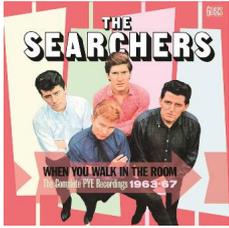


STILL SEARCHING...

Written by BILL B
Friday, 22 March 2019 12:31 -



Liverpool beat group THE SEARCHERS have been in existence for an incredible 60s years. Named for the wonderful John Wayne cowboy movie, the foursome (with a few personnel changes, of course) have worked constantly since the late 50s but this year they've decided to call it a day. Yes, after their current sell-out, nationwide tour, the Searchers will be hanging up their famous 12 string Rickenbackers! To commemorate this auspicious event two new box sets of the best of the band's output have just been released and as souvenirs of a great British music institution both come highly recommended.

First up there's a magnificent 6 CD box set from Grapefruit/Cherry Red Records....'When You Walk In The Room'. This one collects together everything the Searchers recorded for Pye Records in their 60s heyday. The box has the band's five Pye LPs – offered in both mono and stereo mixes and resplendent with the original sleeve art work - and a bonus CD with all the non LP cuts alongside a selection of rarities. All the band's big hits are here, including their classic readings of the Jackie De Shannon songs 'Needles And Pins' and 'When You Walk In The Room'. And it was this ability to find great songs to cover that was part of the Searchers' early success. Though the band boasted a song writing team, drummer Chris Curtis was a big 60s soul fan and he discovered all kinds of great songs for the band to cover. Here you can enjoy wonderful 60s Mersybeat renditions of songs originally recorded by people like The Drifters, The Orlons, Jimmy Hughes, Barbara Lewis, The Coasters, Ben E King, The Crystals, The Isley Brothers, Lou Johnson and many more. Indeed, with hand on heart I'd suggest that the Searchers' cover of Burt Bacharach's 'This Empty Place' is easily the best version of the song... ever!

The 'When You Walk In The Room' collection also allows you trace the evolution of the band – from hard rockers to harmonic popsters with a distinctive 12 string jangling guitar sound that did so much to influence US icons like The Byrds and Tom Petty.



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The second "new" Searchers box comes courtesy of BMG Records and is called 'The Farewell Album ... Greatest Hits And More' – and that about sums it up. The 2 CD, 50 track collection offers all the big hits, key album cuts and a selection of newer songs that are mainstays of the group's live performances – like the big ballad, 'Somebody Told Me You Were Crying'.

The Searchers have come a long, long way since they held court at Liverpool's famous Iron Door Club (just down the road from the Cavern where another band were resident!) but as a tribute to them and their art both these collections are wonderful.... both are available now.