

from: glory road
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"I'M NO HERMIT," SAYS HERMAN

NEW YORK -- If you think that the lads in those popular English singing groups are preoccupied with their appearance -- you're wrong.

At least that's the word from the leader of Herman's Hermits who thinks it's the other way around.

But, if it's dress and grooming the public is interested in, Herman's willing to share his secrets."

"I'm no hermit," Herman said during his recent visit to New York. "I'm typically English and typically human -- I like for my appearance to please my fans."

Herman describes his dressing and grooming habits as conservative -- to be neat and clean and to wear "in" fashions without being extreme. And who could argue with that?

Perhaps it's this approach, along with the universal time-spanning appeal of the direct look in his sea blue eyes and his wide engaging grin, that have won for Herman and his group, followers who belong to several generations.

Herman is, in fact, something of a paradox.

In spite of his fondness for wearing shirts three sizes too big, Herman has been named one of the ten best dressed Englishmen by the British Clothing Manufacturers.

The swingers who credit Herman with wearing "the best of the Mod style" would be surprised to know that if Herman stood leaning against a lamp post, grandmother would quickly notice the resemblance between Herman and the dashing young gentlemen in the old fashioned tintypes.

But when Herman's on stage, he's perpetual movement -- he jerks, he jigs, he sings, he swings, he claps his hands and waves at the audience. Herman's recommendations to other swingers through it all is to take a powder -- baby powder -- because "it's the coolest powder around."

"Everybody's getting too excited about men's hairstyles," according to Herman, who wears his yellow hair in the current fashion but "not too long."

It's long enough however, Herman admits, to pose the possible problem of "beistle (pardon the expression) forehead -- a condition he avoids by washing his face and "bangs" every day with castile baby soap with hexachlorophene in it (the simple approach again.)

He has his hair trimmed every few weeks to keep it exactly right, but doesn't use any kind of hair dressing on it.

A song and dance man in the tradition of the career entertainer, Herman entered show business when he was 11 years old. He's an actor, who can be the boy next door, the adored son, the older woman's foolish crush, the teacher's favorite or the teenagers' latest idol.

And that's the biggest "secret" of all -- the actor's knack for being whatever his audience wants to see.

That's the reason too, why Herman and his group not only maintains top popularity with the young swingers, but has also gathered many fans among the older set who recognize his music as a revival of the music hall songs which were so popular 50 years ago -- with a new beat, of course.