The Beatles

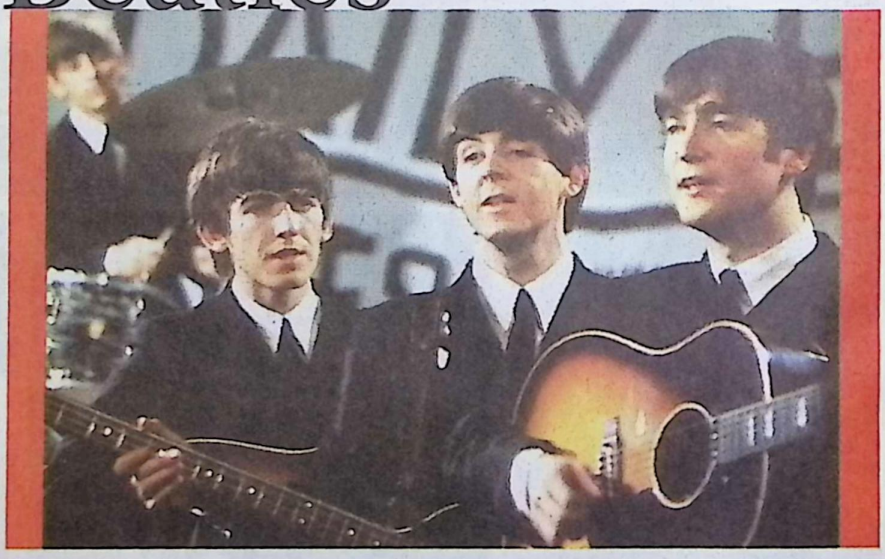
IN the history of popular music, Beatles will remain as a legend not because of its unparrallel commercial success as a band, but mainly because of the impact it's members created worldwide with their musical genre and individual personalities. The four-member band had John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starrfour outstanding musicians who led the mid-1960s musical 'British Invasion' into the USA. Although their initial musical style was rooted in 1950s rock and roll and homegrown styles, the group explored genres ranging from Tin Pan Alley to psychedelic rock. Their clothes, styles, and statements made them trend-setters, while their growing social awareness saw their influence extend into the social and cultural revolutions of the 1960s.

Along with studio tricks such as sound effects, unconventional microphone placements, tape loops, double tracking and vari-speed recording, the Beatles began to augment their recordings with instruments that were unconventional for rock music at the time. These included string and brass ensembles as well as Indian instruments such as the sitar and the swarmandel. They also used early electronic instruments such as the Mellotron, with which McCartney supplied the flute voices on the intro to 'Strawberry Fields Forever', and the ondioline, an electronic keyboard that created the unusual oboe-like sound on 'Baby You're a Rich Man'.

19571960: Formation

In March 1958, John Lennon formed a skiffle group called 'The Quarrymen' while attending Quarry Bank Grammar School in Liverpool. Lennon and the Quarrymen met guitarist Paul McCartney St. Peter's Church on 6 July 1957. On 6 February 1958, the young guitarist George Harrison was invited to watch the group at Wilson Hall, Garston, Liverpool. McCartney had become acquainted with Harrison on the morning school bus ride to the Liverpool Institute, as they both lived in Speke. At McCartney's insistence, Harrison joined the Quarrymen as lead guitarist after a rehearsal in March 1958.

The Beatles started playing in bars in Germany where they were required to play six or seven hours a night, seven nights a week. Shortly after they began performing at a new venue, the 'Top Ten Club', Harrison was deported for having lied to the German authorities about his age. A week later, having started a small fire at their living quarters while vacating it for more luxurious rooms, McCartney and Best were arrested, charged with arson, and deported.



Lennon followed the others to Liverpool in mid-December.

The reunited Bealtles started performing back in England, as well as in Germany, which eventually created massive fan following.

Internal clashes and break up

The group spent the early part of 1968 in Rishikesh, Uttar Pradesh, India, studying transcendental meditation with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Upon their return, Lennon and McCartney went to New York to announce the formation of 'Apple Corps'. The middle of 1968 saw the band members engaging in deep divisions with Starr temporarily walking out. Two prime causes of dissension were that Lennon's new girlfriend, Yoko Ono, was at his side through almost all of the sessions, and that the others felt that McCartney was becoming too dominating.

John Lennon announced his departure to the rest of the group on 20 September 1969 but agreed that no announcement was to be publicly made until a number of legal matters were resolved. McCartney publicly announced the break-up on 10 April 1970, a week before releasing his first solo album, McCartney. Pre-release copies included a press release with a self-written interview explaining the end of the Beatles and his hopes for the future. On 8 May 1970, the Spector-produced version of Get Back was released as 'Let It Be', followed by the documentary film of the same name. The Beatles' partnership was finally dissolved in 1975.

Top five songs : Across the universe, Eleanor Rigby, I am in the Walrus, A day in the life, Being for the benefit of Mr. Kite.

-Compiled by **Feeda Hasan Shahed**