



When the World Came to the Isle of Wight

1970

THE LAST GREAT EVENT

with Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison

Ray Foulk Festival organiser: with Caroline Foulk

The Isle of Wight Festival in 1969 famously attracted Bob Dylan out of retirement in Woodstock and was the starting point and benchmark for all rock and pop festivals in the UK.

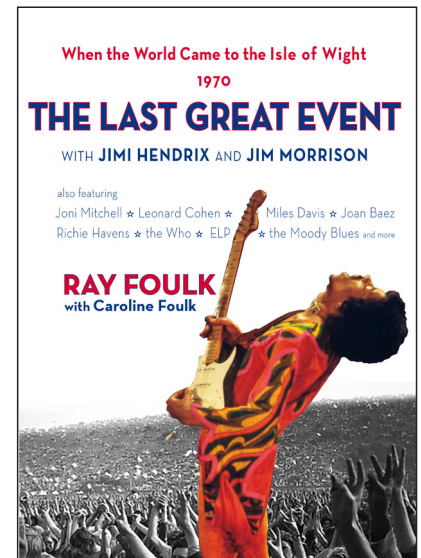
The giant arena festival of 1970 was one of the world's greatest music gatherings of all time. The phenomenal host of stars included Jimi Hendrix, Miles Davis, the Who, Joan Baez, Richie Havens, Joni Mitchell, Procul Harum, the Doors, Leonard Cohen, Emerson Lake and Palmer, the Moody Blues, and many more – all of whom attracted fans from across the music spectrum. This was Britain's 'Woodstock' and all on a tiny island off England's south coast. It would also be Hendrix's last major performance – 17 days later he was dead.

The 1970 Festival was a record-breaking event in so many ways. It spanned five days and nights with an audience widely reported to have reached 600,000, who were entertained by an unsurpassed galaxy of world famous musicians.

But the organisation of such a huge gathering was fraught with difficulty. It proved to be a roller coaster ride for the intrepid young Foulk brothers who navigated its course through a year of relentless political buffeting from local reactionary opponents and then from extremist counterculture militants who demanded a free festival. Just as Island opponents were busy sabotaging the festival site and issuing death-threats, so too an unsavoury cabal of radicals arrived from London under the banner of the White Panthers, intent upon undermining the event. For the first time, Ray Foulk, joint organiser, gives his own full, frank and authoritative account, delving into pivotal texts from all sides of the divide.

Many remember this festival as a magical, life-changing experience, encapsulating the sixties trip of sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll and a political yearning for a better world. But for others, a question looms large over the history: did this final festival help precipitate the end of the dream of an alternative society, or did it reflect changes already taking place?

This most controversial of festivals was aptly promoted by the Foulk brothers themselves as 'The Last Great Event.'



SPECIFICATIONS

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Biography & true stories

RAY FOULK, now based in Oxford, has fostered many passions since his early days as a promoter. After the Isle of Wight Festivals and stadium events in London, he and his brothers were head-hunted by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation to help plan the leisure content of their new city. Through this, Ray brought the scientist and designer Buckminster Fuller to the project, embraced his environmentalism, and eventually trained as an architect himself at the University of Cambridge. Combining design, education and promotion he spent much of the nineties and noughties as an environmental campaigner, and led the ambitious in-schools project, Blue Planet Day, rekindling

the satisfaction and more that the Festivals had brought to his youth. From his home in Oxford, the last few years have been dominated by environmental architecture and writing.

CAROLINE FOULK has worked with her father, Ray, for many years, researching, writing, and co-promoting the schools environmental project, Blue Planet Day. Recently, together they have completed a screenplay for the cinema about the invention of modern art. Caroline trained and worked as a teacher and lives in Oxford with her husband and three children.