



The **WORLD** in our street

Interview with

Mike at In the Land of Grey n Pink Collectors Records

The shop is named after prog rock band Caravan's 1971 album "In the Land of Grey and Pink". Mike who is 66 is mates with the band who he met at Quaintways (now Rosie's). The record now sells for £90.

(**Progressive rock** (often shortened to **prog** or **prog rock**) is a form of **rock** music that evolved in the late 1960s and early 1970s as part of a "mostly British attempt to elevate **rock** music to new levels of artistic credibility.")

All the bands in London used to come to Chester.

Mike opened the business in 1986 in the building they still occupy. Stewart from the Chester Comic Company had his comics on the floor and an extension was built and the foundations strengthened.

They currently have 50 – 60,000 records and their main customer base is collectors. A lot of music has become very collectable. There are young kids who are listening to their parent's records.

The most expensive record he has ever sold was for £600 – Mike had bought it for £400- a lady had come in with a variety of records and this was the one that stood out. Country music isn't a bigger seller and he doesn't stock classical and modern dance. The business does sell soundtracks. The average price of an album is about £5.00. He has a page on a website www.greypinkrecords.com

So people do seek the business out. They also stock stylus and vinyl cleaning products which will keep turntable equipment and vinyl collections in tip top condition.

Downstairs it is all rock, new wave, punk, German rock and Soul. Upstairs they have Blues, Folk, Reggae, country and 60's, world music.

Mike has two colleagues, Paul and Neil. Paul has worked in Grey n Pink Records since 1987. His main musical interests





BROOK STREET

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include 1960's garage / psych, 1970s prog, late 1980s – present indie and alternative rock. Neil has worked at Grey n Pink Records since 1988. His main musical interests include: Mersey beat, sunshine pop, psych, garage, country, bluegrass and americana.

They like being in the street, there is nowhere else like it in Chester and Mike really loves what he does. People ring in to say they have a collection and then he goes round to have a look. He gets as much information as possible at first to see if it is worthwhile so usually people will send through a list, he will speak on the phone with them and then arrange to go round on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

There are certain labels that are very collectible such as Vertigo.

Mike's sister was into music and so he got the bug for it. He grew up in the 1960s and wanted to be a pop star. He plays in a Bob Dylan tribute band. At Grey n Pink they sell tickets for gigs locally for example at the Tivoli in Buckley and the Live Rooms, Chester.

They get Japanese and German dealers and he has made a lot of mates through the business.

Mike is Chester born and bred and loves Chester – thinks it is a wonderful city. Basically the shop is paid for and as long as the vinyl thing continues, he will continue saying "it is not a job to me – it is a lovely way to earn a living!" Mike worked for Chrysalis records for years and then when that finished he was in his forties and started to do record fairs which went well.

Previously the premises was a pet shop and there was a TV repairs business upstairs.

