



with his memories.

Philadelphia was an extraordinary place in those days of the late 1950s and early 1960s. It was where everything was happening in the music industry. Nobody knows why South Philly High produced Frankie Avalon, Fabian, Bobby Rydell, Michael Callan, Jimmy Clanton and Chubby Checker, but American Bandstand had a lot to do with promoting these young stars.

Not only were the stars and dances coming from Philadelphia, but so were the fashions. Whatever the Bandstand kids were wearing was what every other kid in the country wanted to wear, right down to the uniforms some of the parochial school girls wore to the show. Teens in Florida were sweating out the '50s in sweaters because that's what the kids in Philly were wearing.

Jack recalls that while the regulars were hot stuff around the country, they were not looked upon with such reverence in South Philadelphia where it was all happening. One big problem for the male regulars was the constant threat of being challenged to fight by macho bullies, who resented the dancers' popularity with the girls.

"It got to the point where the regulars withdrew into themselves," Jack says.

And did the regulars have as much fun as the teen magazines led us to believe?

"It was great fun," says Jack flashing the grin of a 17-year-old. But the kids didn't live nearly as glamorously or have as much fun as the magazines claimed. "We didn't really have parties every night," he says. "And we had homework like everybody else."

But you could never convince a kid growing up in the South or Midwest in the 1950s that the American Bandstand regulars were just like everybody else.

That fact is one several of the regulars failed to grasp. Growing up in front of network television cameras, idolized by millions of teenagers in every city and town in the country, had a profound effect on

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