

## MICK MILLER BIOGRAPHY

Mick was born, Michael Lawton, in Dingle, an area of Liverpool, on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1950. His father, Stanley, was the manager of a mobile Co-Op shop. His mother, Evelyn, worked in the local Co-Op store. He has an older sister, Marilyn.

From an early age, Mick loved kicking a football around the in the park. When he started at "Cardinal Newman" secondary school; he was in his element as the school had a football team. He made it his goal to be selected for the team. A goal the he soon reached.

At the age of twelve, his father took him to Goodison Park to see his first professional match. He was hooked, and set himself another goal. One day, he would play professionally. In the short term, he managed to gain a place as goalkeeper for the Liverpool Catholic Schoolboys team. He did well, but with typical scouse humour, his teammates nicknamed him "Dracula" because he was no good with crosses!

After seeing an advert in a soccer magazine, Mick and one of his friends, applied for a place at soccer trials for Port Vale Football Club. They were accepted for the trial and Mick was singled out from the others. At just 15 years of age, the legendary Stanley Mathews signed him to Port Vale. Mick was in his element and in 1966 he was called up for an England youth team trial, but lost out to a young lad called Peter Shilton. So, at least he has no regrets about his trial.

Eventually, Mick was released from his Port Vale contract and after playing for some other minor clubs; he decided it was time for a change of direction. After several jobs, and a spell in Israel, working on a Kibbutz, Mick's cousin suggested that he might like to consider working as a sports host for Pontins. He took up the suggestion and in 1971, started work at the Camber Sands camp near Hastings. He loved the job and eventually appeared in the Blue Coat Shows. As the season went on, Mick became interested in comedy. He took every opportunity to learn from the visiting comedians.

The season ended and Mick decided to try his luck as a professional comedian. It was a hard winter, but it taught him a lot about the business. During his leaner times, Mick decided that he would need a "stage" name. He wanted a name that rolled off the tongue. Miller seemed to go well with Mick, so that's how the name came about. It has nothing to do with Mick The Miller, the champion greyhound!

He returned to Camber Sands for the next season as the main comedy host. During the season, Mick was moved to another Pontins camp near Weymouth. The move was successful and allowed him to work on his comedy act.

When the season ended, Mick decided to settle on the south coast. To pay the rent, Mick became a Bingo caller and tried get as much work in the clubs as possible. His act improved and he soon became "in demand." A lot of his work was at the army camps and they certainly let him know if they didn't like his act.

His reputation was growing, so he decided to move back north and take up the offer of work with Stuart Littlewood Associates in Manchester. This proved to be a good move. He was able to work larger, more prestigious venues and became a regular support act to the big name acts. He also now worked overseas.

In 1976, Mick applied to go on the popular TV talent show, New Faces. He was accepted and won his heat. As a direct result, he was signed up for a national tour supporting Chuck Berry. Other tours followed, and in 1977 he was offered his first summer season in Morecombe.

1978 saw him appear for the summer season at Blackpool's South Pier. The show was very well received, and he was invited back the following year. It was during this season that TV producer, Johnny Hamp first saw Mick work. He loved what he saw and immediately offered Mick a regular spot on "The Comedians" TV show. He appeared alongside such household names as Roy Walker, Stan Boardman and Jim Bowen. He loved every minute of it and is still close friends with many of the team.

After the success of that show, Mick was offered other TV work. He appeared on such shows as Blankety Blank and The Little And Large Show. He was also given his own half hour TV special by Granada TV called "Success." Eventually, Mick was asked to co present a series called "The Funny Side" along with Mike Smith and Cheryl Baker. Thanks to shows such as "Des O'Connor Tonight," he has appeared on TV every year since "The Comedians".

Coming up to the present, Mick has appeared on the cult sports quiz, "They Think It's All Over" and had a "half hour special" on Sky One. This was filmed in front of a live audience at a famous London comedy club. He was also very proud to be a regular guest on the popular daytime TV show, "Today With Des And Mel."

In 2004, Johnny Hamp reunited four of the original comedians for a nationwide theatre tour. Mick, along with Roy Walker, Frank Carson and Ken Goodwin, played to packed houses up and down the country.

It was in October of 2004, that Mick entered the “Kings of Comedy” house. This was for a new program, made by “Big Brother” producers, Endemol. The idea was to put Old School comedians in a house, with bright, new, young comedians. They would live together and perform various tasks. At the end of the week, everyone would perform in front of a live audience. One of them would be voted off. Mick came 3<sup>rd</sup>, behind Andrew Maxwell and his old pal, Stan Boardman. He has kept in touch with Andrew, who he admires greatly. He also made a great friend of Scottish comedienne, Janey Godley, who was also in the house. Janey later invited Mick on to her Edinburgh Festival show.

This TV show proved to be a turning point in Mick’s career. He felt invigorated by his time in the house working with the new breed of comedians. It gave him a new lease of life. He realized that there was more to working, than just being the comedian who was on “The Comedians.” Tough decisions had to be made, and he felt that the time was right to part from his long-standing manager. This allowed him to have more control over his career. After completing a pilot show for BBC Radio 4, which was recorded in Manchester. Mick took the opportunity to get to know the young comedians who were also involved in it. One of them, Toby Hadoke, ran a comedy club in Manchester. After a drink in the BBC bar, Mick offered to do a spot at the club. He was very nervous about doing it, as he had no idea of what it was going to be like. “XS Malarkey” is a comedy club, based in a student pub. Mick had worked all over the world, but never in this type of venue. Toby reassured him that all would be ok, and it was. The reaction to him was amazing and he didn’t want to leave the stage. The support acts that night were Peter Slater and Alfie Joey, both great comedians who would turn up later in Mick’s career.

Mick had become a cult! The younger audiences loved him, and he gained a new respect from the younger generation of comedians. He was asked by Justin Moorhouse (Young Kenny from Phoenix Nights) to appear in a charity show at The Opera House in Manchester. The show starred Peter Kay, Jimmy Carr, the cast of Phoenix Nights, along with stars from Coronation Street. Mick was the surprise hit of the night.

New and interesting offers followed, he appearing in “Andrew Maxwell’s Full Mooner’s” with Noel Fielding (Mighty Boosh) at The Comedy Store in London. He also recorded comedy shows for BBC Radio 7 and 4, and was a Special Guest on Lee Mack’s Radio 2 show. But shortly after working at The Comedy Store in Manchester, Mick was asked to audition for the part of Keith in the cult BBC TV show, “IDEAL.” He got the part and has now filmed two series. Also in the cast of IDEAL are Peter Slater and Alfie Joey from his gig at XS Malarkey. The show stars Johnny Vegas and has been critically acclaimed.

Mick still works around the world on cruise ships. He is one of the most in demand after dinner comedians in the UK, and is a firm favorite on the live cabaret circuit. In 2009, he toured the UK with comedians, Billy Pearce and Jimmy Cricket and starred in The Comedians Show on Blackpool’s North Pier throughout the summer.