

TALES FROM THE WOODS

The Roots Music Networking Group

Remember – you're only young twice

In association with "AMERICAN MUSIC MAGAZINE"

96

THE ROOTS MUSIC
MAGAZINE
INCLUDING
ROCK'N'ROLL, R&B,
SOUL, JAZZ, FOLK,
COUNTRY AND
MUCH MORE

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Chuck Berry, Capital Radio Jazzfest, Alexandra Palace, London, 21-07-79, © Paul Harris



In this issue

*Neil Foster carries on hating
Keith listens to John Brown
The Frogman's Surprise Birthday Party
We "borrow" more stuff from Nick Cobban
Soul Kitchen, Jazz Junction, Blues Rambling
And more....*

ROCK'N'ROLL
WEEKENDERS
PRESENTS...

★★ The **FAMOUS** Rock'n'Roll Show! ★★

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58**

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SUN/CINNAMON LEGEND

NARVEL
"THE MARVEL"
Felt's
USA



FROM TEXAS, ROCKABILLY STAR

HUELYN
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THREE MONTHS TO KILL,
PUCKER PAINT



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Candles
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Thurs. Show

Reinst
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The **TRULY**
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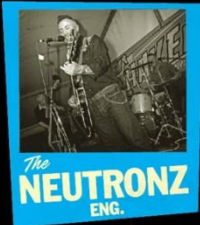
Paul
Ansell's
NUMBER 9
ENG.



★★★

Gene Gambler
AND THE
SHUFFLERS
WAL./ENG.

The **NEUTRONZ**
ENG.



Jake
Calypso
& his
RED HOT
FRA.



The **BULLTOWN BOYS**
ENG.



Mischief
HOL.

The **Man**
IN BLACK
ENG.



The **SURESHOTS**
ENG.



The **SURESHOTS**
ENG.

Jack
AND THE
REAL
DEALS
ENG.



The **Man**
IN BLACK
ENG.

Rusti Steel AND THE **STARTONES**
ENG.



SANDY
AND THE
Wild Wombats
DEU.

The **BULLETS**
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The **DANNY**
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An unidentified man spotted by Bill Haynes stuffing a pie into his face outside Wilton's Music Hall mumbles: "HOLD THE THIRD PAGE!"

Hi Gang,

Trust you are all well and as fluffy as little bunnies for our spring edition of **TALES FROM THE WOODS** Magazine.

WOW, what a night!! I'm talking about Sunday 19th March at Soho's Spice Of Life venue. Charlie Gracie and the **TFTW** Band

put on a show to remember, Yes, another triumph for us, just take a look at the photo of Charlie on stage at the Spice, you can see he was having a ball, enjoying the appreciation of the audience as much as they were enjoying him. You can read a review elsewhere within these pages, so I won't labour the point here, except to offer gratitude to Charlie and the **TALES FROM THE WOODS** Band for making the evening so special, in no small part made possible by David the excellent sound engineer whom we request by name for our shows. As many of you have experienced at Rock'n'Roll shows, many a potentially brilliant set has been ruined by poor sound, or literally having little idea how to sound up a vintage Rock'n'Roll gig. David does and he delivers every time.



Also a big thanks to Bob of Archive Film Agency for filming, Denis sound recording for our YouTube channel, our conscientious live events personnel of Elena cashier, Dave Woodland security, Marti Canal roadie and **TFTW** magazine cinema correspondent, not forgetting too all those folks who work so hard behind the scenes day by day, week by week, month by month. We are indeed a team enabling us to do what we do best.



TALES FROM THE WOODS

Roots Music Social Networking Group
The organization that is bringing live roots music back to central London

PRESENTS ON SUNDAY 28th MAY 2017

**A Groove Yard Explosion of Vintage British
Rhythm 'n Blues & Rock'n'Roll**

AT THE BORDERLINE MANETTE STREET, OFF CHARING CROSS ROAD, LONDON W1D 4JB

MC KEITH WOODS

DJ JOHN 'MR ANGRY' HOWARD

**ZOOT MONEY, PETER DONEGAN,
RAY PHILLIPS, ROY YOUNG, TFTW BAND**

Tickets on the door **£30** in advance **£28** Woodies **£25**

Tales From The Woods Email: TFTW@blueyonder.co.uk Doors 5pm, live music until 10.30pm (pay with PayPal via the website) Web: www.TFTW.org.uk

On Sunday 28th May we are returning to a renovated Borderline. I recently took a peek during their special re-opening celebration, and I think you're all going to be impressed. *(As long as I no longer fall down that hole in the middle of the floor, I'll be happy - H)* The venue may be

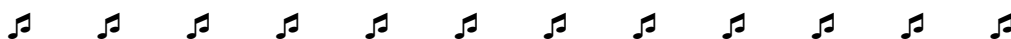
refurbished but the music remains in the same groove yard; exciting, raw, heartfelt, powerful and full of life's joys. I'm proud to announce that veteran rhythm and blues organist **Zoot Money** will be headlining and making his debut on a **TALES FROM THE WOODS** stage. The announcement of Zoot has indeed caused a stir, particularly from folks who remember him from London rhythm and blues clubs' glory days. Since those days Zoot has been busy spreading the R&B gospel across continents many times over. The evening of the 28th will, I'm sure, seem like a homecoming. I'm looking forward to the night as much as you folks are.

Peter Donegan, son of the legendary Lonnie, we are very pleased to announce will be making his Borderline debut and returning to **TALES FROM THE WOODS** after a gap of eleven years. Peter appeared with his late father's band on our first ever central London show back in 2006 and we've finally got him back, this time with the incredibly versatile **TALES FROM THE WOODS** Band behind him. I'm sure a very special skiffle guest or two will be popping in to join in the fun.

Roy Young needs no introduction to all you rocking folks, the man once dubbed the British Little Richard, the star of BBC TV's Drumbeat. No stranger to a **TALES FROM THE WOODS** stage, first appearing at one of our earlier 2is shows at the 100 Club, that memorable night in company of Liverpool sax blowing Howie Casey and one half of cockney duo Chas Hodges of Chas and Dave fame. Roy went on to perform two more shows for us at the Borderline, and since then you have been asking "When is Roy Young coming back?" Well, you got him gang, the answer is Sunday 28th May at the Borderline.

Ray Phillips, lead singer with the Nashville Teens for over five decades, debuted for us back in January 2016 and just about blew us all away. I know for sure he really enjoyed it, so if you have any doubts, check out our YouTube channel for segments of that show, you'll see we "ain't kidding". Ray is back, ready once again to Rock'n'Roll.

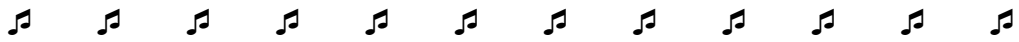
Tickets went on sale from 1st April, and as always tickets can be paid for in advance either via PayPal or cheque made out to **TALES FROM THE WOODS**. For further information please don't hesitate to contact via any method displayed on the flyer. A polite reminder that, for obvious reasons, Woodie reductions are available only through us, the venue cannot provide membership benefits.



Danny Rivers Memorial Jam

A month before our return to the Borderline, we shall be back at the Spice Of Life for a very special event. As you can see from the reproduced flyer it will take place on Sunday 30th April, a 'ONE-OFF' jam session in memory of our very good friend Danny Rivers who sadly passed away last summer, after losing his battle with cancer. All monies raised will go to charity.

It's going to be a fun evening in the name of a good cause, just a fiver in advance via the usual **TALES FROM THE WOODS** contacts. There may be a few tickets on the door, but considerable interest has been shown already as Danny was a hugely popular figure amongst musicians, fans and friends so we can't guarantee any tickets being left over. To avoid disappointment better contact us as soon as you can; we have an all-star cast, and I suspect a surprise guest or two is likely to turn up on the night.



Last issue (95) I wrote about the Lewisham Odeon, fondly remembered by so many. By contrast this issue I'm going to natter about what appears to be a near forgotten masterpiece that stood no more than five minutes' walk from where I sit and type. Sadly I can neither share memories of shows that once graced the stage or films that captured my youth and younger years, as I never visited; it closed over a decade and half before I settled in my adopted home town of Bromley.



The Gaumont in Bromley at the south end of this former market town (now a suburb of south east London), stood at 44 High Street, on the corner of Ravensbourne Road, at the southern end of the high street, just a couple of minutes' walk from Bromley South, a busy commuter railway station. It had seating for 2,583 along with a restaurant that could occupy 150. It was another of London's super cinemas opened on 23rd November 1936 and then well-known organist Terence Casey was invited to play the organ that had been installed just a day before the opening ceremony. Antique organ lovers may be interested to know it was a "4 manual/10 rank Compton" (and please feel free to enlighten us more, I'm sure there may

be a reader or two out there who indeed can). Robert Taylor in "Secret Interlude" and Ralph Lynn in "In The Soup" were the movies chosen for its chilly November opening.

The exterior, faced in brick, horizontal branding, flat top tower on the corner by the entrance, a large vertical fin sign proudly proclaimed the name Gaumont in neon on each side of the tower. The interior was even more grandiose, unique would be an understatement; a gigantic shell, giving an undersea effect, walls adorned with graded mother of pearl tints, the design of the auditorium based on Radio City Music Hall in New York.



Bromley Council is renowned for allowing acts of architectural vandalism, this surely must rank amongst its worst. The interior was gutted and transformed into a department store although the corner tower remains intact to this day.

Bromley Gaumont closed on 18th February 1961, its final showing being Bradford Dillman in "Circle Of Deception" along with the far better known Richard Basehart in "None But The Brave".

If there are any folks out there who remember what surely must have been an icon of cinematic history, please share your memories with us. Maybe you were taken there as a small child and your recollections are dim, does not matter, it needs to be shared and stored for archive purposes. If you actually attended a stage show at the Gaumont, now that would be something, so we're waiting your email, call or letter.



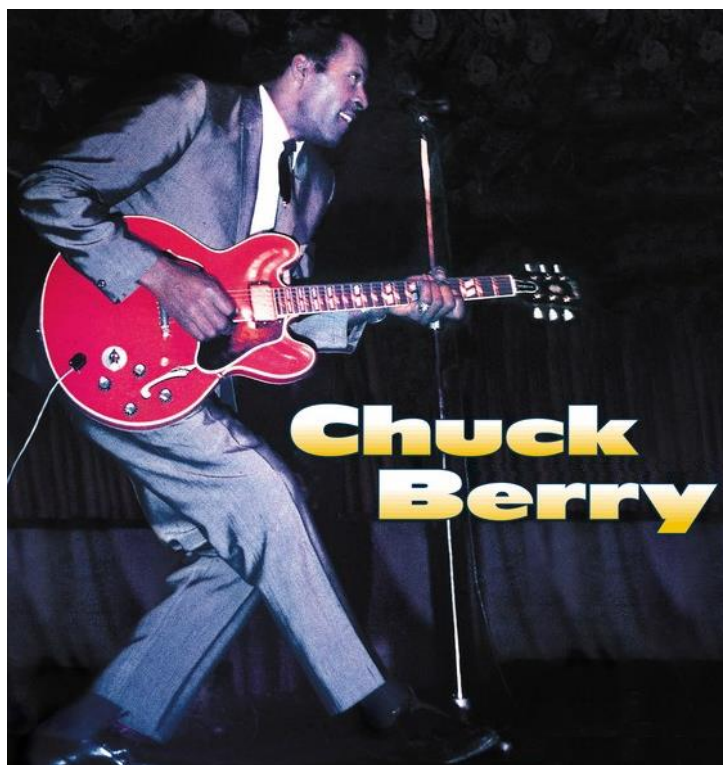
This final segment for Issue 96, I'm entitling it '**Looking For Reg**'. "Why?" I hear you all cry. During this past week, the third week of March, I tuned into BBC Radio London to lend an ear (as I occasionally do) to Robert Elms' radio programme. Elms, as some may know, has been a regular presenter on this station for many a year, only the time of day has varied. On this occasion I'm glad I tuned in, for a guest had been invited into the studio to talk about singer Johnny Ray. I'm not sure if this person had authored a book on the subject, despite being far too young to have witnessed the 'nabob of sob' in his prime. However he proved knowledgeable, talking at some length regarding JR's appearances at the London Palladium in both 1953 and 1954 and the hysteria created amongst young ladies, comparable to that of Beatlemania. What made my ears prick up was when a chap named Reg emailed into the programme to advise not only has he been a lifelong admirer but had actually witnessed the Palladium shows.



Regular readers of this magazine will remember our good friend Vince Eager wrote a fine piece about this American institution a few years ago. Vince, too, a lifelong admirer met him in the early days of his career and Vince, Larry Parnes and Johnny Ray got to socialise a little together. Vince's fine contribution was from the perspective of a fellow performer and with the hindsight of Rock'n'Roll. Reg, though, would purely give a fan's point of view and certainly without hindsight of the big beat that was still yet to come, at least as far as the UK is concerned.

Reg is not a common name, so is there anyone out there who knows Reg, the Johnny Ray fan who witnessed him at the peak of his career back in the early fifties?

I write this not completely with tongue in cheek; stranger things have happened in roots music. Maybe it will rekindle a memory of someone you know who saw him in concert, not just in the fifties but later. He was a fairly regular visitor to the UK up to the time of his death at age 63 in 1990 or perhaps someone will read this and announce "Yes I saw Johnny Ray in concert". If so we definitely want your memories.



TALES FROM THE WOODS raises a glass and says farewell to the great **Chuck Berry**, guitarist/songwriter/singer and a true legend who died aged 90 on 18th March 2017.

Chuck Berry first came to these shores in 1964, and his timing was indeed perfect, at the height of Beatlemania, who lavished praise on their hero. John Lennon, upon meeting Chuck, fell to his knees and kissed his feet, proclaiming in interviews that had there not been a name for Rock'n'Roll they would have called it "Chuck Berry". The Rolling Stones covered a lesser known Berry song for their debut single "*Come On*". Keith Richards based his own guitar style on him, and therefore the whole basic sound of the institution that is the Rolling Stones to this very day, so to say that Chuck Berry was hugely influential would be an understatement. As a teen kid at the time, take my word for it, you could not attend any venue playing rhythm and blues during its mid-sixties heyday in London at the time without seeing a white kid with a pair of maracas in his hands, prancing around the stage singing "*Too Much Monkey Business*". Berry, recently out of jail in the

states, found himself gracing the charts again with songs like "Nadine", "You Can Never Tell", "No Particular Place To Go" and "Promised Land".

I attended a show at Finsbury Park Astoria, just a few miles from my north London home, with a batch of mates, a selection of mods and teddy boys (contrary to popular myth the two warring factions did not always clash, particularly if music was the overriding passion). At this time, as senior members of our readership will recall, both opposing youth cults claimed Chuck Berry as their own, equally split down the middle inside this famous old London venue that evening. Chuck was backed that evening by the Five Dimensions, the late great Jimmy Powell group, who was absent from this tour.



Also on the bill, as many of our readers will already know, was the Rocking Guitar Man from Jackson, Tennessee, Carl Perkins, although way down the bill. Though a legendary name to Rock'n'Roll/rockabilly fans in decades to follow, at the time he was just a name spoken in hushed tones amongst consenting teenage/twenty-something lads. The Swinging Blue Jeans had to follow Perkins and close the first half and to say they suffered for it would be the second understatement already in this affectionate tribute to the great Merry Mr Berry. Chuck and Carl blew their audience away, and later this tour would be deservedly recognised as one of the great Rock'n'Roll tours of all time.

A week or two later, I would see Chuck again, this time at a packed like sardines Club Noreik in Tottenham, backed by no less a band than Liverpool's finest rhythm and blues/Rock'n'Roll outfit, Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes. Wow, imagine that! If only we could all get into Dr Who's Tardis to witness this one more time. One of the greatest Rock'n'Roll shows of all time? Definitely. I can recall it like it was yesterday; the Dominoes walking out on stage, Kingsize Taylor standing at the mike, casting his eye over the former shabby and seedy cinema and mouthing the words "What a shit hole" which I reminded him of at a **TFTW** interview we conducted for this very magazine a couple of years ago, much to his amusement.

I would get to see Chuck Berry in action many times in the decades that followed, commencing at the turn of the seventies, 1971's London Rock'n'Roll Show at Wembley Stadium. A great place to see a football match no doubt, for a Rock'n'Roll show, definitely a NO. A bill that was headlined by Berry included Little Richard who managed to blow it entirely through self-indulgence. The sound throughout much of the day was diabolical, which hampered Jerry Lee Lewis' set, aggravated by a bout of high winds which had been omnipresent spasmodically throughout the days. Bo Diddley had to cope with all this and illness too, only Bill Haley and his Comets and Chuck rose above it all to put on near great performances. A string of inappropriate support acts would then and now cause concern for the sanity of the promoter.

Decades came and went, with shows some great, some indifferent, a couple that were pretty dire; Hammersmith Odeon, Rainbow Finsbury Park, Arenas at Wembley and Docklands, Town and Country Club in Kentish Town, New Victoria Palace, where an unusually happy and smiling Chuck was happy to sign autographs for fans waiting by the stage door. Chuck was by now sitting in the back of the limousine signing autographs through an open window, until a bunch of cocky yobs strutted by demanding to know from the fans who the famous person inside the car was. Once they learnt that it was Chuck Berry they thought it would be great to hurl racist abuse, just for a few seconds though, before a couple of burly teddy boys chased them down the road, kicking their arses, a lesson learnt no doubt by the mouthy yobs. You can't insult a Rock'n'Roll legend and get away with it.

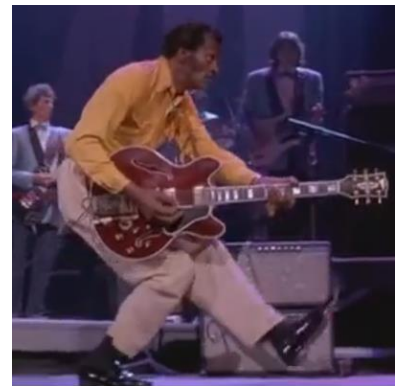
Berry of course is well known as much for his often truculent behaviour as he is for his innovative music, not actually endearing himself to promoters by demanding to be paid in cash before going on stage, or even performing an encore. It has to be said too that his habit of using pick up musicians for shows, the lack of any sort of rehearsal and sound checks alike, did little to enhance the quality control of many a performance.

Charles Edward Anderson Berry born on 18th October 1926 in St Louis, Missouri, one of six children into a comfortable African American neighbourhood, his father a minister, mother a teacher, a deeply religious family. As a child he sang in a choir, was considered a highly intelligent and imaginative student, popular amongst his teachers, it would come as a shock and considerable surprise to everyone who knew the young boy, that as teenage years arrived he was hanging out with a bad crowd and getting into trouble. This would eventually result in a bodged robbery spree with accomplices involving a store and a firearm. If that is not enough, car hijacking too that saw the remainder of his teen years spent behind bars.

By this time he had already purchased his first guitar, a cheap second hand Spanish. By 1952 he was out of prison, leading a more constructive life, spending many hours of each day teaching himself the guitar, whilst at the same time training to be a hairdresser. Now switched to far more suitable instrument he had turned electric, wanting to play like his heroes, the jazz great Charlie Christian and blues legend Tampa Red. For singing influences he turned to none other than Nat King Cole who, by this time, had been lured out of the jazz field into the mainstream by way of discovering he possessed a voice that could sell millions of records.

East side St Louis clubs were not short of exemplary musicians and amongst the best was the Johnny Johnson Trio. Despite his talent Johnson was not cut out for the limelight; Chuck however revelled in it. Along with his natural showmanship and forceful personality it was not long before it became the Chuck Berry Trio. Word travelled fast, far and wide, no doubt helped by words whispered to Chess Brothers in Chicago by one of their biggest artists and another hero to the young blues playing crooner, the legend to be Muddy Waters. With Johnson on piano, Chuck like all blues musicians perfected his blues skills of less is more, and they were soon ready to cut their first sides. "*Wee Wee Hours*" a blues, but with subtle vocals akin to Nat Cole, they chose a western swing tune too, "*Ida Red*", made popular by Texas band leader Bob Wills. Chuck rewrote the lyrics, leaning to hot rhythm and blues styling, Rock'n'Roll by 1955 was breaking through, its country styling remained intact, renamed "*Maybellene*", chosen for the A side. Chuck and Johnny Johnson had found a winning formula, that would not only prove extremely fruitful for Chess Records, they were about to make music history and no exaggeration to say to change popular music history for ever, influences that would linger for decades ahead. There was indeed no going back.

The soundtrack for generations to come followed; "*Roll Over Beethoven*", "*Brown Eyed Handsome Man*", "*Sweet Little Sixteen*" the latter performed and filmed for posterity at the Newport Jazz Festival. A Rock'n'Roll artist included on a bill with jazz legends may still raise an eyebrow now, but in 1958 it was revolutionary. Jack Teagarden duck walking with his trombone across the stage with Berry is indeed a sight to behold, in the opinion of this scribe one of the great moments in Rock'n'Roll history in certainly one of the greatest music films of any kind ever made. "Jazz On A Summers Day" it's called for the benefit of the uninitiated.



"*Memphis Tennessee*", "*Little Queenie*", of course "*Johnny B Goode*" to become one of the most famous Rock'n'Roll songs put to wax. In 1987 this title along with other samples of human history were launched in an unmanned space vessel, forever going boldly in space in the hope that alien life can encounter planet Earth's culture. "*Let It Rock*", "*Sweet Little Rock'n'Roller*", "*School Days*" and so it goes on, each and every one a classic. Some were hits and many were not, but what does that matter when creating history. Charts in the fifties, as we all know, were far from filled with Rock'n'Roll. Over the next few years Chuck Berry had four albums released; "*After School Session*", "*One Dozen Berrys*", "*Chuck Berry On Top*", "*Rocking At The Hop*".

As the fifties gave way to the sixties, Chuck was back in trouble with the law again. This time it is indeed highly likely that Rock'n'Roll paranoia by the establishment played a contributing factor, helped along nicely by the "payola" scandal that was sweeping the music industry in the States at that time. The ever present undercurrent of racism no doubt reared its ugly head too. It involved a

young lady, working at a club he owned until he fired her, she took revenge by claims of her age, Berry now long since married and with four growing children found himself behind bars again for the next near four years.

As the sixties gave way to the seventies, he was still quite a prolific recording artist. Chart hits may have dried up but albums kept a-coming, starting with "Back Home" (1970), the following year my personal favourite, I bought it at the time and it still makes frequent trips to the turntable, certainly a fine blues album, "San Francisco Dues". Sadly this was very much the era of progressive rock, and so-called music critics in the music press gave it a lukewarm reception.

Rock'n'Roll was dismissed and blues was ridiculed, pomposity ruled, the rockabilly explosion and punk were still a few years away, but justice would then be served with much egg on many faces. Chuck came to London to record "The London Sessions" amongst a bunch of admiring young British musicians jumping at the opportunity to play with their heroes as around the same period would see Jerry Lee Lewis, Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf being flown over for these series of sessions with varying results and quality.

The same year would see Chuck, for the first time in his by now lengthy career, hit No 1 in the singles chart, not with any classic recording, but a very silly, infantile risqué tune entitled "*My Ding A Ling*" written and recorded two decades before by band leader Dave Bartholomew. It was lifted off a live album cut in Coventry, England, and remains an embarrassment to this day and no doubt will beyond the grave. The following year an album "Bio" gave him a top ten UK album, sticking around in his native land at around 60. A 1975 LP, simply titled "Chuck Berry" kept royalty cheques flowing, then in 1979 came "Rock It". That would be it for thirty eight years until a surprise announcement made in the latter months of 2016 that he was working on a new album.

Chuck Berry, Capital Radio Jazzfest, Alexandra Palace, London, 21-07-79, © Paul Harris



In July 1979 Chuck Berry was one of the headliners at the Alexandra Palace Jazz Festival sponsored by Capital Radio. Chuck pulled out all the stops for a 10,000 plus audience who attended to see such luminaries as Blues legends Muddy Waters and B.B. King, Jazz greats such as Dizzy Gillespie and Dave Brubeck who no doubt must have shocked more than a few by dedicating a considerable section of his set to boogie woogie, as well as French violinist Stephane Grappelli in company of British guitarist Diz Disley. Chuck would prove to be the final survivor of this fantastic line-up.

Chuck's insistence on being paid upfront in cash on the night of each and every gig not surprisingly led to questions being made by American tax authorities. Once again he was in hot water, and soon after performing at the White House for President Jimmy Carter, he was back

behind bars again for tax evasion for a number of months. It was during his last incarceration that he employed the opportunity to learn to type, which resulted in his autobiography being released in typical Berry fashion without assistance from ghost writers, his poetic prose evident throughout as well as sexual bravado. Released later in the decade of the eighties some may say his time may have been better spent writing new material.



In 1986, a 60th birthday celebration was organized by long-time fan Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards; the celebration was filmed and released the following year 1987, with many guest performers, amongst them the late great blues, soul singer Etta James and then young buck of the Blues Robert Cray. Around the same period, the Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame was created, and they at least got it right on this occasion as Berry was their first inductee. From 1996 through to 2014 Chuck, when not touring pretty much around the globe, performed spasmodically at Blueberry Hill restaurant and bar in his native city of St Louis.

As the present century beckoned he was still performing up to and over 100 gigs a year. As late as 2008 at age 81, he took on a massive European tour that took in France, Germany, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Switzerland, Spain and the United Kingdom where he performed to invited audiences only and an expensive ticket only gig at London's legendary 100 Club on 26th March 2008. He returned some eight months later to perform at a sold out Jazz Café in Camden Town.

However rumours persisted regarding his health; in photographs he began to look uncharacteristically frail, that became evident when it was reported that he had collapsed on stage with exhaustion and had to be carried off. In 2014, soon after we heard he had finally hung up both his cherry red Gibson along with his Rock'n'Roll shoes, hence the surprise when news came out he was cutting a new album and release pending, there were even rumours of a tour. Chuck was 90 so we should not really be surprised that he should pass away so suddenly, but to us who grew up with his music, the soundtrack of our lives, Chuck Berry appeared indestructible. For sure his like will never come again, like all his contemporaries the world that spawned them has gone forever; like many of us reading this magazine, we are the lucky ones to have been around at the right time to witness it in all its glory.

Keith Woods

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More on Chuck Berry (by John Howard)

Amazingly, British fans who bought every Chuck Berry single from *No Money Down* in May 1956 onwards had to wait almost exactly eight years to see their idol in person. And the man to blame? Piano pounder Jerry Lee Lewis and his ill-advised marriage to his 13-year-old cousin Myra and the press furore that followed.

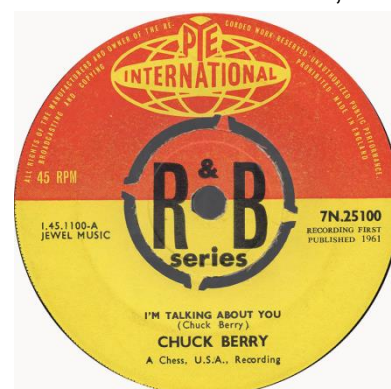
In July 1958, London agent David Rabin signed disc jockey and TV presenter of American Bandstand Alan Freed to host a 21 day concert tour the following October for a package similar to those criss-crossing America under the title Alan Freed's Caravan of Stars. It was to feature Chuck Berry, Danny and the Juniors, Screamin' Jay Hawkins, The Champs, and Jo Ann Campbell.

There was an option clause in the contract which gave Rabin only limited time to pay the upfront money to seal the deal, but the Lewis scandal broke in the interim, souring the enthusiasm of UK promoters, concert bookers and agents for original US Rock'n'Rollers.

As the fifties turned into the sixties British beat groups like The Beatles and the Rolling Stones had been reviving Berry's back catalogue, even if the words Rock'n'Roll had become totally unfashionable. There was an alternative. Berry was now being described as rhythm'n'blues, the term coined by Billboard magazine writer Herb Abramson to replace "race" to describe what we now know as Music of Black Origin.

Many of the British acts who had hits with Berry material added a sheen of authenticity to their sometimes weedy efforts by carefully name-checking their source. At around the same time, the British label conglomerate Pye-Nixa-Mercury had gained the rights to issue releases from Chicago's Chess label, emblazoning their distinctive red and yellow offerings Pye International, and alongside releases from the likes of Bo Diddley, Sonny Boy Williamson and Howling Wolf, were back catalogue items from Chuck Berry, starting with *I'm Talking About You* as the R&B series' first release.

Let It Rock, *Go Go Go*, and *Johnny B. Goode* were the topsides that followed, and these were eagerly snapped up by both sets of teenage tribes prevalent at the time, The Rockers, who thought they were buying Rock'n'Roll, and The Mods, who thought they were buying R&B.



As a result, promoter Don Arden, father of TV talent show judge Sharon Osbourne, knew he was on a good thing when he booked Chuck Berry for a tour. Starting in 1960 as a compere on Rock'n'Roll package shows, and subsequently as a tour promoter, the controversial Arden had hit paydirt by bringing US artists to the UK, particularly Gene Vincent, but also including all the major names whose lights, in the US at least, had been hidden by the bushel of the British invasion, led by The Beatles.

So when the tour, starting in May 1964, was announced, a whirlwind of publicity ensued, and to add to the appeal, yet another US rocker who had never been to Blighty was added to the bill, excitement reached fever pitch. Carl Perkins may have challenged Elvis in 1956, but by 1964 the Americans had almost forgotten him in their moptop mania, while Brits had continued to seek out all his Sun label recordings, and followed his move to US Columbia with interest.

Also on the bill were the Swinging Blue Jeans, who'd had a hit with an anaemic cover of Little Richard's sublime *Good Golly Miss Molly*, the Animals and more appropriately one of the few respected UK Rock'n'Roll bands, Liverpool's Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes.

Don Arden thought he was covering all bases with two US originals, and a few of the leading pop groups of the day. Unfortunately, he was wrong, and it was the Swinging Blue Jeans who paid the price as we shall see.

Berry's live shows were familiar to British fans thanks to appearances on celluloid in such films as *Mister Rock'n'Roll*, *Go Johnny Go*, and *Rock Rock Rock* and some even sat through what seemed

like hours of boring jazz just to catch a single Chuck appearance in Jazz on a Summer's Day, filmed at Newport Jazz Festival.

However, in person he was a revelation; confident, relaxed, and with two notable ways of moving onstage one of which was adopted by British Rock'n'Roll bands, the second of which was more elusive. Chuck had a way of kicking each leg out sideways, one at a time, which anybody could do. The duckwalk was pure Berry and difficult to master. It involved Chuck bobbing down and marching across the stage playing his guitar, while making duck-like motions with his head. Why? Because he could, that's why.

The tour opened on May 9 at the Finsbury Park Astoria, subsequently The Rainbow, and now the headquarters of a religious organisation.

Chuck's outfit suggested a bank clerk rather than a Rock'n'Roll wildman, a dark suit rather than a drape jacket, and he was backed by Kingsize Taylor and the Dominoes, with the surprise addition of another admired British Rock'n'Roller Roy Young on piano.



Young had proved on television shows like Wham! and Oh Boy! that he was possibly the only Brit rocker who could do justice to the output of Larry Williams and Little Richard. However, on this occasion he seemed happy to fill the role of sidesman, since Berry's recorded output was always heavy on piano thanks to Johnny Johnson or Otis Spann.

His set list in 1964 was about the same as it was in 1974, 1984, and to infinity: *Johnny B. Goode*, *Maybellene*, *Sweet Little Sixteen*, *School Day*, *Nadine*, *You Can't Catch Me* and *Worried Life Blues*, just for some contrast.



The crowd, as anticipated, went wild but at this point there was no stage invasion.

It was a huge success and all concerned believed that would be the template for the rest of the tour. That was, until the following night, at Hammersmith Odeon.

The response to Chuck's duckwalk was so enthusiastic that many of the fans left their seats and ran to the front of the stage. Hysteria reigned. Someone, apparently, let off a fire extinguisher. The management, nervous of a repeat of the Rock'n'Roll riots of 1956, brought down the iron safety curtain, curtailing Chuck's act after just a quarter of an hour.

If Chuck, and Carl, had proved conquering Kings, then it was an entirely different story for the Swinging Blue Jeans, who'd had the temerity, no, worse than that, the damned cheek to attempt a Little Richard cover, and felt the whole horror of the Rock'n'Roll community's view of long hairs, people from Liverpool, and those that watered down the music of

the Masters.

They were faced with heckling, cat calls and booing from the first night onwards, and more than a few Teds went to the stage door to ask them, no doubt politely, what they thought they were doing.

The Animals, fronted by feisty, stocky Novocastrian Eric Burdon, suffered less. Burdon was heard to offer hecklers the opportunity to discuss their views outside with him, and few doubted he meant it, winning him grudging respect.

The Blue Jeans, by their own request or otherwise, left the tour, and by the time the caravan arrived at the Southend Odeon at the end of May, they had gone.

Meanwhile, Chuck's latest release, a new recording of a new song, *No Particular Place to Go*, was released in the same month, putting him back in the Top Ten on both sides of the Atlantic, re-establishing a career that kept him at, or near, the summit of the rock world for the next fifty years.

John Howard

CD REVIEWS

A PIECE AT A TIME - A TRIBUTE TO GENE VINCENT

ROLLERCOASTER RCCD 3062



After *The Killer*, Gene Vincent is probably my favourite artist and whilst I am not normally keen on tribute albums, this double CD collection really is a cracking release. The concept of dedicated fan Steve Aynsley, it is he who gets proceedings off to a solid start with his excellent composition *GeGene* (as Vincent was fondly known in 1960s France) which has elements of *Wild Cat*, *Say Mama* and *She She Little Sheila* woven into it.

The second track sees Gene himself, backed by The Echoes on BBC Radio's *Saturday Club* in 1961, and an enhanced version of *Mister Loneliness*. Similarly, *Temptation Baby*, written by Joe Meek comes from an acetate recorded at his studio and preserved by lead guitarist Bob Saunders of Gene's 'British' Blue Caps. The only other track to feature Gene on disc one is an improved Rollin' Rock recording of *The Rose Of Love*.

Also on this disc are original Blue Caps bass player Jack Neal's *Jumpin' Jacks* with a galloping instrumental featuring ex-Outlaw/Rebel Rouser and Hot Chocolate lead guitarist Harvey Hinsley, who also provides the lovely licks on *Red Sails In The Sunset* with Graham Fenton vocalising. Graham sings *The Night Is So Lonely* too, with The Blue Caps, in swell style.

More Ex-Blue Caps pop-up with *She She Little Sheila* writer Jerry Merritt covering his own song, as does Johnny Meeks with *Say Mama*, both of which sounded better when sung by their boss. Paul Peek does an admirable job fronting the Blue Caps on the ballad *I Lost An Angel* and Cliff Gallup leads his band the Four Cs on their 1966 rendition of *Unchained Melody*.

French band The Capitols capture the early sound of *Pretty Pretty Baby* and also offer a song of their own, while their fellow countrymen The Sprites do *On The Sunny Side Of The Street* in a Vincent way. Johnny Carroll's sincere seventies tribute *Black Leather Rebel* still sounds great.

Steve Aynsley sings well on four more numbers, the countryish *Give In And Give Up On You*, *If Only I Could Come Back Once Again* which mentions a number of songs recorded by Gene, the atmospheric John Lodge penned (*Blues*) *Stay Away From Me* and a rocking collaboration with ace guitarist Darrell Higham on *Pretty Little Pearly*.

Darrell also impresses on Eddie Cochran's *Boll Weevil Song*, singing and playing all the instruments, as does the talented Marco DiMaggio with *Pink Thunderbird*. Vince Eager provides a recent take on *Five Days, Five Days* which he first covered for Decca in 1958 while the aforementioned Moody Blues vocalist John Lodge has a go at *Important Words* with Chris Spedding supplying the lead guitar accompaniment.

Disc 2 offers up an abundance of Gene Vincent performances, commencing with a clutch of demos he recorded with the Blue Caps in Dallas in 1958 which include *Hey Mama* (the forerunner to *Say Mama*), *Lonesome Boy*, *In My Dreams*, *Lotta Lovin'* and a couple of versions of the terrific ballad *The Night Is So Lonely*, one of which is a previously unissued Capitol acetate.

The Last Word In Lonesome Is Me comes from a 1965 BBC *Saturday Club* broadcast with The Puppets, a delightful performance of a Roger Miller song that Gene never re-enacted in the recording studio. A real discovery, thanks to a magnanimous German collector, is an acetate of the title track, a delightful but never previously issued ballad from 1967.

Then there are three demos cut in Oregon in 1969, which came out here on an EP in 1980, four of Gene's well known anthems recorded with The Wild Angels for Dave Lee Travis' Radio 1 show in 1969, and three more Rollin' Rock recordings including an enriched *Bring It On Home*.

Blue Caps Cliff Gallup and Dickie Harrell appear on a mournful country tune by The Phelps Brothers from 1955 whereas Dickie's 1961 drum led instrumental *Rocket Racket* is pretty groovy. Paul Peek's 1958 release *Sweet Skinny Jenny* swings like the clappers and Jerry Merritt sings *Born To Be A Rolling Stone* which he wrote for Gene who cut it for Challenge in the sixties.

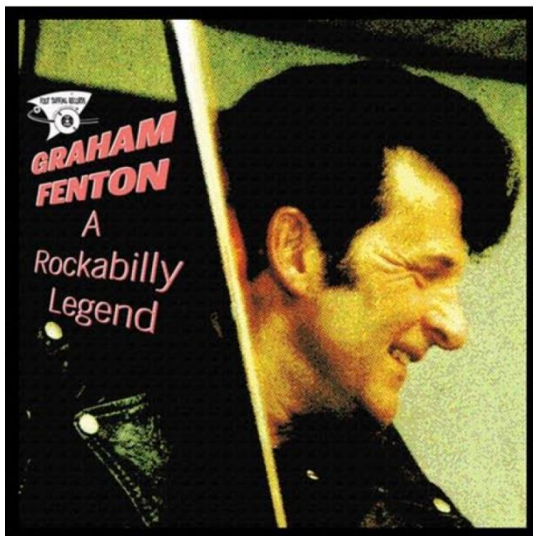
The remainder of this disc consists of Jean Vincent's belting rocker *Gene's On The Jukebox*, Graham Fenton's Matchbox with a Vincent styled *Ain't Misbehavin'*, a live *Be-Bop-A-Lula* from Vince Taylor and a smashing cover of Ian Dury's wonderful *Sweet Gene Vincent* from Steve Aynsley with Chas Hodges in sparkling form on the old joanna.

Also of interest are odd snatches of dialogue dotted about here and there, and the sound quality throughout is top notch, plus there is the superb 44 page booklet which is chock-a-block with information, recording data and photographs. This is indeed a worthy tribute to Gene Vincent for which everyone involved deserves a huge pat on the back. Essential listening methinks.

Lee Wilkinson

GRAHAM FENTON - A ROCKABILLY LEGEND

FOOT TAPPING RECORDS FT158



I am sure most of our readers will be familiar with this fine rockin' fellow, who I first became aware of in the seventies when he fronted the Houserockers/Hellraisers before enjoying chart success with Matchbox.

Here we have his latest project, on which he is accompanied by four top musicians - former Flying Saucers and Avenger slap bass man Pete Pritchard, animated drummer Steve Rushton, the versatile Dave Priseman, here on rhythm guitar, and renowned rockabilly lead guitarist Darrel Higham who also produced these recordings.

The album starts off with a bang, in the form of a forceful rendering of Skeets McDonald's rockabilly classic, *Heartbreakin' Mama*, splendidly sung and embellished by

Higham's gutsy guitar picking. There is no let up with the pace on the second track either, the Pritchard penned *Ring Dang Do*, which rocks like crazy. Pete Pritchard also supplies two other numbers - the good rocking *Hard Hearted Woman*, which suits Fenton's voice to a T, and the pulsating *200 Pounds Of Hard Time*.

Paul McCartney's moody rocker *Name And Address*, a clever tale of lost love, is illuminated with some Johnny Burnette and the Rock 'N' Roll Trio style lead guitar riffs. The tempo eases up on the very likeable stroller *Rock 'n' Roll Blues* which Eddie Cochran recorded, while *You Don't Owe Me A Thing* is a delightfully crooned sentimental country weeper written by Marty Robbins. The other cover, Otis Blackwell's *Make Ready For Love* is a decent enough jaunty pop rocker.

Darrel Higham provides four of his own compositions. *The Blues Is The Blues* is propelled along by a throbbing bass line and lively drumming, the pleasant *Save Me With Your Kiss* and *Longing For Your Love* are less forceful but feature good emotive vocal and vibrant guitar parts. *Another*

Bar Room Death, a Dixie Fried sort of story, chugs along with a compelling beating rhythm, hiccupy vocal and strong guitar work.

This release should hit the spot with Graham Fenton fans, and others may well find it worth seeking out too.

Lee Wilkinson

SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS - THE PLANET SESSIONS

ACE CDCHD 1493



This is a curious item, apparently being the first official reissue of Screamin' Jay's rare second album, *The Night And Day Of Screamin' Jay Hawkins*, supplemented with a dozen previously unreleased bonus cuts.

In 1965 Hawkins made his live UK debut, touring here throughout the month of February, and then remaining for some time leading to a couple of London recording dates, the main one being at Abbey Road on May 3rd, although the resultant disc was only released, on the short-lived Planet label, in the autumn of 1966. Session details are sketchy but guitarist Joe Moretti and tenor saxophonist Ronnie Scott have been mooted as possible participants.

The first twelve tracks follow the sequence of the original mono LP, opening with Cole Porter's *Night And Day* displaying Hawkins' rich voice over a jazzy cocktail lounge

style backing. The only other cover is *Alright, O.K. You Win* which is much better with its ska shuffle beat and a more fervent vocal approach.

The remainder of the songs are all Hawkins compositions: *In My Dream* is a wonderfully sung atmospheric soul ballad with some intricate instrumentation, while *I Wanna Know* is a brisk, rather risqué rhythm & blues number and *Your Kind Of Love* builds the momentum further.

Change Your Ways evokes a night club ambience intensified with Hawkins' lush baritone, whereas *Serving Time* is a boisterous prison refrain and *Please Forgive Me*, which he had previously cut for Okeh, is sung in a soulful manner.

The sexy *Move Me* hits a good R&B groove, with *I'm So Glad* maintaining this vigorous approach. *My Marion* is a ballad bemoaning a lost love with Hawkins in luxuriant voice and although *All Night* expresses a similar sentiment it is a powerful brassy uptempo offering.

The first two bonus tracks are songs omitted from the released long player. *I'm Lonely* is a moving ballad highlighting Hawkins' tremulous voice, whereas *Stone Crazy* finds him in in more of a rocking mode. Both of these, along with several of the other selections, would be re-recorded for other labels in later years.

The remaining tracks are interesting alternate takes, the best of which is a narration of *Please Forgive Me* that shows the wonderful timbre of Hawkins' voice. There is not that much wild rockin' or screamin' going on here, with most of this material handled in a jazz/ballad/R&B vein, but it does serve to remind us of just how good a singer he really was. I consider it to be an enjoyable release, and with splendid sound plus an informative 20 page booklet, rather an essential one for fans of Screamin' Jay Hawkins.

Lee Wilkinson

JAZZ JUNCTION

When Jazz Came To Britain

There has recently been a series on BBC Radio 4 presented by Kevin Le Gendre and titled *Jazzed Up: How Jazz Changed Britain*. It has been an excellent example of how to make a music documentary for radio, if only for the fact that the programmes were not intruded upon by sudden exhortations to listen to other of the channel's programmes with absolutely no connection to the one being aired. But clearly Radio 2, or whoever runs it, thinks of itself as a commercial station whose success is measured in terms of listener numbers and not in the quality of its content or presentation.

The series centred on the bands that took the long and arduous sea crossing from America to Britain, picking out some of the most significant ones, and looking at how jazz influenced the British music scene of the time.



It was February 1917 that saw what is regarded as the first ever jazz recording being made, the honour going to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. The leader, New Orleanian Nick LaRocca, later trumpeted that he was the sole inventor of jazz, and, in response to criticism of the veracity of his claim, answered that he was the most lied about person in history since Jesus Christ. Though both statements were palpably untrue, these tactics did prove popular (and partially effective) in the

early part of the twenty-first century.

Having achieved success with *Tiger Rag* a few months later, LaRocca was keen to capitalise on the marketing opportunities from this recording and his growing popularity, and organised a visit to Britain in 1919. Such was the enthusiastic audience response to the band that they stayed fifteen months, a highlight being an extended residency at the Hammersmith Palais, where their musical style found considerable favour with the dancers. It was this aspect that influenced a host of 'imitators' (such as Harry Roy, Ambrose, Jack Payne, Billy Cotton, and Jack Hylton), though there was a tendency to neaten and tidy up the music for British consumption, as jazz-derived dance music came to the fore during the inter-war years. The popularity of jazz in Britain was also aided by the fact that it was embraced by the upper echelons of society, including royalty.

A consequence of the influx of this special American music was the growth of record collectors, who, no doubt as a result of the difficulty in obtaining discs at the time, formed 'Rhythm Clubs' in the 1930s, at which they would listen to each other's records and discuss the music. Informal arrangements such as these have continued to the present day, if a little difficult to discover.

Louis Armstrong made a visit to Britain in 1932 and also a couple of years later, and the gusto of his music had a tremendous impact. Even by then he was already an international star, and when he visited Denmark, a culturally more advanced nation, he was met by 10,000 fans on his arrival in Copenhagen.



In the second half of the decade, Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson, who hailed from British Guiana, formed a band comprised largely of West Indian musicians playing jazz and swing music, which proved very popular, and he secured a

residency at the Café de Paris during World War II. Leaders of British bands would often turn up just to listen, hoping to attract (or steal, depending on your viewpoint) talented musicians away from a major competitor.



Probably jazz's greatest figure, Duke Ellington, visited with his big band in 1933, and he and his musicians were surprised at the depth of knowledge of the British audience. They were completely taken aback when, on the completion of their first number at the London Palladium, the audience stood up to applaud and continued to do so for ten minutes. A real and lasting special relationship was born.

Apart from some small group visits in the forties, the Second World War and the Musicians Union's ban saw to it that the big band did not return until 1958. An elegant man with impeccable manners, Ellington was comfortable in the presence of royalty, eventually meeting Queen Elizabeth, whom he found charming. His affection for British folklore resulted in an album, *Such Sweet Thunder*, evoking characters from Shakespearean plays. He continued with his visits to Britain until 1973, the year before his death.

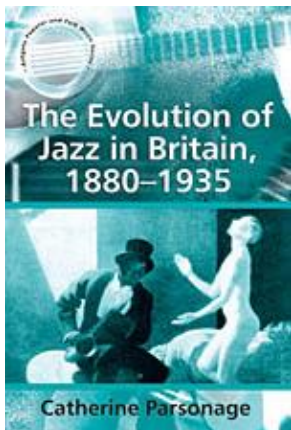
In 1942 the Feldman Swing Club opened at 100 Oxford Street (later to change its name to the 100 Club) and it soon became the home for British musicians such as Nat Gonella, who was inspired by Louis Armstrong, and bands reviving the Dixieland style of the pre-war years. The music was very popular with dancers, and it became known as 'Traditional' or 'Trad' jazz, holding sway at the venue for seven nights a week until the early sixties when it's popularity waned and beat groups started to make inroads.

At first Bebop, which had been developed by a particularly creative group of jazz musicians in New York in the mid-1940s, was regarded with disdain. However, a small number, such as Ronnie Scott, were immediately enamoured, and, eager to listen to it at its source, would seek out jobs in bands on the trans-Atlantic liners travelling to New York to learn more.



They favoured Italian suits and looked down on the Trad revivalists, and, although their music, which came to be known as 'Modern Jazz', did not at first find a foothold outside London, it gradually established itself over the next two decades as they interpreted the style for British audiences.

The first Newport Jazz Festival took place on Rhode Island in 1954, and two years later Lord Montagu of Beaulieu started his own one in the grounds of his stately home. Although it was to continue until 1961, it earned notoriety the year before when a group of young Trad fans stormed the stage, causing damage to it and the piano, expediting the end of the day's entertainment.



Jazz also had an effect on fashion, poetry (in the guise of Christopher Logue and others), and ballet, where Sir Frederick Ashton created a work called *Jazz Calendar*.

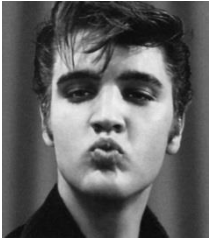
Each programme in the series was very interesting, drawing in part on the book, *The Evolution Of Jazz In Britain, 1880-1935* by Catherine Tackley (née Parsonage), interview recordings from the British Library sound archive of an oral history of jazz in Britain, and was enhanced with comments by the likes of Val Wilmer (jazz fan, writer and photographer), Roger Horton (former owner of the 100 Club), and Russell Davies (radio broadcaster and jazz trombonist).

Dave Carroll

The Big Seven

The passing of Chuck Berry at the age of 90 has caused me to evaluate the unique contribution of seven of the originators of Rock'n'Roll and, indeed, of modern rock and pop music.

Chuck undoubtedly was the most influential, and has often been called the 'Poet of Rock'n'Roll' as he wrote so many fine songs performed and recorded by so many artists. This was in addition to his singing, his guitar playing (when he bothered to keep in tune) and his acrobatic stage antics. Chuck, maybe more than any other black artist, broke down the barriers between what was then called 'race' music (black rhythm'n'blues) and white Country'n'Western with his unique Rock'n'Roll poetry on American life. Indeed his first big hit, 'Maybellene', was based on the Bob Wills Western Swing number 'Ida Red'. Along with Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck was also the 'bad boy' or rebel of Rock'n'Roll, serving several prison sentences.



Elvis Presley has to be recognized as by far the biggest and most well-known performer of the seven originators I have picked, but after he was conscripted into the US army in 1958 he lost his rebel image and never really returned to his Rock'n'Roll roots, making some awful movies in the 1960s. He then had his big comeback show dressed in black leather and started touring again, and of course his wonderful voice meant he recorded and sung some great ballads. In fact I

always preferred Elvis as a ballad singer to his Rock'n'Roll, though probably his early rockabilly Sun recordings were the best in that sphere of music.



Fats Domino must be credited, not only with many hits and massive record sales, but he was the earliest true Rock'n'Roller with 'The Fat Man' becoming a hit in the late 1940s. Fats, along with David Bartholomew, also wrote some great songs, and crossed over to a white audience.



Little Richard was yet another black artist who crossed over, breaking down the barriers, and was one of the wildest performers both live and on record. He co-wrote many of his Rock'n'Roll hits, and is one of several who have laid claim to the title 'King of Rock'n'Roll', as he is never shy of claiming, though sometimes this is varied to the Architect of Rock'n'Roll or the Originator.

Let's not forget the great **Gene Vincent**, who was transformed from a rather shy rockabilly-type singer with his Blue Caps into a mean leather-clad rocker when Jack Good changed his image and reportedly told him to 'limp, you bugger, limp' on account of his badly deformed and injured leg due to a motorcycle accident. This leg gave him great pain throughout his short life, not helped by surviving the car crash which killed his friend Eddie Cochran. Yet still Gene managed to swing his bad leg over the mike stand and perform energetically on stage. He was truly one of the great rockers.



Bill Haley and His Comets brought Rock'n'Roll to the attention of the world. Although we never heard his hits in the UK until 'Rock Around The Clock' hit our shores (no thanks to BBC radio) in the mid-1950s, Bill abandoned his Country songs with the Saddlemen to have some early Rock'n'Roll hits like 'Crazy Man Crazy' in the USA in the early 1950s. Bill must be given credit for kick-starting Rock'n'Roll and modern rock music ushering in a new era as novelty songs like 'How Much Is That Doggie In The Window?' were gradually eclipsed by the new beat-oriented music.

My seventh Rock'n'Roll originator has to be my personal favorite, **Jerry Lee Lewis**. He wrote very few songs, and had relatively few big Rock'n'Roll hits due to the 1958 fiasco and the subsequent air play ban. He only had three Billboard Top Twenty hits in the United States, and five Top Twenty hits in the UK. Although he later scored many big Country hits in the USA, these are virtually unknown elsewhere. He also had a big selling duets album in 2006 which



earned him another Gold Record, but again mainly in the States. His reputation as a wild on-stage performer and a true 'bad boy' Rock'n'Roll rebel, however, are what makes The Killer one of the greatest Rock'n'Rollers. His 'live' albums, particularly 'Live at the Star-Club, Hamburg', are evidence of his wild stage performances in the 1950s and 1960s especially. His shows, until recently, were always unpredictable. He was just as likely to walk off during a stage show or insult the audience or his band members, and change the lyrics of songs to put across a point. He was always his worst enemy, never taking advice, being completely unmanageable, and complaining about his marriage to Myra being constantly mentioned when he himself refers to it many times on both record and in stage performances captured on video/DVD.

There have been many disputes as to who is the true King of Rock'n'Roll, but in my estimation all these seven made a unique contribution. Chuck Berry stands out, however, as the one who, on his own, wrote so many Rock'n'Roll standards, and he managed to continue to have some big Rock'n'Roll or rhythm'n'blues hits in the 1960s era of the British invasion of the American charts.



Now only three of these great original Rock'n'Rollers are still with us, and they have all either retired or, in the case of Jerry Lee, should probably do so or stick to recording where deficiencies in his voice can be corrected technically. On stage he seems bored nowadays, though his duets DVD 'Last Man Standing Live' from 2006 captured the feeling of what his live performances were like in the 1970s, a great mixture of Rock'n'Roll, blues and Country with a touch of Gospel thrown in.

My own personal favorites at the height of their performing careers were Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard and Chuck Berry, with Gene Vincent coming in a close fourth. With Chuck now gone, we are unlikely to see the likes of these rockin'

gentlemen again on record or on stage.

Tony Papard

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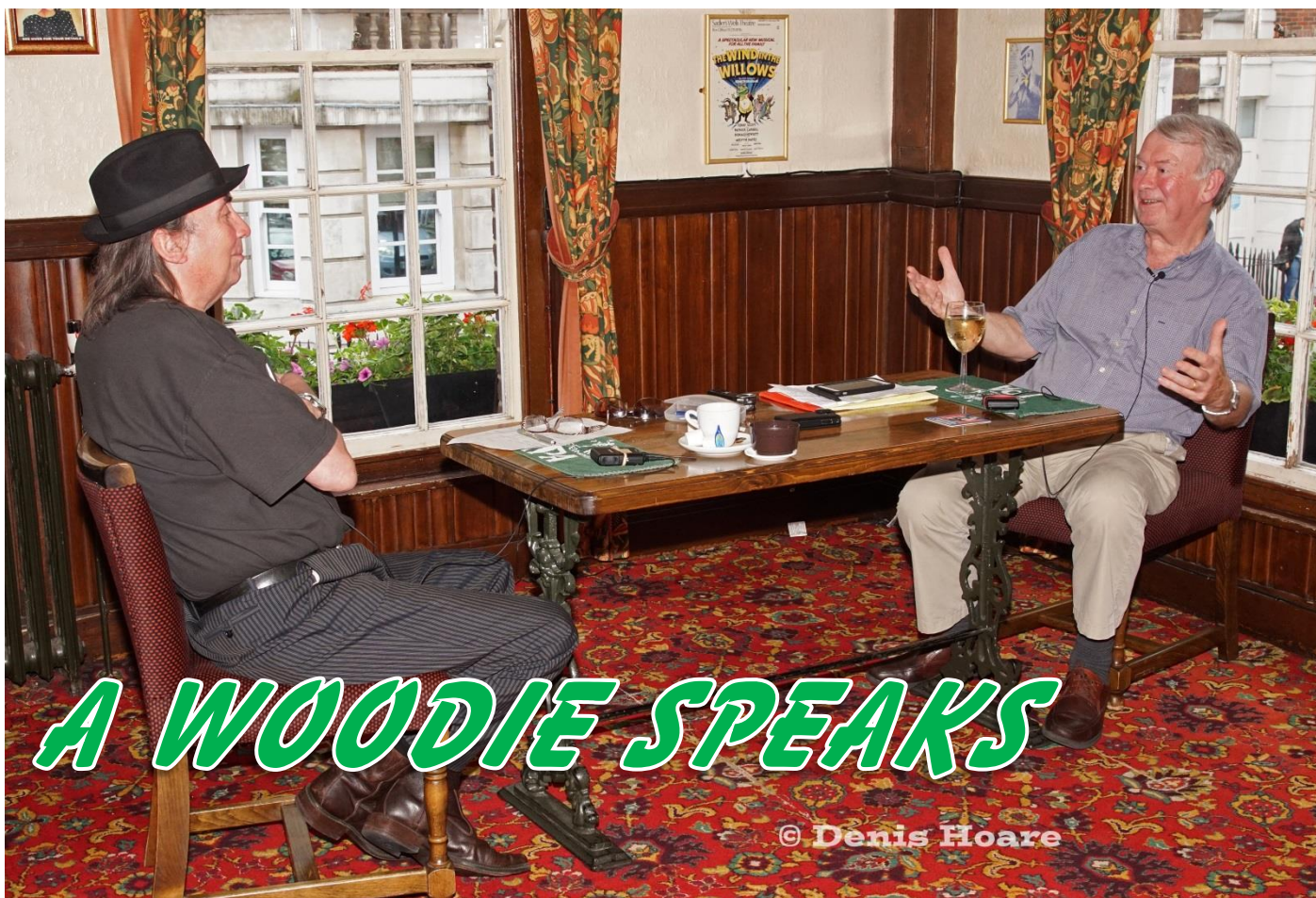
Baker's Dozen

A dip into 40 years of correspondence from the
Ken Major (London) / Chuck N. Baker (Las Vegas) archive cabinet

Contact Ken for the fuller stories.

1. John Andrews, a forensic neuropathologist, was the final witness for the prosecution in the Phil Spector case. A defence forensic pathologist said "Clarkson's lungs were filled with blood indicating she breathed for several minutes after she was shot and blood could have emitted on to Spector's jacket if she had shot herself." Andrews said that this could not have happened because Lana would have suffered "spinal shock" when the bullet hit her spinal cord, a condition of temporary paralysis. After Andrews stepped down the defence began to put on final evidence called "surrebuttal", and the prosecution's phase is "rebuttal" **Source:** *Peter Y. Yong L.A. Times, 23.8.2007*
2. "Elvis Presley: Writing for the King" 1. Written by Ken Sharpe is a book of interviews with nearly 150 songwriters whose songs were recorded by Elvis. Included is a CD "Follow That Dream" which contains 25 song demos sent to Elvis believed available for the first time. Includes "Teddy Bear", "Viva Las Vegas", "Burning Love." Another CD is included with live recordings from Elvis' Las Vegas shows. Writers include Leiber & Stoller, Doc Pomus and Mort Shuman, Ben Weisman, Tony Joe White, Mark James and Dennis Linde. The book was published in Europe and is available in the U.S. only at Graceland or via www.Elvis.com. **Source:** *Robert Hilburn, L.A. Times, 2.5.2007*
3. The Las Vegas New Frontier casino shut shop 16/7/2007. The 105 room Last Frontier opened in 1942, the 2nd hotel-casino on the Strip. Howard Hughes bought it for \$14m in 1967. Phil Ruffin bought the property for \$167m in October 1997 ending a 6 year workers strike 4 months earlier. He sold the 34.5 acre property in May for \$1.2 billion to the El-Ad Group. They plan to spend \$5 billion to construct a multi-use development based on New York's Plaza Hotel. There is an on-site auction scheduled for July 26 and security guard Jimmie Johnson said he was scheduled to work until 2.30am to ensure everyone leaves the hotel. **Source:** *Arnold M. Knightly, Las Vegas Review Journal, 16.7.2007*
4. Caesars Palace is being sued by the Musicians Local 369 Union for illegally recording showroom performances, and selling a compilation CD without consent of the union. Caesars gift shops briefly sold the CD featuring performances by Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr. and Andy Williams. The Caesars showroom had a contract with the local musicians union for house orchestras in the '70s and '80s when most of the tapes were recorded. The suit asks for "seizure and destruction" of the recordings and Caesars to pay musician wages "for each and every hour of unlawful recording made". **Source:** *Mike Weatherford, Las Vegas Review-Journal, 5.9.2001*
5. Ahmet Ertegun: "what we did was to take the best singers we could find and force them to play soul music. As a result of that, we came out with a sound which was halfway toward funk." These included Ray Charles and Clyde McPhatter who had the blues and soul instincts to sing soul music on their own. In the late '50s Atlantic lost several of their best R'n'B artists, but in the '60s went on to sign up Franklin, Zeppelin. Cream and Pickett, then Buffalo and Dusty Springfield, the Bee Gees, the Allman Bros, Crosby Stills Nash & Young. **Source:** *Robert Hillburn, L.A. Times, 15.12.2006*
6. The Isley Brothers latest album "Eternal" is nearing platinum sales of 800.000 so far, boosted by their previous single "Contagious". The single gives the Isleys the longest chart span on Billboard's Hot 100 singles at 42 years, beginning in 1959 with "Shout". Originally were a trio – Ronald, Rudolph (now a minister) and O'Kelly (died at 48), then later plus Marvin, and Ernie. The group won \$5.4 million law suit against Michael Bolton, when he stole their 1966 tune "Love Is A Wonderful Thing" in 1991. Ronald has become identified with an old-school gangsta character called "Mr. Biggs", who has become his alter ego. **Source:** *Nekesa Mumbi Moody, Las Vegas Sun, 12.10.2001*

7. The harmonica solos on many film scores such as “Midnight Cowboy”, “The Getaway,” “Sugarland Express” and the TV series “Sesame Street” were by the jazz musician Toots Thielmans. Born 29.4.22 in Brussels his full name was Jean-Baptiste Frederic Isidore Thielmans and he started playing during the German occupation. He joined Benny Goodman on a European tour in 1950 and emigrated to the U.S. in 1952 joining Charlie Parker’s All Stars. He also played with Ella Fitzgerald, Miles Davies, Frank Sinatra, Paul Simon and Billy Joel. Toots had an operation on his shoulder last month after a fall and died in his sleep in a Belgian hospital. **Source:** *Lorne Cook, Las Vegas Review-Journal 23.8.2016*
8. LP sales are at nearly a 30 year high hitting \$416m including EPs which is about 6% of total music sales. Capitol Records’ vinyl sales are up 19% in the first half of 2016, and across the industry they are up 11% with downloads and CDs on the decline. Their vinyl mastering engineer 67 years old Ron McMaster was to have retired but is now working around the clock. He was the drummer in the 1960’s Garage rock band called Public Nuisance signed to Equinox Records owned by Terry Melcher. The label was shut down when Melcher was involved in the Charles Manson murder case having leased his L.A. home to Roman Polanski. **Source:** *Ryan Faughnder, L.V. Review-Journal, 8.9.2016*
9. “Mad Men”, a TV show about the advertising agency business in the ‘50s and ‘60s, included several pieces of ‘50s music, including Don Cherry singing his 1955 hit “Band of Gold.” A long term Las Vegas resident who had a career as a recording star and a top professional golfer, his recent book is titled “Cherries Jubilee” (*elsewhere in the article referred to as “Cherry’s Jubilee”– KM*), written with Neil Daniels. Triumph Books, ISBN 1-57243-834-7, hard cover, 285 pages, \$24.95. Don grew up in Texas and in WWII served in the Army Air Corps. The late ‘40s/early ‘50s worked with big bands and stars such as Bing Crosby and Teresa Brewer. **Source:** *The Veterans Reporter, August 2007*
10. White trumpet player Wayne Jackson and black tenor sax player Andrew Love were “The Memphis Horns” who played together on 52 No. 1 records and 83 gold and platinum records. The original line up also included James Mitchell, Jack Hale and Lewis Collins. Jackson & Love backed up and recorded for Elvis Presley (Suspicious Minds), Otis Redding (Dock of the Bay) and Neil Diamond (Sweet Caroline). Wayne was born in Memphis and raised in West Memphis, Arkansas. The Memphis Horns were awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012. Wayne who received his 1st gold disc in 1961 died of heart failure in June 2016 aged 74. **Source:** *L.A. Times, 23.6.2016*
11. Neighbours at the Clark County Commission protested over Las Vegas celebrity Wayne Newton organising commercial tours of his Casa de Shenandoah 55 acre ranch which he built in the 1960s. The project may create 400 jobs plus a museum and theatre on 10 acres of land. There is an estimate of 6 shuttle buses an hour and a tour through the bottom floor of his 14000 square foot house. A car wash would be built to clean the shuttle buses plus a small chapel to hold weddings. Newton has 50 Arabian horses and other animals plus 20 vintage cars. He hopes to get the tours off the ground within a year. Board members sided with the opponents and will recommend the commissioners to deny the permit. **Source:** *Scott Wyland, Las Vegas Review-Journal, 27.10.2010*
12. Starting Friday, Wayne Newton’s estate opens for public tours, address: Casa de Shenandoah, 3310 E. Sunset Rd., Las Vegas. Open 9am to 6pm., price \$35 - \$95. Newton said that he and his partners have settled their differences and he owns the whole property. He moved to Vegas in 1959 and purchased the first 5 acres of the estate in 1966. The first house was built between 1966-1968 and bought more acreage between 1969-1972. The mansion was built between 1973-1976. The estate has 8 residences, several natural ponds, 2 barns and stalls for 60 purebred Arabian horses and 3 horse arenas. Tour displays include gifts from Elvis Presley, Nat King Cole, Jack Benny and Frank Sinatra. Plus Rolls-Royces and Bentleys. **Source:** *John Przybys, Las Vegas Review-Journal, 17.9.2015*
13. Record Stores Day are shunned by some outlets for encouraging too high retail prices, so says Sherry Lane who has opened Pop Obscure Records, a vinyl only store in downtown L.A. with husband and partner Dustin. They have a 10,000 strong stock with punk, new wave, industrial and underground. There is a jazz section but is a genre they are learning. Their objective is to emulate Permanent Records, a thriving, multi-outlet mini-chain specialising in used LPs. Other vinyl outlets locally include The Last Bookstore, Descontrol in the Art District and Ooga Booga in Chinatown. Other neighborhoods like Highland Park and Echo also have several stores. **Source:** *August Brown, L.A. Times, 28.8.2016*



A WOODIE SPEAKS

© Denis Hoare

John Broven

Where were you born John?

I was born in Maidstone, Kent, on November 4th 1942, very much a wartime baby. My parents moved down to Polegate, Sussex just after the war and that's where I was raised. The nearest big town to Polegate was Eastbourne and that was the centre of gravity for me. I used to watch Eastbourne Town Football Club at the Saffrons and Sussex Cricket Club used to play at the Saffrons as well. That was the era of the ABC Minors and we used to catch the bus from Polegate to Eastbourne; I think the fare was threepence. That introduced me to the glories of American movies and as I became a teenager that's when Rock'n'Roll first came in. What great timing!

One of the most significant movies I saw was 'Don't Knock The Rock' in 1957 and that was the performance that just knocked me out, almost my road to Damascus moment; Little Richard singing *Long Tall Sally*. I shall always remember that the film ended about 5:25 in the afternoon and I was so moved I thought I just had to get the record of *Long Tall Sally*. The record shop, Booths, closed at 5:30 so it really was a mad dash from Seaside Road to Booths by Eastbourne Town Hall. I got there just before the doors closed and bought *Long Tall Sally* which was, of course, a 78 on London American (45s were just coming in). So, as I said, that literally was my road to Damascus moment.



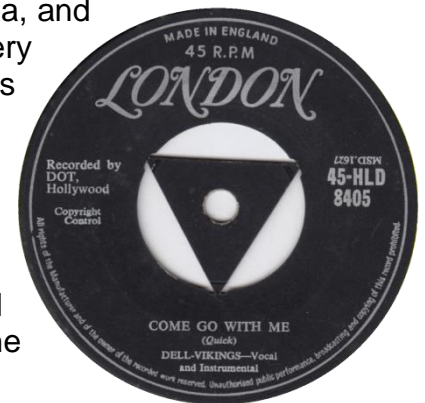
Shortly before that my father had purchased a Bush radiogram with Garrard record deck and that really opened the family up to records. Amongst the first batch I can remember were *Rock Around The Clock* and *Thirteen Women* by Bill Haley, *Only You* by the Hilltoppers (not the Platters), *It's Almost Tomorrow* by the Dream Weavers on Brunswick. But of course the record, who would have known, the one that predicted the future so to speak, was *Blueberry Hill* by Fats Domino. Little was I to know that the 78 that my dad brought home would lead me to New Orleans and writing books about the city and, in a sense, led me to living, as I do today, on Long Island just outside of New

York City. I suppose you can say that the journey started there but it was Little Richard and *Long Tall Sally* that really gave it the push.

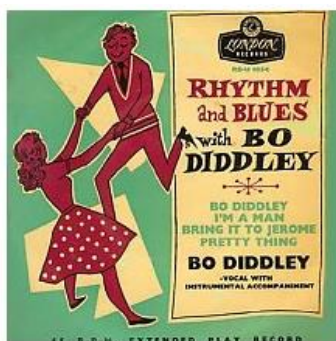
So back a bit to your school years.

School was really significant; I went to Bexhill County Grammar School for Boys, distinctly separate from the Girl's school and never the twain shall meet. As I said, Eastbourne was the next big town to Polegate but, because it was a county borough, they would not accept 11 Plus students from outside the area which meant I had to go to either Lewes Grammar School or Bexhill. As luck would have it, it turned out to be Bexhill and I say "luck" because I ended up in the fourth year in the same class as Mike Leadbitter who, as we know, went on to found Blues Unlimited with Simon Napier. By being in the same class as Mike, who was already on a different plane to the rest of us, he was seeking all these obscure records that were being released.

At the time England was very much dominated by the Hit Parade and Family Favourites and you and a lot of keen fans will know the Rock'n'Roll era was not all Rock'n'Roll. Mike was a guy who really went to the underbelly of the record releases. There was a little record shop in Bexhill where Mike and his teddy boy friends were friendly with the manager, Marcia, and convinced her to bring in literally one single of every release every week. As you know you had the weekly advance record schedules and they would say to her we want *C C Rider* by Chuck Willis, we want *Flirty Gertie* by the Jiv-A-Tones and so on. Mike introduced me to all these weird and wonderful records and I just found that I had an empathy with genuine Rock'n'Roll. Some of the early records I can remember buying were *Party Doll* by Buddy Knox and one I cherished most of all because it was a pretty obscure record was *Come Go With Me* by the Dell-Vikings; everybody knows the record now but at the time you just never heard it.

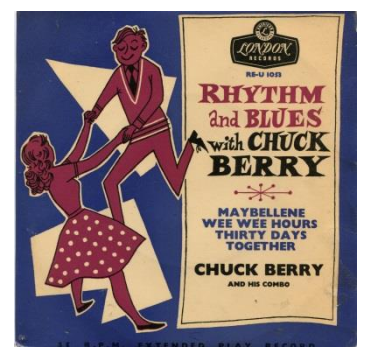


That opened the floodgates so to speak. There I was in Four Arts with Mike who was the guy who literally opened the door for me. Mike was one of these great characters who turned out to be a tremendous visionary researcher and a superb writer. You'd have thought he'd have been a natural candidate for university but, basically, he was thrown out of school after the fifth year with either one or two O levels (and I rather think it was one) and from then on he had to scuffle a little bit. Occasionally he hit hard times which meant he then sold part of his record collection and his misfortune was my fortune. I remember buying from him [Rakin' and Scrapin'](#) by Dean Beard on London; everybody knows *Blue Suede Shoes* by Carl Perkins but in those days you never heard Carl Perkins, it was just Elvis, Elvis, Elvis and that was the end of it. I love telling, particularly audiences who don't know Rock'n'Roll, about [Flirty Gertie](#) by the Jiv-A-Tones and they say "What?!" regardless of the fact that it's a super record and another one in that category was *Cast Iron Arm* by Peanuts Wilson... fabulous records, in that case from Norman Petty's studio.



So this, if you like, was the real Rock'n'Roll but Mike, although he became known as a blues man, he started off by collecting these out and out Rock'n'Roll records. Of course, it was rhythm'n'blues which was his forté and I remember buying from him at the same time as *Rakin' and Scrapin'*, *Blue Suede Shoes* and so on, the Bo Diddley London EP. The first side is *Bo Diddley and I'm A Man*, with *Bring It To Jerome* and *Pretty Thing*. I put the needle on the record and I think my parents almost disappeared from the house, it was such an unearthly, ungodly sound. Billy

Boy Arnold's and Lester Davenport's harmonica, I just didn't know what instrument it was. Leonard Chess had obviously put some echo on the harmonica and you had Jerome Green on maracas; it was just a totally mind-blowing sound. The Chuck Berry London EP, also from Mike, was just as revolutionary.



I think the thing I learnt most from Mike was that behind every record there was a story. At that time the music press was basically New Music Express and you have one of their latter day writers here in the audience today, Mr Cliff White. However, I think it's fair to say that in those days the NME was very much in the music publishers' hands and the impresarios. So in the late fifties it was the NME and you look at it now and they had some great adverts from EMI and Decca and the weekly paper always had the stories of artists who were coming over. I think Johnny Otis was supposed to be coming over at one time and Fats Domino and so on but because it was so restricted with the musicians' union rules a lot of those tours fell by the wayside. Basically the articles were puff pieces and we wanted to find out more of what was behind these records.

I don't know whether they still hold mock O levels but the reason they called it 'mock' was you had to show reasonable proficiency to the school otherwise you were not allowed to take the actual O level exams. Just before the start of one of the papers, Mike came up to me and said, "I know where Fats Domino makes his records. It's Cosimo Matassa's studios in New Orleans" and after that revelation I didn't care a damn about the examinations. If you can visualise the London American label it said 'Recorded by Imperial, Hollywood' so who knew, for a start, that Fats came from New Orleans unless maybe you looked at the liner notes of an EP or LP. That was another enlightening moment, and God knows how Mike heard about it as you would never find it in a newspaper.

He left grammar school in 1958 while I left in 1960 and we lost touch for two or three years. I was still collecting records with a Saturday morning jaunt down to the record shops in Eastbourne. My favourite shop was Boyds where we got to know the people and they got to know us. Some of the records I can remember buying on the great London label there were *Maybe* by the Chantels - I heard it once on Radio Luxembourg's Decca show and I thought wow, what a mind blowing record. I went down to Boyds but they didn't have it in stock so I had to order it for six and sevenpence ha'penny (I think). The point was I never heard that record played on the radio again, not by Decca on their sponsored show and certainly the BBC wouldn't have played it. But there I was, the proud owner of *Maybe* by the Chantels recorded by End of New York. Another was *Oh Julie* by the Crescendos and also *The Walk* by Jimmy McCracklin. I'm still amazed by the number of great records that came out in England in the late fifties and throughout the 1960s. I would turn up records which were a surprise such as things like *Little Bitty Pretty One* by Thurston Harris on Vogue. You never saw the Vogue label in record shops in Eastbourne as it was basically for the West Indian market in London. They occasionally had an advert in the NME and that was it.

All these great records were coming out and I suppose, if Mike hadn't given me a kick start, I had no visions of making a career in the record business, or as a writer I was just a keen fan. I was just a record collector who I guess was lucky, had a feel for American music. I could hear a record, say *Poison Ivy* by the Coasters, and just hear the great production techniques of Leiber and Stoller and a bit earlier *What'd I Say* by Ray Charles, it just all made sense to me. I wanted to discover more and the next stage was Davis record shop in Eastbourne in about 1960. It's all coming back to me but just great records like *Mother-In-Law* by Ernie K-Doe and *Ooh Poo Pah Doo* by Jessie Hill. The K-Doe London label had 'Recorded by Minit, Hollywood' so who would know it was from New Orleans?

The manager was very friendly and his office was on the same floor as the record racks and I noticed in the corner of his office a pile of magazines and I asked what they were. He said they were Cash Box magazine which they get in from the USA and, before I could say anything he asked if I wanted them. What can you say to a whole year's supply of Cash Box? That really did open my mind even further; you were seeing the record reviews and the latest releases with adverts for Chess records and adverts for Excello and Duke. These were the latest records that were coming out.

As an aside, and I still can't believe this years later, when I moved to New York and was writing 'Record Makers and Breakers' which is my



summary of the pioneering independent record industry, I came to meet in New York all three Cash Box editors from that era: Ira Howard, Irv Lichtman and Marty Ostrow. They were able to not only give me their stories but the Cash Box story which resulted in a chapter in the book. The point is that this was another aspect of the record research thing - I wanted to find out how the industry worked; it wasn't just the artists, the record labels and the record men.

I always remember being totally mystified, and it took me quite a while to work it out, what was a 'one-stop'? I kept seeing one-stop record distributors and I was just intrigued. Cash Box had an annual issue every July where they listed the one-stop operators but in the same issue they listed all the distributors throughout the whole of the United States and you could trace, for instance, Chess Records were distributed by Music Sales in Memphis and you could follow the whole chain; Atlantic Records, Schwartz Brothers in Washington D.C. The thing about the distributors, the one-stops, the juke box operators was the means of getting the records into the radio stations and record shops and so on. It really was a broad canvas. It was getting those Cash Box magazines that led me into becoming interested in not only the music and the records but also the business side of things; that's a fascination that has stayed with me. All of a sudden I realised what original music was being recorded by those great record men and women, many of whom I was privileged to interview many years later for the book.

In 1961 I was living with my parents in Polegate and I suddenly had a letter from Mike Leadbitter asking how I was as we had lost touch. I didn't know this but he'd been writing letters to Melody Maker, which was very much jazz based, talking about the great new rhythm'n'blues records that very much deserved to be heard. Another dear friend of mine, Graham Ackers, a keen Jimmy Reed fan, wrote to Melody Maker in reply to Mike and eventually they became friends. In response to Mike's letter to me, I told him I had got hold of these Cash Box magazines from 1960/61. To put it in perspective a lot of Rock'n'Roll fans thought Rock'n'Roll was finished by then but it's quite clear that in particular these great down-home blues records, Slim Harpo, Lazy Lester, Sonny Boy Williamson were still being released. The scene was far from dead, it was just so vibrant and we didn't know about it.

Mike asked if I had started to do discography work and that was a new world to me and what Mike was doing was the first record lists of labels like Chess and Sun. He said he'd love to see the Cash Box magazines and in those days I was very trusting, not only of him, but of the post as well so I sent them to him and that cemented our friendship. Mike was having record sessions with Simon Napier who was the other co-founder of 'Blues Unlimited' and this was when the blues/R&B thing started to take off. There still weren't too many blues records being released; for example at that time Excello didn't have an outlet over here and I can remember a friend of ours from Germany, Wolfie Baum, sent over a tape of Excello blues including Lonesome Sundown's *I Stood By*. I'd never heard guitar playing like that (by Leroy Washington) or Sundown's big doomy voice that introduced us to the modern, as it was then, down-home recordings.

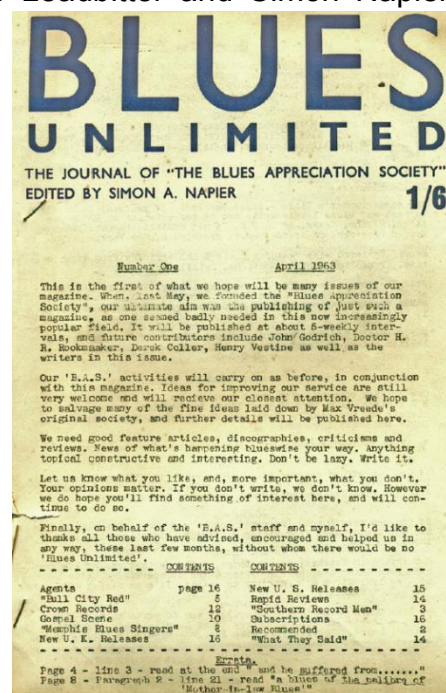
I started attending these record sessions and Mike suggested that, with all the adverts for these great record labels in the Cash Box magazines, why didn't I write to them mentioning 'Blues Unlimited' and the 'Blues Appreciation Society'. We split the load and wrote to these, what turned out to be, independent record companies. Mike struck gold by writing to Goldband Records, Eddie Shuler in Lake Charles. You won't believe it, but Eddie Shuler sent him a big box of Goldband singles from the late fifties and early sixties which we couldn't have afforded to pay for but it's one of the greatest promotion things Shuler ever did.

All of a sudden we were the first ones to hear Juke Boy Bonner on Goldband, *Sugar Bee* by Cleveland Crochet, all of the Cajun music, Iry LeJeune and so on. I think it must have been the first time anybody had heard contemporary Cajun records in England. Mike was the first guy to write about Cajun music in 'Blues Unlimited' in a column called 'Cajun Corner'. Mike was pretty carefree and had his critics but he didn't care a damn and at times was known as Mike Backbiter because of his sometimes sarcastic approach. But we are where we are now research-wise through guys like him.

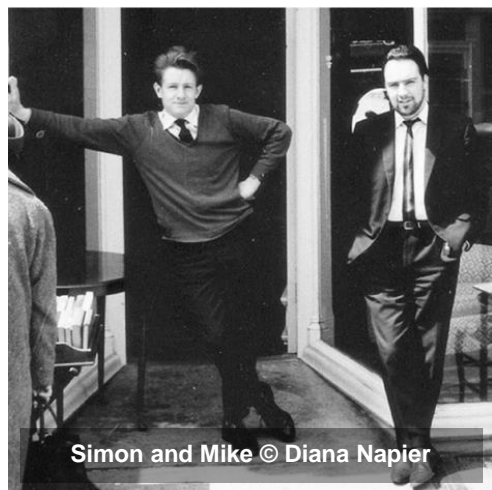
Around the same time Breathless Dan Coffey started 'Boppin' News' and I heard that Mike was one of the few people Dan respected. By then we were getting more and more into the blues thing as epitomised by Excello and Chess records. I wrote to Paul Glass at USA-Age Records which were fairly new labels then but they'd had a minor hit in Chicago by Willie Mabon. I had no idea of the depth of the catalogue but I received a similar sized box to the one Mike had got from Goldband. In this box came records from Homesick James, Junior Wells, J.B. Lenoir and Jesse Fortune. At the time Age Records in Chicago had a hit by Ricky Allen and also on that label was Earl Hooker. So I suppose that was my equivalent to Goldband Records, very much modern, Buddy Guy type Chicago blues.

Another record man who replied was Juggy Murray of Sue Records who sent a couple of Ike and Tina Turner LPs which are now worth two or three hundred dollars each but just great stuff, and also a Jimmy McGriff LP. Another was Bob Shad of Time/Shad Records who sent 45s by Junior Wells and J B Lenoir but he also sent a bill. 'Blues Unlimited' came out of what was called the 'Blues Appreciation Society' and was founded in 1963 by Mike Leadbitter and Simon Napier. During this letter writing spree I'd written to Excello Records with letters back from Ernie Young, the owner of Excello in Nashville, responding to my questions about Slim Harpo and Lightnin' Slim. They are well documented now but then there was just no press about them. Slim Harpo had just had a hit with *Rainin' In My Heart* so Excello were on a bit of a high.

Ernie Young recommended I write to Jay Miller in Crowley, Louisiana because he was the guy who made all these records in his studio down there so I wrote him a letter with lots of questions about the down-home blues artists (we weren't so interested in the pop stuff). A two page letter came back telling us as much about Slim Harpo and Lightnin' Slim as he could and, even better, listing his studio musicians. Of course, Mike loved that for his discography. The first issue of 'Blues Unlimited' came out in April 1963 with a 1/6d cover price. 180 copies were printed on an old stencil machine; I still remember the pages laid out on the desk with the ink flying everywhere and trying to get the pages in the right order. Mike and I were going up and down the table with Simon at the end with a stapler.



Mike had previously said Simon and he were forming this magazine and would I write for it. I'd never even thought of writing, I was just a record collector. Mike pointed out that I had the records, I'd been buying the latest Excellos, the latest Chess and Fires through Ernie's Record Mart in Nashville, Tennessee, I had letters from Excello and J.D. Miller so he told me to write about J.D. Miller as a start. So, pinned to the wall, I had no choice. The series was called 'Southern Record Men' based on these records and all the letters and that was one of the articles in the very first issue. Sometimes you look back and think things are meant to be because in due course I went out to Crowley to meet J.D. Miller and, when I was with Ace Records in the nineties, we got the Excello Records licensing deal which was a pretty amazing coincidence in a sense, all those years later.



'Blues Unlimited' was the first international blues magazine and I love to put Mike and Simon on a pedestal because they are no longer with us - Mike died tragically from meningitis in 1974 aged 32 and his work just should not be forgotten, while Simon died at the stupidly young age of 51 in 1991 from a heart attack. Mike has been recognised in the Blues Hall of Fame. Perhaps it's up to me to start the ball rolling but I think Simon ought to be recognised as well. The whole point was that Mike was one of these "head in the clouds" types, a

brilliant researcher but he hadn't a clue about business. Simon's family was in the antiques business so Simon made sure the magazine made a profit. We were sort of kids of the sixties but Simon was the guy who made sure we had enough adverts in, we got the subs in.

The magazine started as an A4 stencilled sheet and later moved to the smaller A5 before moving back again to A4 and in the seventies it was professionally printed by Unwin Brothers of Old Woking before Private Eye's printers took over. 'Blues Unlimited' really caught the blues movement. Mike and I were post-war blues fans and we were playing catch-up to a certain extent because we were collecting records in the 1960s but the great period, particularly in Chicago, was in the 1950s. What it did mean was we lost sight of what you'd call the soul era so it wasn't until years later that I started to appreciate the body of work Cliff White and his colleagues were doing at the time. In all honesty, there was more than enough blues and R&B research work for us to handle anyway.



The other great thing in those blues years was the American Folk Blues Festival so all of a sudden we were seeing artists like Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, Willie Dixon, Lightnin' Hopkins and so on. Not only did they do the concert halls but they started to play the clubs. A very good friend of mine Dave Williams reminded me of the Ricky Tick club in Guildford where we saw Jimmy Reed playing and John Lee Hooker as well. People said Jimmy Reed was a drunkard and Dave said he was pretty inebriated at that gig although I wasn't aware of it to that extent but what I do know is he was a far better guitar player than any of us had been led to believe. A lot of the intricate guitar work on his Vee-Jay output was Jimmy himself.

Another memorable gig was Little Walter in Hampstead - Mike, Simon and I (I think Graham Ackers was with us too) turned up to what was basically a folk club. We went in at the tail end of the first set and Walter was playing with his folk guitarist and the whole thing was very desultory - the audience wasn't interested, Walter wasn't interested, the guitar player wasn't interested. We went over and met Walter at half time and started raving about his Checker records saying he had to play *I Got To Go* and *Last Night* and he was totally transformed in the second half. That was as near as you could get to his great Checker records and you could see what a brilliant musician he was. You could see that our love of the music was justified.

Almost everybody lived up to their reputation and that's what I loved about that period. Another was Howlin' Wolf at Twickenham - he had a great period in the '50s with Willie Johnson and then

Hubert Sumlin and those jumping down-home records like *Goin' Down Slow*, *I Ain't Superstitious*, *Down In The Bottom* and he had the wonderful Johnny Jones on piano. I went up to him and said, "Mr Wolf, I just love your records". He towered above me and I shouldn't have put my hand out as my whole arm disappeared into his hand. "Mr Wolf, those records you've made recently for Chess are just wonderful. What a terrific band you've got." Wolf, who was about six foot three or four, stood on his toes and said "They're MY records!" Nothing to do with the band as I disappeared into the crowd. We were full of ideas for interviews and stories but that was the energy that we got, the music meant a lot to us and these guys came over and justified our attention.

I should say that all this time that I was buying records, going to clubs and writing reviews and articles in 'Blues Unlimited' I actually had a day job with Midland Bank as it was, joining them in 1960. It was a long and arduous promotion ladder and I started at Hailsham in Sussex, then went to Battle near Hastings in Sussex. It was all happening in London and I said to the staff superintendent that I wanted to go to London. He replied that he couldn't do that but what he could do was send me to the outer extremities of the southern area which was Weybridge in Surrey. It was at Weybridge that I met Tony Russell who has made his name as a writer, author and an old time music specialist. Also Robin Gosden who went on to found Flyright records eventually out of Bexhill-on-Sea.



One of the best things I did was to study for my banking examinations and I became a qualified AIB (Associate of the Institute of Bankers) which put me on the fast managerial track and took me down to Farnham in Surrey and then to Leicester in 1967. Granby Street, Leicester was one of the biggest branches of the Midland Bank anywhere. We went to see Leicester City play at Filbert Street, and even travelled to see them at Nottingham Forest and Manchester City. I had three months in Leicester and on my very last day of the three month course, three of us headed back to London and Fats Domino and

his band were playing at the Saville Theatre in Shaftesbury Avenue. That was another major moment for me.

I attended the Friday night concert where the Bee Gees were on, I think, their debut tour. We were so snobby we couldn't see the Bee Gees so headed out to a local pub while they were on. Fats was announced and the band were behind a gauze curtain playing a sort of rumba rhythm and I remember thinking that wasn't Fats Domino music and the sound seemed to be all out of sync. Then, as the curtain rose, you saw this bank of golden saxophones - Nat Perrilliat, Herb Hardesty, Clarence Ford, Walter Kimble - it almost took your breath away. Fats went straight into *Blueberry Hill* and it was just like the record and, again, that appearance justified his legendary status. I wrote a rave review for 'Blues Unlimited' and I suppose the one surprise was that his piano playing was far better than I had ever dreamt of and I still think to this day that Fats is much underrated on that instrument. Basically he's a jazz pianist and he really led the band from the front.

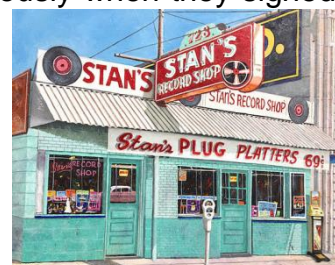
The reason I mentioned my banking career is because I became more immersed in it and a little known fact is I started Jan & Dil (two EPs) and Flyright Records with Robin Gosden. Those were the days of the 99 copy LPs - if you pressed a hundred you had to pay purchase tax. The first Flyright release was an out-and-out bootleg with Snooky Pryor on his J.O.B. recordings. There was just no way you could get hold of those records and I like to think that was a great promotion for Snooky and subsequently he came over to England, one of the great Chicago harmonica players. The second release was Juke Boy Bonner. Mike Leadbitter had gone to Texas and Louisiana in 1967 and had got to know Juke Boy well and he gave Mike tapes of a live performance so that release was done legitimately in conjunction with Juke Boy. That introduced him over here where his records hadn't been released before. Then the banking thing took over, I resigned from Flyright and Mike came in for a while followed by Simon Napier and Bruce Bastin. Flyright settled down and it became Robin Gosden, Simon and Bruce and they did a



wonderful job. This was the start of the reissue period - Ace Records and Charly Records hadn't even started at this time.

Robin and I became good friends and then, in 1970, we made our first trip to the States, our first port of call being New Orleans. Mike had arranged for us to stay at the house of 'Blues Unlimited' subscriber James La Rocca and I had no idea that James' mother, Connie, had a record label in New Orleans in the early sixties called Frisco Records and they had a pretty big local hit by Danny White with *Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye*. James seemed to be a perpetual student and he acted as our driver and guide. The first person we saw was Professor Longhair who, in 1970, was a little bit down and out and James was one of those who helped to rediscover him although he doesn't get credit these days. We saw Huey 'Piano' Smith and we tried to find Earl King but couldn't pin him down. Blues guitarist Boogie Bill Webb we met and we tried to find Snooks Eaglin so went up to Donaldsonville on Sunday morning and literally got chased out by the white contingent for looking for a coloured guitarist.

That trip had a big impact on me because I suddenly realised that these great artists, particularly Professor Longhair and Huey 'Piano' Smith who'd had national hit records, were basically forgotten. We got their stories and I thought we must be able to do something about this. We went out to Baton Rouge and met another good friend, Neil Paterson, who'd been writing for 'Blues Unlimited' and then out to Crowley to meet J.D. Miller for the first time who made us very welcome. J.D.'s contract with Excello had finished in about 1967 acrimoniously when they signed Slim Harpo direct to the label. However, the blues scene was dead, just nothing was happening. There was Miller with this big recording studio where he'd had only one recording session in the past year with Henry Gray. He'd started his own label 'Blues Unlimited', named ironically in tribute to the magazine. You could see how these guys were hurting at the time. We continued our trip on to Shreveport and to Stan's Record Shop where there was no activity at all.



When we got back home, Mike said "You're going to write a book aren't you?" "Am I? I hadn't even thought about it." "Well you've just been to New Orleans haven't you?" This was the time when Ray Topping was starting to do his research, also Bill Millar, and the guy who deserves a lot of credit and I want to make sure he isn't forgotten is Charlie Gillett. About six months later I was travelling to Polegate station, Mike had just been visiting on his way to Bexhill, and he asked how the New Orleans book was coming along. So I had no option and I started to do research. There had been articles on Lee Dorsey, Robert Parker came over and the Dixie Cups (who I didn't get to see) but the guy who really set the seal on the book was Dr John who was at the height of his rock stardom.

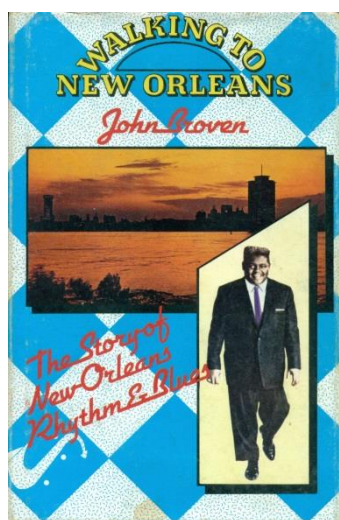
Mike organised an interview with him in 1972 at a hotel near Regent's Park, the White House, and what he was on I just don't know. The point is he was very lucid and he wanted to talk about the New Orleans musicians that he grew up with. It sounds simple now, but someone like Smiley Lewis, we knew his records but here was somebody who'd met Smiley Lewis and seen him play and could give such a graphic description; we didn't know where he came from, what his real name was and so on. Dr. John was filling in the New Orleans scene because he was a session musician himself as a teenager and he'd met all these guys. That interview really did open up so much - for instance he talked about Eddie Bo, saying he was a jazz-based pianist which I had no idea from his records.

I wrote the first draft of the book and what was good is I realised what good material I had and the weak spots where I was missing things so I went back out to New Orleans in April/May 1973 to see James. I could concentrate on the artists I still knew nothing about and plan to interview them. And so the whole thing came together. I said that Connie La Rocca had her own record company but I didn't know she was great friends with Earl King who wrote some key songs for Frisco Records and she was also friends with Clarence 'Frogman' Henry. Instead of me having to chase all over New Orleans and make phone calls - "Who's this English guy anyway?" - she and James were able to make introductions, people came to the house and sat down in front of the tape

recorder and I got their stories. The book manifested itself as 'Walking To New Orleans' and, to paraphrase Dr John, it was right place, right time and interest was starting to build.

'Blues Unlimited' was a magazine only but Mike and Simon suggested we publish the book. We were very lucky to have as our printers Unwin Brothers of Old Woking where Janet Baker was in charge so I handed her the manuscript, got some great photos, and got Tom Stagg the jazz researcher and discographer to write the introduction. What I really wanted to say was that the New Orleans R&B era was a direct follow on from the New Orleans jazz era. At the time music fans were very compartmentalised so the jazz fans would not acknowledge R&B and almost vice versa but what I was showing was that many R&B musicians came up through the jazz thing.

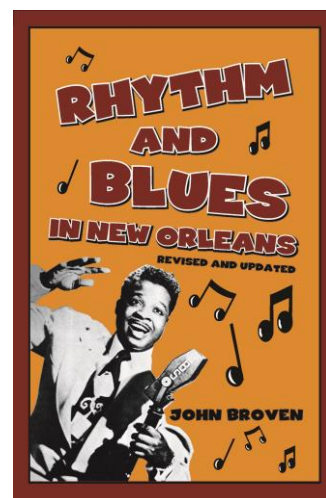
One more thing about Mike, I had showed him the first draft very proudly, this is it Mike, this is what we'd been working toward (he was living at Blackheath at the time) and he said, "Is this it?" After I'd picked myself up off the floor I realised the great thing he'd pointed out was - we were so anorakish at the time - that it read "Ernie K-Doe was born in New Orleans on such a date, Earl King was born in New Orleans on such a date" and so on. We knew they were born in New Orleans and roughly when but why keep repeating it? Have that information but put it in the appendix. What that did was it cleared the book of all the starch and it was able to flow without all the repetition and I have to give dear Mike credit for that. When I'd redone it he said "I can't believe the difference". It went from "Oh my God" to "Okay, this is alright".



'Blues Unlimited' at that time had about 2,000 subscribers and very approximately we knew we had to sell 1,000 copies to break even and cover our costs. What we said in effect was that the 'Blues Unlimited' readership was so committed, so devoted and so passionate that we were banking on one in two readers buying the book. This was surely a stupid marketing assumption and wildly optimistic but, lo and behold, because that readership was so passionate within six months we'd covered our costs and had to have a reprint and the book was licensed to the United States in 1978 and became 'Rhythm & Blues in New Orleans'. It's the same book albeit with more information on Smiley Lewis and Roy Brown for example but the reason the title was changed is the publisher in New Orleans said that nobody in the States would understand the title 'Walking To New Orleans' (named, of course, in honour of the big Fats hit!) so they had to do the typical American thing of making it very simple

and obvious and to the point. This was fine in the pre-internet days when America really was another country. It did cause a bit of confusion - for example, has Broven written two books on New Orleans R&B? But I have to give the publisher credit for two things that they did - one was to keep the book in print and the other was to find outlets in New Orleans, tourist shops and also the Louisiana educational system which I or 'Blues Unlimited' could never have done in a million years. The book was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame as classic in blues literature in 2011 so it took some time for it to be recognised but it finally was.

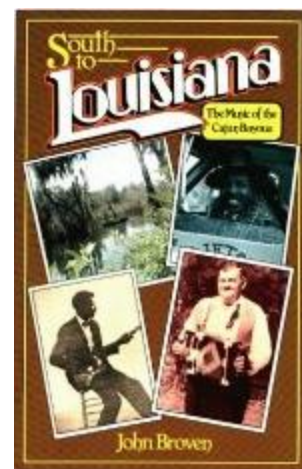
I've just further revised it and I'm having a lot of fun publicising it and promoting it. The message I have to get out is that it is a different book, not just another edition. I've updated it and introduced interviews I've done since it was first published with Roy Brown, Paul Gayten, Earl Palmer, Harold Battiste and others. I feel now it's as good as it could be. One reason I didn't want to do the update was that I've always seen it as a product of 1970s music research and history by a lot of enthusiastic amateurs but as time has gone on many of the artists and record men have passed on. The recommended records were for LPs, not even CDs so I was happy to introduce those changes.



A personality whose reputation is not that high is Marshall Sehorn who in 1973 was just starting up the Sansu recording studio with Allen Toussaint. Marshall being a promotion man immediately saw

this was a good way to promote his artists and his new studio but he was absolutely terrific. If it hadn't been for him I'd never have interviewed Allen Toussaint who then was particularly shy. I was just so surprised as I thought we'd just talk about Minit Records and Jessie Hill, Ernie K-Doe and Irma Thomas but to him that was the past and he was living in the present and looking to the future. I had to force old stories out of Allen, but he was so perceptive and it proved to be a great interview. I have to say it turned out Allen was absolutely right as he had a glittering career post 1973. Another one was Art Neville, then of the Meters, and I don't think I'd have got his story at the time without Marshall.

Pelican took over the book in 1978 and in 1979 said things had gone very well and they asked if there was another book I had in mind. Louisiana music had always interested me so I got down to writing 'South to Louisiana'. That gave me a chance to go back to my Excello roots and to record man J.D. Miller. I split the book into three sections; Early Cajun and Cajun country verging on hillbilly; Zydeco, swamp blues and then rhythm'n'blues; and Swamp Pop and the Cajun Revival. Where I felt I was really sticking my neck out was with swamp-pop because at the time that was considered to be more pop than swamp. Again, what I was trying to say was that swamp-pop was as much a part of the Cajun tradition as your Nathan Abshires and Iry LeJeunes and I'm pleased to say that through the years swamp-pop has been accepted as an integral part of the Louisiana music heritage.



I've had discussions with dear friend Bill Millar and Charlie Gillett who were great in promoting swamp-pop music but there's always this question of who invented the swamp-pop term. All I can say is that Bill definitely wrote early articles on Louisiana artists and he has to take credit although he thinks it might have even been down to a Melody Maker sub-editor. I know I used the term in 'Walking To New Orleans' in 1974 describing Bobby Charles' records. The thing that gives me a lot of pride is that 'South to Louisiana', through great supporters Floyd Soileau, Johnnie Allan, Harry Simoneaux and Warren Storm, helped to popularise the term so much so that swamp-pop is now an accepted genre of music in South Louisiana itself. How it came about was that Floyd on the Jin label had these swamp-pop oldies LPs, also by Rod Bernard and Johnnie Allan, but he always called it South Louisiana Rock'n'Roll. What a mouthful and not all of it was Rock'n'Roll so swamp-pop is now in the Louisiana lexicon. There's no doubt, though, the term was an English invention.



Swamp pop gang in London pub, 1981 © Paul Harris. Left to right are Johnnie Allan, Charlie Gillett, Bill Millar, Ray Topping, John Broven

I got involved in liner notes and compilations - EMI did a six LP Fats Domino set from Imperial, a two LP set for EMI on Smiley Lewis and an Amos Milburn from Aladdin. There was also Roy Milton and Joe & Jimmy Liggins LPs from Specialty for Sonet. Then I started to do one or two things for Ace Records and Charly because the reissue business had really taken off by then. Cliff White at Charly has to take a lot of credit for that too, so the whole music scene was reenergised.

On to the 1980s where my banking career was going well and I ended up as Midland Bank Manager at Burgess Hill and then Haywards Heath in Sussex. 'Walking To New Orleans' and 'South to Louisiana' had been taken on in holiday time so writing was very much a part-time activity. What gave our generation such a wonderful opportunity was that academia in the States just totally ignored American roots music - part of the Rock'n'Roll is going to die tomorrow, it's lower class, it's not worth documenting ethos. It just opened the door for us amateurs to do it mostly part-time, we were totally unpaid and it was our daytime jobs that gave us our sustenance.

The great thing was that we didn't have any allegiance to anybody, we were totally independent, and we could write and say what we wanted. The only thing we had to watch was when Charly sent us a batch of Cliff's latest LPs so we couldn't exactly slam them as Cliff might have cut us off *[laughs]*. We pretty much had autonomy and didn't have Big Brother leaning on us. It was all part of that wonderful sixties and seventies movement.

By the late eighties the banking industry was changing, the branch manager (which I was) was going out of fashion, branches were put in corporate areas and I became a corporate manager for East Kent based in Ashford and then Tunbridge Wells but it wasn't the same as having your own branch with a staff of 40 or so. At the time the Channel Tunnel was just being built and we were pretty much in the forefront so you couldn't help but succeed if everything went well. So things changed and in 1991 I got the golden handshake aged 48. I still can't believe I got a lump sum and a pension and it gave me a terrific opportunity to say "Hey, let's try and do something in the music business".

In the meantime Bruce Bastin had done a wonderful job promoting Louisiana music on Flyright, and had exploited the J.D. Miller archive. He knew Trevor Churchill at Ace Records which had Ray Topping as the sole consultant and Ace were expanding with the interest in quality reissues on CD. Basically Ray couldn't handle everything (he wanted to but couldn't) and Trevor mentioned to Bruce one day that he could use somebody to help out Ray. Bruce said that I'd just been chucked out of the bank so I came up and had a meeting with Ted Carroll. We worked out a salary which Ted cut by 50% *[laughs]* but it didn't matter because I had my pension so I was delighted to join them.

I stayed with Ace from 1991 to 2006 and although it was an English based company it was American music we were reissuing. I still can't believe there was absolutely no hesitation in sending us consultants out to the States to visit various record labels, get master tape copies, and secure licensing deals. There was no accountant ruling saying we're going to spend £1,000 sending Broven out here, where's the return? I was useful to them through my New Orleans and Louisiana connections from the two books. We did get Goldband from Charly - the first level of enthusiasm had gone from Charly after the Ding Dong reissues. I knew Eddie Shuler through the book and Eddie had been great friends with Mike Leadbitter so we signed the Goldband deal and another was AFO through Harold Battiste in New Orleans, also Frisco with Connie La Rocca. I was able to bring those labels to the table.

The greatest thrill was going to Nashville and visiting the vaults of King Records where the tapes were immaculately stored - in so many of the independent labels the tape archive has been torn asunder but with King, literally everything was there. My pride and joy was Excello and visiting Woodland Studios in Nashville to fondle the tape boxes of Slim Harpo, Lightnin' Slim, Lazy Lester and the like was exhilarating. My job was to copy the Excello tapes so all of the subsequent reissues we did came from those transfers.

The thing about Ace was there was such a great synergy; the three directors Ted, Trevor and Roger had different strengths. Trevor, apart from being a great record fan and record collector kept the finances under control and, like Simon Napier with 'Blues Unlimited', it's so important to have a man like that to make sure that the dreams and schemes don't evaporate out of control. You need somebody to ensure it's operating at a profit and not a loss.

Ted was the avuncular record man, everybody loved him and, with his Irish roots, could talk the hind leg off a donkey. He was also a good deal maker and although he had a teddy bear like front, deep down he was a man of steel so he was the perfect man for a negotiation. Roger was a record dealer with Ted in Soho market and they knew not only the records but also the record labels.

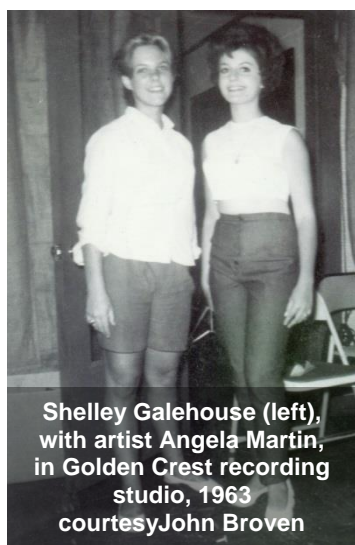
One of their great coups was to eventually find the Modern label and buy it for Europe. Modern in the '80s had literally disappeared from the map and they found the riches that were there, from B.B. King, Elmore James, John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Jimmy McCracklin, Etta James all the way through to the soul era.

Ace's best-selling series was 'The Golden Age Of American Rock'n'Roll' which was started by Trevor and Rob Finnis and was the top 100 hits from 1954 to 1963. It ranged from great well-known records to the obscure but still musically great tracks. By now the CD revolution had taken hold and to get the best sound you had to have access to the master tapes. At that time disc dubbing was still in its infancy and inferior as well. Rob Finnis is a great writer and understood the history of the records and how they slotted into the great scheme of things. I joined from Volume 2 and that brought back my early Rock'n'Roll days with things like *Wiggle, Wiggle* by The Accents and I was able to inject the more R&B side so it was a perfect match. I didn't mention that Roger Armstrong was basically the guy who made sure the sound was right and that's been one of the secrets of Ace's success. They set up their own studio so it was quality all the time. They could have made a lot more money but that didn't come into the equation and the fact they're still going today is terrific.

As part of the 'Golden Age' story one of the records we were looking at was *Tall Cool One* by The Wailers, an instrumental made in 1959 on Golden Crest which, to all intents and purposes had disappeared from the horizon. That was a top 40 record that had been lost and the hunt began. At that time, the more tracks that hadn't been issued on CD, the better and more commercially attractive it was. So how do you find defunct Golden Crest Records of Huntington Station, Long Island, New York? A good friend, Donn Fileti of Relic Records of Hackensack, New Jersey, said that Golden Crest's publishing company was still registered at BMI and had an address of P.O.Box 26, Cold Spring Harbor, New York 11724. I wrote to them and got in touch with the daughter of the founder, Shelley.



The reason they had disappeared from existence was because Clark Galehouse, the founder, had died in 1983 and he really was the record label. Their main business was a pressing plant, Shelley Products, where they pressed labels like London, ABC Paramount, Liberty-Imperial and Atlantic. That was their business and the record label was almost like a plaything. After Clark died in '83 the company soldiered on for three years but it was the old story; what was more valuable, the record label or the property? Once the company was put into liquidation the printing machines were sold off, the property was sold and the tapes ended up in New Jersey. I arranged a meeting with Shelley, principally to talk about *Tall Cool One* and this was in 1993. Shelley lived in just a beautiful spot in Cold Spring Harbor in the grounds of the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory which is one of the world's leading research organisations. Her next door neighbour was Jim Watson, Nobel Prize winner (of Watson and Crick DNA fame).



Shelley Galehouse (left), with artist Angela Martin, in Golden Crest recording studio, 1963 courtesy John Broven

Her husband Hugh had suffered a stroke so she arranged for us to meet in a restaurant, the Country Kitchen at 11am, which had agreed to open specially for her. I thought the meeting would be a doddle but she said she would like us to meet her adviser which I didn't think was a good sign. "Yes" she said, "It's Hy Weiss". Hy Weiss, the most feared record man in New York with a reputation that preceded him. Just my bloody luck! Shelley was very fair; she said the record company had disappeared, she didn't know if she owned the tapes, and she didn't know where they were but had inherited the music publishing. Hy had a licensing contract with Ace for his Old Town masters which helped and he impressed me with his knowledge of the record industry, copyrights, and the statute of limitations and so on. I thought this was going nowhere as how can you sign a contract when you don't know what you own but Hy interjected with a gruff "Sign the contract, sign here!" The legalities, of course, were subsequently legally confirmed.

Sadly Shelley's husband took a turn for the worse and I never heard from her for two years although I wrote and then Hugh passed. She phoned me at Ace and said she was ready to do the

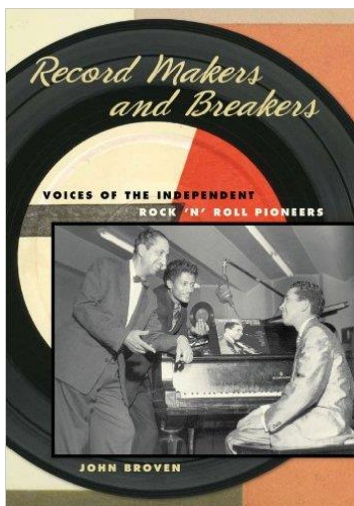
deal so I went out there. She was now single as was I so we signed two contracts - one was a record contract and the other was a marriage contract. That's how I came to live on Long Island in 1995. The great thing was that email had just come in so I was able to continue with Ace Records almost like their New York representative. I was able to do the compilations and what I did was to come back every two months with project memorabilia and so on, and it worked beautifully. I can't really believe how well it worked out.

By then Ace had built up their consultant roster; Ady Croasdell was already there, Peter Gibbon came on board, Rob Finnis, Alec Palao and Dean Rudland. What Ace did was to have annual consultants' meetings where we went to a hotel somewhere up in Peterborough and got our heads together, and ideas were flowing. Ray Topping was still doing his Modern thing and more. In 1996 I had another trip to King and Excello in Nashville. Then Ady and I drove down to Muscle Shoals and met the Halls and saw the FAME Studios but Rick Hall wouldn't do any deals at all but we had sowed the first seeds. Ace started releasing FAME material about 12 years after our initial meeting - you keep chipping away, you keep in touch with these guys and the punters perhaps don't realise what goes on with all these deals, it's not just sign here and that's the end of it. By the time the FAME deal was signed Ace had already purchased Goldwax Records of Memphis and had great success with James Carr so the Southern Soul thing had really taken off. I remember doing three Excello CDs in the late nineties, 'The Heart of Southern Soul', and many punters didn't even know that Excello had released Southern Soul records. You had these great tracks by the Kelly Brothers, the Wallace Brothers, and Kip Anderson.

I did the compilations with John Ridley who has done such a wonderful job with Southern Soul and opened up some very obscure artists and labels through his Sir Shambling website. If you remember the footballer Martin Peters, he was always said to be ten years ahead of his time and when I did the Southern Soul Excello stuff it was like him; a very slow beginning and then Southern Soul mushroomed. When Ace eventually did that deal with Rick and Rodney Hall the time was right. By then the budget-priced 'out of copyright' companies were coming in which meant there was a lot of 1950s material in the marketplace and a lot of competition and Ace just couldn't compete price-wise. So Southern Soul - and 1960s material generally - came in as their prime market..

I had originally seen Ace as a blues, R&B, Rock'n'Roll, rockabilly and doo-wop label but they had deals with Fantasy Records which meant they had Creedence Clearwater Revival and I couldn't believe just how many Creedence CDs were sold each month. They also had the Grateful Dead and Ady had started the Kent label for Northern Soul so they were able to ride swings in popularity of rockabilly going up and down, for example, by having an across the board catalogue of music. Another one was jazz with Prestige, Bluesville, Riverside; it was all so very shrewdly done.

Two other key people were Carol Fawcett in the production and art department who made sure Ace records fitted in the releases with the correct period which was so important in the reissue business and also Phil Stoker, another director, he was the sales manager who dealt with the distributors and made sure Ace's profile stayed high. A very well run organisation.



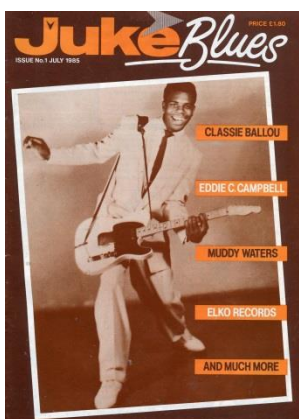
I left Ace in 2006 having been with them for 15 years but one thing I was able to do before I left was the B.B. King 4 CD box set 'The Vintage Years'. That, if you like, was the pinnacle of my Ace Records sojourn. Then, for various reasons, I decided I wanted to do one more book. Whilst with Ace I had met a lot of record men like Joe Bihari of Modern, I'd interviewed B. B. King for his box set and I felt I had enough material to write what I call my personal magnum opus in 'Record Makers and Breakers'. That came out in 2009 through University of Illinois Press. I had a little job in my home town of East Setauket with the local newspaper group and that kept me in touch with young 20-something editors - I think they enjoyed my company and I certainly enjoyed theirs. In the meantime Shelley and I had worked on Golden Crest, rescuing it from nothing and building up its presence again through licensing its

masters, including for films and adverts..

So here we are today. Sadly Shelley passed in 2013 but I'm delighted to say that just before she passed the Library of Congress accepted Golden Crest into the national archive so the legacy of her father and herself has been preserved forever. In the meantime this good old music thing still keeps me occupied - last October (2015) I went down to the Ponderosa Stomp in New Orleans and they asked me to interview Gene Terry who you've just had playing here in London. So that's where we are today; still looking forward and I'm grateful to you for the interview and to the Woodies for their support.

Thank you John, it's been a fantastic interview.

Postscript: Due to time running out at the interview in June 2016, John was unable to cover his 'Juke Blues' years, John having co-founded the magazine in 1985 with Cilla Huggins and Bez Turner. However, he wants to give credit to editor Cilla and her husband Mick, also Dickie Tapp, for upholding the 'Blues Unlimited' tradition with this quality magazine. John adds that his publisher is pleased with the reaction to the new edition of 'Rhythm and Blues in New Orleans', so much so that a similar updated edition of 'South to Louisiana' has been requisitioned for publication within the next 12 months.



Charlie Harris (better known as Wee Willie) was one of my pals back in the '50s. I dug out a picture of us 'lads' taken in Middlesex Street (Petticoat Lane) back then; notice the old bomb damage ruins from the war years in the background. Left to right are Georgie Hadliegh, Georgie Rowe, myself Bob Rudd, Alan Rowe, and of course Charlie Harris. I think this must have been taken around 1950/51 as we are all wearing our Roseman's tailor made suits and Brothel creepers. This was just before I was 'called up' for national service, joining the RAF in May 1951. Charlie and I are roughly the same age and I was 84 on March 30th.

The only one of the gang I kept in contact with was George Rowe. He was my best friend up until his death two years ago. He had a fall at home, hit his head on a cabinet, suffered a broken neck and after two operations he was left paralysed from the neck down on a life support system. He asked the specialist how long until he could expect to be mobile again and was told he would remain like that for the rest of his life, they had done all they could for him. George bravely said 'pull the plug' and consequently and sadly he left us.

Bob Rudd

MISTER ANGRY

From the Daily Mail Archives

June 24 61 AD



Thank Jove that Boadicea or Boudicca, or however you want to spell the old biddy's name, has finally met her maker. At one time we admired her vigour, not to mention the way she customised her chariot.

She sensibly took advantage of the absence of Roman governor Gaius Suetonius Paulinus who was pointlessly campaigning miles from her Midlands base to conquer the waste-of-space island of Anglesey. She led the Celtic Iceni to destroy the Roman towns of Colchester, London and St Albans. Great stuff, we thought at the time. Goodbye, Romans.

Now it turns out that the swords mounted on her chariot wheels caused more damage to innocent Iceni pedestrians than it ever did to the Romans. We also believed that her aim was to drive out the Italian invaders. Not so, it seems. Her only ambition was to be Queen, and everything she did was to that end. What a terrible woman, driven by the lust for power.

October 29 1618

Finally, the wandering knight Sir Walter Raleigh has been served his just desserts, and has been separated from his head at the Tower of London.

We welcomed his introduction of tobacco and potatoes to Great Britain, his two searches in South America for the fabled El Dorado, the city of gold, and his development of the British colony of Virginia.

But we guessed he had something else in mind when he laid down his cloak so his Sovereign, Queen Elizabeth, was able to avoid walking in a puddle.

Yes, you've got it. He had no real interest in spuds or baccy, or even if the Queen got her dainty feet wet. All he was after was a knighthood and, once he got it, he married who he wanted without the required Regal permission, and his sordid ambitions were revealed.



October 21 1805



Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson has with his death revealed what many believed. With his dying words at the Battle of Trafalgar he was revealed as what many had suspected – he was a closet homosexual, asking his second in command Hardy to kiss him.

Some believed he was a brilliant strategist, but was unable to control the colonists in what became known as the American War of Independence, and was just plain lucky with his wins over the French, Spanish and Danish allies of Napoleon, even if did cost him an eye and an arm.

No, his real aim in life was a Dukedom, a step up the social ladder this middle class Norfolk chancer did not deserve, which negates everything else he achieved.

January 30 1942

Lord Rothermere writes: Seldom do I pick up my quill to complain about what I believe to be described as popular culture, but the BBC Forces Programme have over-stepped the mark with the introduction of what will apparently be a series entitled Desert Island Discs.

The first guest on this programme was an entertainer and comedian called Vic Oliver, and he chose some slight classics he would wish to hear repeatedly were he unfortunate enough to be shipwrecked on the island of the programme's title.

Surely a prestigious programme of this nature should instead feature academicians, classical musicians, the nobility and others who have made their mark on public life? Additionally, I believe that Mr Oliver is of the Jewish persuasion and it is debatable as to whether we should be providing a platform for those of his ilk. I am perfectly aware that a state of war exists between ourselves and Herr Hitler at present but, considering his own country's views on the Hebrew, is it wise to exacerbate relations between ourselves and our German cousins?

I think not.



January 24 1965



Sir Winston Churchill talked the talk, but did he really walk the walk? This High Tory, born in Blenheim Palace, descended from the Duke of Marlborough for whom the Palace was built, switched political parties to gain power, and in 1940 achieved what he had always sought – the position of Prime Minister.

He may very well have fought the Germans, written a few books, got a Nobel Prize for Literature, painted water colours so well they are now worth millions, but that does not excuse or hide his real motive. The quest for power.

Not satisfied with his term in office until 1945, he wanted a second bite of the cherry in 1951 and became Prime Minister AGAIN. We can see where he's coming from, and it's now obvious his only motivation was political dominance.

January 22 2017

Footballer David Beckham may well have captained the England soccer team, helped to win the 2012 Olympics for London, and raised many millions for charity, but is he the right person to be chosen to be the guest on the historic 75th anniversary edition of Desert Island Discs?

Furthermore, it would appear that he has devoted the past ten years of his life to United Nations children's charities, and yet had but one ambition in life. He considers all he has done makes him deserving of a knighthood and, when it is refused, reacts petulantly to the great and good who took the decision that he was not worthy enough.

It is obvious that this fellow has ambitions above his station, and all our columnists have strict instructions to monster him on all possible occasions. As you will no doubt read...



WRITER'S BLOCK

BY NEIL FOSTER

I was sure I knew the face that stared out of my daily paper but the name didn't ring a bell. Then I realized it must be his pen-name. "**MP SUES FAMOUS WRITER FOR LIBEL**" the headline said. Apparently, the politician had objected to a character in the author's latest novel that he claimed was based on him.

SHARPSTON STEELE. Now I remembered. I had seen the name on the covers of piles of paperbacks at railway station bookstalls and in the departure lounge of Heathrow but I had never read any of his books. So that's who he was! His real name was Hugh Allinson, and 25 years before, the Hon. Sec. of our Writers' Club, Mrs Bland, had introduced him to me. The first thing I had noticed about him was the thin, sardonic smile and the world-weary pose.

The second was his sharp tongue. During a lull in our conversation I was singing Elvis's "It's Now or Never" softly under my breath and he cut in with a curt: "I'd prefer it to be never." I was rather annoyed as I'm told that I have quite a good voice.

He had explained that he had been dabbling in writing for years but just couldn't find a theme or an idea for a book.

"Ah, the famous writer's block", I said. "Perhaps this place might give you ideas." His eloquent eyebrows and a disparaging glance at the assembled members said it all.

Mrs Bland, our most efficient Secretary and rotten writer, wrote romantic fiction for women's magazines under the pen-name of 'Lorna Guile'. "It pays well," was her excuse. The heroines in her stories were usually blonde, always long-legged (or "lithe"), had tossing curls or manes of cascading hair and invariably found true love and a clean marriage licence with dark-haired men who were lean, fit, bronzed and athletic, and had strong teeth and roguish smiles.



She opened the proceedings by announcing that she would read us one of her (unpublished) short stories and a hunted look came into Hugh's eyes. I saw him flinch at the clichés and when she read out the sentence: "and her heart danced with the daffodils", he groaned and rolled up his eyes to the ceiling.

Some of the regulars had brought MSS to read out and be criticized. After some tactful dissection of the first one, Mrs Bland asked us all brightly: "Well, what market do you think this would be suitable for?"

"Billingsgate," muttered Hugh in my ear, "for wrapping paper". I stifled a giggle. He really had a most peculiar sense of humour. I knew from experience what ignoramuses some of the members were but even I was amazed to hear him telling one of the ladies that he had spent three years learning Polish in order to read Joseph Conrad in the original. "Oh, I do admire dedication like that!" she gushed but Hugh's expression never changed.

During the tea-break we noticed a large, florid woman in tweeds march importantly up to the Secretary's desk and ostentatiously display a novel on it. "That's Dorothy Doolittle," whispered Mrs Bland to us. "Local children's author. That's her 25th book."

Hugh picked it up gingerly. It was called 'SALT, VINEGAR, MUSTARD, PEPPER', a gripping tale for four year-olds about a salt and pepper set in constant warfare with a haughty sauce-bottle and an irascible pot of mustard. There seemed to be only about ten words on a page, with plenty of jolly illustrations.

"Far too much violence for kids," said Hugh drily. It was obvious that he was totally unimpressed by the assembled talent. Neither was I, as it happens. I was there for a non-literary reason called Julie. She hadn't shown any interest in me yet but I decided to persevere.



Writers' Clubs in the sixties (and for all I know, now) were gold-mines for psychiatrists. There would be one or two obsessives, a religious nut, someone who wrote sentimental tosh about animals, humorous writers (I mean the writers were humorous, not their material), always someone who "wrote for their own pleasure" (but no-one else's), and there'd be a Bernard.

Bernard was writing a collection of apocalyptic tales dealing with the end of civilization. Fire, famine, flood, plague, collision with a comet, nuclear devastation, he revelled in them all, including an environmental disaster he called "The Great Sludge." He would have been furious if he'd found out that Hugh always referred to him thereafter as "The Great Sludge".

Afterwards we went for a coffee and Hugh dropped his flippant cynical tone for a while and told me something of himself. He was single, a civil servant, and lived with his widowed mother. "She doesn't read anything," he complained. "Just wants to watch TV all the time - and ITV at that. Mentally stimulating she isn't."

Then his sarcasm returned. "I'm going to have my work cut out to compete with this lot. They're all budding Tolstoys."

"Stick it out," I advised. "There are some quite good writers here and you never know, you might pick up some ideas for a book." He appeared totally unconvinced.

The following week he met Owen who had been off for a while with a nervous breakdown and had returned to pass it on to us. Owen of course was Welsh - 200%. The Welsh, like the Irish and the Scots, are always complaining about English stereotypes of them but what do you do when you meet a real, live Welsh stereotype like Owen?

He was small, very dark, wore a black polo-neck with a red dragon on it, had a high-pitched voice and quick nervous movements like a startled bird. He was a sort of Welsh Wordsworth, writing endless poems about striding the hills alone, tuning in to the spirit of Nature and getting close to the great Celtic earth-mother.

I know the feeling as I once slipped off a wet path in Snowdonia and fell face-down into a muddy ditch.

Hugh's comment on Owen was: "Has he ever stayed in Rhyl?"

The welcome tea-break came and I introduced Hugh to Maureen, a studious-looking type with shapeless clothes and waist-length hair. "What are you working on at the moment, Maureen?" I asked.

"It's a detective story, but with a difference."

"Ah, not the Agatha Christie type, then?"

"Oh, God, no, I can't stand her," she frowned. "Too contrived and old-fashioned."

"Hear! Hear!" said Hugh. "The thing about her books is that I couldn't care less whodunnit: what I could never understand was why they always dunnit in the same hotel as Miss Marple or on the same cruise-ship as Hercule Poirot."

"My character, Cassandra", said Maureen, "isn't really a detective at all. She's a brilliant medium who goes into trances every day and foresees crimes before they occur. Then she passes the details over to the police to solve."

"Oh, that's great. Maureen," laughed Hugh. "What a brilliant comic idea. It's time someone satirized all those over-educated sleuths and their infallible intuitions."

Maureen's face froze. "Comic idea?" she said icily. "It's a serious story."

Hugh looked as if he'd missed the bottom step of a staircase. She gave him a withering glance and moved away peevishly towards the tea and biscuits.



"Hell hath no fury like a woman writer scorned", said Hugh ruefully.

During the third week I noticed him making copious notes and knew from his air of suppressed excitement that the germ of an idea must have come to him. This time, instead of gazing at the members with ill-concealed contempt, he watched them intently and scribbled away furiously. Everyone noticed it and was flattered by his attention. The members often stole furtive glances at him before they began to read out their MSS.

Mrs Bland was very curious, too, and kept asking whether he was working on a book and when would he treat them to a reading. He gave politely evasive replies.

He refused to give even me details. "Just an idea for a novel, old chap. Might work. Might not."

Then he suddenly stopped coming to the club. At first I thought he might be ill, but as the weeks wore on it was obvious he wasn't coming back. At about the same time I lost Julie, the girl I was after, to an American student who introduced her to Eastern religions and Southern Comfort so there was no point in staying.

I did contact Hugh's employers but all they could tell me was that his mother had died suddenly some weeks before and that he had left his job, sold the house and moved down South without leaving a forwarding address.

And that was the last I had heard of him until today. My curiosity was rampant. How had he made the transition from amateur scribbler to highly-paid professional writer? Did he ever finish the novel he was writing? Did it ever get into print? Why did he leave the club so suddenly? I decided to write to him. Back came a courteous reply inviting me to meet him after the libel case was settled which it soon was, in his favour.

The resulting publicity did wonders for his sales so he was in an agreeable mood as I sat opposite him in the huge drawing room of his converted farmhouse in Shropshire.

"The last thing I remember you telling me all those years ago at the club was you that had an idea for a novel but it might not work out. Did it?"

"It certainly did. It set me out on my career."

"Oh, great. Presumably, that was the first book you had published."

"No, it was never published."

"Oh, pity."

"Not really. I didn't want it published."

"No? But why not? You always struck me as very ambitious. Every real writer wants to get into print."

"That's right but I just decided I didn't want it published after all."

"I don't understand", I said. "Why ever not?"

"Well, as you've just seen, it's very easy for a writer to get involved in expensive libel cases if his books are based too closely on real people.

"And this book was?"

"Oh, yes. For example. you're in it!"

"What! I still don't understand."

He threw himself back into his armchair and laughed heartily. "Admit it, you're baffled."

"You can say that again."

"Let me explain. One night we were drinking tea in the break and I heard Mrs Bland, the Sec., talking to a new member. "Always write about things you know, dear," she said.

"It's the most hackneyed piece of advice ever given, as you know, but it set me thinking. I suddenly realized I had been sitting on a wonderful plot for a novel without knowing it. The characters were ready-made. What could I write about that I knew: why, the Writers' Club itself, of course!

"Dickens or P.G. Wodehouse or Evelyn Waugh would have screamed with delight at the eccentrics paraded before us like a bad variety bill: The Great Sludge, Welsh Owen, Mrs Bland with her excruciating romantic tosh and the rest. The vanity, the pretentiousness, the self-importance, the self-delusions of them all! The back-biting, jealous feuds, rivalry! The utter lack of talent of most of them! And how hilariously ridiculous most of them were without knowing it, since none of them had any sense of humour.

"I put it all into the novel. It was easy to write and I've never had trouble writing since. But here's the irony. I could never bring it to the Club to read out, now, could I? It's pretty scathing and would have upset a lot of people."

He pulled open a drawer and drew out a tattered brown parcel tied together with string. "Judge for yourself. I've nearly binned it a few times. I decided it would be too risky to try to get it published, either. One of the Club would be bound to get hold of it, see through the pen-name and consult his solicitor."

He paused. "I'm sorry we lost touch. I did go back to the club a few months later to see you but of course you'd left by then. I felt rather guilty as they were very nice to me. I told them I was still working on the novel but was purposely vague about it. I had to stay a while of course - it would have been rude to leave so early."

A frown crossed his face. "Would you believe they were all still there - Owen still Celticking, Bernard still disastoring, and oh, my God, that Doolittle woman had another kid's book out." He shuddered.

"It was a story about pond creatures whose peaceful pool is invaded by savage water-beetles driving speed-boats!

"Thank God I got away from that Writers' Graveyard," he said passionately. "That first book proved to me that I had a pen as sharp as my tongue and I soon discovered that there was a real gap in the market for satirical novels based solidly on fact - too factual, sometimes," he smiled. "You see the dangers, but it's been worth it". He waved his hand around proudly.

He was silent for a minute. "You know - I've been very unkind to those pathetic failures at the Writers' Club but really, when I think about it, I should dedicate every one of my books to them. None of them could write for toffee but they certainly brought out the writer in me."

He raised his glass. "So, let's drink to them! They cured my writer's block, not me!"

NEIL FOSTER



The Organ for the Swedish Rock'n'Roll Club

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Founded in 1979, AMERICAN MUSIC MAGAZINE is an A4 size magazine, published three times a year for all devotees of 50's associated music. Each issue comprises at least 48 pages of interesting fact filled articles and reviews complete with a cover in glorious colour, rare photographs in abundance, artist discographies and recording session details when available.

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The (*Borrowed*) Vinyl Word

Nick Cobban has very kindly allowed TFTW to reproduce articles from his blog (<http://thevinylword.blogspot.com/>) so feel free to nip over and take a look at his many articles. Thanks Nick.

Monday, March 20, 2017

TFTW Band comes of age, with Charlie Gracie

It was the night that the **TALES FROM THE WOODS** band came of age. They've provided excellent backing to numerous artists at **TFTW** shows over the years, but last night, at the Charlie Gracie show in Soho's Spice of Life bar, they got to perform their own set. And a fine set it was too.

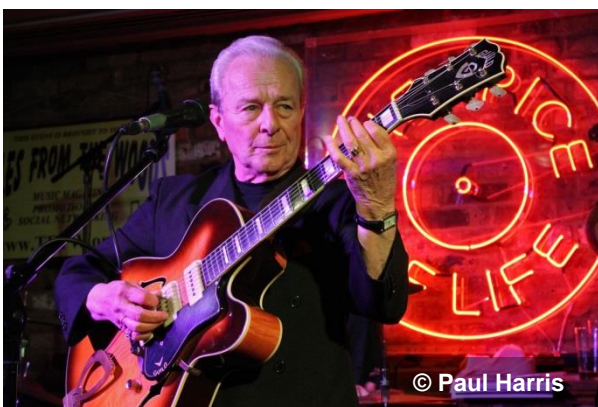


Lead guitarist John Spencely showed that as well as being an excellent plucker he can sing as well, and his gritty and powerful vocals were well suited to this exciting rock and roll set. The rest of the band - Claire Hamlin on keyboards, Alex Bland on saxophone, Rob Davis on bass and Jeff Tuck on drums - were well up to the task and together the band put on a set to remember.

They began with *Maybellene*, as a tribute to Chuck Berry, who died the previous day, before launching into Johnny and the Hurricanes' *Crossfire*, which gave Alex a chance to shine.

John's vocals were really quite wild on *Flying Saucers Rock and Roll* and equally good on David Ray's rockabilly number *Jitterbugging Baby*.

John joked about the band's name and said they had considered changing it to the Top Rankers, until they remembered promoter Keith Woods' inability to pronounce the letter R. Claire's keyboard dexterity was well to the fore on Huey Smith's *Rockin' Pneumonia and Boogie Woogie Flu*, as it was on the instrumental *Swanee River*, and the band's imaginative choice of material was illustrated well by the Crickets' *Love's Made A Fool Of You*, Conway Twitty's *I'll Try, California Sun* (a cross between Joe Jones's original and the Rivas' cover, John said,) and Amos Milburn's *Chicken Shack Boogie*, again featuring Claire. Other numbers included a great version of Big Al Downing's *Yes I'm Loving You* and Gene Vincent's perennial favourite *Say Mama*. As an encore the band did *Big Fat Mama*, an original by Roy Young, who is one of the stars of the next **TALES FROM THE WOODS** show in the summer. Altogether this was an exciting set and it would be great to see the band do their own thing again.



The star of the show was **Charlie Gracie**, a man who made his name at much the same time as Chuck Berry was making waves back in the fifties. Now 80, Charlie is still an excellent guitarist and has an easy stage manner. His first number, *Caldonia*, showed off his guitar playing to good effect, and he ran through many of his best known numbers including *Just Lookin'*, *Wandering Eyes*, *Butterfly*, *Ninety Nine Ways*, *Cool Baby*, *Heart Like A Rock* and, of course, his biggest hit *Fabulous*.

He's been to London many times over the years and has picked up a Dick Van Dyke type accent, which he put to use on snippets of *Maybe It's Because I'm A Londoner* and even *I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts*. Other numbers included *Rock A Beating Boogie*, *Don't Worry About Me* (a tribute to his friend Eddie Cochran), *I Love You So Much It Hurts*, *Tootsie*, *What'd I Say*, *Cottonfields* and, as an encore, *Shake Rattle and Roll*. All of them were two minute master classes and much enjoyed by the packed crowd in this tiny venue.



Charlie is welcome back any time. Well done Keith on another enjoyable show.

Sunday, February 05, 2017

Rockin' Race Jamboree in Torremolinos

It's warm and sunny in southern Spain, a far cry from chilly England, so a weekend at the Rockin' Race Jamboree was just what I needed. Despite a shortage of genuine legends this year this rock and roll weekend, now in its 23rd year, lived up to expectations, with a varied bill and some good music, little of which could be described as rockabilly.



Highlight of Friday's line up was undoubtedly Los Straitjackets, complete with obligatory wrestling masks, who produced some hard driving guitar numbers and backed up the funniest musical double act I've seen in a long time: Big Sandy and El Vez, the Mexican Elvis. Sandy, immaculate in a tuxedo, sparred with El Vez, dressed in an Elvis styled PVC costume, on a *'Big Sandy to the Rescue'* duet, before El Vez launched into *Mystery Train* crossed with *Night Train*. Both of them tackled *His Latest*

Flame, Sandy's cheeks by this time smeared with lipstick, and Sandy did excellent half Spanish versions of *Lonely Teardrops*, *Be My Baby* and *La Plaga (Tallahassee Lassie)*. The pair dashed around the stage, with gymnastics from El Vez, as they belted out *Malagueña (California) Sun*, *Land of 1000 Dances*, an instrumental *Rampage* and, finally, *Wooly Bully*. Great fun.



Earlier, Marcel Riesco, from the US west coast, showed what a good Roy Orbison styled singer he is on originals such as *Because He Broke Your Heart*, *Long Time No Love* and *Dumb Struck*, and Orbison songs such as *Rock House* and *Only The Lonely*. He showed he could rock, too, with *Cast Iron Arm*.

Following him on stage was London based Alice Jayne. Her band was good, but the less said about her the better, as she was distinctly average on covers like *Dimples*, *When Will I Be Loved*,

Restless and *Let Me Down Easy*, on which she was flat and underwhelming.

Rather better was Swedish band Fatboy, who started well with a couple of melodic country rock numbers from their Moments album - *Dreaming Like I Do* and *No Regrets*. Other numbers included a couple of songs from their Overdrive album, *Dragging The River* and *Bad News For Pretty Red Lips*, which were interesting, but perhaps a little samey.



Saturday night's offering was another varied selection, with pride of place going to Austin's Dale Watson, looking very much the part of the Texas troubadour. His set ranged from rockabilly (*You're Humbugging Me*) through Tex Mex and country. Numbers included *My Baby Makes Me Crazy*, *It's Heaven's Plan*, *Whisky or God*, *Sayonara Is All She Wrote*, *I Guess I'm Not The Man I Used To Be* and an excellent *Lonely Blue Boy*. Quality stuff throughout and very enjoyable.

First act was German band Smokestack Lightnin', a four piece band with leanings towards Americana, whose varied set included *The Highway Rolls On Forever*, the Beatles' *Run For Your Life*, some swamp blues with *Swamp Country* and *Polk Salad Annie*, and *El Camino Real*. They were followed by the Cactus Blossoms, who harmonised beautifully on Everly Brothers sound-alike numbers including *You're Dreaming* and *I'm A Happy Man On a Gloomy Day*. Highly recommended.



Also good in their way, and much enjoyed by the crowd, was the good time sound of The Big Six, featuring singer Sugar Ray Ford. Dressed in check zoot suits, their fun set included such rock and roll classics (!) as *Tiger Feet*, *All Of Me* and *20th Century Boy*. Not for the purists, or me for that matter, but amusing and lively.

Saturday, February 18, 2017

Betty Harris at the 100 Club



There was a time, back in the nineties, when US music legends would appear at London's 100 Club on a regular basis. Not anymore. So it was a great privilege to see one of New Orleans' finest, Betty Harris, put on a show last night that was a real delight. Betty's recording career effectively began and ended in the sixties, with some classic soul and New Orleans styled material produced by, first, Bert Berns, and then Allen Toussaint. Her one hour set featured ten numbers, including many of her best known songs, and the good sized crowd showed how much they enjoyed her efforts.

Betty was backed by three female singers, two of them clearly still in their teens. They were led by Dayna Snell, from Connecticut, who mentors and helps young people in her home town. Dressed in a long black dress, Betty kicked off with *Mean Man*, a Toussaint produced number from 1968 recorded for Sansu, and followed up with one of her more dramatic songs *Twelve Red Roses*. Betty confessed



that she was singing some of these numbers live for the first time but you wouldn't know it, as this was an assured and well-rehearsed set. She followed up with two more Sansu songs, *I Don't Want To Hear It* and *Trouble With My Lover*, before moving on to her classic 1963 version of *Cry To Me*, which was produced by Bert Berns and recorded for Jubilee.

Betty let Dayna's young protégé Aliyah take centre stage for the next number and the young singer did an excellent job on *Can't Last Much Longer*. Then it was back to Betty with the up tempo *Bad Luck*, featuring an excellent organ solo from the backing band Disposable Breaks (who did a great job throughout). Another classic followed with the slow and soulful *Nearer To You*, from 1967 and yet another with Betty's version of Lee Dorsey's *Ride Your Pony*, featuring some enthusiastic support from the backing trio. They left the stage at this point but returned for an encore featuring *There's A Break In The Road*, which Betty recorded for SSS International in 1969.

Altogether this was a highly enjoyable set which was much appreciated. Betty may be in her 78th year, but she can still hold an audience, even if her voice isn't quite what it was. I've seen Betty quite a few times over the years, including the Ponderosa Stomp (twice), the Porretta Soul Festival and, most memorably, at the Old Point Bar in Algiers, across the river in New Orleans where she did a full set. On some of these occasions she had very little time on stage but this time she was able to express herself and rolled back the years with a great selection of her original sixties material.

Saturday, February 25, 2017

Leroy Hutson at the Union Chapel



When Curtis Mayfield left The Impressions in 1971 he was replaced by Leroy Hutson. It was an obvious choice, as Leroy had been a protégé of Curtis as a member of The Mayfield Singers, a group put together by the great man. Leroy's smooth, soft, soulful voice fitted in perfectly with the Impressions' sound and he recorded two albums for the group for the Curtom label. When he left two years later to follow a solo career Leroy enjoyed success with a series of high quality albums for Curtom including *Love Oh Love*, *The Man!*, *Hutson* and *Closer To The Source*. He also enjoyed a degree of chart success in the black singles charts during the seventies, but although his reputation was growing, he remained something of a cult among die hard soul fans.

Last night, at the Union Chapel in London, he showed that at the age of 71 he has lost none of his vocal quality, with a sweetly soaring voice which stayed faithful to his original recordings. He also looked great too - much younger than his real age - dressed in a multi coloured jacket and red cap. Disappointingly though, he sang only seven of the 11 numbers in his set, the remainder being split between young British soul diva Gizelle Smith and his highly proficient eight piece backing band The Baltic Soul Orchestra.



Leroy's own vocal numbers included some of his best known tracks including *All Because Of You*, *Lover's Holiday*, *Love The Feeling*, *It's Different* and *Lucky Fellow*, with an encore of *So Nice*. I particularly enjoyed *So In Love With You*, a song which would certainly have suited Curtis himself, The stage was set up with keyboards, but Leroy spent little time playing them, leaving the backing to the band. Their take on his funk hit *Blackberry Jam* was effective. Gizelle also did a good job on her two numbers, Leroy's

compositions *Trying To Get Next To You* and *Cashing In*, originally recorded by Arnold Blair and The Voices of East Harlem respectively (thanks to Dave Carroll for this bit of research).

The audience, which included will.i.am in the row in front of me, clearly enjoyed Leroy's quite beautiful vocal ability, but no doubt would have wanted more: the show lasted less than an hour and considerably less time than that of Leroy himself. So I have mixed feelings about this one. Someone near me said that they felt short changed, and I can see what they meant. But this was the first time I've seen Leroy so at least it's now possible to put a face to the voice.

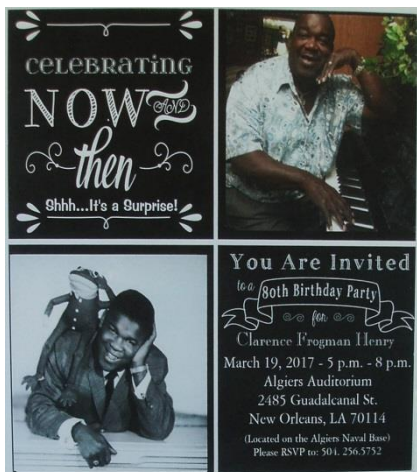
Nick Cobban

As usual, TFTW would like to thank Nick for allowing us to borrow (steal?) his articles

Clarence Frogman Henry at 80

Words and pictures Jay McCaddin

I know that many of us are big Clarence Frogman Henry fans, and it was a pleasure a few years ago arranging a visit of Ken Major's **TFTW** Stompin' USA group to the Frogman's home in New Orleans. On Sunday March 19th 2017, a surprise party was arranged by Clarence's daughter Linda who told her father they were going out for dinner. She pulled it off magnificently because his eyes teared up when he was brought in and saw the crowd of over 100 well-wishers: his children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, old school classmates from 1955 and of course his friends.



ENTRANCE ANNOUNCEMENT



FROGMAN'S ARRIVAL



THE BIRTHDAY CAKE

The party was an invitation only for family and friends with one exception, representatives from The Gulf Coast Music Hall of Fame (Port Arthur, Texas) who were in attendance to present Frogman with a framed memento of his hit song "But I Do".

A DJ was there to provide background music while everyone mixed and mingled. A wonderful food spread was also provided so everyone could eat to their hearts content. It was a shame none of the surviving Beatles were there who would have remembered that Clarence opened up 18 of their 1964 USA and Canadian tour shows.



HALL OF FAME REPS



WITH PAULA AND JAY



WITH SOME OF HIS FAMILY



I WOKE UP THIS MORNING (THANK CHRIST) A LITTLE BLUES RAMBLING

Besides enjoying listening to contemporary Blues, and going out and seeing Blues bands I am finding that those I really like (in the UK) are becoming few and far between. In fairness to those I don't like they are usually advertised as Blues/Rock and that, as I have written many times before, means loud bands and long, long guitar solos played in songs written by the artist which are mostly 12 bar efforts.

I even wrote to the editor of 'Blues In Britain', a magazine locally produced, that the music was nearer heavy rock than Blues and should be advertised as such. It means that columns like this one are finding less to write about as most bands on the British Blues circuit are really heavy rock; the bands think Blues fans want loud rock music and the clubs can't find pure British Blues acts (and make money!).



I read in a recent 'Blues In Britain' an interview with Dom Pipkin, leader of Dom and the Iko's, a New Orleans style British R&B band of which Dom is leader and piano player. He said that piano led Blues bands "are a very small part of the British Blues scene which is dominated by guitar led bands and venues sometimes turn them

down because they don't feature the long loud solos they're used to". He just wishes Blues audiences were offered more variety. So do I.

WHO DID I LAST SEE? I visited my local blues club to again see Storm Warning, a blues band I have seen many times and generally like. I will not review their performance because I have written about them several times before. Supporting them was the best British Blues band I have seen for a long time. This was the **Bolaji Blues Band**. I looked up Bolaji and found it generally interpolated as all nice things to all men but it was of Nigerian origins and was a first (or last) name meaning 'a child born with wealth'. I didn't see the connection with this band. Their set of well-played, well balanced covers included opening with 'Gin House Blues' (the 1967 Amen Corner/Andy Fairweather-Lowe version of the Bessie Smith song), B.B.King's 'Rock Me Baby' through 'Don't Do It' (the Band), an Eric Clapton song 'Old Love', and later finished with the Allman Brothers 'Ramblin' Man', including the great duo of guitars in the instrumental solo and finish.

I enjoyed every last note of their performance which was all too short. Storm Warning's keyboard player, Ian Salisbury, sat in with the band, (Dan Smith, guitar, Ken Redding, bass, and singer/rhythm guitarist, Dave Lowrance who had a great voice) but wasn't really needed. If they had a CD out, I would have bought it. They disbanded four years ago the MC told us, but had recently reformed and, he said, the drummer, Steve Dunkley, had been with them for four hours! On YouTube the old band can be seen with keyboards and a sax. The club was full and most wanted more from them. They will be back and I will be there to see them. Catch them if you can at a venue near you.

LISTS: This time I've chosen the Billboard (America's top music magazine) Blues chart for the last week in March. It's a fairly stable chart which doesn't move much so is probably quite accurate. I have listed the top 15 albums and the number of weeks they have been in the chart.

- 1) **Blue & Lonesome** by the Rolling Stones - 15 weeks
- 2) **The Fever: The Remastered Epic Recordings** by Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes – 1 week
- 3) **Roots Of Blues** by Various Artists – 4 weeks
- 4) **Blues Of Desperation** by Joe Bonamassa – 50 weeks
- 5) **Fire On The Floor** by Beth Hart – 5 weeks
- 6) **Prick Of The Litter** by Delbert McClinton & Self-Made Men – 6 weeks
- 7) **Live At The Greek Theatre** by Joe Bonamassa – 24 weeks
- 8) **Got Soul** by Robert Randolph & The Family Band – 3 weeks
- 9) **Memphis Rock And Soul** by Mellissa Etheridge – 22 weeks
- 10) **I Still Do** by Eric Clapton – 42 weeks
- 11) **Southern Avenue** by Southern Avenue – 2 weeks
- 12) **The Marcus King Band** by The Marcus King Band – 22 weeks
- 13) **The Story Of Sunny Boy Slim** by Gary Clark Jr. – 77 weeks
- 14) **Make Blues Not War** by Mike Zito – 7 weeks
- 15) **Let Me Get By** by The Tedeschi Trucks Band – 57 weeks

For those who are looking at delving into Blues, this is an interesting list as Billboard obviously can no longer use Rhythm & Blues as a title meaning what us old 'uns think it means (it's close to Hip-Hop these days) so they chuck anything in this chart which cannot fit in any of their other charts such as Blues Rock, Modern Rock'n'Roll, Heavy Blues, Soul and Proper Blues (Blues Blues) and reissued oldies!

I have several from this list [Nos. 1 (growing on me), 5 (very good), 9 (rather poor soul), and 15 (excellent Blues rock)] and would like a couple more (2 and 6, this as I am a great Delbert fan)

AN A TO Z OF MY FAVOURITE BLUES ARTISTS: Continuing with the Ls and Ms (I have decided to put two letters in each magazine otherwise I'll never get to the end!). I have a lot of likes in these letters, in fact, so many that I'm having difficulty choosing, Hamilton Loomis, Bettye LaVette, Los Lobos, Hugh Laurie, Chuck Leavell, most of the Little's, Richard, Axe, Milton, Feat, Walter etc, Leadbelly, and Meade Lux Lewis are a few Ls then there are The Meters, Willie Mitchell, Memphis Slim, Amos Milburn and the Moonglows amongst the Ms that I enjoy. So I have chosen lesser known artists in these 'letters' which are favourites of mine.

Doug Legacy and the Zydeco Party Band. I bought 'King Cake Party' by Doug Legacy and the Zydeco Party Band in May of 1991 because, being a Ry Cooder fan, I had heard he was in the band. It turned out to be one of the best CDs I own with 12 faultless tracks of good time Zydeco/Rhythm & Blues. Ry Cooder was not on it!. Doug Legacy formed the backing band behind the Muppets, he played accordion and piano. Born in 1954 I'm afraid I don't know much more about him but this album is still played in my house often and I love it.

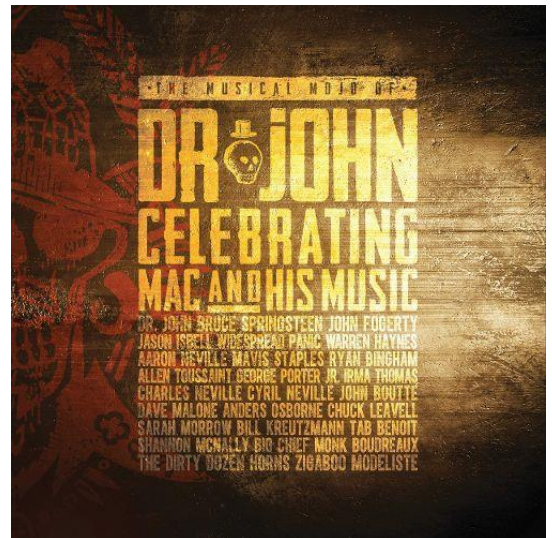


Willie Mabon. Way back when the BBC was still struggling to get their programming right and on time, they introduced short films from Canada introduced by an old man (I think his name was Grierson) with glasses and moustache and these films were basically animated cartoons set over a song or tune. I enjoyed looking forward to this series and still remember some of the films. One was of an elastic man, sliding under furniture and walking in an angry way, set to 'I'm Mad Again' by Willie Mabon. In those days I searched high and low for that track on an LP and found, and bought 'The Chess Masters – Willie Mabon' which had 'I'm Mad' but not 'I'm Mad Again'. I enjoyed this LP bought in 1987 and eventually managed to find

'I'm Mad Again' on a compilation CD later when I wasn't looking for it.

Willie James Mabon was born in October 1925. He had two number one hits in his career; 'I Don't Know' in 1952 and 'I'm Mad' in 1953. As a pianist and singer he arrived in Chicago in 1948, and recorded for Chess later. He wrote several well-known songs including 'I'm Mad' and 'Got To Have Some' (released in the early '60s) and 'Seventh Son' which has been covered by more than a dozen artists including Mose Allison, Sting and Georgie Fame. He died in Paris in April 1985.

WHAT WAS MY LAST CD? 'The Musical Mojo of Dr. John celebrating Mac and his Music' This is a double CD of live tracks from Dr. John and guests recorded at the Saenger Theatre in New Orleans sometime early in 2016 and what a concert it must have been. 22 tracks by New Orleans greats like Irma Thomas, Tab Benoit and Allen Toussaint. Other stars like Bruce Springsteen, Anders Osborne and John Fogerty and unknowns (to me) like Ryan Bingham, Sarah Morrow and John Boutte. All these backed by a cracking all-star band which included Chuck Leavell (piano). He turns up everywhere! There are plenty more good and great artists turning up on this absolutely splendid double album including Dr John himself. Nothing more to be said.



WHAT'S ON MY IPOD? 'Same old Blues' by Irma Thomas and pianist, Marcia Ball. Written by Leon Russell and Don Nix, this is from one of Irma Thomas's best albums 'Simply Grand'. 14 tracks (12 different pianists) recorded in 2008 with Irma and some of the best piano players in the New Orleans area and further afield. All the tracks on this great album are pared down to the simple essentials and this track is only the two ladies. This just came up because the iPod is on shuffle but I really wouldn't like to choose my best track on the album because they are all 'simply terrific'.

FURTHER RAMBLINGS. I am a member of CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale as if you didn't know!) and drinking is as much of the Blues scene as the music... almost. I can't drink like I used to but I still enjoy a pint of 'real' ale more than any other alcohol and I am lucky that my area (Bucks/Herts/Beds) have a large number of excellent breweries such that, in a local festival, 13 local breweries were represented supplying 29 casks of the 40 on offer. However there is a down side and that is pubs are still closing at an alarming rate.



There is a pub at Great Kimble (five miles from Aylesbury) called the Bernard Arms and this is being pulled down by developers for private housing. This pub happens to be within walking distance of Chequers estate, (the Prime Minister's country retreat) and has welcomed many world leaders, prime ministers and their guests, and you could pop in for a pint with them too. The pub had many historic photos on its walls of these famous visitors, even President Eisenhower. Wycombe Council have ignored the many objections from the local council, a large number of locals and, of course, CAMRA but the pub will be no more.

Dave Parker

SOUL KITCHEN

THE HOME OF REAL SOUL

LOST SOULS

TOMMY TATE



Tommy Tate was a Southern soul man with few peers, yet remained hidden in the shadows. He never achieved the success his talent richly deserved. He was also a prolific songwriter.

He was born 29th September 1945, in Homestead, Florida and when he was six his family relocated to Jackson, Mississippi. His musical family encouraged young Tate to play an instrument, so it was the drums he took up. Also his vocal abilities were put to good use in various church choirs. By his mid-teens he was gigging around his home town.

In 1965 he came to the notice of ABC records, which resulted in his first release, '*What's The Matter*', supported by Tim Whitsett and his Imperial Show Band, a band that for a short spell also featured a young Dorothy Moore. During the rest of the sixties Tate had releases on a variety of labels; Swing, Temporaire, Okeh, Big Ten, Verve, Atco and Musicor. Tim (*Macks By The Tracks*) Whitsett was involved in almost all of them.

In 1970, now parted from Whitsett, he made his first solo forty five on the Jackson Sound label, with '*Peace Is All You Need*'/'*Let Us Be Heard (A Prayer For Peace)*'. Soon after that he signed as a writer for Stax. Through the years numerous Stax and other artists benefitted from his compositions. He was also given the opportunity to record a couple of singles at Stax which fell by the wayside.

In 1971 he moved to New York, and signed for producer Johnny Baylor's KoKo label. This was his finest period, with Baylor at the helm. Between 1971 and 1977 KoKo released six impressive singles. His second release, the classic ironic '*School Of Life*', was to be his biggest R&B chart entry, peaking at 22. His only other R&B chart appearances were in 1976 with '*Hardtimes S.O.S.*' (62) and '*If You Ain't Man Enough*' (93).

In the early eighties he is to be found with some marvellous releases on Sundance and Fredrick Knight's Juana label.

Tate suffered a heart attack in late 2001, which tied him to a wheelchair, and later a care home in Jackson, Mississippi. He died 20th January 2017.

LEON WARE



Leon Ware was a prolific songwriter, musician and record producer, born 16th February 1940, in Detroit, Michigan. Besides a solo career as a performer, Ware was best known for his behind the scene activities. Ware gained his first experience of performing in the mid-fifties, with the doo-wop group the Romeos.

My first introduction to Ware was his 1982 single '*That's Why I Came To California*', which I played over and over, and certainly would be in my all-time top forty fives. At the time I knew nothing of his past involvement with artists like the Isley Brothers (Ware wrote their 1967 hit, '*Got To Have You Back*'), Ike and Tina Turner, Michael Jackson, and working for ABC, Motown, Bell and re-joining Motown.

At Motown he worked on a romantic song-cycle intending it to be his own solo debut. Instead Motown boss Berry Gordy persuaded Ware to give the songs to Marvin Gaye in return for being allowed to produce Gaye. The result was the delicate and tender, million selling gold album, I WANT YOU, Gaye's most cohesive artistic outing. This exposure enabled Ware to launch his own career, firstly in 1976, with the magnificent laid back MUSICAL MESSAGE album.

Leaving Motown in 1978, he enjoyed minor US R&B hits in 1979, *'What's Your Name'* on the Fabulous imprint, and in 1981, *'Baby Don't Stop Me'* and *'Rockin' You Eternally'*, both on Elektra, all in the same heavily produced, lush style that he had fashioned for Gaye.

Ware continued his song writing and producing career, while also releasing solo albums between 1979 and 2008. During that period he wrote for numerous soul and pop artists, the list is endless, but includes Bobby Womack. He toured infrequently, but he did make a memorable appearance at the Jazz Café in 2009. He died 23rd February 2017 from prostate cancer.

MARVELL THOMAS



Marvell Thomas was a respected pianist, producer and arranger, and was a key figure in the development of Stax records.

Son of Rufus Thomas, and older brother of Carla and Vanessa, he was born 22nd August 1941, in Memphis, Tennessee. Surrounded by his musical family, it was only natural he was involved in the business, mastering the piano from an early age.

He was seventeen when he was first introduced to the Stax studios, and from there it became his second home, going on to contribute to many of the great soul records, including dad Rufus and sister Carla.

He co-produced Isaac Hayes' album *HOT BUTTERED SOUL* and played on numerous records, by the likes of William Bell, *'You Don't Miss Your Water'*, Johnnie Taylor, Staples Singers, and Albert King to name a few. He was also very involved with dozens of recordings at Muscle Shoals, such as Etta James, Wilson Pickett, and Denise LaSalle. He was a regular at the Porretta soul festival. He died 23rd January 2017.

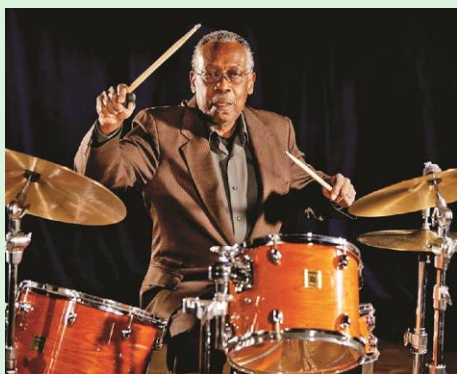
BOBBY FREEMAN



Bobby Freeman was born 13th June 1940, in San Francisco, California. By the age of fourteen Bobby was singing with the vocal group The Romancers, performing around the Bay area. He subsequently formed The Vocaleers. In 1958 he came to the attention of Jubilee record producer, Mortimer Palitz, who offered him a recording contract.

In April 1958, Bobby recorded a song he had written called *'Do You Want To Dance'*, released on Jubilee's subsidiary label Josie, while he was still in high school. His follow up was also a hit, *'Betty Lou Got A New Pair Of Shoes'*, which was also a top tenner. Up until his graduation, in February 1959, he was a permanent visitor to the R&B charts. His run of hits eventually dried up. A few years later he signed for the Autumn label, and in 1964 he butterflied back to the charts with yet another new dance craze, *'C'mon And Swim'*, followed by *'S-W-I-M'*. These were to be his last chart appearances. He would continue to perform, but in later life appearances were few and far between. He died 28th January 2017 from natural causes.

CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD



Clyde Stubblefield was one of the world's top drummers. His legendary drum break from *'Funky Drummer'* probably holds the record as the most sampled recording ever. It's estimated that Stubblefield's beat was sampled on more than 1000 records, and he has been credited with inventing the rhythmic pattern that became hip-hop.

He was born 18th April 1943, in Chattanooga, Tennessee. In the early sixties he moved to Macon, Georgia, the home town of Otis Redding, who gave Clyde his first professional gig. He joined the James Brown band in 1965. Brown saw him playing and hired

him on the spot. Stubblefield became the percussive heartbeat of Brown's sound for the next six years.

He had had enough of touring, so in 1971 he retired from music and, apart from the occasional reunion with members of Brown's band, he was content to play his drums in local clubs.

He died 18th February 2017 from kidney failure.

AL JARREAU



Al Jarreau was born 12th March 1940, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Although Jarreau sang from childhood, it wasn't until the late sixties that he decided to make singing his full time occupation. He began singing in small West Coast clubs, before adventuring further afield. By the mid-seventies he was becoming, via records and tours, a sought after performer.

It's hard to pinpoint his vocal style, singing a highly sophisticated form of vocalised scat that displayed many influences, mainly from the world of jazz. He customarily used his vocal sounds that had roots in African chants etc. Basically the range of influences made him hard to classify. His unique style made it hard for him to cross over into mainstream popular music. In the seventies and eighties he was constantly

inventing vocally, now attuned to fusions in popular music.

I saw him live a couple of times at the North Sea Jazz Festival, Netherlands. To be honest he never really rocked my boat, but there was no denying his exceptional vocal talent.

He died 12th February 2017 from respiratory failure.

WILLIE JOE LIGON



Willie Joe Ligon was a co-founder, and lead singer, with the gospel group The Mighty Clouds Of Joy. The group was formed in Los Angeles, California, in 1955, which is where they appeared in gospel concerts in local churches.

In 1960 they signed with Peacock records. Their debut single, '*Steal Away To Jesus*', made enough waves to warrant an album, FAMILY CIRCLE. Throughout the sixties the group recorded a series of albums, which sold extremely well in the gospel market.

Along with preaching, The Mighty Clouds of Joy put other innovations into their dramatic stage shows. They wore bright colour-coordinated suits and sported pompadour haircuts. Their singing was extremely energetic and their voices wide ranging. The Clouds would whip the audience into a frenzy with moral tales exhorting the people to faith. This drama secured for them a reputation as the country's leading male gospel group.

In the early seventies their recordings changed tempo, adapting a more commercial repatriation, leading them into soul and R&B, but never leaving their gospel heritage behind.

In 1974 a move to ABC records saw the group's first R&B chart entry with '*Time*', which was produced by Gamble & Huff, and peaked at 32. Like the Staple Singers and Rance Allen, the Mighty Clouds Of Joy brought their gospel to the mainstream record buying public. In 1976 they achieved their highest chart placing, in both the R&B and Pop charts, with the majestic '*Mighty High*'.

What followed was a frenetic touring schedule, along with an amazing recording output, with over seventy albums, of which many achieved Grammy nominations and awards. Many personnel changes and deaths over the years, but the group for more than sixty years continued performing with Ligon at the helm. He was born 11th September 1936, and died 11th December 2016.

RICHIE INGUI



Richie Ingui was a co-founder of the sibling blue eyed soul group The Dedications, formed in New York, along with brothers Charles, Richard and Kenny Jeremiah (who incidentally was later with Shirley Goodman in Shirley & Company). They issued several sides from 1962 to 1964 without much success. In 1965 they signed to Crimson records and changed their name to The Soul Survivors. They relocated to Philadelphia and teamed up with Gamble and Huff.

It took the group a few years, but in 1967 they hit pay dirt with the million selling *'Expressway To Your Heart'*, to what end kind of established "The Sound Of Philadelphia" which, over the next few years, went on to become the international sound of soul. Further hits followed; *'Explosion In Your Soul'* and *'Impossible Mission (Mission Impossible)'*. In 1974 they had a final fling with the charts with *'Brotherly Love'* before splitting up. They occasionally reformed for oldie concerts.

He died 13th January 2017 from heart failure. He was 70.

JONI SLEDGE



Joni Sledge was born 13th September 1956, and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was one of four sisters who formed the vocal group Sister Sledge. They started their recording career in 1971, and spent a short time working as backing singers before enjoying a series of minor R&B chart hits between 1974 and 1977.

In 1979 they entered a fruitful relationship with Nile Rodgers (Chic), that resulted in internationally acclaimed hits, including, *'He's The Greatest Dancer'*, *'We Are Family'* and *'Lost In Music'*. Although success in the States waned, the girls retained their UK popularity throughout the eighties, where in 1985 they achieved a number one hit with *'Frankie'*. In 2005 they performed on the pyramid stage at Glastonbury. They continued to record and tour, mainly supper lounges, special events, and oldie package tours.

She died 10th March 2017 from natural causes.

WALTER 'JUNIE' MORRISON



Walter 'Junie' Morrison was a singer, songwriter, producer. The multi-talented musician was the driving force behind some of the biggest seventies funk hits with the Ohio Players and the P-Funk collection, which is Parliament - Funkadelic.

He died 11th February 2017. He was 62.

JAMES COTTON



James Henry Cotton was born 1st July 1935 in Tunica, Mississippi. He was inspired by hearing Sonny Boy Williamson II on the radio. He worked with his mentor from the late forties until 1953, when he made his recording debut for Sun records. He joined Muddy Waters in 1954, and played with him on and off, until 1966.

He toured Europe with Muddy in 1961. He formed his own group in 1966, and continued to tour and record up until a few years back. In 2006, Cotton was inducted into the Blues Hall Of Fame.

He died 16th March 2017 from pneumonia.

CHUCK BERRY

I guess I would have found real music somehow along the line, but Chuck Berry sure put me in the right direction. Four of my favourites from the duck-walking musical genius - *'Nadine'*, *'You Never Can Tell'*, *'Promised Land'* and *'Too Pooped To Pop'* - are all works of art.

Right - A rare Polish Flexi Card disc.

LIVE SOUL


LEROY HUTSON

Being a great fan of Leroy Hutson, he was a guy I always wanted to catch live. So finally I did at the Union Chapel, London, Friday 24th February.

Rather than reproduce it here, check out Nick Cobban's Vinyl Word (stolen for page 45 of this issue) for the report of the evening.

RANDY BROWN

TWR & Interesting Promotions present
'SOUL LEGEND'
RANDY BROWN



— 1ST UK tour —
Thursday 5th & Friday 6th May
at THE SHAW THEATRE
100 Euston Road, London NW1
TICKETS: £8.00 from Box Office
Telephone: 01-388 1394

Following on from Leroy Hutson we have another cult soul man making a rare visit to the UK.

I will be seeing him at the Indigo, 9th April, along with Denise Williams, Barbara Mason and the Valentine Brothers. As far as I know his only other UK visit was at the Shaw Theatre, London, back in May 1988. In the seventies Brown, as a member of the vocal group the Newcomers, recorded for Stax, and charted with *'Pin The Tail On The Donkey'*.

Brown went solo in 1978, recording some truly great soul for Parachute. *'I'd Rather Hurt Myself (Than To Hurt You)'*, *'I Thought Of You Today'*, *'(Too Little In Common To Be Lovers) Too Much Going To Say Good-Bye'*. If we get these three tunes I shall be very well satisfied.

SOUL DIP

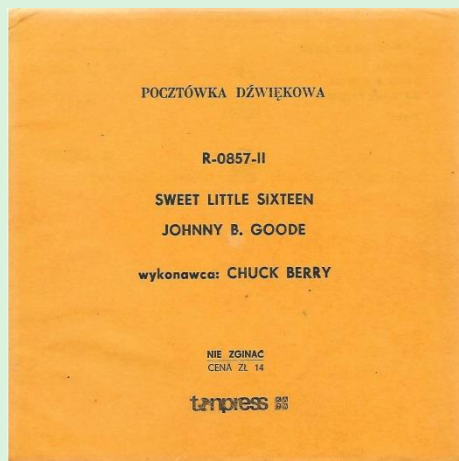
McKinley Mitchell - Party Across The Hall/She's Married Already (Black Beauty 1974)

Party is a terrific horn led mid-tempo stroller, all about Mary dancing. There's no mistaking Mitchell's unique vocals, and he throws a couple of growls in for good measure. On the flip McKinley has his eye on a real fine lady, whom he loves, until one day he sees her with someone else. She keeps appearing on his street. He's gutted to find out that she is already married. He sounds so disappointed on his way to hurstville. An awesome double sider.

Well he soon got over his frustration as, a couple of forty fives later, he found himself a Good Time Baby.

Howard Tate - These Are The Things That Make Me Know You're Gone (Turntable 1969)

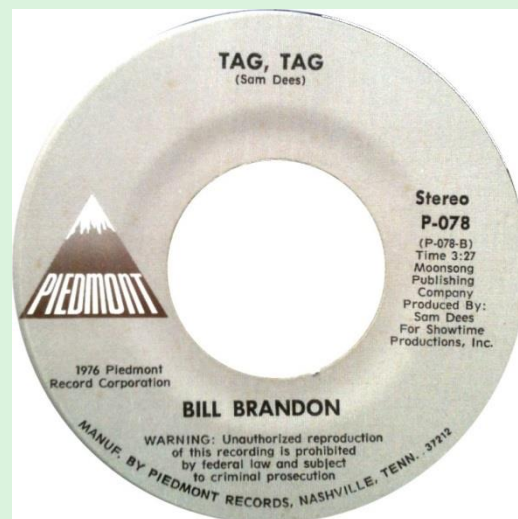
Tate's prolific recording career brought us numerous classics, and this is one of his best. The lyrics are first rate, as he relates how his life has fallen apart since his girl left him; *"Newspapers collecting at the door, pyjamas lying on the floor, TV dinners every night, dishes piling up in the sink, refrigerator left ajar and here's a half-eaten candy bar"*, *"makes me know how lonely I am"*. Subtle strings and shadowing male backing only adds to his yearning. Marvellous side.



Bill Brandon - The Streets Got My Lady/Tag Tag (Piedmont 1976)

The A side is a super example of a mid-seventies dancier, part penned by Moses Dillard, with lyrics about a girl who's fallen by the wayside, ending up on life's murky sidewalks etc.

But it's on the B side we find our deep soul classic. You couldn't find a more perfect blend than master lyricist Sam Dees, along with Brandon's powerful pleading vocals, which is the ideal team to produce a heartless deep classic. Bill sounds really hurt and angry on this occasion, and isn't gonna stand for any more nonsense from his woman, *"acting just like a child"* *"you're playing with my mind"* *"I just don't know where I stand"...* *"Tag Tag, if that's your game I don't wanna play, cos I don't have the time, so babe please stay away"*. There is so much in these revolving grooves, it's simply Souttastatic.



Larry Santos - We Can't Hide It Anymore (Casablanca 1975)

Produced by Don Davis, this tells the story of a woman who is having an affair with the singer, and her husband is hot on their trail. All the passion and pain of their illicit encounters are captured on vinyl for the whole world to hear and feel. An excellent slipping around goody. Also recorded by J J Barnes and The Facts Of Life.

Roshell Anderson - Know What You're Doing When You Leave (Sunburst 1973/Contempo)

Deadly slow ballad that oozes simplicity. We find the throaty voiced Roshell in an appealing mood to his woman, to let her know what she's gonna miss if she walks out the door to this other man. He tells her, point blank, that once she steps outside there is no way back for her at all. Also we get a mini monologue, sensitive female backing and a great fade out.

This has the same approach and feeling as Aaron Neville's *'Tell It Like It Is'*, and Toussaint McCall's *'Nothing Takes The Place Of You'*. A deep soulful forty five, which is quality Soul with a capital S.



Little Richard - Blueberry Hill (UK Fontana 1964)

The beautiful Little Richard from Macon Georgia opens with a few Ah-ooooos, Ah-ooooos, before getting down to business. Female chorus belts out, whatever, occasionally in the back ground, on top of a full instrumental belting, with Richard giving the lyrics his full attention as only he can.

I think this record is as good as any of his. Fats Domino's version of 'Hill' is unsurpassed, but Richard gives the song a new lease of life. The proceedings are busting with Penniman's enthusiasm which seems to jump out at you from the grooves, which is enough to give anyone the Heebie Jeebies.

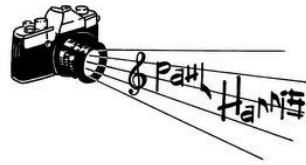
Remember you're in
safe soul hands with....

SOULBOY

Keep on keeping on



MIKE VERNON IN PICTURES



All pictures © Paul Harris



Paul Harris had another day out on the south coast to see Mike Vernon & The Mighty Combo performing at the Southern Pavilion, Worthing Pier on February 23rd 2017

Thanks for the pictures Paul.



Mike Vernon & The Mighty Combo



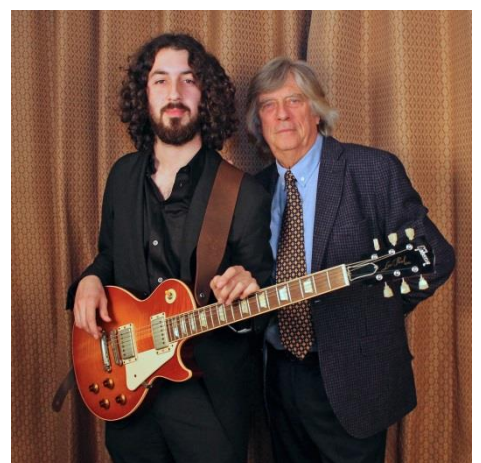
Mike Vernon & Kid Carlos



Kid Carlos

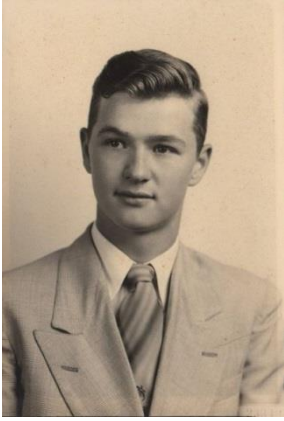


Paulo Tasker



Kid Carlos & Mike Vernon

Red Moore



Some say bad news travels fast but it seems Red Moore's passing on December 16, 2016 took a long time to get round, at least to me. Maybe I skipped a beat? It is pretty shocking bad news for me and his friends all around the world. Red was a musical legend for "Crawdad Song" (Red 840) for years before he could be seen on the Rockabilly Hall of Fame web site after his induction under #108. Red was also featured in American Music Magazine issue #95.

In May 2004, Red wrote me: I consider myself very lucky and fortunate to have been a part of it and getting to meet and mingle with so many great artists. One of my highlights was getting Lefty Frizzell out of retirement and playing with Johnny Paycheck, Dave Dudley and dozens more.

In January 2007, Red wrote me: When people called my music (Crawdad Song) rockabilly I thought hum, I always thought it was country? Actually I guess it was a rockin' country. Back then before country so much, a lot of people would call it hillbilly and I guess it sounded too corn ball so it changed to country. During the middle of the '50s, the younger generation then liked to kind of crank it up a notch so it would move. Bill Haley and several others were already doing it and it was catching on as a mixture of rock and hillbilly. Remember, back then we didn't have all the instruments and most weren't electric. To speed it up on a big upright bass you kind of had a SLAP going. Maybe rockabilly is used more now than it was back then because it's used to separate the type of music that came out the mixture? I heard the word rockabilly back then and it sounded good if you didn't want to be labelled rock or country.

Through his various emails, Red told me about our friend Marvin Rainwater but also Wynn Stewart, Hopalong Cassidy and his wife Gracie, Tex Ritter and many others. Red really liked Cowboys.

I miss him now he's gone... I wonder who will take the keys to the mailbox?

Dominique "Imperial" Anglares

ANOTHER TEN THINGS I LOVE TO HATE

1. "One size fits all." It doesn't.
2. Cafés that serve tea with the tea-bag still inside the cup so that you have to slop it into the saucer.
3. Cafés that serve you toast with those tubs of butter that are murder to open with your fingernails. And the butter is half-frozen so it won't spread properly.
4. Hand dryers in public toilets. They don't.
5. Taps that don't come with a User's Manual. Flip the tap upwards? Sideways? Put your hand under the tap and wait? Shout "Allah Akbar" at it? Even worse are those ridiculous candelabra things.
6. "Slim Fit" or "tapered" shirts. They suddenly become so tight half-way down that they bulge open and your wife or partner suggests you start slimming.
7. "Medium" sizes that are either "Small" or "Large" but never "Medium".
8. Incomprehensible foreign sizes for trousers, shoes etc. (2/61/16/42)
9. People talking on TV who keep saying "Er" and "Um" or "I-I-I ing".
10. "One of the only". My grammatical bête noire. I've even heard David Attenborough say it in one of his documentaries. "One of" obviously means "more than one" and "only" means "no more than one". It can't be both! "One of the *few*," please.



NEIL FOSTER

AMERICAN MUSIC MAGAZINE

in association with «Tales From The Woods» - Roots Music Social Networking Group

#144 APRIL 2017



The April issue of American Music (AM) Magazine is a 72 page 'special'. The first-half of the magazine carries a 36 page feature on **Faye Adams** who took the rhythm & blues world by storm in 1953 with her huge hit 'Shake A Hand'. However, Faye's talents have never been fully-appreciated and the article aims to bring her overdue recognition. Besides telling her story, the feature is lavishly illustrated and includes a definitive discography, label shots in full colour, and an abundance of trade magazine clippings and adverts. AM believes it to be the best ever feature on Ms Adams. For lovers of country and hillbilly, there is the fascinating story of **Uncle Harve Spivey**, the Miami band leader and promoter who also had his own record label - Mida Records - which recorded local rock 'n' roll acts. The magazine continues its **Instrumentals Forever** series (part 7) and carries the second instalment of **Sophisticated Ladies and/or Tough Cookies** (black singers who managed to cross-over to the white market) whilst Bear Family's founder **Richard Weize** looks back at his achievements under that banner, and looks forward to his new label 'RWA Records' (Richard Weize Archives). There is a comprehensive report of **Rhythm Riot's 20th Anniversary Show** with the magazine concluding with loads of record reviews.

AM works in association with TFTW and deserves your support. There are more fascinating articles planned for the September and December issues this year. Readers in the UK/Eire should contact Dickie Tapp dickietapp@googlemail.com for details of how to receive a copy of the latest issue and/or subscription information (or write to Dickie at 75 Potters Lane, Burgess Hill, RH15 9JT).

VINYL REVIEW

ROBB SHENTON & THE WESTERN ALL-STARS - ROCK, ROLL, JUMP & JIVE

WESTERN STAR WSRC MLP09

Robb Shenton & The Western All-Stars

Rock, Roll, Jump & Jive

Album Released 20th January 2017

Visit: www.western-star.co.uk - and proceed to "The Shop" where you can find this album in the vinyl section

Album Released 20th January 2017

Visit: www.western-star.co.uk - and proceed to "The Shop" where you can find this album in the vinyl section

Some of you may recall the name Robb Shenton due to seeing him at one of our Borderline shows where he has featured as both a performer and master of ceremonies. Preston born, Shenton turned professional in the sixties, joining popular north west beat group David John & The Mood. Moving south he participated in several vocal sessions at Joe Meeks' famous Holloway Road studio, and some years later recorded the tribute disc *Lonely Joe*.

More recently he has had a CD - *We're Gonna Rock* - issued on Fury in 2011, and a 5 track disc - *Down The Line* - followed in 2014. Now comes this brand new 10" six track vinyl record, the cover of which lovingly replicates the vintage style of such an album sleeve. Paying homage to the sort of music Robb listened to as a teenager, the opener is a cover of rockabilly guy Connie Dycus' rare 1959 release *Rock-A-Bye Baby Rock* which speeds along like an express train, led by a cool throbbing vocal and Rusti Steel's prominent ethereal steel guitar playing.

Shenton's own well-crafted composition *She's Gone, She's Long Long Gone* is a catchy mid-tempo country flavoured number featuring some sparkling lead guitar picking from Dave Yates and agreeable backing vocals courtesy of Liz Avent.

The Ron Hargrave/Sheb Wooley co-write *Dreamy Doll*, as recorded by Bob Luman, is a moody ballad that Shenton handles skilfully and with feeling. Some mellow saxophone blowing here from Sean McBride fits like a glove, and Stuart Demmery helps out on bass vocal.

A joyful romp through the title track, a Curtis Gordon rocker, is all the better for Yates' ringing guitar work. Shenton gives an emotive performance of Jamie Coe's dramatic rock ballad *I'll Go On Loving You* which is enhanced by some striking drumming from Ben Turner.

Closing this applaudable album is Marney Webb's 1981 teenage neo-rockabilly refrain, *Still Searching*. Boasting lashings of Stuart Whitehouse's pulsating slap bass and crisp twangy electric guitar played by producer Alan Wilson, Robb Shenton signs off with a stirring vocal rendition.

Lee Wilkinson

MOVIE PICKS

Tales From The Woods

Tales From The Woods



Tales, stories, sometimes based on real events, some other times imaginary, played in a visual manner, accompanied by music, exuding emotion, sometimes joy, some other times sadness; these are movies. And this time we have plenty.

We have dramas able to touch us deep inside our very own souls with heart-wrenching beauty. Like:

Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk

Tales From The Woods

Drama, War. 1h 53 min 10 February 2017
Director: Ang Lee
Starring: Joe Alwyn, Garret Hedlund, Arturo Castro

An insight into decorated hero Billy Lynn's ulterior motives in joining the army and questioning of a second tour.

Directed by Taiwanese born Ang Lee; Life of Pie and Brokeback Mountain, twice academy award winner. Still not sure if it is an antiwar or a pro-war movie. Nevertheless it is very moving at times.



Moonlight

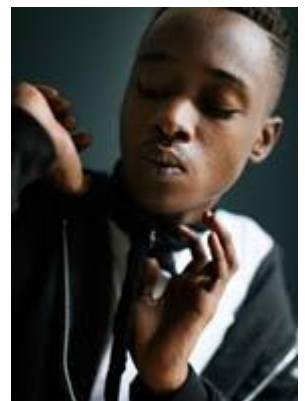
Tales From The Woods

Drama. 1h 51min 17 February 2017
Director: Barry Jenkins.
Starring: Mahershala Ali, Shariff Earp, Duane Anderson

Told in three parts, coming of age portrayal of a black gay man growing up in Miami.

Directed by an African-American with an all African American cast. Award winner of Best Picture against La La Land.

A melancholic account of a boy's struggle to cope in a loveless insensitive environment he does not belong to.



We have Science Fiction films set in a distant future made to captivate our imagination. Like:

LIFE

Tales From The Woods

Sci-Fi, Horror. 1h 44min 24 March 2017
Director: Daniel Espinosa
Starring: Jake Gyllenhaal, Rebecca Ferguson, Ryan Reynolds



A group of astronauts analyzing soil samples from Mars discover Life.

Danish director Espinosa's suspenseful and claustrophobic ride on board a Space Station.

Aliens explore mankind's fear of deep space, Life preys on our fear of what we could find on Mars.



Ghost In The Shell



Fantasy, Sci-Fi. 1h 47min 30 March 2017

Director: Rupert Sanders.

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Pilou Asbæk, Takeshi Kitano



Cybernetic enhanced counter terrorism soldier Motoko Kusanagi's search for her own identity.

Chinese produced Hollywood motion picture based on the highly popular Japanese Manga. If that made sense.

Superb visuals, amazing CGI action oriented with adequate character development. However, it differs enough from the original series to still stand on its own.



Or even Horror, movies able to repel and shock our bodies with intense dread, otherwise enjoyable due to a discharge of adrenaline into our systems with:

Get Out

Horror, Thriller. 1h 44min 17 March 2017

Director: Jordan Peele

Starring: Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams, LilRel Howery

A black guy meets the parents of his white girlfriend in Alabama.

Second film in this article to explore the theme of racism only with a more sinister tone.

Truly unsettling; at first liberal and welcoming parents, nothing is as it seems only to take a turn for the worse. If horror is your genre you will love.



A Cure For Wellness



Horror, Fantasy. 2h 26min 24 February 2017

Director: Gore Verbinski

Starring: Dane DeHaan, Mia Goth, Jason Isaac.



A young up and coming executive is sent to retrieve his company CEO from his retirement in an idyllic resort in Switzerland

Pirates of The Caribbean director Gore Verbinski in a psychological horror movie.

Suspense, intrigue and mystery surround the premise of this movie at first, soon to turn into a creepy and freak gore fest.



We can even learn some history by going to the cinema with:

Hidden Figures



Drama, Biography. 2h 07min 17 February 2017

Director: Theodore Melfi

Starring: Kevin Costner, Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer



Talented black mathematician women work at NASA as human computers.

Theodore Melfi's depiction of segregated America during the late '50s.

Based on the true story of the black women working on the Mercury Program. It is heavily dramatized although in a nice and enjoyable manner.



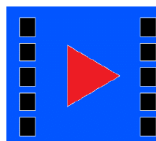
Viceroy's House



Drama, History. 1h 46min 15 March 2017

Director: Gurinder Chadha

Starring: Hugh Bonneville, Gillian Anderson, Manish Dayal



Newly appointed Viceroy of India, Lord Mountbatten, is charged with overseeing the partition of India.

A British Production directed by Kenyan born of Indian descent Gurinder Chandha.

Stunning cinematography and colorful costumes. The story is told in a very effective and personal manner, despite the historic reality and its cost revealed during the credits.



And of course, foreign movies if we intend to learn a new language, only to limit ourselves to read the subtitles like:

The Age Of Shadows



Drama, Thriller. 2h 13min 24 March 2017

Director: Jee-woon Kim

Starring: Byung-hun Lee, Yoo Gong, Kang-ho Song



A group of resistance fighters oppose the occupation.

A meticulous recreation of 1920's Japan ruled Korea.

Atmospheric with vivid coloured costumes and shadowy scenery.

A war time based spy thriller; complex, dark and brutal.



Drama, Thriller. 2h 10min 10 March 2017
Director: Paul Verhoeven
Starring: Isabelle Huppert, Laurent Lafitte, Jonas Bloquet

Fiercely independent and cold businesswoman is assaulted in her home and sets herself to unmask the perpetrator. Based on a Philippe Dijan novel, Oh... Recommended reading to fill the gaps the movie leaves unanswered. Paul Verhoeven, Robocop, Starship Troopers notorious excessive violence. This time a less futuristic but equally disturbing film.



Or even movies we're not entirely sure why we go to see, perhaps due to merchandising like:

Power Rangers

Sci-Fi, Adventure 2h 04min 23 March 2017
Director: Dean Israelite
Starring: Dacre Montgomery, RJ Cyler, Naomi Scott



Five outcast teenage students must learn to trust each other in order to unleash their powers. A reboot of Saban's version of the popular Japanese Kyoryu Sentai Zyranger. Basically a Power Rangers origins story. Not bad, actually well received, recommended to a young adult audience.



Kong Skull Island

Action, Fantasy. 1h 58min 09 March 2017
Director: Jordan Vogt-Roberts
Starring: Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, Brie Larson

A group of scientists escorted by soldiers explore an uncharted island protected by a mystical creature. It relies heavily on a stellar cast and even more costly CGI. Good acting, of course, never mind the bland characters and nonsensical plot. Set during the '70s Vietnam War, a glorified mix of war and monster movie. A prequel to the coming Kong vs Godzilla.



NEW ORLEANS SECOND LINE

the beat of the street

by Patty Lee and Armand St. Martin

This column, written by husband-wife team Patty Lee and Armand St. Martin, features Roots News From The Crescent City - - A flavorful gumbo of who's who and what's what of New Orleans Music



New Orleans in April and May is a great time to enjoy the city before summertime kicks in with high humidity that sends folks seeking refuge from the heat whether indoors or out. With a festival of some kind (always with music) offered every weekend, New Orleans definitely earns the title of “the city that care forgot,” when it comes to music, eating, and enjoying a good time.

On February 26th, reclusive Fats Domino turned 89, born in New Orleans in 1928 as Antoine Domino, Jr. Releasing five records that went gold before 1955, he chalked up over a million records sold by then. By the following years (1956,

1957), his “Blueberry Hill” sold upwards of five million records around the world. The Fat Man’s list of music accomplishments, records released, career credits, and lifetime achievements is mind-boggling. His 2017 birthday was celebrated quietly with family and a few close personal friends in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Also in February, among non-stop Mardi Gras seasonal performances that yearly keep Armand St. Martin busy, he entertained solo at the Harrah’s Main Theatre for the National Basketball Retired Players Association, pictured by Patty Lee.



Mardi Gras season is complex to describe but it’s easy to say that New Orleanians work all year ‘round towards each Mardi Gras, participating in providing free parades for all viewers who come from everywhere. There are always plenty of Mardi Gras beads to go around. (Kylee and Sean Lee, MyPartyBus of Eugene, Oregon love Mardi Gras fun.)



Record crowds enjoy Mardi Gras parades sporting such names as the Phunny Phorty Phellows, the Societe Des Champs Elysee, Krewe du Vieux, Krew of Cork, Krewe of Chewbacchus, Krewe of Femme Fatale, Krewe of Barkus, Krewe of Chaos, Krewe of Nyx, Krewe of Druids and Krewe of Bosom Buddies.

A “krewe” is an organization whose delight is in putting on a parade and/or a ball for Carnival season. In southeast Louisiana alone, there are over 50 official parades throughout the weeks, culminating with the final parades in the Big Easy on Fat Tuesday aka Mardi Gras Day which always end the spectacular season exactly at midnight going into Ash Wednesday. Most popular krewes not to miss are Le Krewe d’Etat, Krewe of Muses, Krewe of Endymion, Krewe of Bacchus, Krewe of Proteus, Krewe of Orpheus, Krewe of Zulu, and Krewe of Rex.

Music is an enormous part of Mardi Gras gaiety with the favorite recordings of Fats Domino’s “[Mardi Gras in New Orleans](#)”; Professor Longhair’s “[Go to the Mardi Gras](#)” and “[Big Chief](#)”; the Dixie Cups “[Iko, Iko](#)”; the Hawketts’ “[Mardi Gras Mambo](#)”; The Meters’ “[Hey Pocky A-Way](#)”; Louis Armstrong’s “[King of the Zulus](#)”; Clifton Chenier & his Red Hot Louisiana Band’s “[Mardi Gras Boogie](#)”; Dr. John’s “[Mardi Gras Day](#)”; Wild Tchoupitoulas’ “[Brother John](#)”; and Armand St. Martin’s “[Must Be the Mardi Gras](#)”. When Mardi Gras lovers hear the very first note of any one of these songs, they jump from their seats to dance, knowing Mardi Gras is here!



Armand St. Martin is pictured during his music video shoot at Mardi Gras World by WNOA-TV. And, speaking of Professor Longhair, his daughter Pat Byrd hosted her Mardi Gras seasonal get-together at her Professor Longhair house of memories during Mardi Gras.

And speaking of Dr. John, he was spotted on Super Sunday, March 19 (which this year fell on both St. Joseph's Day and Super Sunday). The Mardi Gras Indians were out in the streets in full regalia. Super Sunday is one of only two traditional days each year when they can be seen publicly displaying their

elaborate "suits" in a festival setting including their walking parade where they sing, dance and play music as they strut and stroll followed by revelers. It's a full day affair. Dr. John was first sighted visiting St. Francis Xavier Church for the biggest St. Joseph's Day altar in town. Then he was later spied, sitting casually in a folding chair, and accompanied with several dear friends, while thoroughly enjoying the beautiful day and the Mardi Gras Indians easing by - many stopping to shake his hand. Dr. John covered "[My Indian Red](#)" that Danny Barker released in the mid-1940s.

Approximately three dozen tribes participated in uptown New Orleans this year, each designing and sewing elaborate [new costumes](#) every year. Music filled the air at the festival location where the parade began and concluded, with sets by the [Wild Magnolias](#), the Young Pinstripe Brass Band, Lady Buckjumpers, the Hot 8 Brass Band, and Big Al Carson's Band. [Black Feather Mardi Gras Indians](#)' documentary is worth the watch.

The 34th Annual French Quarter Festival (FQF) graces the Quarter April 6 - 9 this year, self-billed as "the largest showcase of Louisiana music in the world!" It is free and open to the public. The FQF touts a line-up of more than 1,700 local featured musicians. New Orleans finest restaurants and shops are open for business as part of FQF, as well as Juried Art Shows, Jitterbug dance lessons, film screenings, and even a Battle of the Bands. "This is a family-friendly event," the St. Martins say, "We highly recommend it as our favorite festival of the year."

FQF has an impressive line-up of artists including Aaron Neville, Waylon Thibodeaux Band, the Dixie Cups, Irma Thomas, Big Sam's Funky Nation, Fredy Omar con su Banda, Susan Cowsill, Monk Boudreaux and the Golden Eagles, Walter Wolfman Washington and the Roadmasters, the Soul Rebels, Dwayne Dopsie and the Zydeco Hellraisers, Dash Rip Rock, James Andrews, Little Freddie King, John Boutte, Wanda Rouzan and a Taste of New Orleans, the Palmetto Bug Stompers, Tony Green and Gypsy Jazz, Washboard Chaz Blues Band, Symphony Chorus of New Orleans, The Pfister Sisters, Honey Island Swamp Band, Lena Prima, Bruce Daigrepoint Cajun Band, and Rockin' Dopsie and the Zydeco Twisters, to list a few familiar acts. Aaron Neville makes his FQF debut this year.

The New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival (Jazz Fest) kicks off April 28 - 30 and May 4 - May 7 at the Fairgrounds which offers talents Stevie Wonder, Dr. John and the Gris-Gris Krewe, Tower of Power, Deacon John, Henry Butler's Jambalaya Band, Steve Riley & the Mamou Playboys, Lil' Buck Sinegal Blues Band with special guest Barbara Lynn. Also featured is Earth, Wind & Fire, plus A Salute to Louis Armstrong featuring Hugh Masekela and Dr. Michael White, the Dukes of Dixieland, Gregg Martinez & the Delta Kings' Swamp Pop Revue featuring GG Shinn, and Marcia Ball, for a starter kit. Meanwhile music is offered city-wide as well during this Jazz Fest time frame, with clubs, bars, restaurants, venues, parties, churches, and various venues all offering live music, even in the streets.

There is never down-time in New Orleans when it comes to music, nor "time to be down" nor "time to sit down" when enjoying the language that music speaks to all of us!

Stay tuned. . . .



The Buzz

Welcome to *The Buzz*

The 'Tales From The Woods' round up of gigs where you really need to show your face.

The **TALES FROM THE WOODS** YouTube channel celebrated its first birthday upon 1st April. Denis has worked so hard in creating what has proved to be an invaluable asset, proving to the uninitiated the quality of **TALES FROM THE WOODS** live shows.

You will find numerous segments taken from our shows over these last few years, older events that we feel may not be up to our exacting standards, that were recorded in far from ideal circumstances, or with problems created by background noise, poor sound, but we feel that are historically important enough to be included. We head these items under the title "Vintage". I'm sure you'll agree that Denis deserves a big round of applause for creating our wonderful YouTube channel.

I know that Denis has a surprise for our one year anniversary that I know you will all want to check out. For those who have come across us for the very first time, or have recently joined our ever expanding membership, go to www.tftw.org.uk and, on the front page click, on YouTube. I hope you enjoy browsing, we are very keen to get feedback, we love to hear your views on all things **TALES FROM THE WOODS**. Please feel free to express yourself either positively or negatively, we really don't mind as long as we hear from you.

CHECK OUT SOME GREAT TFTW VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDINGS ON OUR YouTube CHANNEL



Alan Lloyd has been our webmaster for a number of years now, working hard to keep our website looking exciting, interesting and informative, with photographs old and new from over the years of our existence, all our many social events throughout the years, as well as our live shows, not forgetting too, you can access all our back catalogue magazines from issue 1 to 95, where our growth from a bit of fun one A4 page to the professionally produced on-line magazine that we have become today. You'll discover links that will take you to places new and maybe unexplored, certainly another big round of applause please for Alan.

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TALES FROM THE WOODS

Remember - you're only young twice

Whilst you're cruising our website don't forget to check out our Facebook pages. Above the YouTube channel link you will see our **TALES FROM THE WOODS** Facebook link, with lots of interesting stuff awaiting your perusal. Soon you will discover as you casually scroll down that we

are on Twitter too, and at the bottom of the page you will find my own personal Facebook page. Now there's a thought; got something to say gang that you may not want to share with all the guys and gals on the **TALES FROM THE WOODS** Facebook page? This is the place to post it; come on, it can't all be complimentary surely? Ha Ha.



Okay! That's enough waffle from me, now it's time for the man who brings you all the gig news, who instinctively knows what events are going to be of interest to all our members, friends and guests; let me present to you Dave 'Jazz Junction' Carroll.

Keith Woods

The Gig List

*Information is obtained from various sources and is hopefully accurate.
The advice 'check before travelling' remains sound.*

April 2017

1 Saturday Bill Kirchen & Austin DeLone
Promoting their new cd 'Transatlantica'. (Americana recorded both sides of the pond?)
The Troubadour, Earls Court £16

1 Saturday Garland Jefferys
Cult singer-songwriter admired by Bob Marley, Lou Reed and Bruce Springsteen.
Nell's Jazz & Blues £15 + fees

6 Thursday Kat & Co
American blues vocalist based in England.
The Eel Pie Club at The Cabbage Patch, Twickenham £11

6 Thursday Woody Pines
Both a person and an American group. Billie Joe Shaver claims to be their greatest fan.
Green Note, Camden £12.50 + fees

7 Friday Diane Shaw
Mancunian soul-singer who's always welcome in the south.
Hideaway £15 + fees

8 Saturday The Blues Band
Paul Jones and Dave Kelly remaining true to their first love.
Under The Bridge £27.50 + fees

9 Sunday Deniece Williams, Barbara Mason, Randy Brown, and The Valentine Brothers
Appearing as 'Soul Explosion'.
Indigo at the O2 £23.45 - £67.45 + fees

21 Friday John Prine
Legendary writer of 'Sam Stone'.
The Palladium £37.40, £40.15 + fees



22 Saturday The Real Thing, Heatwave, and Odyssey
Seventies soul from two British bands and one native New Yorker.
Indigo at the O2 £25 - £35 + fees

22 Saturday Shalamar
American band with soul hits in both the 70s and 80s. Which venue will have a night to remember?
Clapham Grand £33.75

30 Sunday Danny Rivers Memorial Cancer Trust Jam
The TFTW Band plus many 'Sixties All Stars'. A worthy cause.
The Spice Of Life 7.00 pm to 10.30 pm £5

May 2017

1 - 2 Monday - Tuesday Albert Lee
Former Everly Brothers guitarist and English exiteer returns with his American band.
Half Moon, Putney £25 + fees (adv), £30 (door)

3 Wednesday Robert Cray
Successful bluesman fills hall.
Cadogan Hall **SOLD OUT**

4 Thursday Doña Oxford
"Goddess of Soul – Queen of Boogie Woogie" taking a break from Mr Lee's band.
The Eel Pie Club at The Cabbage Patch, Twickenham £15

7 Sunday The Dave Kelly Band
Forsaking cerebral acoustic blues to blast out the fun kind.
Half Moon, Putney £13.20 (adv), £14 (door)

12 Tuesday Bruce Mississippi Johnson
Mississippi bluesman who once fronted Big Joe Turner's Band.
The Blues Kitchen, Camden Live music 10.00 pm Free

20 Saturday Dr Feelgood
Canvey Island's finest whose former members are remembered.
Half Moon, Putney £16 + fees (adv), £18 (door)

27 Saturday Shuggie Otis
Guitar prodigy, thankful for a Johnny, appears with full American band.
Under The Bridge £25 + fees

28 Sunday Zoot Money, Peter Donegan, Ray Phillips, Roy Young, TFTW Band
A Groove Yard explosion of vintage British Rhythm'n'blues and Rock'n'Roll
The Borderline Doors open 5pm £25 / £28 / £30

30 Tuesday Darden Smith
Singer-songwriter who sings songs that are known by others.
Slaughtered Lamb £12 + fees

31 Wednesday Carrie Elkin & Danny Schmidt
Folk/country "spellbinding" (Bob Harris) couple from Austin.
Green Note at the Slaughtered Lamb £12.50 + fees

June 2017

12 Monday The Impressions
Farewell tour billed as 'The Soul of Curtis Mayfield'. Oh how we need him now.
Union Chapel £32.50 + fees

July 2017

6 Thursday Mavis Staples + The James Hunter 6
Appropriate venue for one of gospel's best female vocalists.
Union Chapel **SOLD OUT**

7 Friday Taj Mahal & Keb Mo
Senior bluesmen following collaborative album with a tour.
Shepherd's Bush Empire £33 - £38.50 + fees

13 Thursday Buddy Guy
Gold-plated blues at venue which once had B.B. King, Bobby Bland, and John Lee Hooker all on the same bill.
Hammersmith Apollo £60.50 & £66.50

17-18 Monday - Tuesday The Blind Boys Of Alabama
Is gospel worth more? It is when you get Jimmy Carter and Paul Beasley (though Clarence Fountain may not travel).
Ronnie Scott's £70 - £100 + fees

21-23 Friday - Sunday Hook & Sling Festival
'The Finest In Funk, Soul & Breaks'. Line-up includes Syl Johnson but doesn't cite day(s).
229 The Venue £33 per night or £93.50 (3-day ticket)

28 Friday Toots & The Maytals
Reggae legend capable of filling concert halls.
Barbican £25 - £40 + fees

MAY MUSIC AT THE ACE CAFÉ

Wed 3rd – 6pm – Hot Rod Night “Spring Riot” with Lewis Chamberlain & His Band + DJ Little Carl – Entry Free

Sat 27th – 7pm – Rhythm n' Cruise Rockin' Record Hop with DJ Jimmy Guntrip – Entry Free

Sun 28th – 9am – RBLRB Day with the band Joan ov Arc – Entry Free

Mon 29th – Noon – Margate Meltdown Run (on seafront) with The Accidents + DJ's Bill & George Guntrip – Entry Free

JUNE MUSIC AT THE ACE CAFÉ

Wed 7th – 6pm -11pm – Hot Rod Night with The Outsiders + DJ Little Carl – Entry Free

Sat 24th – 7pm – 11pm – Rhythm n' Cruise Rockin' Record Hop with DJ Jimmy Guntrip – Entry Free

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All subscribers receive a membership card. For those who do not possess a computer we send out black and white paper copies of the mag which will incur a fee of £10 per year.

Remember - you're only young twice... Keith Woods