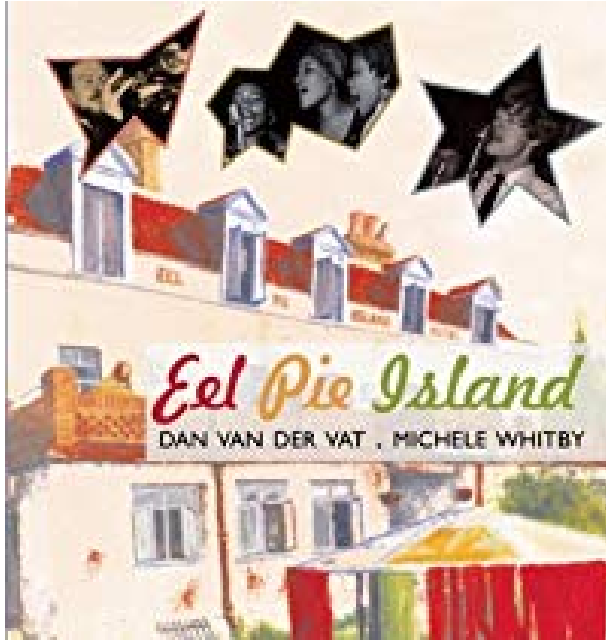


Eel Pie Island



Pages:	112
Language	English
Author:	Dan van der Vat
ISBN10:	0711230536
Genre:	Uncategorized
ISBN13:	9780711230538
Goodreads Rating:	4.25
Published:	October 27th 2009 by Frances Lincoln

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Eel Pie Island, the only inhabited island on the River Thames, has been described as “120 drunks clinging to a mudbank.” A tiny place, just 600 yards long, 150 feet at its widest, and home to a few dozen homes and businesses, the island has enjoyed two periods of special fame: in the 19th century, it was a popular resort for Charles Dickens and other Londoners who came by newfangled steamboats to spend the day at the grand hotel that dominated the island till 1969. In the 1950s and 1960s, it became a hip venue for England’s hottest jazz, R&B, and rock bands. All over Britain and beyond, Eel Pie Island and its famous concerts are remembered with a nostalgic, and sometimes knowing, smile. This book tells the island’s story from the Stone Age to The Rolling Stones and beyond, illustrating every period with a wealth of rare images and atmospheric contemporary photographs.