

# A TRIP THROUGH LADBROKE GROVE

THE LIFE & TIMES OF UNDERGROUND 'HERO' STEVE PEREGRIN TOOK

AUTHOR: FEE WARNER



The artwork for the cover was produced by Kirsty Sloman the partner of Monty Oxymoron of The Damned. Inner illustrations by Juan Manuel Escribuela Ruiz and Function Creep.

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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF  
UNDERGROUND *HERO*  
STEVE PEREGRIN TOOK

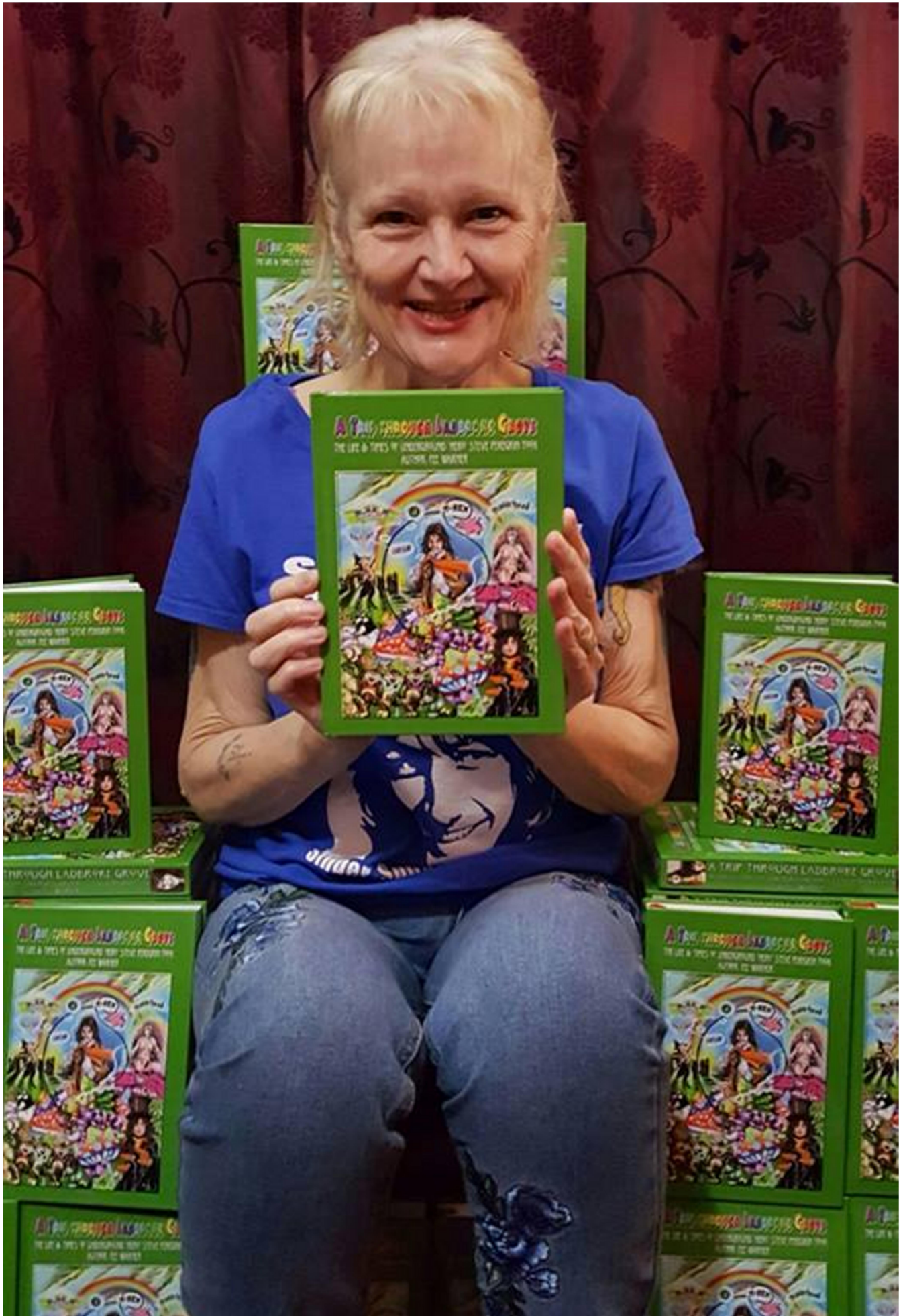
BY FEE WARNER

DEDICATED TO LUKE TOOK  
AND  
EVERYONE WHOSE LIFE  
STEVE PEREGRIN TOOK TOUCHED.

FIRST EDITION



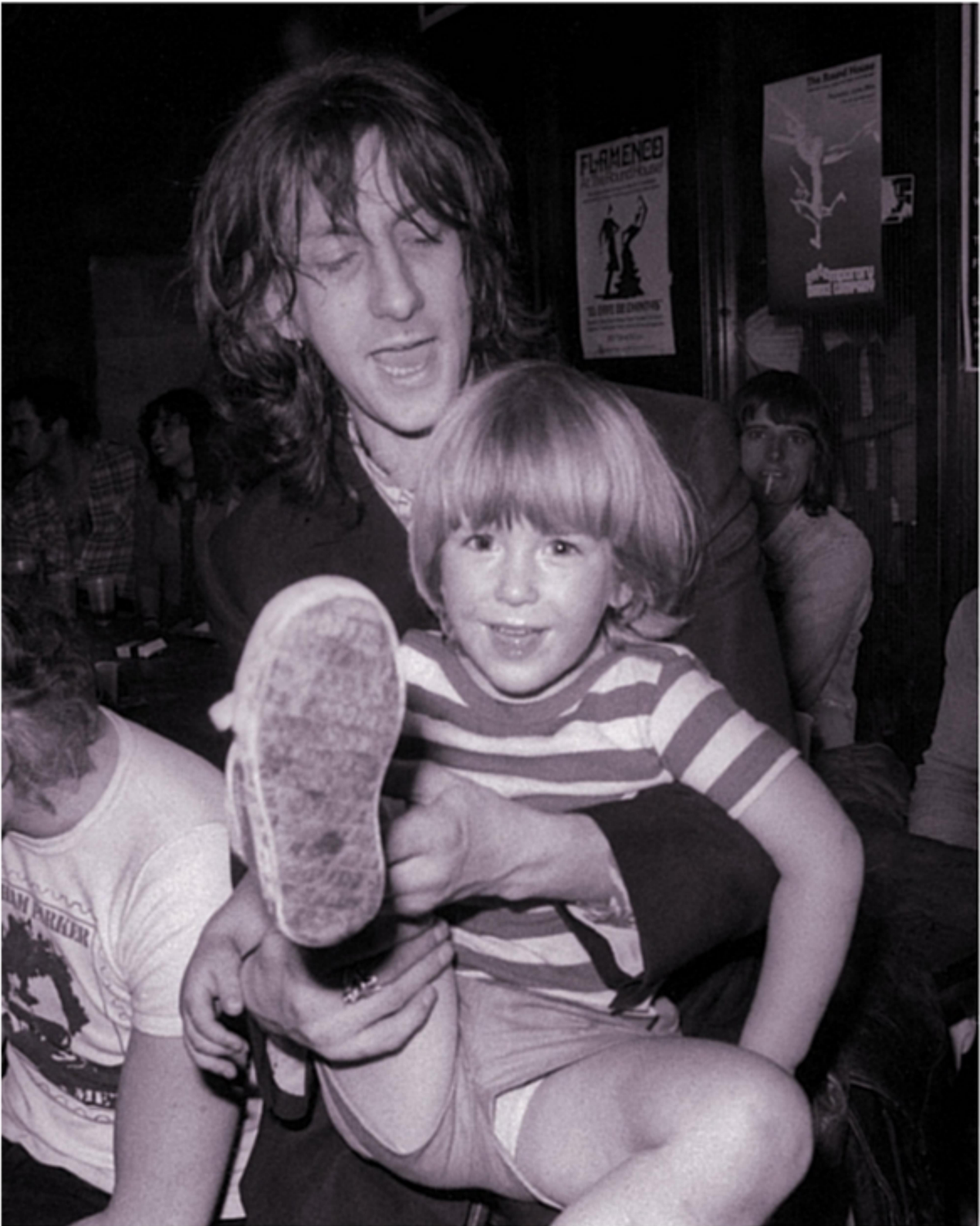
BELOW: A HAPPY FEE WITH THE BOOKS, COLLECTED FROM THE BRIGHTON PRINTER





A TRIP THROUGH LADBROKE GROVE

Foreword by Luke Took



Steve and Luke Took, Roundhouse, London on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1978  
Photograph © Ray Stevenson





STEVE PEREGRIN TOOK - 28<sup>TH</sup> JULY 1949 - 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 1980







## A TRIP THROUGH LADBROKE GROVE

## 1. What just a few people Steve knew him said

*Lee Tunstall (Mum to Luke Took)*

"His mum Betty said that she thought I knew him better than anyone. He was so special; I knew I had to have his child. He had his dad's hair. He'd have never gone bald, but he was such a pixie and, it's hard for a pixie like that to grow old."

*Tony Visconti*

"Steve was a creative back-up singer. His ideas were really his ideas. I really adored him, and I did work a few days with him on my primitive home setup. You couldn't have anything fancy at home in those days. I never went into any kind of pro or semi-pro studio with him after he and Marc split up. I would have liked to continue working with Steve, but it would've have been taken as betrayal by Marc, so I didn't. Steve was a lovely man, but when the split came I had to pick my side."

*Jenny Ashworth<sup>1</sup>*

"He was a fantastic songwriter; he really was a fantastic songwriter. He taught me all I know, that was our main connection. I'd just started playing guitar and writing songs and Steve would say; 'You've got no bloody hook line, there's got to be a hook line.' Steve had really tiny feet. Size four. That was why when he couldn't find men's shoes; he used to wear these pixie boots with little heels. He had incredibly thick hair. He was very beautiful."

*Keith Morris,<sup>2</sup>*

Keith, "I know no one that disliked him, you couldn't dislike him, and he was a very likeable sort of guy. I never saw anyone he was really close to, as a *best friend*".<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Songwriter, musician, former girlfriend to Pink Fairy Russell Hunter.

<sup>2</sup> Photographer. Friend to Steve Took, Marc and June Bolan, Gloria Jones, Tony Secunda, Larry Wallis, Elvis Costello and too many other people to name them all.

<sup>3</sup> A telling line from one of Steve Took's songs "I still trying to bury my heart in a Harem." What Steve didn't realize is that with the exception of one former girlfriend, all his girlfriends both platonic and lovers still love him to this day!



## A TRIP THROUGH LADBROKE GROVE



### *George<sup>1</sup>*

George, "Steve and lots of the others came in here. He used to come in for beans on toast, or a fry-up. He liked jam-roly-poly. He was a very quiet person, no problem, no trouble."

### *Trevor Thoms<sup>2</sup>*

"I thought he was alright really. Vulnerable, clever"

### *Nik Turner (Hawkwind)*

"A tragic Genius. A fine chap, when he was straight."

### *Sadly... Bad influences in London 'friends'*

Nik, "People would take him on, saying, 'Here, have some more, see how long you can stand up!' y'know, that type of thing. It was quite sad really, he was hanging out with pretty messed-up sort of people. That's how he was, when in London really." This was probably driven as much by jealousy as anything else. Steve had the looks when many of them really did not! In addition, they were trying for success and Steve had got it so quickly with Tyrannosaurus Rex. Even underground bands like Hawkwind wanted 'some success' which they managed with Silver Machine".

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<sup>1</sup> Owner of The Mountain Grill, 275 Portobello Road. It was a hub of Ladbroke Grove where many musicians would meet up, hang out and discuss plans for the countless impromptu gigs, which happened under 'The Westway' in Portobello Road. Steve Took wrote a song about The Mountain Grill and Hawkwind named an album after this 'greasy spoon' café.

<sup>2</sup> In addition, many other bands including the Steve Gibbons Band and numerous Nik Turner bands including Inner City Unit.





## A BRIEF GLIMPSE OF THE HIDDEN TALENT OF STEVE PEREGRIN TOOK



The music paper announcement (right) passed under the radar of historians, interested solely on the achievements of one of the duo: Marc Bolan, because until 2018 history had been written by and about "the victor" of the Tyrannosaurus Rex era and commercially that was Marc Bolan. But the truth was demonstrated quite clearly when she was given unprecedented access to 'The Took Estate' archives which included a scrapbook kept by Steve's mum Betty of her son's achievements.

Overleaf are two pages from Fee's Steve Took biography showing

- 1) The finished concert programme
- 2) One of his preliminary drawings for this impressive Concert poster.

### TYRANNOSAURUS REX

**T**YRANNOSAURUS Rex, who appeared with Donovan at the Albert Hall last week, are scheduled to appear in concert with Radio One disc jockey John Peel in the Purcell Room of the Royal Festival Hall. There will be two performances of the programme, entitled "Oak, Ash & Thorn", at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, April 5 and Saturday, April 13. The duo, Marc Bolan and Steve Peregrin Took, have been signed by Blackhill Enterprises, managers of the Pink Floyd. Their first single, "Deborah", is released by Regal Zonophone on April 19 and "My People were Fair and had Sky in their Hair but now they're content to wear Stars on their Brows", an LP, is planned for release in the first half of May. All songs have been written by Marc Bolan and the sleeve artwork is by Steve Peregrin Took. Tyrannosaurus Rex are produced by Tony Visconti.



In concert with John Peel

## OAK, ASH & THORN

Purcell Room,  
Royal Festival Hall, Southbank

General Manager: John Denton, C.B.E.

Friday 5th April & Saturday 13th April  
at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets: Royal Festival Hall Box Office

by arrangement with Blackhall Enterprises





Below: An original early pencil sketch preliminary for the Tour Poster



(© The Took Estate Collection)

## REVIEWS ... REVIEWS ... REVIEWS ... REVIEWS ... REVIEWS ...

### GOLDMINE REVIEW

*Book Reviews: Steve Peregrin Took February 8, 2018 | Dave Thompson*

**A Trip Through Ladbroke Grove: The Life and Times of Underground Hero Steve Peregrin Took by Fee Warner ISBN 978-1788081689**

Steve Took, for those who may not know (there's probably one or two) was the original other half of Tyrannosaurus Rex, the band that hauled Marc Bolan towards the superstardom of the seventies - and who, according to what and where you read your histories, has been effectively whitewashed from the story.

Integral to the duo's first three albums, he was out before the fourth, and while his former cohort rode the white swan to glory, Took sank into the kind of legend that made his very existence seem somehow apocryphal. How could someone have been so cool, so talented, so poised on the edge of greatness, and then vanish with such finality?

Well, you could ask his friend Syd Barrett about that, and it's diverting to wonder what the two sat and talked about, as their old playmates played frisbee with platinum discs, while their lives were choked by grapevine and speculation.

Barrett's story has long since been cleared of such clutter. There are probably more books about him on the shelves today than he gave interviews in his prime. Took, however, has remained deep in the shadows - one reason, perhaps, why this particular book has been germinating for seemingly years.

Author Warner has spent much of the last twenty years researching the story - gathering information, speaking with any and everyone who might have an insight into the truth, and patiently correcting the misapprehensions that have littered Took's life for so long. She doesn't intend stopping, either, but this gloriously illustrated and so-affectionately written book at least serves as a "story so far," and a companion to a planned "sister book" focusing on his music alone. The 400 pages here are simply the life.

A cast of almost thousands add their voices to Warner's - not quite an "oral history," the book is nevertheless built around the observations of the people who were actually there, in Took's company, as events unfolded.

Death, sadly, removed many of the key players before Warner could speak with them - Took, of course; Bolan, Barrett, Tony Secunda, Mick Wayne and more. But from producer Tony Visconti to friend Nik Turner, sometime collaborators Larry Wallis and Twink, and onto the son who never knew him (who provides a fascinating, moving, introduction), *A Trip Through Ladbroke Grove* lives up to its title with technicolour flare.

The Grove, after all, is where Took lived much of his life, and Warner vividly paints the subterranean multi-verse of streets and basements, hang outs and hang-ups through which Took and a host of fellow underground adventurers paraded. Dandies and drop-outs, freaks and friends, for whom making music was simply one component within the web of fascinations and convictions that sustained them.



## GOLDMINE REVIEW – CONTINUED ...

More than any other book on the time-and-place (there are several) Warner captures that mindset, but more importantly than that, she depicts a world in which the actual rewards of fame - and that includes the backdated royalties that Took eventually received from his Tyrannosaurus Rex days - were secondary to simply living. And Took, until he was taken in October 1980, lived.

<http://www.goldminemag.com/blogs/spin-cycle-blogs/book-reviews-steve-peregrin-took-year-country-prog-rock-jerry-nolan-frenchy-flickknife>

## REVIEW BY AUTHOR, AND UNDERGROUND EXPERT STU TOVELL ...

Saturday, 10 February 2018

A Trip Through Ladbroke Grove The Life and Times of Underground Hero Steve Peregrin Took By Fee Warner (Book Review)

Author/Editor/Compiler: Fee Warner

Limited edition hardback book.

Hand numbered 250 Copies.

Steve Took has often been consigned to a mere footnote in rock music's illustrious and controversial existence, this book finally elevates his status, and as you will read deservedly so.

Firstly it deals with the Marc Bolan and Tyrannosaurus Rex period with clarity and some honest talking, "Tooky" was never the sidekick or just that "bloke" with Bolan, he was in fact an equal partner and just as important to the sound and creation of the whole bands concept.

Then it goes into the whole crazy world of the underground scene taking in The Deviants, Pink Fairies, Hawkwind, Motorhead, David Bowie, Syd Barrett and even the MC5.

In fact I have to say from my own personal perspective that this is one of the most fascinating anecdotal books written and compiled on the underground with comments and memories from a host of respected writers and musicians including Mick Farren, Michael Moorcock, Nik Turner, Lemmy, Larry Wallis and Russell Hunter.

Add to this highly interesting and, at times perhaps controversial, comments from close family, friends and collaborators, what we end up with is a detailed look into the world of "Tooky" which also reflects the whole scene as it moved and changed with the times.

As if this wasn't enough we are treated to many previously unseen photographs, some fascinating press cuttings, reprints of original interviews and some stunning illustrations.

Has to be said that even the books design is a sight to behold, each section perfectly laid out in green, red and black text, oh and a really nice touch is the ribbon bookmark attached to the hardback.

Not since Jonathan Green's 1988 book 'Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground, 1961-71', has so much amazing information been forthcoming from those who were there and nice to hear it directly from them, they tell it as it was, sometimes that can be uncomfortable, Lemmy's son Paul Inder is a great example of words from the heart with no agenda other than honesty.

## STU TOVELL REVIEW CONTINUED ...

Anyone who has more than a passing interest in rock history would do well to purchase a copy, you may not really know Steve Took at the beginning of the book but by the end you will have a greater understanding of the contribution he made to music and the lives of the people around him.

Books written with this much dedication, love and attention to detail are few and far between, Fee Warner is to be commended on producing one of the best music books I have ever read.

<https://mrstu616.blogspot.com/2018/02/a-trip-through-ladbroke-grove-life-and.html>

## REVIEW BY THE ARTIST JUAN MANUEL ESCRIBUELA

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 YOUR AMAZING BOOK

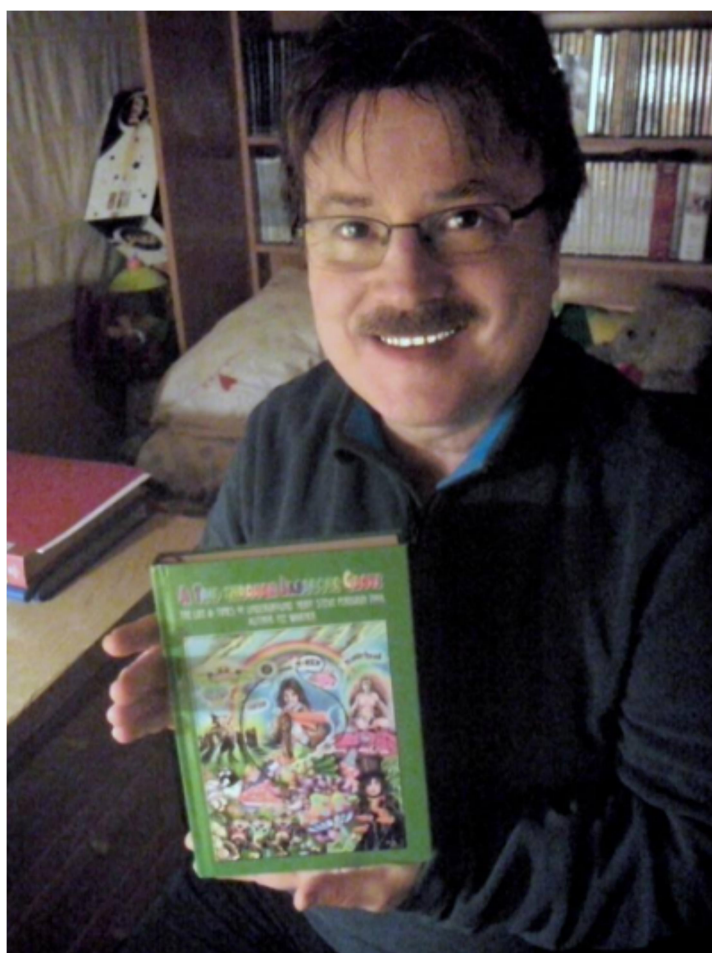
This morning I received your book Fee dedicated to Steve Peregrin Took. After a quick glance in which I have read several passages of it, and visualized the large amount of documents, memorabilia, and illustrations (among which I have had the pleasure of collaborating with a few of mine).

I must confess that I am faced with what will it mean to be one of the best biographies of the year.

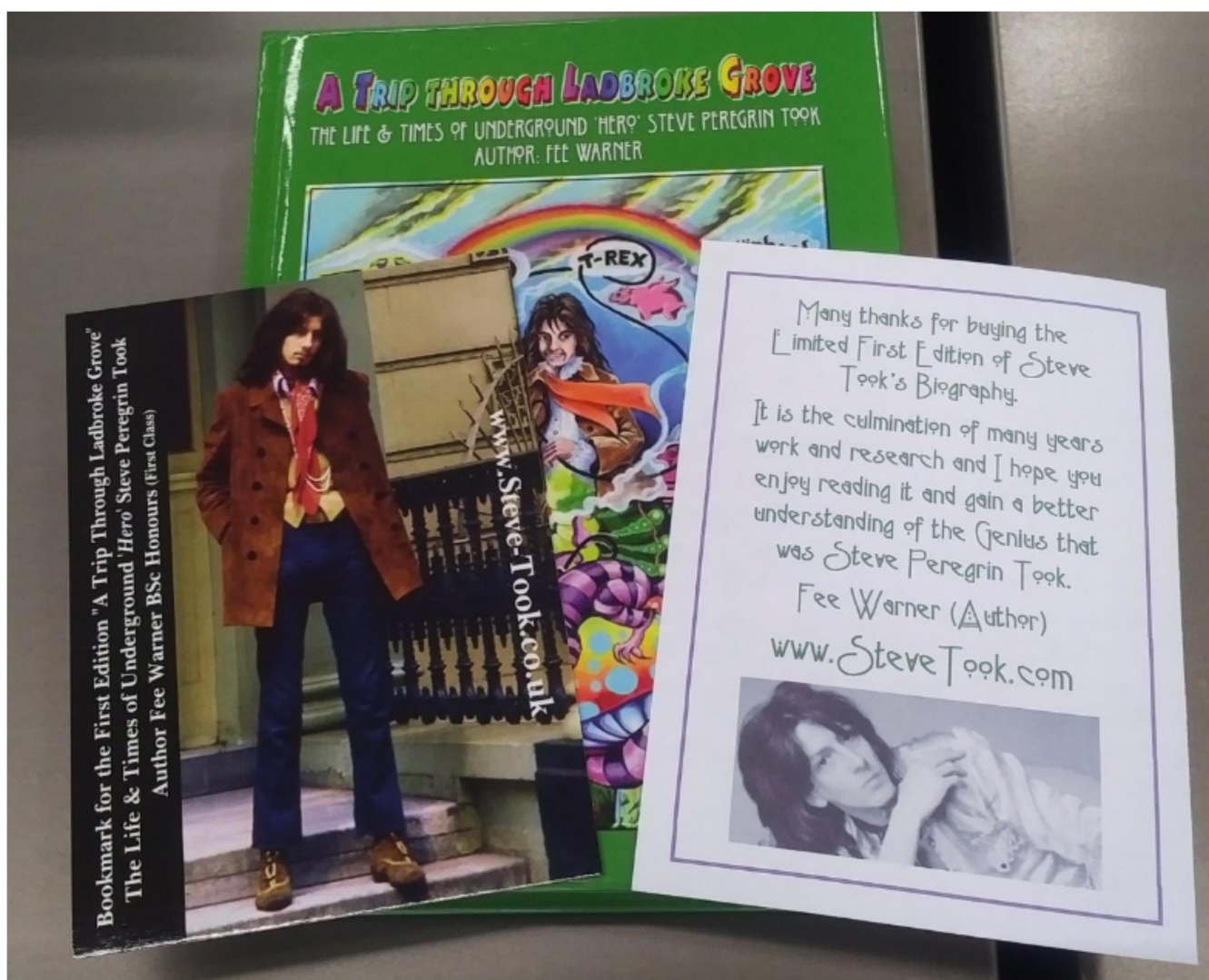
To make this book, you have done a great job of love, with many great interviews with Steve's relatives, colleagues, as well as friends.

I am sure that its reading will excite all those who fell in love with the music of Tyrannosaurus Rex, then a duo that continues to demonstrate to us today that the music of Marc Bolan and Steve Peregrin Took continues to influence many artists, and that Tyrannosaurus Rex was one of the best performers that that 'summer of love' gave us in 1967.

Thanks again Fee !! xx



## REVIEW BY FLY RECORDS



**FLY Records**

Page Liked · 12 February · 🌐

An extraordinary labour of love. The [Steve Took: A Trip Through Ladbroke Grove](http://www.stevetook.com/) back cover declares

"This book does contain such extensive new information regarding [Marc Bolan](http://www.stevetook.com/) that it renders all previous Bolan/ [T.Rex](http://www.stevetook.com/) biographies out-of-date."

Judge for yourself, it's put together with an intense passion & PACKED full of incredible stuff. Definitely not a 'cash-in' release 😎

<http://www.stevetook.com/>

#MondayMotivation





Dear Fee,

my book arrived today and I am made up to say the least, what a thing of beauty this is! Brimming with info and illustrations way beyond my expectations, for a book about a dead star its so full of life!

The first poster on my wall ever was Marc Bolan it would have been 1972/3 and I have hung on to the Ladbroke Grove rockers after many of the clever clogs bands of the 70s have failed to keep my interest.

So thank you for all your effort and perseverance in manifesting this book I know I'm gonna love it to bits.

Love laughter and good things

The following honest review was sent to Fee and the comments are well founded. One reason for errors creeping in, was that the manuscript was submitted to a publisher with their promise that the books would be delivered before the Official Launch Party in Portobello Road, London in a venue next to what was the legendary 'Mountain Grill' cafe on the 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2017 – The 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Steve Took's death.

Unfortunately the printers let Fee down, promising a November delivery date, followed by a December date. Fee then took the decision to take the manuscript to a local printer based in Brighton. Their order books were full until after the forthcoming Christmas and New Year shut down.

While the delays had been happening more information had come in from friends of Steve Took, so over the Christmas/New Year period Fee decided to reopen the manuscript to add this extra information into the manuscript. This led to limited time for proof-reading. Hence the errors. These will of course be corrected for the follow-up paperback version.

Dear Fee,

Firstly, what a well presented, lovely looking book. Full of fascinating info about Steve and so many great photos and illustrations! I do feel though, that major proof reading and correction has to be done before any 2nd edition is considered. I know you mentioned that it was proof read but dozens of errors remain, as you may have noticed. These are:-

1. The comma is misused, sometimes missing when needed and wrongly placed throughout the book. This makes sentences hard to understand and takes several re-reads to understand.
2. Some paragraphs have been duplicated on the same page. The duplicate ones obviously need removing. See Page 28 and 29 "Steve was originally going to be called Ross Stephen Porter" - should be "named", not called, as well.
3. Some sentences simply do not make any sense (due to missing or wrong words and/or commas. An example is on Page 34 "When he was born, something, which is rather unusual to find in a Baby Book but there it, was in Steve's Baby Book (left)."
4. Other errors and various typos like the John's Children song - it's titled 'Go-Go Girl', not 'Go Go Go Girl'.

PLEASE do not take this as major criticism. The work and research put into this lovely volume is evident. As is the love shown for Steve. It's a book well worth owning. But these errors do (currently) detract quite a bit, from the content. I have some experience of proof-reading, having edited, corrected and proof read for a newspaper and several CD releases. I can help if required. Again, please do not be upset by my words. I intend no offence and can certainly understand how these errors can occur when constructing such a detailed and extensive manuscript. You've done an overall brilliant job.

My thanks for everything you've done to help with both Steve and Marc's legacy.

Yours sincerely,

Dave Turner













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## FEE'S ANNOUNCEMENT DATED THE 12<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2018

I am delighted to say that the First Edition of my Steve Took biography "A Trip Through Ladbroke Grove" has sold out. This came as a bit of surprise! It was triggered by a second 'Legal Request' for five books. I had already sent one copy to The British Library and while I knew that five further books could be requested, I also knew that only some of these books are requested, so I really didn't expect the following five libraries to think my book was worth including on their shelves ...

- .....
- 1) The Bodleian Library, Oxford University
  - 2) The Cambridge University Library,
  - 3) National Library of Scotland
  - 4) National Library of Wales
  - 5) Trinity College Dublin

This is in accordance with the Legal Deposit Libraries Act 2003 or the Irish Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000, as appropriate. Each named library is entitled to one complimentary copy of each publication. Please note that this claim is in addition to any similar claim made by the British Library.

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### THE SPECIALNESS OF THIS REQUEST

It is a legal requirement to send one copy of all published books to The British Library. A fellow-author commented that he has four books in The British Library, but none have been requested by ANY of these five additional libraries, so getting a request from any of them is rare. Getting a request from ALL five libraries is even rarer. As Fee said "What can I say? I don't know how many Marc Bolan biographies have been requested by these five libraries over the years, especially written by authors either self-publishing or getting in print with a small publisher, but it's an honour to be able to take

### A TRIP THROUGH LADBROKE GROVE: *The Life and Times of Underground 'Hero' Steve Peregrin Took*

into these libraries. It is especially wonderful for me to help him go to the 'home' of J.R.R. Tolkien - namely The Bodleian Library, Oxford University. For me, it is also a delight every bit as wondrous as that of the White Queen that we are travelling over the sea to Trinity College Dublin and thereby to the fabulous Oscar Wilde."







Steve Peregrin Took is currently most famous, (Or should that be *infamous*?) for being a 50/50 founding partner with Marc Bolan of Tyrannosaurus Rex. For half a century he has been written off as 'a drugged up loser' who had his chance with Marc Bolan and missed it. This stereotyping has been further entrenched by the memories of the '*Notting Hill leather trouser mafia*' as one of his friends described them. Their excesses matched, if not exceeded those of Steve Took. These *friends* did him no favours, frequently gaining amusement by egging him on to be a clown.

Away from these influences his real friends feel that his lack of achievement was not due to an absence of talent. Steve was a fine singer songwriter whose ability to break from singing to become a satirical, topical comedian, was second-to-none. This biography reveals for the first time a deluge of new information about Steve Took's childhood, the path to Marc Bolan and the formation of Tyrannosaurus Rex. The real facts about Steve's sacking are revealed along with information on how Steve and Marc's lives remained connected and converged in the 1970's at a time when Bolan had discovered what it was like to be humiliated by the UK press and again in 1977.

Steve Took's closest genuine friends and family have allowed the author unprecedented access to documents, and eye witness testimony never before revealed. There are also previously unpublished photographs, illustrations and other associated paperwork.

This is Steve Took's first biography, and has been written to set the record straight, without vilifying Marc Bolan as a person.

This book does contain such extensive new information regarding Marc Bolan that it renders all previous Bolan/T.Rex biographies out-of-date.

