

# Sounds

Wilson Lindsey

1968

## **Dirty Blues Band (Bluesway)**

This band's blues roots were first formed years ago during the British blues invasion started by The Rolling Stones. During this embryonic stage, many teenagers had suspicions that the Stones were copying...yes, copying, but from whom?

Some started research, combing through old Negro blues LP's until they happened on a song title they recognized, and discovered that the Stones were drawing from many blues sources.

But, getting back to the Dirty Blues Band. They are all good musicians and their lead singer is a pleasing natural vocalist, but he is trying apparently to duplicate a person, namely Charlie Musslewhite of Memphis, who has been trying for years to duplicate blues artists.

They ignore the urge to 'jazz it up' so to speak. They just play 12-bar blues. All things taken into consideration, the LP is average, but their version of "Spoonful" is very well done.

## **Ten Years After (Deram)**

This LP is not really new. It's been on the market now for a couple of months. Since this article is about blues, it would be unfair to skip this group, since they are one of the finest all-white blues bands I've ever heard on record.

Their timing, phrasing and instrumental ability is exceptional, and their choice of material is excellent. There are very few, if any, slow spots on this LP.

In "Help Me" guitarist Alvin Lee obviously sought to crucify every blues guitarist in Britain. He relentlessly pumps notes at full speed and without let up for 96 bars. The standouts on this fantastic album are "I can't keep from crying," "Feel it for me," "Spoonful," and "Help Me."

## **John Mayall: The Blues Alone. (London)**

The sales on this LP will certainly show who are "the real John Mayall fans." His last two LP's have better material, but the first Blues Breakers LP, featuring Eric Clapton, is the best seller.

This LP features none other than John Mayall on all instruments except for some faint and sporadic percussion in several tracks.

Mayall proves he knows blues technically inside-out, and he possesses the ability to play several instruments; some of his own invention.

His songs are all original and mostly old blues-oriented. His standout is "Broken Wings," a truly beautiful song where he demonstrates an ability to actually play controlled and refined melodies, not just the rinky-dink licks he has been known for.

Several other cuts are also interesting, notably "Brown Sugar" and "Don't Kick Me." This LP may not prove that Mayall is an all-around musical genius, but the sales of this record should give some indication if his appeal is wrapped within that of his renowned former lead guitarist.

## **The James Cotton Blues Band: Pure Cotton (Verve)**

James Cotton has played harp with dozens of blues bands in the last few years and has Finally hit success after literally blowing his brains out.

He is known as one of the finest of Chicago's blues harpists. The only unfortunate part of his success is that his newly-found success extends everywhere except Chicago's South Side where it all started.

His new LP is better than the first. The distracting brass is left out and Cotton plays more harp. The entire selection of songs is closer to his club act and therefore more realistic.

The standouts are "Down at your buryin'," "She's murder," and "Fallin' rain."

## **Otis Spann: Bottom of the Blues (Bluesway)**

There really isn't much I can say about this LP that hasn't already been said. The recording should have taken place years ago as Spann is the greatest living blues pianist there is. Lately he has not been feeling well, following a heart attack just before Muddy Waters' last engagement here.

Every cut is great. It is real Chicago blues featuring Muddy Waters' band, with vocals by Spann and his wife, Lucille. Pay close attention to his technique and speed. He is unparalleled and that in itself makes this LP an exception.

Jim & Jean came to Detroit last month as some might remember. While here they spent a few hours taping a Robin Seymour Show on CKLW-TV. They'd been on several times before, always complying with a nondescript love song. But this time they chose Phil Ochs's "Rhythms of Revolution" for the teenybops.

And the tape got lost. Too bad, huh?

An interesting new rock club has opened on the near east side of Detroit, called the Detroit Castle and located on Chene between Grand Blvd. and the Edsel Ford expressway at the corner of Trumble.

Owned and operated by musician Gene Hayward' and associates, the Castle is a former movie theatre that's been carefully redecorated as a medieval castle inside, with full restaurant facilities, a good light show by Photon Energy/Ibis Electronics (Robin Eichele, Jim Thornioh, Bob Burch, Bob Rubiyan), and top Detroit bands on stage.

Gene Hayward is a beautiful cat and really means well, but more important his Castle is a good place to hear and see music. His audience is very relaxed and warm and draws from the immediate neighborhood as well as the suburbs, which is especially nice to see. Check it out.



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Fifth Estate #55, June 4-18, 1968

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