

THE BACHELORS

After their performances The Bachelors, a three-piece band from Dublin, liked to chat with fans, and hear their show reviews. Mitchell Smyth, a *Northern Constitution* journalist, was told by Bachelors fan Wendy Olphert, **‘The boys were very anxious to know how the act had been received and told us to be very honest in our criticisms.’** (*Northern Constitution*, 2 March 1963).

Despite huge demand for Bachelors tickets in October 1964, Bobby kept the admission fee lower. The Bachelors attracted a crowd of 1,735, the second best-selling performance of 1964, after the Royal Showband. Bobby said, **‘I was thinking mainly of my regulars when I kept the admission fee low, because I think they deserve the best. After all they support me all year round and why shouldn’t I do them a good turn.’** (*Northern Constitution*, 17 October 1964).



The Bachelors backstage at the Strand Ballroom, 22 February 1963. Left to right: Con Cluskey, John Stokes, Bobby Platt, Sammy Barr, and Dec Cluskey. Courtesy Bobby Platt collection.

DANNY WILLIAMS

Bobby said he was **‘particularly proud of this engagement.’** His single ***Moon River*** had reached number one in the UK in 1961, and the Strand Ballroom was his only appearance in Northern Ireland.



Danny Williams on stage. Courtesy *Coleraine Chronicle*, 6 July 1963.

JOE BROWN

Joe Brown and the Bruvvers played at the Strand Ballroom on 27 February 1965. The **‘ballroom audience were packed to the doors’**, and **‘the crowd were on edge waiting for Joe to appear’**. While playing ***Hava Nagilah*** Joe played the guitar behind his back.

The fans were so **‘wild with excitement’** that Joe had to leave by the emergency exit to avoid being mobbed. Joe was very complimentary about the local support bands, **‘I would like to say that I think your Irish showbands are wonderful. You are all lucky having such talented musicians over here...’** (*Coleraine Chronicle*, 6 March 1965).

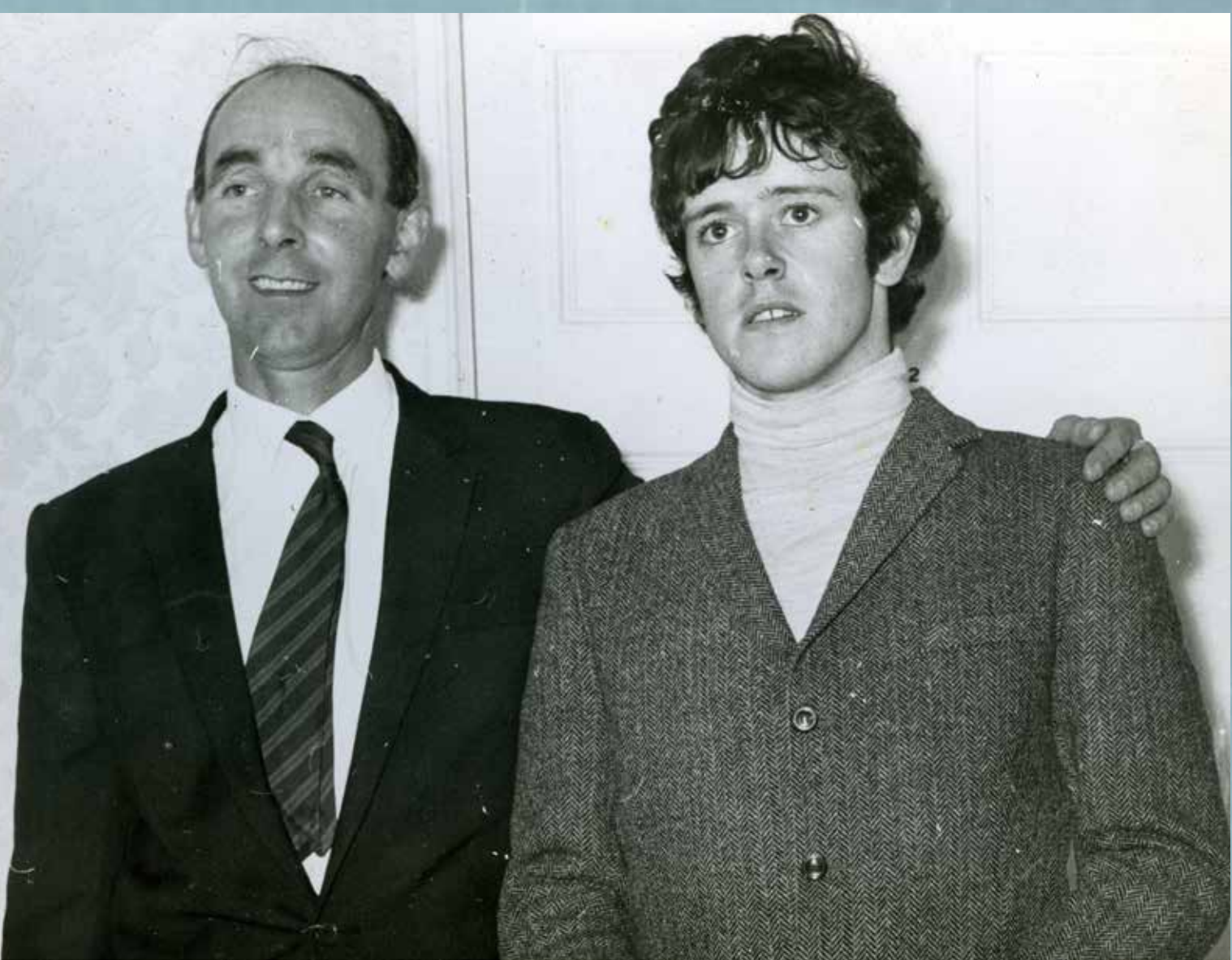
DONOVAN

Donovan played the Strand Ballroom on 17 September 1965, supported by Strangers and local band, The Wanted. Twice female fans broke into the dressing room and had to be escorted out. After the performance he announced, **‘I don’t intend staying long in this business as I am not very knocked out by it. I would like to write poems, stories and songs, and do a lot of travelling.’** The *Coleraine Chronicle* reported that the day after his appearance he went shopping in Coleraine and bought **‘two pairs of trousers, two polo-neck sweaters, six pairs of socks’**. (*Coleraine Chronicle*, 25 September 1965).

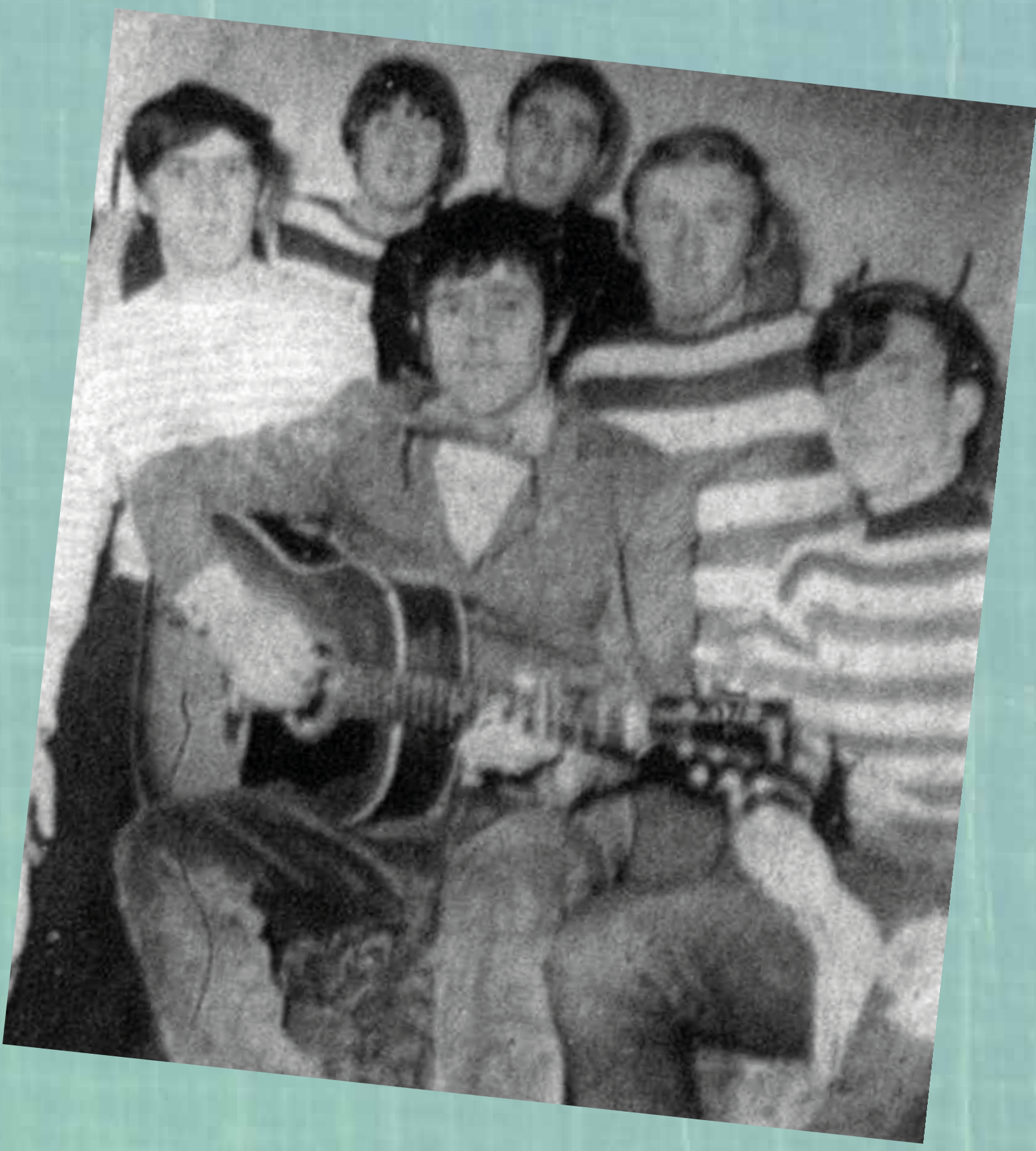
Bobby said, **‘Teenagers coming to the ballroom have been pleading with me to bring a star attraction on a long dance night, that is from 9pm to 1.30am, and now Donovan will be starting his Irish tour shortly I have succeeded in getting him to Portstewart on the start of his tour.’** (*Northern Constitution*, 11 September 1965).



Donovan on stage at the Strand Ballroom. The crowd were chanting ‘We want Donovan’ for over half an hour before his performance began. Courtesy *Coleraine Chronicle*, 25 September 1965.



Bobby with Donovan backstage at the Strand Ballroom. Courtesy Bobby Platt collection.



Bobby’s son Barry Platt played drums in local support bands Strange Effect, The Wanted, and Blues by Five. This photograph shows The Wanted supporting Donovan at the Strand Ballroom in 1965. Left to right: Vincent O’Neill; Gerry Neill; Donovan; Errol Walsh; Shalmar Glasgow; Barry Platt. Courtesy *Coleraine Chronicle*, 9 April 1966.

KENNY LYNCH

Kenny played the Strand Ballroom three times in 1963 and 1964, and once in Limavady. He had toured with the Beatles and had two UK Top Ten chart hits. Kenny said, **‘A singer thrives on applause, and the fans here certainly went for me tonight. I loved them; they’re sincere.’** (*Northern Constitution*, 22 June 1963).



Signed promotional photo of Kenny Lynch. Courtesy Bobby Platt collection.

Joe Brown and the Bruvvers. Courtesy *Coleraine Chronicle*, 6 March 1965.

