

15 Scuzzy Scandals

FROM STOWAWAYS TO SKIVVIES TO THE STONES

KRLA: 1963–1969, The Pop-Star-Pandemonium Years

All of the interviews, the more-than-legendary Hollywood Bowl performance, the screams from the girls, the start of the *KRLA Beat*—even my plunge into the “moat”—were history-making, for sure. But none of that stuff flirted with, well, a *federal criminal offense!*

One more collateral *situation* played its way out from Bob Eubanks’ first Beatle-Bowl. And that situation was the most infamous “stowaway” scandal since 1928!

You see, back in ’28 a nineteen-year-old European guy named Clarence Terhune hid himself on board the Graf Zeppelin dirigible; he became the first stowaway to fly across the ocean.

Clarence may have achieved some heights, but *the world hadn’t seen nothin’ yet!*

Right after the Beatles played their last tune and bounced off the Bowl stage, they headed for Denver and their next gig via a chartered flight from LAX. I had also jetted off to the airport, hoping for a last-

minute interview at the bottom of the plane's loading ramp. Jim Steck, of course, was there with me.

"I'm getting on board!" Steck suddenly told me. "I'm going to fly with them to Denver!"

What?!

I quickly tried to explain a couple of things to Jim.

"First, you're not on the charter flight manifest.

"Second, it's against the law to do something like this!

"Third, it's a really bad idea!"

It appeared, however, that my incredible wisdom was about to be ignored.

In fact, Jim didn't give me even one slight, condescending moment where he even *pretended* to mull over what I was saying.

"I'm going!" he said. And up the ramp he ran.

I followed him!

My real purpose was to try and convince Jim of the "bad idea" part of my suggestions! But when the Beatles' security people at the top of the ramp by the plane's door recognized the both of us, they waved us in.

No problem...

Yet.

Please fasten your seat belts...

When we got to Denver, there were, of course, *no* accommodations for us anywhere! And we had only thirteen dollars between us.

Worst of all, our names were *not* on the flight manifest.

And that *legally* classified us as *illegal* stowaways!

When everyone was getting off the plane, the first one to see *me* was Ringo.

Then the Beatles' road manager, Neil Aspinall, spotted us.

Then their press secretary, Derek Taylor.

Ringo seemed pleased. Neil and Derek, not as thrilled.

Derek gathered up his things and took me right to Brian Epstein, who by now was trying to enjoy an unwinding drink in his hotel room. Epstein was the only one who could manipulate the manifest and get us on it before we were *all* in *Misery*.

Brian was even less happy than Neil and Derek at our Clarence Terhune act (although I'm pretty sure he didn't really know much about Clarence—beyond the basics that we *all* certainly know!) but he *did* "fix" the flight manifest.

That perked me up in a hurry!

I figured we were on a roll at that point, so I also asked Brian for front row seats and backstage passes for Jim and me for the performance two nights later at Denver's Red Rocks Amphitheater.

I mean, we were already there and everything.

I don't know just how delighted he was with that, but he *did* give us the all-access.

Now it was time to call our boss at KRLA, John Barrett, and *explain* the whole situation—mainly why we were now 1,013 miles from where we were supposed to be!

Barrett actually took the complex news pretty well—but he was vehement about our possible future in federal custody: "If your names aren't on that manifest, you're *doomed!*" Then he wired us fifty bucks and return plane tickets home.

Pick Your Enemies...

There was another Barrett I had to contend with in Denver—*Rona* Barrett. Rona was no relation to John, but she did have a connection

to virtually everyone in show business—mainly because *her* business was *their* business.

Rona Barrett has spent decades as *the* entertainment reporter for publications and television shows such as *Good Morning America* and NBC's *Today* show.

And she recognized *me*.

“Dave, I’m Rona Barrett,” she said, introducing herself at the Red Rocks concert. “And I’m going to lose my job.”

What?

It was quite an ice-breaker!

“I’m going to lose my job if I don’t get an interview with the Beatles,” she pleaded. “And you’re the only one I know here who can get me in to see them. Can you do that?”

“Rona, let me check,” I told her. “I’m not going to say yes or no, but let me go talk to Brian Epstein or Neil Aspinall. If they say yes, then get ready to get in there.”

Amidst all the Epstein stress and pressure—which I was probably *somewhat* responsible for—I somehow managed to work it out: Rona Barrett got backstage with the Beatles.

And then she proceeded to trash them in her article.

The headline read: *I Saw the Beatles in Their Underwear*.

Well, of course she did! They were backstage changing and they let her come in, in between shows.

I never forgave her—and the Beatles didn’t either!

*“Pick your enemies carefully or
you’ll never make it in Los Angeles.”*

—Rona Barrett

Paint It Black...or Blue

Beatles-at-the-Bowl I was epic. But just three months after that, Bob Eubanks was looking for further commercial *Satisfaction* (I know, this is a Stones song, but it does fit perfectly! And there’ll be more!), so he brought a very young Mick Jagger and his Rolling Stones to the four-thousand-seat Long Beach Auditorium.

And it was sure different than the Beatles. Eubanks had to *Play with Fire* instead of enjoying *A Taste of Honey*.

“*Tell Me, Dave*,” Bob said. “Would you like to emcee the concert along with Dick Moreland and Charlie O’Donnell?” Well, I wasn’t *Sittin’ on the Fence* on that one!

“I’d be *Happy* to do it!”

I arrived at the auditorium in my brand new Cadillac—a white Coupe Deville with less than a thousand miles on it. It was a special night, so I had Jeanette, Mike, and my mother with me—all of us sitting tall and proud in that shiny Caddy.

We eased on into the parking lot.

Pop-star pandemonium!

Hundreds of girls made up a sea of feminine fandom that we had to somehow get the car through. And the mascaraed mob was gearing up for a night with a group that was emerging as the “darker, bad-boy side” of what was now officially being called the “British Invasion”—the knees-up parade of English bands sweeping through America on those long coattails of the Beatles.

As we tried to part the skirted sea to slide into our VIP parking area, the girls looked in the car windows and saw me and my family.

And they began jumping!

On the car!

I knew what I had to do! I had to be the brave scout who went for the cavalry! I forced the big door open and made a run for security! You could almost hear the bugles *bugling* as the men with badges came to get my family safely into the concert. The immediate crowd around the car was dispersed as well—but not before making off with one of Mike’s shoes during my family’s “rescue”!

And not until they had destroyed the car.

They tore it to hell. The top, the hood—they just tore the hell out of it!

We went to the concert in a brand new Cadillac; we limped home in something that *Wild Horses* had run over.

**(Cue “The Last Time”
by the Rolling Stones...)**

**Dave: “This Could Be the Last
Time”...Rolling Stones. This
could be the last time this
program could be on the
air! Ha! If we keep going like
we are!**

Neither we—nor our insurance company—had much *Sympathy* for *Those Devils*! (Though the cops *did* manage to find Mike’s shoe!)

But we had work to do! I was the emcee!



The Stones concert wasn’t the first—or last time—I was besieged by feminine fandom and pop-star pandemonium!



Once I parked what was left of the car, I went backstage with the Rolling Stones. Even then, the Stones were becoming known for their tireless touring—very little time was set aside for anything but performing and partying.

They definitely hadn't set aside *any* time for hygiene.



The Stones' busy schedule included partying and performing—not much else!

In the dressing room, they'd removed their pants to clean up with a bit of a sponge bath—no time was even *considered* for a full shower.

I noticed that all of their legs were blue. *Levi's denim blue.*

I asked them where they had bought their jeans.

New York...

I looked at their schedule and did some quick calculations. New York had been eighteen days ago. Eighteen days in the same jeans. Eighteen days of a lot of wear, a lot of body heat, and little washing.

The blue dye and that pale U.K. skin were becoming sweat-fused and permanent!

Oh well, *It's Only Rock and Roll...*

And ultimately, that's what *all of this* was all about.

Beatles, Bones, & Boris

As 1964 ended, Saturday nights became especially “interesting” at KRLA. It was like the Beatles meet Frankenstein!

Along with my weekday shifts, I was doing a Saturday night six-to-midnight show—the *Saturday Night Special*. But on Halloween night, management cut the show by three hours and put in a nine-to-midnight spookfest hosted by Bobby “Boris” Pickett, the Karloff-voiced “singer” who had a giant hit in 1962 with “Monster Mash.” That Halloween, Bobby opened the creaking door to his full creepy closet of monster voices, noises, clanks, chains, and screams!

From that night on, through the rest of '64, Saturday night was a six-hour bash with me playing mostly Beatles tunes and Bobby Boris rattling bones 'til the witching hour!

And these kinds of chaotic nights wouldn't be the *only* ominous portals opened over the next few years as the 1960s were detonated and defined.



Speaking of creepy chaos...another promo op we KRLA DJs got was to cruise around in the Munster Koach to dig up young viewers for the upcoming TV series! Herman's ride was created by the legendary Los Angeles Kustom Kar King, George Barris. (Left to Right: a macabre me, Herman Munster, Bob Eubanks, and Emperor Bob Hudson.)