

Report on The visit to The Revolution Exhibition at the V&A –

Thursday 11th February '17

Quotes from the Meet Me group members – en route, at the exhibition and then afterwards in the lunch room

From my perspective the outing had a wonderful effect on the group as a unit and also allowed many individuals to express ideas and recount memories that may not have been stimulated without such a visit

Many of the members became notably articulate and animated during the visit, recalling song lyric, favourite dresses, local characters, precious moments spent whilst listening to specific songs and much more! It was a seemingly rich and rewarding experience for absolutely everyone and though some feet and legs were aching by the end of the tour, there was very little complaint – just a great atmosphere and a genuine acknowledgement of the power of the music and the images to stir many memories!



I have outlined some highlights – and whilst some were articulate at length, for others, just a simple comment made calmly and in direct response to stimulus was in itself a wonderful moment

MEET ME GOES TO THE REVOLUTION!

There was a real buzz as we boarded the bus and on the journey we waved at Meet Me people in other buses picking up passengers to get to the V&A for 'The Revolution!' – a widely acclaimed exhibition about Western music and culture of the 60's and 70's

.... before we left I asked one or two Meet Me members what they were expecting ...

Barbara – *I'm expecting to see a lot – cos I've never been there before – the 60's music is what I like....*

Angie – *I'm hoping to see unusual things I haven't seen before – tweekin' them cos I like tweekin' things – to be inspired – I like any type of music – my favourite is classical music – jazz...*

On the bus there was more chat about the memories of those two decades – just exactly how revolutionary were they.....

Nick – *in 1960 I came to England – in Jamaica I listened Jimmy Reece – Roy Rogers – in England I listened to ska and reggae – in the clubs!*

Angie

I came to England in the 70's – I enjoyed it – I was 17 years old – we lived in Hampshire ...

It was so cold ... snow up to our knees ... we wore strict dress code but we went out to the clubs and danced round our handbags ... my music is soul music – The Four Tops – The Temptations – The Three Degrees – we used to go to Bournemouth – The Winter Garden - The Cherrelles – The Ronettes

Once we all converged in the foyer at the V&A we made our way to the exhibition entrance and were looked after very well – forming a separate queue and waiting in line for our headsets – the voice guide to take us all through the exhibition



As it turned out this was less about any explanation of what was in front of us and was instead a succession of tunes that fit the part of the exhibition we arrived in – using some kind of sensory device in each space

The excitement mounted!.....



Mickey – I loved the Beatles – something called ‘Let It Be’ – it was the first time I enjoyed music in the 60’s that wasn’t classical...

our discussion went on to the fact that the Beatles were influenced by classical music

.....

Polly – I loved the Beatles – the Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan ... I liked ‘Blowing in the Wind’ – I lived in Richmond – I saw the Stones walking around – I liked Brian Jones ... I remember the Troubadour where Jimi Hendrix played – I used to go there for poetry nights ...

Huw I’m looking for underground music – very heavy rock too!

Tom – I remember the 60’s music well – part of ‘the revolution’ – I loved the 70’s though – it was really different – Roy Orbison was amazing – he was a really inspirational character – he was so still – motionless – it was all about the voice ... and the start of Motown – black music in the 60’s – love all that! – Atlantic Records!

Elsie – I’m a Stones fan! I didn’t like the Beatles!

Inside, the pace was slow and the images and artefacts on the walls and in the display cases were beautiful and detailed reminders of the times – from fashion to politics, from scandal to celebration and from 1960 to 1979! They inspired some great memories!

Frank – I know the Crays worked in Whitechapel – I been in the Blind Beggar where they used to drink



.... In the 70’s I wore a big coat with a number on the back!

Joan – I loved the Beach Boys, The Beatles, The Stones – I loved Bob Dylan – he really had something to say in his songs – one of the best songs is Maggie’s Farm – listen to the words at the end where he says ‘they want you to be just like them!’... Adele sung one of his songs (‘To Make You Feel My Love’) ... the words are beautiful ... Oh I liked Otis Reading – he had such a voice – a lot of soul to it...
Martin Luther King and Kennedy both ended up being shot – they shot Kennedy because he wanted to get rid of the rottenness
People began to realise there was so much hypocrisy, the Holocaust and the war, amongst all the politicians ...



Huw [The exhibition] ... was out of this world – the whole decade was wonderful! There was a lot more going on in the 60’s than I knew about! The unrest – the level of change that was going on – ...

... in the early 60’s you had the end of censorship – one of my favourite CDs of the time was ‘Hair’ ‘Let the Sunshine In’
I heard my heavy rock too – Jefferson Airplane!
I was watching the start of the Isle of White film – I saw Hendrix!
That concert was later called ‘the sell out’ because Clapton played electric instead of acoustic – he switched!
I’ve got Woodstock on DVD – the first singer was Joan Baez! She got on stage and said ‘what a puny lot – don’t think I’ll bother!’ ... just because everyone was overwhelmed at the amount of people who travelled to Woodstock!

Then the next band was Crosby Stills Nash and Young ... they sang Marrakesh Express
Joni Mitchell in her yellow dress singing Big Yellow Taxi – no one ever knew what it was about!

Saw Dusty’s metal dress! Next to Twiggy The Springfield family were South African
.... and there was Country Joe McDonald – the Fish Chant!

Tilly was a fantastic guide – she took me round I found out her dad was a Pink Floyd fan!



Angie

The 60's wear! I definitely loved the clothes! The clothes for me! I liked Twiggy – she started it off – ... Jean Shrimpton and Mary Quant – I admired them!



It was only Woolworth that sold the make up – you used to see batches of schoolgirls who went in to experiment with the make up! ...



In those days you had to have the legs – but every one had the legs in those days! Isn't it funny! All those girls had legs! It brought back memories – I can see where I can tweak some ideas ... Remember the high white boots! – I had a pair! Oh I loved my white boots!

.... but my dad was very strict – so all our clothes had to be below that line! I'll never forget I made my first shift out of gingham and you cut it on the bias so the stripe it falls that way and then you put braid around the bottom – that was the first thing I made for myself – pink and white gingham check and I put a little pink bow ... inspired by what Twiggy used to wear (my mum was dress designer and it was passed down) ... those models – they were beautiful girls! They had the poise and the height!

Fred – *I was in Canada when Woodstock happened ... it was great that was... I did my meditation – cross-legged – I liked it – put you in another land!*

Three days of understanding, of moving with one another ... even the cops grooved with us! Do you believe me? Yeah!
The Animals, Monterey Pop Festival, 1967



Joan Did you see the Woodstock part – all those lyin’ on the cushions! When I saw Jimi Hendrix and I remember Janis Joplin ... Jimi – no one could play guitar like him – it seemed to flow out of him – no one could teach him that

.... I think Dusty was so unique – must’ve been heavy that dress!



The Beatles, The Animals, Freddie and the Dreamers (the Liverpool acts) – all came to the Gaumont in Lewisham!

... and the American acts – Gene Pitney, even Judy Garland – she came to Boots and bought some make up and put it on her account! She was nice and friendly but we were told not to ask for any autographs!

Rosemary

I wasn’t really a wild girl – I remember staying out late one night only because the 21 bus was cancelled and I had to wait for a later one and my dad had locked the door by the time I got home – but once I explained through the letter box he let me in!

Afterwards in the lunch-room – there were some more thoughts to share

Elsie My favourite Rolling Stones were Mick and Brian Jones – when I first met my husband he was a teddy boy! I didn’t like the hairdo or the way they dressed!

Maureen – Everything sparked memories! I was only 24 then – I had my son ’65 – when you’re bringin’ up a baby you don’t take so much notice. I remember Dusty Springfield when they found out she was a lesbian ...

.... A woman I know used to work for the Cray twins.

She was a silver service waitress and when the raid came, they smuggled her out the back so she wouldn’t get caught ...



A

Daisy – *I can remember the old music ... I listened to Sandy Shaw ... I liked Dusty Springfield ... I just love music as a whole*

[of the moonwalk...]
One small step for man ... one giant leap for mankind ... Its impossible to go to the moon ...



.....our discussion then followed the conspiracy theory that the whole thing was a fake and happened in the Arizona desert!

The draft is ... white people sending black people to make war on yellow people in order to defend land they stole from red people – Stokely Carmichael speech outside the United Nations NYC 15th April, 1967

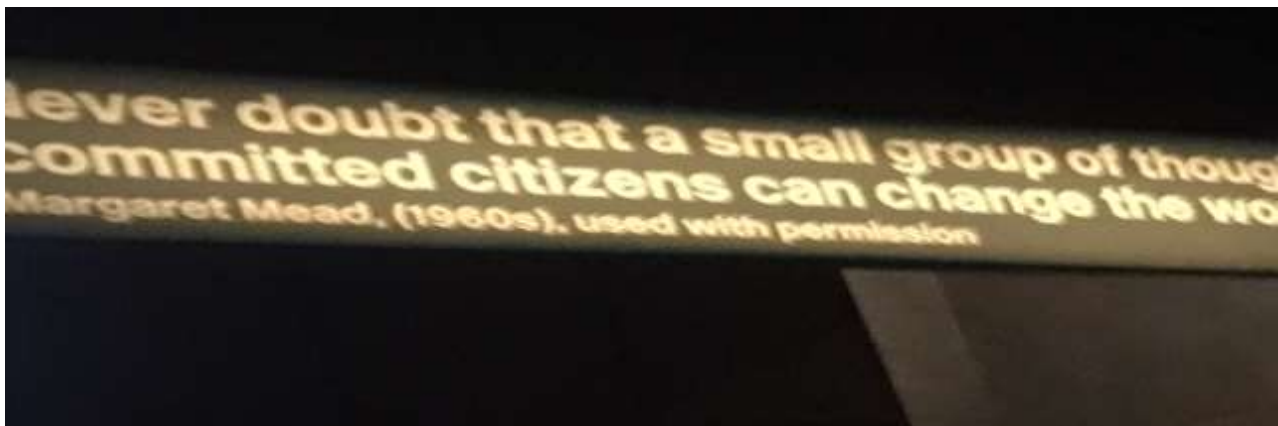


Grace – *I was really moved by the Vietnam War part – I watched with tears in my eyes – John Lennon and the Peace sleep in. It's a message and the politicians didn't like it – that's why they got rid of him I wrote a message in the book at the end – I am very grateful for seeing so many things I didn't know and to you (Meet Me) for bringing me here*
The man who carried the little girl and poured petrol on himself ... you make a statement ... a young innocent child ... that was wrong! I learned a lot – I am so happy to be here today



***Huw** – I was once sittin' on a swing and singing 'Hey Hey LBJ – how many kids you killed today!' –*

...I got kicked out the park!



We left the exhibition to the sounds of 'Imagine'