

Northern Tour

Wednesday, 08 October 2008

In The City, back in the Midland Hotel, brought nostalgic memories flooding back - I gave Keynote Speeches and was interviewed as the ITC Celebrity by the late Tony Wilson in the same room that hosted Jarvis Cocker, Andy Oldham and others this year and it was in front of those very doors that David and Sue Mackie introduced Disctronics to the UK years ago by selling CD's of that interview the very next day - which inspired me to link up with them to produce and add a weekly Tip Sheet CD to our magazine in the middle 90s.

Long chat to my old and very supportive friend Seymour Stein - I replaced him at another Celebrity Interview when he had to drop out one year. He said he keeps urging Yvette to ask me back for another interview.

Lots of industry figures there and absolute 100% support from every one of them (though some odd glances from young new arrivals who would have been about 10 when I was suddenly monstered by the meejah)!

I drove to Newcastle (much further than I thought - North East? About half an hour from North West, I wrongly thought and, 4 hours later, realised). Dinner with Derek Chinnery - now 83 but one of the three really influential Radio One Controllers.

Robin Scott started the station but was succeeded by numerous nonentities - Mark White, Douglas Muggeridge, Charles McKellan; all of whom contributed little or nothing - until Derek was promoted into the top slot and then chose Johnny Beerling to succeed him. Those three men had an extraordinary impact on British music and radio.

Of course, then John Birt and Matthew Bannister started to dismantle the strength and power of Radio One and it has never recovered. It now has a tiny percentage of listeners compared to that era and one of the results has been far less impact.

And British music influence has dropped as a result since the mid 90s.

Derek was on great form and we had a wonderful nostalgic catchup.

I stayed in the renovated Gosforth Park Hotel - now a Marriott - where I used to stay decades ago when I went up there for late night local TV shows (with Joan and Jackie Collins amongst others). Once I gave Nigel Dempster a lift back down on the next day and we remained friends until his death.

The hotel has the most comfortable beds I've ever stayed in!.

Little Joe Taylor was amazed that I drove all that way and back in a couple of days. As I collapsed into my bed home in London I tended to agree with him!