

Rock's ripple of apathy

By IFAN PAYNE

THE Travelling Monster Rock and Roll Show creaked into an almost deserted St David's Hall in Cardiff last night.

The show featured a succession of mostly pensionable footnotes to the history of rock and roll.

Tommy Bruce was the pick of those who warmed the audience up from cool to tepid for the appearance of half of the Walker Brothers.

During his set, John Walker, who appeared to double as offstage MC, put over a particularly bouncy rock version of the jazz classic *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans*.

As befits a travelling show, an effigy of the rocking trucker himself was produced in the form of Elvis look-a-like Layton Summer. His walkabout in the audience while singing some of his master's hits, including *Return to Sender* produced no more than a wave of indifference.

Ricky Valance presented his hits of yesterday, *Tell Laura* and *The Wonder of You*. But 1960 was over a quarter of a century ago and all too few singers can now ignite even a pale spark of the

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flames they once generated in young hearts.

Screaming Lord Sutch at least had energy, toilet seats and pig masks. But the electorate which suggests that he sticks to singing can be countered by those who suggest that his political career is the more successful.

The heck with singing, Screaming Lord Sutch does generate an awful sort of camp frenzy.

The Vernon Girls provided the musical sparkle of the evening with their back-up singing. Their solo set included songs by the Everly Brothers, The Supremes and The Ronettes. Apart from Sutch's fancy dress and smoke, the only other signs of life was their singing *Why Do Fools Fall in Love* and *Bye Bye Love*.

The Blackcats provided sturdy and safe backing all evening.

For all Sutch's antics, the tenor of the evening was summed up by Jet Harris when after a round of underwhelming applause he responded with "Thanks for that little ripple."