove... He became what is euphemistically referred to as a fixture on the scene... one of his friends told *NME*: "He just never made a serious attempt to get himself together."

As Island became the first big independent record label, their Basing Street studios were frequented by the likes of Nick Drake, ELP, Fairport Convention, Free, Jethro Tull, King Crimson, John Martyn, Mott the Hoople, Quintessence, Roxy Music, Sparks, Cat Stevens, Spooky Tooth and Traffic.

The history of Island Records goes back to Chris Blackwell's first jazz release in Jamaica in the late 50s. After signing Laurel Aitken, Blackwell moved to London and became the UK's premier ska importer. Island had their first worldwide hit, as a production company, with Millie Small's 'My Boy Lollipop' in 1964.

Blackwell's association with reggae began in 1958 when a boat he was on ran aground and he was saved by a group of Rastafarians. He released the first Bob Marley single in 1963, and co-founded the Trojan reggae label with Lee Gopthal in 1967.



Island label/Basing Street Studios

As Jimmy Cliff left Island in 1972, in the wake of *The Harder They Come*, Bob Marley turned up on Basing Street when he was staying in Neasden. Blackwell proceeded to sign the Wailers and market 'Catch A Fire', featuring 'Concrete Jungle' and 'Stir It Up', as the first rock-reggae crossover album. Rock effects were added to the album and the Wailers' first UK tour was organised in Notting Hill.

The Basing Street studios were also used by such non-Island acts as the Eagles, the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin. At one point in 1973 the Wailers and the Stones were in the studios at the same time. Chris Wright's Chrysalis prog rock label started up with an Island licensing deal for Jethro Tull, and the Virgin label was founded with an Island distribution deal for Mike Oldfield.

In *International Times* 122 Courtney Tulloch reviewed the *Rastafarian Cry* newsletter of the Notting Hill People's Democratic Movement. This was the political wing of the otherwise strictly religious Rastafarian movement, formed in order to denounce 'the decadent teaching of the so-called Black Power leaders, and the destructive doctrine which they preach to the youths.'

By then Michael X had become more of a British Manson than Malcolm. A year after his return to Trinidad, Michael's last residence in Arima went up in flames. The police took the opportunity to search the grounds for guns, and instead found the bodies of Gale Benson and Joe Skerritt.

Gale was the daughter of the Tory MP Leonard Plugge (whose Knightsbridge house appears in *Performance* as '81 Powis Square') and the girlfriend of Hakim Jamal, an American Black Power leader turned Michael follower. Joe Skerritt was another follower who rebelled. Soon after, Michael was picked up in the Guyanese jungle and returned to Trinidad for his last trial and eventual execution.

During the Angry Brigade Stoke Newington 8 trial at the Old Bailey, Jim Greenfield was goaded by the prosecution counsel Mathew into showing his anti-establishment feelings: "And you saw some unhappy things happening at Notting Hill Gate." Greenfield: "I would say it was downright disgusting." Mathew: "That is what I thought you would say. You hate the police." Jim Greenfield and John Barker were duly found guilty of conspiracy to cause explosions and received 10 year prison sentences.

Back in Powis Square, when number 25 came up for public auction the *Performance* house was squatted. People's Association members outbid property speculators in an auction bust, and a handbill was distributed describing Notting Hill as a 'noisy, unstable, multi-racial, high-crime area, where political demonstrations, affrays and rioting are frequent occurrences.'

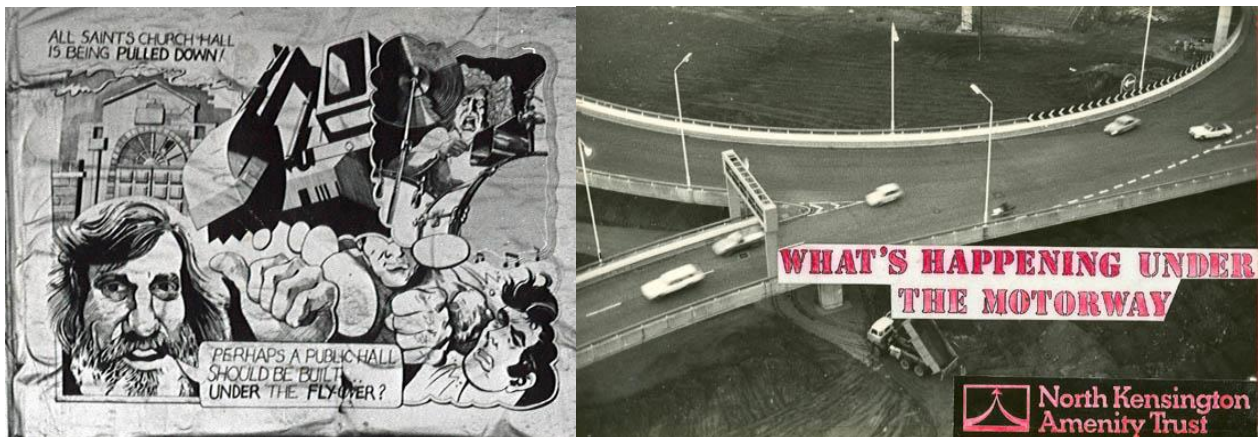
25 Powis Square's outstanding health orders were listed and potential buyers were warned that the occupants would resist eviction by any means necessary: 'This house has been and will continue to be a focal point for the escalating militant community hostility towards the activities of property speculators in the area.' After that the house was sold to Notting Hill Housing Trust.

The 1972 Notting Hill Carnival was organised by the Westway Amenity Trust, Selwyn Baptiste and Merle Major, who led a children's procession from the adventure playground on Wornington Road.

Frendz announced that the Kensington and Chelsea Arts Festival would feature 'folk groups, theatre, dance etc under the motorway at Portobello Road where an experimental open air stage has been erected. Also beneath the motorway M40/M41 interchange near Silchester Road W10 will be Groverock!'

A public meeting about plans for the area under the Westway at Isaac Newton School was promoted with a poster captioned 'All Saints church hall is being pulled down', featuring cartoons of All Saints hall on Powis Gardens, a bulldozer, a rock drummer and a hippy saying: 'Perhaps a public hall should be built under the flyover.' The Acklam Hall would duly open as the new community centre in 1975.

Shortly after the first residents moved into Trellick Tower in Kensal, the lift-shafts were flooded when a fire-hydrant was let off by vandals, leaving the building without power at Christmas.



Westway meeting poster 1972/Westway roundabout *Concrete Island*

1973 *Frendz*, the People's Defence anti-police group, the Claimants' Union and the People's Association housing group made a last stand, proclaiming that 'in isolation we can too easily lose our strategy and initiative and that's what 'they' want – together we can start to turn Notting Hill into a liberated zone.'

The *Frendz* collective described themselves in *Oz* as 'libertarians, leftish loons, freaks and heads who want to get things on now.' Nigel Fountain called *Frendz* an 'image of a movement going completely off its head', as 'tramps, the occasional threat of physical violence, the offices on Portobello Road' took their toll.

Nick Kent, who arrived at *Frendz* towards the end, told the music mag *Zigzag*: "Everything was at a very low ebb, everyone was just free-loading manically. Hawkwind, for some Godforsaken reason, were subsidising it, no one was doing any work... everyone was into dope very heavily; just getting stupefied."

In Michael Moorcock's *King of the City* semi-fiction memoir, 'Dennis Dover' fondly recalls the *Frendz* office at 305 Portobello Road, when 'the market activities seemed to spill through the doorways and carry on in the passages and stairwells'; and the picture editor lived on a ledge above the stairs.

The last great Notting Hill protest of the early 70s was the People's Association 'community lock-in' at All Saints church hall on the night of May 8/9 1973. During the extended meeting, reported as 'The Siege of Notting Hill' and 'Mob Rule', councillors were forced to listen to locals' demands: for compulsory purchase orders to be put on multi-occupied properties; the Tabernacle in Powis Square to be opened as a community centre; and the Electric Cinema to be saved from redevelopment.

In JG Ballard's *Concrete Island* novel: 'Robert Maitland was driving down the high-speed exit lane of the Westway interchange in central London. 600 yards from the junction with the newly built spur of the M4 motorway, when the Jaguar had already passed the 70mph speed limit, a blow-out collapsed the front nearside tyre... Leaving the hard shoulder, the car plunged down the grass slope of the embankment. 30 yards ahead, it came to a halt against the rusting chassis of an overturned taxi...'

After 'Robert Maitland' became stuck on the Westway roundabout *Concrete Island*, the director of the North Kensington Amenity Trust (which became the Westway Development Trust) from 1976 to 2005 was Roger Matland. The motorway also features in Ballard's *Crash*, Trellick Tower influenced his *High Rise* novel, and he contributed to Michael Moorcock's *New Worlds* sci-fi mag at 307 Portobello Road.

At the time of Ballard's *Concrete Island* story, John Trux's Greasy Truckers Promotions presented a series of 'Magic Roundabout' free gigs under the Westway roundabout, featuring Ace, Kevin Ayers, Burlesque,

Camel, Chilli Willi, Keith Christmas, Clancy, Henry Cow, Fat City, the Global Village Trucking Company, Gong, Skin Alley, Sniff and the Tears, and Spyra Gyra.

1973 was the next pivotal year in Carnival history when the first Amenity Trust director Anthony Perry called a public meeting about the event's doubtful future and Rhaune Laslett's successor Leslie Palmer appeared. Palmer came up with the plan to transform the hippy fair into 'an urban festival of black music incorporating all aspects of Trinidad's Carnival.'

From Acklam Road, Palmer established the blueprint of the modern event; finding sponsorship, recruiting more steel bands, reggae groups and sound-systems, introducing generators and extending the route. The attendance went up accordingly from 3,000 at the beginning of the 70s to 30-50,000.

The 'Carnival '73 Mas in the Ghetto' consisted of a festival on Portobello Green headlined by Black Slate, with 'pan on the road from 4pm'. The procession route was along Acklam Road, up Golborne Road and down Wornington Road, to a steel pan rendition of the Jackson Five's 1970 hit 'I Want You Back'.

In *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* hells angels kidnap a girl on Bard Road off Freston Road for a property speculator vampire.

1974 'In Notting Hill Gate in London, or it might be Greenwich Village in New York, the unreasonable city has come to the point where it cannot be ignored by even the civic authorities. The streets around Ladbroke Grove, with their architecture of white candy stucco, are warrens of eccentric privateness; they are occupied by people who have taken no part in the hypothetical consensus of urban life...

'The streets are crowded with evident isolates; a pair of nuns in starched habits, a Sikh in a grubby turban, a gang of West Indian youths, all teeth and jawbones, a man in a fedora, greasy Jesus Christs in shiny green suede coats with Red Indian fringes at their hems... These are the urban spacemen, floating in capsules of privacy, defying the gravity of the city...' Jonathan Raban *Soft City*

Leo Sayer had the biggest local pop hit singing: *'Well everybody knows down Ladbroke Grove you have to leap across the street, you can lose your life under a taxi cab, you gotta have eyes in your feet, you find a nice soft corner and you sit right down, take up your guitar and play, but then the law man comes says move along, so you move along all day, well, I'm a one man band...'*



Virgin label/Vernon Yard Portobello Road

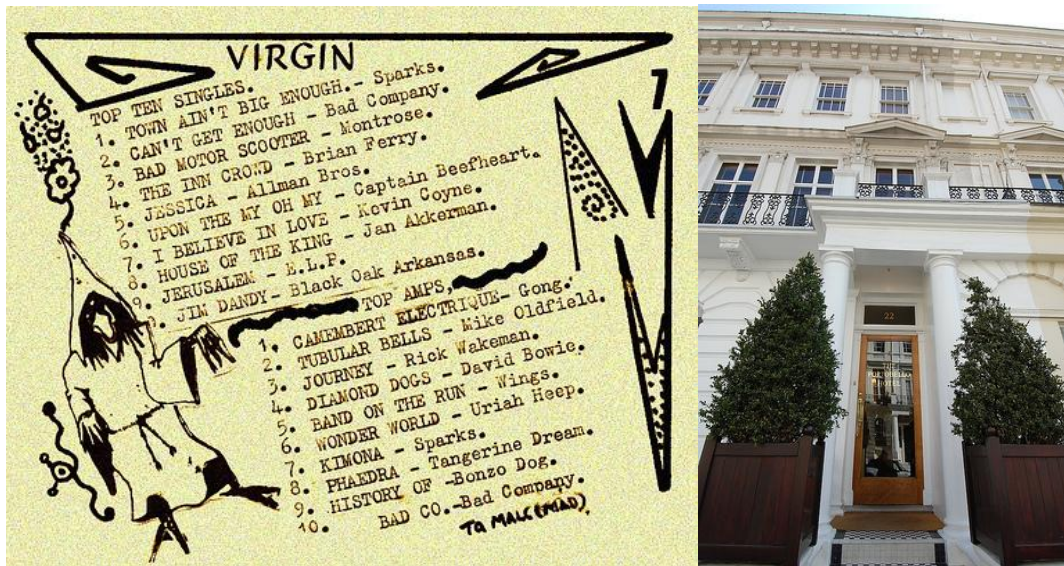
The early Virgin years were more or less single-handedly financed by Mike Oldfield's 1973 prog rock opus 'Tubular Bells' (a sample from which appears in *The Exorcist* film soundtrack). In Virgin's first major expansion in early 1974 the company relocated from South Wharf Road by Paddington Station to 2-4 Vernon Yard, 119 Portobello Road, in the antiques market just north of Westbourne Grove.

'The Vernon Yard premises exuded a particular quaintness,' writes Mick Brown in his Branson biography. Inside was an overcrowded state of confusion featuring 'jarring strains of music, over-brimming ashtrays, discarded plates of health food and an abundance of long, straggly centre-parted hair.'

'Tubular Bells' was followed up by less commercial albums by Mike Oldfield, Gong, 'The Manor Live' compilation, the German electronic or 'kraut-rock' Faust and Tangerine Dream, Robert Wyatt, Hatfield and the North, Henry Cow, and Ivor Cutler.

Richard Branson lived at 19 Denbigh Terrace (off Portobello the other side of Westbourne Grove), which had previously been the residence of the comedian Peter Cook. After Branson's first wife left him for Kevin Ayers, the house became the head office of his embryonic pop empire. Meetings between Branson and Mike Oldfield took place in the Obelix pancake shop at 294 Westbourne Grove.

Virgin duly acquired their own restaurant Duveens, down the hill at 29 Kensington Park Road (now Osteria Basilico). Here the Virgin boss would invariably end up in his underpants and/or covered in cranberry sauce of a night in the mid 70s. Steve Hillage of Gong lived round the corner on Elgin Crescent.



Virgin chart/The Portobello Hotel 22 Stanley Gardens

The Portobello Hotel at 22 Stanley Gardens became renowned for the stay of the glam shock-rocker Alice Cooper and his stage-prop python snake. The hotel (opened in 1969) is also remembered for its Bohemian atmosphere and the basement bar which acted as the after-hours office of *Frendz* and Virgin.

Julie's bar at 135 Portland Road in Clarendon Cross was founded back in the days of *Oz* magazine by the Portobello Hotel owners Tim and Cathy Herring. In the glam rock years the bar/restaurant was famously frequented by Beatles, Stones and Roxy Music members.

Rod Stewart was photographed for the cover of his 'Smiler' album in the Prince of Wales beergarden on Pottery Lane (which previously appeared in the Nazi invasion film *It Happened Here*). Julie's Bar and the Prince of Wales both later appeared in *Minder*.

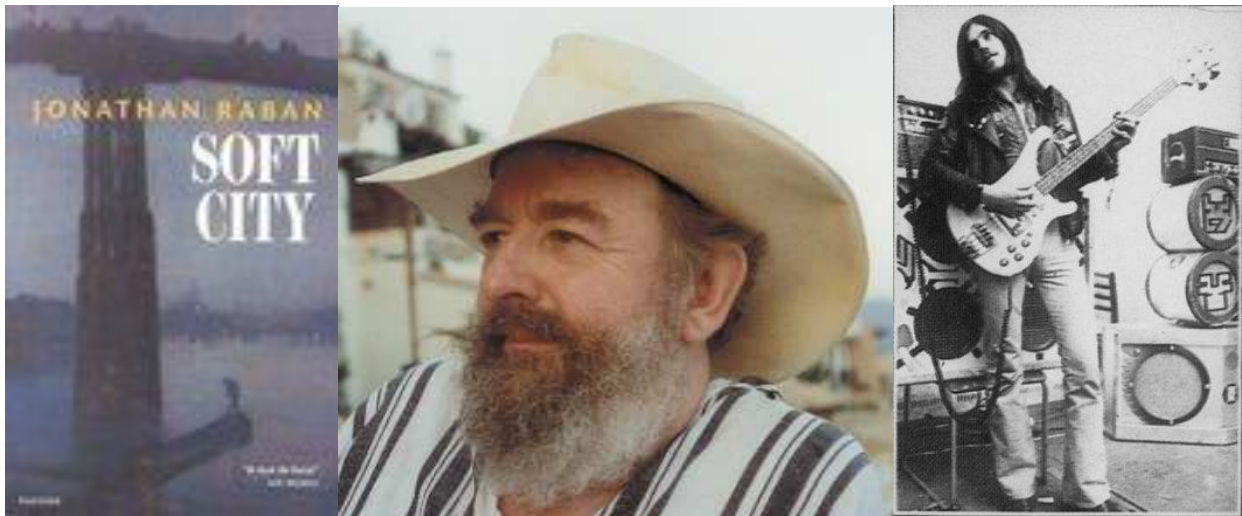
Another notable local rock site is the studio next to the Globe bar on Talbot Road where the prog rock group Yes practised – leading to the building being sprayed with 'No' graffiti by Heathcote Williams. The Yes keyboards player Rick Wakeman was brought up in Blechynden Mews in Notting Dale.

The David Hockney film *A Bigger Splash* is partly set in his studio-flat on Powis Terrace; with diversions to the fashion designer Celia Birtwell's on Arundel Gardens; across Ladbroke Grove around the Elgin pub; and along Latimer Road. *The Tamarind Seed* spy film, starring Julie Andrews and Omar Sharif, features Barnett's toyshop on Elgin Crescent.

According to Michael Moorcock's *King of the City* pub drugs guide there was: 'Speed in the Alex. Dope in the Blenheim (now E&O restaurant). Junk in Finch's. They kept tarting up Finch's and Henekey's and we kept tarting them down again.'

Henekey's (the Earl of Lonsdale) at 277-81 Westbourne Grove was recalled by Mick Farren as 'the prime freak pub of the time', becoming too much of a tourist and police attraction. As the acid-punk pub rock scene moved over the road to the Alex (the Princess Alexandra, now the Gold), the Clash guitarist Mick Jones first appeared on the scene with his 'decadent rock' group, the Delinquents.

Finch's (the Duke of Wellington) at 179 Portobello Road was described in *Frendz* as 'where your cooler, more nervous, refined or trendy dealer goes to relax over a jar or 2 of plump barmaid.' Nick Kent recalled the New York Dolls guitarist Sylvain Sylvain 'in Finch's back in good old Ladbroke Grove dealing dope.'



Soft City/Michael Moorcock/Lemmy with Hawkwind

In Michael Moorcock's *A Dead Singer* shortstory: 'Since his comeback (or resurrection as Mo privately called it) Jimi hadn't touched a guitar... he was taking a long time to recover from what happened to him in Ladbroke Grove... In Finch's on the corner of Portobello Road he'd wanted to tell his old mates about Jimi, but Jimi had said to keep quiet about it...'

As well as featuring Hawkwind, Hendrix and the Sex Pistols in his novels, Moorcock was a card-carrying member of Hawkwind. He wrote the lyrics of 'Kings of Speed', various other Hawkwind and Blue Oyster Cult songs, played guitar on Bob Calvert's solo albums and had his own group Deep Fix. In *King of the City* he mentions Annie Lennox working at Mr Christian's delicatessen on Elgin Crescent.

Ceres health food store at 269 Portobello Road (now the Grain Shop) was singled out in 'The Magical City' chapter of Jonathan Raban's *Soft City*, as the most disturbing aspect of the hippy scene:

'Here magic flourishes, and everywhere one can see evidence of a growing devout irrationalism. Little bookshops sell the I-Ching, packs of tarot cards and fat studies of the obscure mathematics of astrology. You can buy Sufi watergongs to aid contemplation and the macrobiotic foodshop on Portobello Road, Ceres, even turns the consumption of vegetables into a mystical religion...

'Notting Hill Gate is a superstitious place because it seems to exceed rational prescriptions and explanations... The people who float on the tide of metaphysical junk – freaks of all kinds... into macrobiotics, yoga, astrology, illiterate mysticism, acid, terrible poetry by Leonard Cohen and tiny novels by Richard Brautigan – have managed, at a price.'

In *A Dead Singer*: 'Mo shuffled slowly up Lancaster Road and turned the corner into Portobello Road... The buildings were all crowding in on him. He saw them grinning at him, leering. He heard them talking about him. There were fuzz everywhere. A woman threw something at him. He kept going until he reached the Mountain Grill and had stumbled through the door. The cafe was crowded with freaks...'

'And in the Grove, by Gate and Hill, midst merry throng and market clatter – stood the Hall of the Mountain Grill where table strain'd 'neath loaded platter – from the Legend of Beenzon Toste.' In 1974 Hawkwind named their 5th album in honour of the Mountain Grill greasy spoon caff at 275 Portobello Road.

The Hawkwind singer Bob Calvert aka 'Captain Lockheed' (who wrote the lyrics of 'Silver Machine') recalled in *Pete Frame's Rock Family Trees*: "The Mountain Grill was a working man's café in Portobello Road frequented by all the dross and dregs of humanity.

"Dave Brock always used to go and eat there – which is how I first met him... because I used to eat there too... It was a kind of left bank café/meeting place for the Notting Hill longhairs, a true artists' hangout, but it never became chic, even though Marc Bolan, David Bowie and people like that often went there."

The 'Psychedelic Warlords' of the Wind then numbered Dave 'Baron' Brock, Nik Turner aka 'the Thunder Rider', Lemmy 'Count Motörhead', and the dancer Stacia. The latter was summed up by Bob Calvert with a Mountain Grill anecdote in which an awestruck 'spade cat' repeats "Nice lady."



'Hall of the Mountain Grill' inner sleeve/275 Portobello Road formerly the Mountain Grill

Michael Moorcock's *King of the City* novel features a Saturday afternoon free gig under the Westway by Brinsley Schwarz. 'Dennis Dover' finds amphetamine rock nirvana with his Basing Street studios session group, playing to an audience of 'Swedish flower children, American Yippies' and 'French 'ippies.'

Across Portobello, a hand sign sprayed with 'It's Only Rock'n'Roll' pointed to the Free Shop hippy recycling centre. Acklam Road in the mid 70s is described by Jonathan Raban in *Soft City* as consisting of: 'a locked shack with Free Shop spraygunned on it, and old shoes and sofas piled in heaps around it; a makeshift playground under the arches of the motorway with huge crayon faces drawn on the concrete pillars; slogans in whitewash, from Smash the Pigs to Keep Britain White.'

At the 1974 Carnival Leslie Palmer introduced reggae sound-systems and the Cimarons played; thus attracting black youths from all over London, rather than just locals. The Brazilian Caetano Veloso's '9 Out of 10' song describes taking a trip 'down Portobello to the sound of reggae.'

International Times ended up on Portobello north of the Westway at 286, over the road from *Frendz*, for a few more John Lennon financed issues. Mick Farren won the last underground press obscenity trial of his *Nasty Tales* comic and wrote the Elvis to the Angry Brigade *Watch Out Kids* book, designed on Portobello by Ed Barker. Then Farren, Charles Shaar Murray and Nick Kent deserted the underground for the *NME*.

The underground press concluded at 2 Blenheim Crescent, above the Dog Shop, where the last issues of *IT*, *Oz* and *Frendz* were designed by Richard Adams and Barney Bubbles. Adams became part of Felix Dennis's Honeybunch group as he founded his publishing empire with *cOzmic Comics* and *Kung Fu Monthly*. Richard Adams subsequently founded the Open Head Press with Heathcote Williams.



The local radical publishing tradition continued with the *Ned/Nell Gate* paper covering 'towerblock conditions, rent strikes, meter fiddles by landlords and property speculation'; the *West London Street Press* and the Notting Hill People's Association's *People's News*.

In the wake of Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch*, there was a *People's News* anti-gentrification 'Property Eunuch' supplement as Germaine's house on Cambridge Gardens was squatted. The *People's News* 1974 election special featured a strike at the Fidelity radio works on Latimer (Freston) Road.

1975 Lemmy was quoted as saying, "Hawkwind fits exactly into my philosophy. They're weird – that suits me." However, after their 6th album 'Warrior on the Edge of Time' and the 'Kings of Speed'/'Motörhead' single, he was sacked for being busted with speed (mistaken for coke) at Canadian customs.

As Lemmy's Motörhead and the reggae local heroes Aswad made their debuts, Joe Strummer (when known as John 'Woody' Mellor) formed his pre-Clash 'squat-rock' group the 101'ers at 101 Walterton Road off Harrow Road – originally as El Huaso and the 101 All Stars. The name was abbreviated to the 101'ers during their shebeen style gigs at the Chippenham pub in Maida Hill.

At the same time the terrorist 'Carlos the Jackal' (Illich Ramirez Sanchez) acquired his nickname when his arms stash was discovered on Hereford Road off Westbourne Grove with a copy of Frederick Forsyth's *Day of the Jackal*.

The 101'ers gigs at the Chippenham came to an end shortly before their eviction from 101 Walterton Road. Their next squat, 36 St Luke's Road, was advertised in Heathcote Williams' Ruff Tuff Cream Puff squatting estate agents mag as: 'empty 2 years/entry through rear/no roof/suit astronomer.'



The group's next musical residency in the Elgin at 96 Ladbroke Grove put them and Notting Hill on the pub rock map. As 'the 101'ers' r'n'b rave on every Monday night at the Elgin', over the course of 30 gigs they became a more streamlined rock'n'roll outfit along the lines of Dr Feelgood.

The Chippenham and Elgin pub rock scene was trailblazed by the proto-punk group the Derelicts from Latimer Road, described as 'squat rock' and 'Trotskyite r'n'b.' The Elgin also hosted gigs by McSmith with Alex Harvey and alternative comedy turns by Alexei Sayle, Keith and Tony Allen.

The 101'ers appeared across Ladbroke Grove at the squatted Royalty cinema/bingo hall on Lancaster Road, dubbed the Albion Free State Meat Roxy by Heathcote Williams (previously Middle Earth), and headlined the first gig at Acklam Hall under the Westway; a benefit for the Law Centre on Golborne Road.

British punk rock began on Portobello Road when Mick Jones's Delinquents formed an alliance with the Hollywood Brats, London's existing answer to the New York Dolls, as the London SS. This shock rock moniker was influenced by Dirk Bogarde in *The Night Porter* rather than the National Front, but punk accessories were purchased from the notorious military ephemera stall in the antiques market.

A party at the south end of Portobello, thrown by the hippy socialite Sally Sparkle, turned into a jamming session featuring Mick Jagger, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page, Ronnie Wood and Rod Stewart. This caused what has to be the hippest local noise complaint of them all, and the least heavy police incident in which the rock stars were politely ushered to their limos, photographed by Mick Rock.

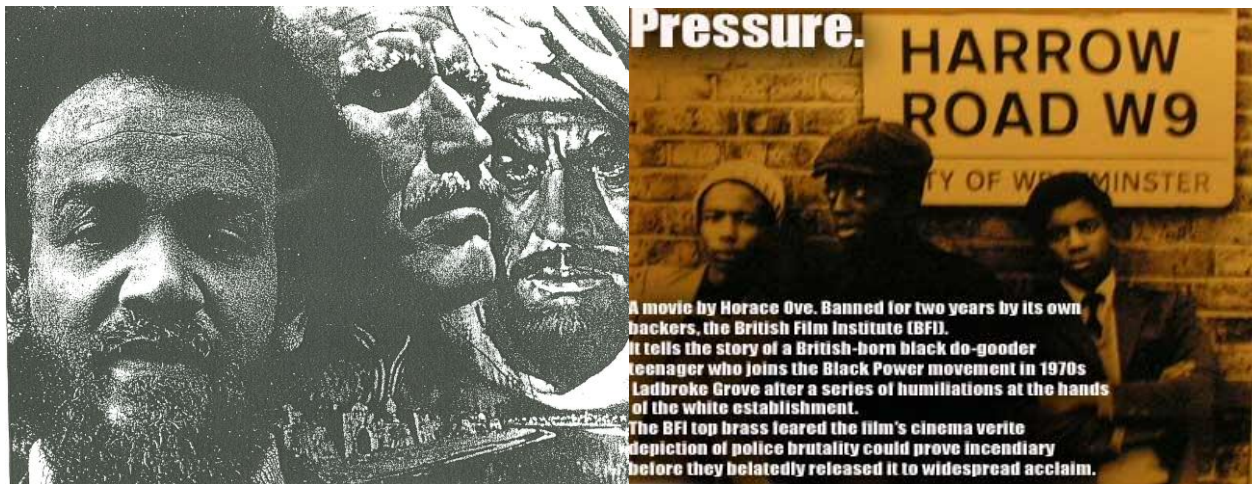
The first punk rock site in North Kensington is 93 Golborne Road, where the Rock On record stall of Thin Lizzy's manager Ted Carroll boasted a 'huge and rocking selection' of rare imported rock'n'roll, rhythm'n'blues, rockabilly, 60s beat, northern soul and US garage punk.

Jon Savage cites Rock On in *England's Dreaming* as second only in punk rock importance to Malcolm McLaren and Viv Westwood's Let It Rock shop on King's Road. The co-owner Roger Armstrong recalls "a small space at the end of a kind of enclosed alleyway famous for the Elvis wallpaper from around 1972."

In Craig Sams' *Portobello Guide*, Rock On is described as an 'arcade stall which first brought rare and re-issued 50s rock'n'roll records to London. The shoo-bop-a-woo-bop sounds emanating from the shop's loudspeakers identify its location and lend musical backing to the other items being sold on the street.'

Joe Strummer's alter ego, the Clash valet 'Albert Transom', reminisced about haggling over a Dansette record player and rummaging through 30p bargainbins on Golborne Road: 'They would haunt these little arcades of leather jackets and toy cars and ancient radios, little record shacks in the back where a tiny dedicated minority would be packed in leafing through the racks like zombies...'

Other Rock On customers included Malcolm McLaren, Lenny Kaye (of 'Nuggets' US punk compilations and Patti Smith fame), Lemmy of Motörhead, Mark Perry of *Sniffin' Glue* fanzine and Jesse Hector of the Hammersmith Gorillas. Ted Carroll launched the pre-punk Chiswick label with the Count Bishops' 'Speedball', Vince Taylor's 'Brand New Cadillac' and the 101'ers' 'Keys to Your Heart'.



As the Teds were revived in Notting Hill, the life of the West Indian hustler Michael de Freitas came to an end in Trinidad. In spite of the efforts of the International Committee to Save Michael X (which included John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Leonard Cohen and William Burroughs), after 3 years on death row, on May 16 1975 he was hanged in Port of Spain and buried in the prison Golden Grove graveyard.

To Darcus Howe, "it was the only honest thing that the corrupt government had done in 3 years." Back in London, 'Michael X' graffiti appeared across the railway bridge on Ladbroke Grove and 'Michael Abdul Malik' was painted on the wall around Buckingham Palace.

In the *Souvenir Programme for the Official Hanging of Michael Abdul Malik*, by John Michell and Bill Levy from *IT*, he was introduced as the 'W11 club man with the fatal amiability that led him to assume the fantastic roles.' Mike Phillips summed him up as 'a Trinidadian boy who came to England and became the man he was in the hothouse atmosphere of Notting Hill, and that doesn't say it all, but most of it.'

VS Naipaul concluded that 'Malik had become a 'character', a Carnival figure, to be beaten through the streets on Good Friday. Which was all that he had been in London, even in the great days of his newspaper fame as the X; the militant who was only an entertainer.'

Michael's ghost haunts *Performance*, *Leo the Last* and Godard's *One Plus One: Sympathy for the Devil* – which features 'Michel X' graffiti. VS Naipaul's *Guerrillas* novel is about the murders in Trinidad, and the 1992 Black Audio Film Collective short *Who Needs a Heart* explores his charisma and contradictions. He has recently appeared in *The Bank Job* film and Stewart Home's *Tainted Love* novel.

The mid 70s Notting Hill film *Pressure* was made by Horace Ove and *The Lonely Londoners* author Sam Selvon. The film follows the transformation of Herbert Norville's 'Tony' character from an Anglicised 'fish and chips man' to a dread 'pattie man'; set to a 'Blood and Fire' reggae soundtrack.

The Caribbean Karakata store at 194 Kensington Park Road acts as Tony's father's shop. Tony's brother's Black Power stall is on Portobello at the Tavistock Road junction. Tony and co also appear on Portobello Green, All Saints Road, and in a classic 70s shoplifting scene on Harrow Road.

Scenes in *Tommy*, Ken Russell's adaptation of the Who's rock opera, were filmed at Lea International Studios on Kensal Road, featuring Tina Turner, Roger Daltrey, Keith Moon, Oliver Reed and co. Jack Nicholson appears on Lansdowne Crescent in *The Passenger*.

As the Notting Hill Carnival attendance rose to an estimated 100-500,000, the event's press profile changed from harmless hippy fair to public order problem. After the 1975 Carnival the police reported finding the streets strewn with empty wallets and there were calls in the press for it to be banned.

The Amenity Trust director Anthony Perry recalls the youths under the flyover as "murderous" and "in constant hostility with the police." Brinsley Forde of Aswad fondly remembers the sound-system scene at Briggys' yard on Acklam Road as like being in Jamaica.

November 28 The Sex Pistols' 4th gig was on Campden Hill at the Queen Elizabeth College Christmas 1975 rag ball – for which the student audience wore formal dinner suits. The ball was headlined by Georgie Fame and the Blue Flames, who appeared in a different room to the Pistols. Dave Robinson, one of the 20 or so students present for the Pistols' set, remembers them wearing bright red jumpsuits.

YOU KNEW THE SEX PISTOLS
C/O M. McLaren
430 KINGS RD.
LONDON S.W.10
TEL 01-673-0855
01-551-0764

Dear Phil,
This is a brief
note to confirm that
the band the SEX PISTOLS
will appear at your college
on Nov 28th in the BAE COMMON ROOM
and play with their own
equipment ~~at~~ between the
hours of 8.30pm and 9.30pm.
We shall arrive by 7p.m.
and set up our equipment.
As we arranged by telephone
expenses will be paid for
our van hire which should
be no more than £8.
Thanking you for your
attention
Remain yours truly
M. McLaren.

Sex Pistols Campden Hill college gig invoice