

Dear Sir,

I have just received an e-mail from Tony Barker with regard to the proposed extension of the copyright rules from 50 years to 95 years and am totally aghast at the proposal.

I think the contents of his e-mail give a very detailed assessment of the disastrous consequences of the extended period being implemented and I thoroughly support his views.

The ban must be opposed vigorously in every possible way.

Devotees of 'old' music of whatever genre can only obtain our type of music via CDs from the dedicated small labels. The major companies produce nothing of interest whatsoever to people like myself as they are solely interested in issuing the current dross which, unfortunately, seems to be the only money making music at the moment.

It will be a total tragedy if music and records prior to the 1950s became unavailable to our generation as most devotees have no chance whatsoever of ever getting hold of the minute number of 78s which still exist, fortunately safe for the moment in the hands of devoted collectors. Worse still, the ban on issue would prevent any younger people ever hearing the great artists of the past and, as a consequence, as the aging collectors pass on, no new fans will have emerged to maintain the interest which will result in the artists and their music fading into oblivion.

I think Tony's compromise idea has considerable merit, although I doubt if the major companies will accept the 25 year after death clause because of the early deaths of the likes of Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Eddie Cochran et al.

Perhaps an alternative idea would be that the extension only apply to those masters held by the major companies – in other words the majors would not be able to dictate to collectors who hold the only copies. A further alternative might be to exclude items originally issued on 78 from the extended period.

Please advise if there's anything else I can do to press our cause.

For info, my interests are music hall, 30s dance bands, 50s pops prior to rock n roll and a wide range of historical stuff first issued on 78s.

Albert Pattison