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The Beatles - All These Years - Extended Special Edition: Volume One: Tune In



Synopsis

This extended special edition of Mark Lewisohn's magisterial book *Tune In* is a true collector's item, featuring hundreds of thousands of words of extra material, as well as many extra photographs. It is the complete, uncut and definitive biography of the Beatles' early years, from their family backgrounds through to the moment they're on the cusp of their immense breakthrough at the end of 1962. Designed, printed and bound in Great Britain, this high-quality edition consists of two beautifully produced individual hardbacks printed on New Langely Antique Wove wood-free paper, with red-and-white head and tail bands and red ribbon marker. The two books will sit within a specially designed box and lid featuring soft touch and varnish finishes. The whole product comes shrink-wrapped for extra protection. Mark Lewisohn's biography is the first true and accurate account of the Beatles, a contextual history built upon impeccable research and written with energy, style, objectivity and insight. This extended special edition is for anyone who wishes to own the complete story in all its stunning and extraordinary detail. This is genuinely, and without question, the lasting word from the world-acknowledged authority.

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Customer Reviews

An epic on an unprecedented scale . . . Lewisohn has no serious rival • *Irish Times* This is the story told in Proustian detail . . . The first edited-down volume, is largely a delight, and the story is told so definitively that, after this, that really should be it. Secondary sources are comprehensively mined; letters, public records and business documents have been found in places no one else ever thought to look . . . Lewisohn is a Beatles oracle • *Guardian*

Mark Lewisohn is universally acknowledged as the world's expert on The Beatles. He is the author of six previous Beatles books and has been described by the Independent as the band's 'Emeritus Professor'.

By and large, the people reading a review of an 800 page book that covers the Beatles before "Please Please Me" was released in January 1963 are going to be serious Beatles fans. I am no exception. I was born in 1951 and bought the single "I Want to Hold Your Hand" in mid-January 1964. I was a fervent Beatles fan throughout the sixties and fifty years later, Beatles books, records, cds and memorabilia take up a sizable amount of space in our home. And any serious Beatles fan knew that any lengthy history of the Beatles by Mark Lewisohn would be an important book. So when the release of this book was announced, i was prepared to order it - and then i heard that there was to be an extended two-volume edition. For some reason, it was not going to be available in the United States in general or on the american .com site. So i went to 's United Kingdom site and advanced ordered the extended edition. Of course the idea of 800 pages covering the period ending more than a year before the Ed Sullivan appearance was daunting. And the report on the extended edition indicated that it not going to simply be embellished with significantly more photographs or a fancy cover -- it was going to be twice as long -- 1600 pages ending on December 31, 1962. I don't read many books more than 400 pages. 1600 pages was quite daunting. But guess what: any serious Beatles fan will savor this edition. We have all read Beatles books that seemed to emphasize the amount of research the writer has done over using that research to synthesize a cohesive narrative (Ray Coleman's biography of John Lennon comes to mind.) It is evident simply by reading any ten pages in this book that no one has come close to doing the amount of research regarding the Beatles that Lewisohn has done. He has seemingly reviewed every single document that has anything to do with the Beatles, and communicated with every living person who has ever been within 100 yards of any of the main actors. And the three-paragraph discussion in the "Credits" section regarding Neil Aspinall reminds the reader that well before Lewisohn began this book, he already had significantly more access to certain insiders and files than any other major Beatles biographer. (It was Lewisohn, after all, who was hired to write the annotations for the Beatles Anthology audio releases.) But Lewisohn's book is not simply a well-researched history of the Beatles. This book is a meticulously assembled structure where family histories, the history and sociology of Liverpool, the history of rock and roll and its presentation through popular media, and the technological development of the recording industry, are all carefully developed as a framework

so one can fully understand the context in which the Beatles evolved from three good friends in 1960 who were marginal guitar players and who could sing individually and in harmony to a phenomenon on the verge of changing English popular culture forever by the end of 1962. (As this volume ends, there is not yet any basis for anticipating the impact they would have on the world at large in the following fourteen months.) But, of course, given the justifiable praise for the one-volume, 800-page edition, is there any reason to believe that an additional 800 pages does anything more than gild the lily? Well, as the title of this review suggests, the answer is a resounding yes. As one gets to the last 500 pages, covering the year 1962, not only will Beatles fans savor each development from the disappointment of their New Years Day audition at Decca records to the anticipation of the release of what would become their first number-one single at the end of that year, but one will realize how so much of what was set out in the previous 1,000 pages resonates: Everything that made Brian Epstein the one-in-a-million person who was essential in making the Beatles not only commercially successful but in a position to fully exploit their potential. Everything that made George Martin the one-in-a-million record producer who allowed the Beatles to become something beyond a bubblegum act. And amid all that set the stage for what was to come, one is immersed in: (1) the conspiracy of circumstances that compelled George Martin to record the Beatles despite the fact that he had already rejected them out of hand (Martin was being punished for having an extra-marital affair); and (2) the conspiracy of circumstances that compelled George Martin to release "Love Me Do" as the Beatles first single when it was his every intention to put out "How Do You Do It." And Lewisohn spells out the unknown story of how Kim Bennett of EMI's in-house song publishing entity laid the groundwork that allowed Love Me Do to become not only a Liverpool phenomenon but a song that stayed in the charts in England for three months with less than a dozen radio plays. Kim Bennett is finally given his due as the person responsible for not only virtually compelling EMI to sign the Beatles, but for seeing that "Love Me Do" got the exposure to perform so much beyond George Martin's expectations, that it turned around his thinking regarding the Beatles, allowing them to record Please Please Me as their second single. It becomes clear that among those "second-tier" contributors to the Beatles success, including the likes of Bob Wooler, Alan Williams, and Dick James, Kim Bennett deserves a prominent place. These stories are all set out in the 800 page edition. But in 1600 pages, Lewisohn is able to immerse the reader in 1962 and see it as the real *Annus mirabilis* for the Beatles, the year that made everything they were to become possible and the year that included numerous mind-bending coincidences without which it is quite possible that no one outside of Liverpool and Hamburg would have heard of them. One of the great fears in reviewing a work such as the extended edition of "Tune In" is that one will lack the

talent to fully convey the level of engagement this version provides so as to justify the significantly greater investment of time and money over an already demanding 800 page version. So, perhaps, as a child of the 60s, the most apt analogy i can provide is the difference between listening to Abbey Road under the influence of very good marijuana and listening to it with a close friend under the influence of high quality LSD. In short, i can comfortably offer any real Beatles fan the assurance that if you take my suggestion, you will be very grateful you did.. (By the way, the only place in this book where i can find the words of the title [i.e., "tune in"] is on page 1310, describing what would be required of Ringo to be fully integrated into the Beatles, Lewisohn writes: "Ringo knew he had to tune in [to the shared outlook the other three had developed], as would they to him." Lewisohn's book gives us Beatles fans a meaningful opportunity to tune in.)

As all Beatles fans will know, we have been waiting for the recently released first volume of Mark Lewisohn's biographical trilogy of the Beatles for ten years. Having recently released Tune In, he has now published an extended two volume set of the first book. I have read the kindle edition of this book, but I will try to explain what the extended version offers that is different from the single volume and, hopefully help you decide which edition you wish to read (if not both, as I did). The one volume Tune In has the book split into the following headings: Introduction and Prologue (the same in both editions), Old Before Our Birth, Year 1: 1958, Year 2: 1959, Year 3: 1960, Year 4: 1961 and Year 5: 1962. This first volume of the two book set takes the story only to 1960 - in this first volume the end of 1960 ends at loc 8733. The first volume of this two volume set splits the chapters into : Introduction and Prologue, 1845-1939: Looking Back, Shapes of Things to Come (a far extended, 2 chapter, look at their family history and Liverpool in wartime), 1939 - 1955 (seven chapters of childhood and schooldays and far extended from the original 'Old Before Our Birth' section on family history and childhood). 1956 Rock! (2 chapters on the skiffle boom and early discovery of rock and roll), 1957: Old Before Our Birth (3 chapters on that momentous year when Lennon and McCartney met "He'll get you into trouble son..."), Year 1: 1958: Thinking of Linking (2 chapters on those early days, "Where we going, Johnny?!"), Year 2: 1959: Three Cool Cats (2 chapters dealing with the Casbah, etc) and Year 3: 1960: Competence, Confidence and Continuity (amongst other things, covers the trip to Scotland with Johnny Gentle and heading for Hamburg). The end of these chapters (not counting notes, etc) ends at loc 15840. Sadly, page numbers are not shown in this book, but if you consider that the original book ended 1960 at 8733 and this book finishes the same period at 15840, then that is 7107 extra - almost double the same amount of text to cover the same period. The illustrations section is also extended and, to be honest, is worth looking at simply to see

the amazing photograph of George's maternal grandfather, John French, who is the absolute spitting image of George! Well, rather, George was the splitting image of him, but I hope that Olivia and Dhani see this, as it is really astounding. Mark Lewisohn's ability to discover these unseen gems are why this book stands head and shoulders above any other biography so far. Knowing you have more text for the same period is one thing - the question you are probably asking is whether it is worth reading. That really depends on whether you need to know that John Lennon scaled the heady heights (or doleful depths) of 3% in his Quarry Bank maths exam - we all know he was bright, but he certainly brought a new meaning to the phrase, "couldn't care less" - or that, when his teachers unwisely asked him to run a stall at a school fundraiser, he gleefully created vicious caricatures of his teachers, obtained some darts and charged fellow pupils to "Prick your Teacher" (he raised more money than anyone else, even when he and Pete Shotton pocketed most of it, showing that his teachers had a greater sense of humour and tolerance than he gave them credit for). In all honesty, if the one volume book was criticised (unfairly) in national newspapers for having too much detail, then this is full of the obsessive detail fans love. One of the really interesting, if not unique, things about the Beatles story is how the timing of things always worked out - in Lewisohn's words, the timing was "always perfect". If you were writing this story as a fiction, you seriously could not make it up. For example, Ivan Vaughan, the school friend who introduced Paul to John, only met him because his parents were so upset at John's disrupting their son's education that they vowed he would not attend the same secondary school as him. Consequently, Ivan went to the Liverpool Institute, rather than the more local grammar, Quarry Bank, became friends with Paul and later introduced him to John. It was not the first, or last, time a parent would sense danger and take a dislike to John - Paul's father was less than enamoured... Mark Lewisohn knows that Beatles fans are quite happy to read about their heroes in immense detail and, in this two volume edition, he certainly gives us this. At all times he cleverly tells the story not only of the four Beatles, but also of the other important members of the story. It isn't overdone, but he always informs us what other members were doing when, for example, Ringo got his first job - or we learn that when Larry Parnes was signing Tommy Steele to a very unfair management contract (while George Martin didn't sign him and missed the next "big thing"), Brian Epstein had just started at RADA. He puts their life in context and discusses the music they heard, their influences and important events. In reality, he paints a picture of those times which it would be hard to beat. Even reading the early pages about Irish immigrants fleeing famine and their suffering and poverty; the lists of babies born and then dead within weeks or months, shows us where the Beatles (three of them, anyway) came from. When one of them starts school or visits a location previously mentioned, Lewisohn will point out

that a relative of one of them lived nearby or weave the strands of the story deftly together so that we know where we are and the context of events. When John or Paul say in later interviews how they wanted, above all, to be rich, or you read of Ringo wanting a job simply to get the uniform (and being cheated by getting only the cap) or of George's mother bemoaning the level of violence and vandalism where they lived, you understand exactly where they started and how little all their contemporaries had. Clothes, for instance, were in such short supply that both John and Paul wore their school uniforms on holiday and George's mother had to cut down his father's trousers to fit him. Ringo went to the fairground to hear rock and roll records; records were just too expensive and hard to get hold of. So, should you buy this two volume set? Does the first volume offer you anything else? In all honesty, if you have never read a biography of the Beatles before and if you are considering which of the new Mark Lewisohn books to buy, then I would say just get the single "Tune In". It's brilliant, as detailed as you need - more detailed than the casual fan will probably want in fact - and wonderfully written. If, however, like me, you have read everything on the Beatles - including the single book "Tune In" - and yet still crave more, then you will love this. The first volume of this two volume set has immense depth to it, giving detailed historical background, more reminiscences from neighbours, school friends and colleagues, and is brilliantly written. I am looking forward to reading Vol 2 - The Beatles - All These Years - Extended Special Edition: Part Two: Volume One: Tune In - of this extended two volume edition next, which covers the years 1961 and 1962 and takes the Beatles to the cusp of success, with a record contract and ready to take over the world. Let's hope we don't have to wait another ten years for the next book in the series. Meanwhile, whichever edition of this book you choose, I am sure that you will enjoy it and, even if like me you have already read hundreds of books about them, you will learn something new.

The best book I have ever read on The Beatles, and I have read most of them. Can't wait for part 2!!!

Every page is a joy to read. I'm reading it on Kindle, which is great, and I look forward to every second I spend in company with this truly masterpiece.

For diehard Beatle fans, this is the best book bar none. It puts into context the personalities, place and events brilliantly. I can't wait for the next installment. I hope it doesn't take ten years.

Wonderful historical detail. This is a masterpiece and THE definitive Beatle's biography. Period. I

really get a sense of the world the Fab Four grew up in and honed their musical genius. A must read for any one interested in the lives of the Beatles.

Fantastic work by Mark Lewisohn. An amazing journey from Liverpool 1845-Hamburg 1962. Tune in and read it! Looking forward to the next part.

Delivered earlier and exactly as explained.

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