

PAST TIMES

It is 55 years since Beatlemania swept the globe. **MARION McMULLEN** looks back at the world of music fandom

Girls, girls, girls... it really was a scream

JUSTIN BIEBER has his Beliebers, Ed Sheeran fans are known as Sheerios and Lady Gaga affectionately refers to her followers as Little Monsters.

These days die-hard music lovers can be found all over the world, but in 1963 crowds of screaming fans waving banners and posters had never really been experienced before on such a grand scale in the UK.

That all changed with the arrival of The Beatles and the phenomena was officially given a name 55 years ago this month... Beatlemania.

The Fab Four were riding high in the charts with their fifth single I Wanna Hold Your Hand and began November performing before the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret at the Royal Command Performance at London's Prince Of Wales Theatre.

The night became famous for John Lennon's on-stage instruction to the audience. "For our last number I'd like to ask for your help. The people in the cheaper seats clap your hands. And the rest of you, if you'd just rattle your jewellery. We'd like to sing a song called Twist And Shout."

The band went on to tour the country with police having to be called at many venues to deal with the growing number of fans waiting to greet them everywhere they played from Belfast to Plymouth and Cheltenham to London. The band even popped out to pose with the police at their Birmingham date and cheekily wore their helmets for a quick photo.

John Lennon later remembered the times as "like being in the eye of a hurricane. You'd wake up in a concert and think 'Wow, how did I get here?'"

The Rolling Stones were also mobbed by screaming fans in London's Kingways in 1964 when they left a television studio after appearing on pop show Ready Steady Go. The fan hysteria turned into a riot as the door of the band's car was ripped off as fans tried to get near them.

Police also struggled to hold back fans when Mick Jagger and co performed in the Isle of Man the same year.

American stars also had the girls screaming across the UK in the 1970s with teen pop idols The Osmonds and David Cassidy creating the most noise.

Thousands descended upon Heathrow in 1972 when Donny Osmond and his brothers flew in and fans became very inventive when it came to finding way to try and meet the Puppy Love star.

One girl attempted to abseil down the front of his hotel to his room and another posted herself in a crate to his suite.

David Cassidy fans stopped the traffic in London in 1974 when he appeared for a Radio Luxembourg broadcast.

They had been waiting in the rain at the front of the building eager to catch a glimpse of the Partridge Family star, not realising he had already been hustled in through a back door. However, not wanting to



When Beatlemania struck the world, no one was prepared for the fans' reaction to the band



From mop tops to cop tops - the Fab Four



Paul, John, George and Ringo seem overcome just by being The Beatles



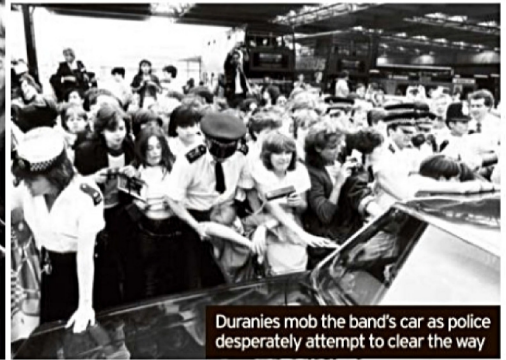
1964 saw Rolling Stones fans riot in their bid to get close to the stars



Tartan to a T: Rollers' fans in London, 1975



David Cassidy makes an appearance for fans crowding round Radio Luxembourg



Duranies mob the band's car as police desperately attempt to clear the way

disappoint the crowd, he made two unscheduled appearances on the balcony overlooking Hertford Street as the masses blocked the road.

Homegrown bands the Bay City Rollers and Slade also attracted fan mania during the 70s with fans opting for Scottish tartan fashion wear or versions of Noddy Holder's famous hat.

The "Tartan Army" with their plaid

scarves, half-mast flares and platform shoes faithfully followed the Bay City Rollers all over the country and took Rollermania to new heights. The band ending up with their own TV show and were hailed in America as "the new big thing from Britain."

In the 1980s, the world of fandom was seized by Ant Mania and the Duranies. Adam Ant fans sported the Dandy Highwayman's distinctive

look with white stripes across their faces and tiny plaits in their hair. Songs like Prince Charming and Stand And Deliver shifted 15 million records and Adam was even voted Sexiest Man in America.

Duran Duran fans - Duranies - descended on Heathrow Airport in 1983 wanting to meet the British band. They even surrounded the Wellington Hospital in London when

singer Simon Le Bon's first daughter, Amber, was born in 1989, hoping to catch a glimpse of him visiting.

But Simon, who celebrates his 33rd wedding anniversary with wife Yasmin in December next month, says fans were a part of the music scene: "That was the whole point in forming a band. Girls. Absolutely gorgeous girls."