## Achievements of The Kinks Not Fully Recognised

The Kinks have held an important position in the group scene for a long time. Since August 1964, in fact, which puts them right up there with the long-runners in a business which chops and changes about almost from week to week. However, they've never had quite the same amount of power and prestige that groups such as The Beatles and The Stones or even .The Dave Clark Five, have enjoyed.

It's only by going back through their scrap-book, in fact, that you get to appreciate fully the achievements of the Davies brothers, Ray and Dave, of drummer Mick Avory, and of bassist Pete Quaife. Maybe their problem is that their initial success was not of the "overnight" variety...

For in that August so long ago, "You Really Got Me" rushed headlong into the Charts and everybody became suddenly aware of the Kingdom of Kink, a London-based outfit spluttering into a world that had previously had a lot of northern influence. That initial breakthrough disc got to the No. 1 spot without any trouble, and soon after, they made it for the first time in the States with the same disc. In a sense this put them one up on The Hollies, for instance, who'd made it big in Britain but had to wait a long, long time before anything happened for them across the Atlantic.

Their first tour of Britain was headlined by Billy J. Kramer and The Dakotas, also No. 1 hit-makers, but it's interesting for a start to see bow they've outlived that erstwhile stir attraction. Then their next disc, "All Of The Day And All Of The Night", which got to No. 3 in most Charts, but underlined again what a compact outfit this was, creating their own material and playing it in a wild, but controlled way.

Within six months of making the Charts here, they were starring on top American television shows, and doing very well.

Definitely, for most people, the most outstanding new group of that exciting year of 1964. "Tired Of Waiting For You" was their next No. 1 and their first L.P. was an instant hit. By now, even-body had forgotten the theories that they were a here-today-and-gone-tomorrow outfit. Inspired by the near-genius of the gentle Ray Davies, they made it big in France, too. French audiences were supposed to be two years behind the times (British times anyway) but they took instantly to the long-haired lads with the built-in charm. "Everybody's Gonna Be Happy" was yet another hit, but not so big as the earlier ones.

However, this is also a group with controversy. There was one scene on a tour with The Yardbirds (again, whatever happened to them!), when something akin to a scuffle broke out on stage between The Kinks. Dave Davies was knocked out and there were many stories of how it happened. His own brother was alleged to be involved. Nobody will ever know now, except the four chaps involved, but at any rate there were headlines galore as The Kinks were withdrawn from the tour and The Walker Brothers boosted their reputation by taking over.

More world-wide tours followed, despite rumours that the group couldn't get on together any more. "Set Me Free", "See My Friend", "Till The End Of The Day" and so on, right through 1965. The following year really settled any doubts about the boys' staying power. That started with "Dedicated Follower Of Fashion", a light and gentle tilt at the Carnaby Street centre of way-out clothes, and pinpointed a complete change of style in the writing methods of Ray Davies.

One question mark has always been over the head of Ray Davies. He is prone to over-straining his reserves of strength. A devoted follower of sport, he was mad keen on athletics as a kid and still turns out whenever he can for show-business soccer teams, but coping with the adulation of fans made him go inside his own

mind and worry. It was this strain that led him to suggest he would give up touring with the group and instead concentrate on producing and writing their records.

It didn't happen, not then, but he did have a precedent to work to ... Brian Wilson, of the equally inventive Beach Boys.

Ray once told me: "I can see an amazing connection between sporting achievements and music. It's strange—I can watch a mile race on television and see it all as part of an incredible human ballet, with the commentator taking the part of the conductor. That's if he is a GOOD commentator, of course. I can't stand the second-rate in any field of life."

The Kinks have stuck together, at this time, better than most groups. True, Pete Quaife, then so dangerously ill, was replaced by John Dalton for a while, but it was accepted that once he was fit again he'd return, and he did just that.

The Kinks realized that there were some aspects of their talents that could never come across in the confines of pure group releases. That's when Dave Davies stepped up to make a solo record, "Death Of A Clown\*', which also got to the top spot in the Charts, surprising a lot of people. It had been accepted for several years that Ray was the individual voice of The Kinks, mostly singing his own material.

Here, though, was positive proof that Dave also had a tremendous following. Of course, people said this really WAS the end of the road for The Kinks as a group: "They've had their arguments in the past, but not sufficient to split them. Now Dave is bound to go out on a solo career. They'll not survive now."

Of course they did. Dave went on to make other solo records, including some by brother Ray. They remained very friendly and the Kingdom of Kinkery went even further ahead. It's strange seeing Ray and Dave together. Ray is the quiet one, the elder brother who feels genuine responsibility for the activities of his younger "half". He'll sit and sip a half of bitter; Dave, a notorious raver despite efforts to "change me character", enjoys the social life to the full.

Ray, at the time of writing, has plans for working out full-length musicals. The Kinks themselves have adopted a slightly lazy attitude to making personal appearances. They realize there is no longer any need to rush headlong into back-breaking tours. Their fans can be pretty well satisfied by regular record releases and by sensibly chosen television shows.

Lyrically speaking, there is obviously no end to Ray Davies' talents—Dave is progressing well, but lacks the versatility and poetic imagery of his elder brother. Ray has developed ideas from all sorts of things: classical poetry, Shakespeare, even the music-hall songs of the late George Formby. He does get fed up, sometimes, with the monotony of making personal appearances.

When your mind is as active as that housed in the handsome head of Ray Davies . . . well, it is difficult to concentrate on things which become mere repetition, and remember, he's already had enough triumphs to last most people a lifetime.



