

UB40 - Band

THE BAND MEMBERS BEGAN AS FRIENDS WHO KNEW EACH OTHER FROM VARIOUS SCHOOLS ACROSS BIRMINGHAM. THE NAME "UB40" WAS SELECTED IN REFERENCE TO THE SIGNING-ON DOCUMENT ISSUED TO PEOPLE CLAIMING UNEMPLOYMENT



BENEFIT FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AT THE TIME OF THE BAND'S FORMATION. THE UB40 NO LONGER EXISTS, ALTHOUGH THE TERM IS STILL WELL UNDERSTOOD TO REFER TO UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS IN THE UK. FOLLOWING A SERIOUS ASSAULT ON ALI CAMPBELL HE RECEIVED A HEFTY COMPENSATION PACKAGE WHICH HE PUT TOWARDS FUNDING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE FLEDGLING BAND MEMBERS.

THE ORIGINS OF WHAT WOULD BECOME UB40 BEGAN WHEN IN MID-1978 GUITARIST ALI CAMPBELL, TOGETHER WITH THE RHYTHM SECTION OF DRUMMER JIMMY BROWN AND BASSIST EARL FALCONER, BEGAN REHEARSING

CHARTING REGGAE SONGS IN ADDITION TO SOME OF THEIR OWN ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS. THEY WERE SOON JOINED BY SEVERAL OF THEIR FRIENDS'; FIRSTLY PERCUSSIONISTS' YOMI BABAYEMI AND NORMAN HASSAN, AND THEN SAXOPHONIST BRIAN TRAVERS AND KEYBOARDIST JIMMY LYNN. ROBIN CAMPBELL, ALTHOUGH INITIALLY RELUCTANT TO COMMIT TO FORMING A BAND WITH THE OTHERS, WAS INVITED TO JOIN ONCE AGAIN BY HIS BROTHER AND BOUGHT A GUITAR WITH WHICH TO DO SO IN DECEMBER OF THAT YEAR. ONCE ROBIN HAD JOINED THE OTHERS IN THEIR JAMMING SESSIONS, THE EIGHT MUSICIANS FORMED A BAND, DECIDING ON THE NAME 'UB40' AFTER A FRIEND SUGGESTED IT WAS AN ADEQUATE NAME GIVEN THE UNEMPLOYED STATUS OF ALL OF THE BAND MEMBERS. PRIOR TO THIS, TRAVERS HAD WORK AS AN ELECTRICAL APPRENTICE FOR NG BAILEY; WHILST ROBIN CAMPBELL HAD BEEN AN APPRENTICE TOOLMAKER

THEIR FIRST GIG TOOK PLACE ON 9 FEBRUARY 1979 AT THE HARE & HOUNDS PUB IN KINGS HEATH, BIRMINGHAM FOR A FRIEND'S BIRTHDAY PARTY. THIS WAS COMMEMORATED IN OCTOBER 2011 BY THE UNVEILING OF A PLAQUE AT THE VENUE, INDICATING THE BAND RECEIVING THE PERFORMING RIGHTS SOCIETY'S MUSIC HERITAGE AWARD.

UB40 CAUGHT THEIR FIRST BREAK WHEN CHRISSIE HYNDE SAW THEM AT A PUB AND GAVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY AS A SUPPORT ACT TO HER BAND, THE PRETENDERS. UB40'S FIRST SINGLE, "KING"/"FOOD FOR THOUGHT" WAS RELEASED ON GRADUATE RECORDS, A LOCAL INDEPENDENT LABEL RUN BY DAVID VIRR. IT REACHED NO. 4 ON THE UK SINGLES CHART.

UB40		UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT ATTENDANCE CARD			
Surname (block capitals)	Initials	NI Number		CODOT No.	
M					
Post Office					
1 IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CLAIMING BENEFIT					
You should make your claims for unemployment benefit at the Benefit Office each week on the days and at the times shown in the box on the right. Produce this card on each occasion.					
If you fail to claim in any week on the day specified you risk losing benefit and you could be disqualified for all the days between your last claim and the day you next claim.					
If you do miss claiming benefit on the day specified go to the Benefit Office on the very next day you can (but not on Saturday or Sunday). Do not wait until the specified day in the following week.					
This notice ceases to apply when you start work or claim another benefit. If you again become unemployed you should claim benefit on the first day of unemployment.					
				MON	
				TUES	
				WEDS	
				THU	
				FRI	
				Signing box	
Surname	Initials	NI Number		chkd by & date	
2 CLAIM FOR OUTSTANDING BENEFIT					
If there is outstanding benefit in respect of days for which you have already claimed, payment will be made by post to your home address on return of this card with part 3 completed. If there are days between the last day on which you claimed benefit at the Benefit Office and the date on which you started work (or claimed another benefit) complete the declaration below:-					
"I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND the leaflet 'Responsibility of Claimants' (UB 170).					
I CLAIM BENEFIT for the following dates					
AND DECLARE that on those days I was unemployed and did no work: I was able and willing to do any suitable work but was unable to get any: the circumstances of my dependants were as last stated." (If there was a change cross out this last item).					
Signature				date	
DO NOT SIGN UNTIL THE LAST DAY FOR WHICH YOU WISH TO CLAIM BENEFIT.					



Balsall Heath
Local History Society

Legends of Balsall Heath