

Ray Davies

"When Big Bill Speaks / The Man Who Knew A Man"

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I used to go down The Marquee Club where all these R & B bands were playing. It was like hearing Big Bill Broonzy with drums, but they were British bands. Alexis Korner had his Blues Band. Cyril Davies & His All Stars backed Sonny Boy Williamson.

But before doing any more gigs we wouldn't make the same mistake as we'd made before, for this time we'd get a drummer. We took an advert out in The Melody Maker, which is a hugh music paper in England. "A very important new beat group require the services of an extraordinary drummer. Auditions next thursday". The following thursday one person turned up. You see, we'd forgotten to put the address of the audition down. This was fate, this was destiny, because the young man standing before us was no other than Michael Charles Avory. We liked Mick. He was a really down to earth, ordinary guy. He was a boy scout! Very commendable. But why, why did he wear the boy scouts outfit to the audition? He must have thought we were really weird, because we were all dressed in those Carnaby Street clothes, you know. Dave...Dave and Pete especially. In Mick's eyes we must have looked very very effeminate. To say the least. And Mick dressed in his boy scouts outfit, so you can understand there's a big difference, a big gulf. But Mick looked at us and he said "I like the group a lot, yeah I like the group. I like the music you play, yeah, R & B, that's the coming thing,

ain't it? But if I join the group, I want to make one thing clear. I've got a girlfriend and if you haven't noticed: I'm straight". "We can soon change that, darling". Poor old Mick. I suppose we did look effeminate to him. We just explained that we wanted to create an image for ourselves and, you know, be outrageously dressed. But we said "Exactly, Mick. We need a masculine looking person in the group, and you've got those features, man, you're the guy! Particularly the drummer has got to look hard". And so the band was formed. Let's hear it for the band.

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