



(Header by Sven Kramer)

Well, here we are going into 2019. Happy New Year to every one of our readers and welcome to those who have joined us in the last month.

We have over 100 more readers than we had this time last year. Thanks to everyone for sticking with us. It is interesting for me to see how far and wide Russ's fans are spread. Not everyone tells me where they come from; for most I only have a name and email address. However I know that, as well as to many in the UK, I send the newsletter out to the US, Germany, The Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, Ireland, Denmark, Ukraine, Slovenia, Myanmar, Portugal, Greece and Norway. If you live in a country I haven't mentioned, please let me know.

Also, going into the new year, some of you are asking when It's Good To Be Here will be released. There is no release date yet but it is definitely on its way.

Dave's article, this month, is something a little different, a look at some young musicians with major talents. It is not primarily about Russ, although he is in there somewhere, but I think you will enjoy it.

Just a reminder that all contributions to the newsletter are welcome. We love to hear from you. A Russ related article, your story as a "Reader's Profile", your Russ story, a question...obscure ones are good, old bits of information you have found...all welcome.

Sue

## THIS MONTH

**Russ:** *"The week before Christmas - [It seems a long time ago now] - I wrote a song with Cassidy Janson....She played the part of Carol King in the musical, 'Beautiful'. Cassidy and I met at my home and she arrived with Ian Ramige, a record company executive, who asked if I'd like to write something for her album. The three of us talked about music straight away....Goffin and King songs, "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow", "Take Good Care of My Baby", "Might As Well Rain Until September" - "Locomotion" - "You're No Good" - "It's Too Late" - Oh, there's loads!! - Cassidy and I sat around the piano and played many of them - She was surprised I knew all the words to all the songs, but sixties pop didn't get any better. I asked Cass if she had a lyric that I could develop. "Yes", she said, and gave me title, then verse and a chorus...This was interesting for me, because, I invariably have a title first [or words]. Anyway, we had a very enjoyable day, then Ian and Cassidy caught the train back to London. I finished the tune a day or two later and Cassidy came back and we recorded the song. Everybody seems pleased with it. After I sent her the demo, Cass sent a message back, "This sounds Epic", which is what it's all about, for me.*

*An old musician friend of mine, [who passed away a couple of years ago], said to me, "you know, Russ, I think the lyric is the soul of the song" - It's the first time that anyone had said that to me and I agreed. Most people say oh it's the tune or melody....it's an interesting argument....As I've said*

*before, when I sit down to write, my mind often goes to "deep themes" - and I have to stop myself sometimes and remember people might not be interested in the problems of the World and the higher qualities of the mind...I can hear them say...WE JUST WANNA DANCE or hear a Love song....THAT SOUNDS GOOD TO ME....as the song once said!!*

*Well, be happy - It's good to see the snowdrops coming out, Spring's just around the corner. Love, Russ x"*

## CASSIDY JANSON

Not one of Russ's songs (yet) but here, for those who don't know her, is Cassidy Janson performing You've Got A Friend in October 2018.

<https://youtu.be/Fisi5RwVo90>

## CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

Dave did a brilliant job with the Christmas Quiz, coming up with some very clever clues. Russ enjoyed doing it and we had positive feedback from some readers who also enjoyed it. If you didn't have time to do it over the festive season, it doesn't have a Christmas theme so it is not too late to have a go. You will find it in an attachment in the email sent out on 20th December, subject, 'RB News - Quiz For The Holidays'. The answers are in the attachment above (thanks again to Dave)....don't peek if you haven't done it yet!

## QUESTION

Russ, having seen a photo of you on your Facebook page in the Roulettes' black and white jackets, which everyone remembers, is there a story behind those jackets?

**Russ:** *"We went to Dougie Millings, who by then, had made our clothes for a few years - We looked through lots of samples of cloth - lightweight (which was usually our choice, because of heat on stage). We then looked at heavier samples - we all thought it would be too heavy and too hot, and*

*it was really too heavy but too cool 😊 not to have it....We did suffer from the heat wearing them 😂. But you know what they say, suffer everything for art...Story of my life 🎵👍 R."*

## **RUSS'S MUSIC HISTORY** WITH A TWIST

By Dave Williams

### **Somewhere at the end – a Rainbow**

Happy New Year everyone. I hope you had a good Christmas and enjoyed the little quiz I put together. My article this month does not feature **Russ** as the main character, but I hope nobody, especially Russ, will mind. It's not all bad. He does enter the picture right at the end

I'm guessing we've been using the internet for over a couple of decades now. As a communication tool and a source of information it's hard to imagine how we ever lived without it. It has transformed our lives in so many ways, and as with all technology, not always for the good. Hopefully the pros outweigh the cons.

Social networking, when used responsibly, enables people to reach out to others across the world, and share information in whatever form that might take. Isn't it fun to be able to share our thoughts, our opinions, our likes and dislikes with people from different backgrounds? As Russ pointed out in his song **Just Like Me** on **Book of Love**, we may come from different continents and cultural backgrounds, but we are all humans and have the same feelings, the same hopes, fears and so on.

Facebook always has an abundance of video clips posted and shared between friends. Someone posted a clip of a young teenage drummer performing a long solo on the streets of Singapore. This prompted someone else to post an even younger drummer, then another posted one younger still. The age dropped rapidly down to 5 years old, the young lady playing with the confidence of a seasoned pro, only slightly hampered by her inability to reach her pedals. Speed and complexity are impressive on the eye but can become tiresome on the ears after a while. So often in music, less is more. It was around this point that I stumbled on a young German drummer called **Sina Doering**. She covered a **Deep Purple** track so impressively that I subscribed to her page. **Sina** posts a new cover every week and although it only seems like yesterday, the then 15-year-old will shortly reach her 20th birthday, so I've followed her progression over a period of about four years during which her internet audience has ballooned to over 137,000 followers and she has over half a million subscribers on her YouTube channel. Her work has been viewed over 5 million times. An amazing achievement. In one of her recent posts she

pays tribute to **Ringo Starr**, who's talent goes unrecognised by so many famous drummers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0NCczct2ZIM>

	<p><u><a href="#">What makes Ringo a Great Drummer - Tribute by Sina</a></u></p>
	<p>Ringo is still the most underrated drummer in Rock. This humble tribute is meant to illustrate the importance of Ringo Starr's unique drum work for the Beatles. First ...</p>
	<p><a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a></p>

**Sina** is not entirely self-taught. She did take lessons for a couple of years, which set her off on the right path. Amazingly she is also quite competent on guitar, keyboards and bass guitar.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-a4dlcuRXQ> She clearly enjoys the challenge and occasionally hands the drumsticks over to her younger sister Milena, who also plays.

In 2015, **Sina** decided to create an album of original songs. She was able to call on the services of her father **Mike Wilbury**. Being an amazingly talented musician and songwriter in his own right, Mike proved to be a useful starting point. He has worked with various musicians, including one or two from the UK, so he was able to call on their services as and when required. As far as songs were concerned, **Sina** put out an invitation to musicians all over the world to join her. The standard of musicians that came forward was amazing. The resulting CD **Chi Might** was released a year later and a follow-up **Chi-Might II** has quickly followed. Going back to my original point, most of these recordings have been put together remotely via the internet. The musicians are mostly young and share the same dedication as **Sina**. Included in this 'virtual' band is a lead guitarist called **Andrei Cerbu** from Romania. Close your eyes and you could be listening to **Jimmy Page**. Two female bass guitarists feature. **Miruna Harter** from Romania and **Juna Serita** from Japan. There are many lead singers including 14-year-old singer guitarist **Emma Marie** from Colorado, **Victoria K** from Australia, Canadians **Jaydn Rylee** and **Mikalyn** and Russian singer and pianist **Alyona Yarushina**. These are just a handful of many talented names.

These are so many more, too many to name, but they share the same passion for music and it's unlikely you will find them on any fame hungry TV talent shows.



So, we see the power of the internet. But where does **Russ** fit into the story, I hear you ask? Well, the article title wasn't quite random. Amid the scores of cover numbers that these youngsters have collaborated on, there is a rather tasty cover version of **Since You Been Gone**. Whilst it doesn't feature the drumming talents of **Sina**, it does showcase **Andrei Cerbu** and **Alyona Yarushina** from Romania and Russia respectively. Here is the link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KZL3JkmZ6Y>



### [Since You've Been Gone - Rainbow \(Alyona & Andrei Cerbu\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KZL3JkmZ6Y)

👏👏 You can become my Patron here: <https://www.patreon.com/AlyonaY> Even \$1 on Patreon is huge support for me! All my Patrons get some exclusive stuff. 🎤 Many ... [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

I believe that with young musicians of this calibre we can safely say that music is being left in safe hands and wouldn't it be nice to think that maybe one or two of these musicians might make the big time one day.

Just to complete this feature and to put a belated final lid on Christmas, here is a video that was put together by **Sina** to feature some of her collaborators on the two **Chi Might** CDs. It's always been one of my favourite Christmas songs and serves as a tribute to

Russ's good friend **Greg Lake** who sadly passed away on 7th December 2016. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZK\\_bBYJwRA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZK_bBYJwRA)



## [I Believe in Father Christmas \(ELP Cover\); Sina & Friends](#)

Thanks so much to everyone involved, Merry Christmas to everyone! Credits: Original song written by Greg Lake Vocals: Tyler Simmons

[https://www.youtube.com/user ...](https://www.youtube.com/user...)  
[www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

## DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Whilst writing my articles I've discovered scores of versions of songs written by Russ, some well-known, others less so. It started to become something of a quest to discover as many songs as possible. There's lots of material out there and I thought it might be nice to share some of these discoveries with readers. Here's this month's offering:

No.6



### **Heartbreaker by Olivia Newton John**

In the run up to Christmas it was both disturbing and upsetting to see reports that Olivia Newton John is fighting another battle against breast cancer. The Cambridge born singer was first diagnosed with the illness in 1992 and fought her way through treatment with tremendous courage, returning in 1994 with an album of self-written songs titled **Gaia, One Woman's Journey**, that documents the period from diagnosis to recovery. At the time, I remember her appearing on a TV chat show hosted by Des O'Connor, talking about her illness and how it had inspired her to document her journey through song. She then took the stage to

perform the single **No Matter What You Do**. Not only did she look stunningly beautiful as always, but she oozed happiness and joy. Having previously relied on cover versions, here was **Olivia** making her mark as a songwriter in her own right. The lyrics certainly hit the mark; “I found out just what is important, I found out who really loves me, and I found out that trials like these make us grow”. The clip is available on You Tube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GM9YnmwppM&list=RD7GM9YnmwppM&start\\_radio=1&t=160](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GM9YnmwppM&list=RD7GM9YnmwppM&start_radio=1&t=160)

**Olivia** already had a history of supporting various charities from protection of sharks and dolphins to child health awareness. Following her illness, she walked the Great Wall of China, raising money to build a Cancer and Well Being Centre in her native Australia. Reports on her latest health situation suggested she is very poorly, but Olivia and her management responded by saying that the reports were wildly exaggerated, if not malicious. We certainly hope that is the case, and whatever the situation, there will be no shortage of prayers being said for her recovery, given her popularity.

**Olivia** first sprung to fame in 1971 with her hit version of **Bob Dylan’s If Not for You**. Other hits followed including **Banks of the Ohio** and covers of **George Harrison’s What is Life** and **John Denver’s Take Me Home, Country Roads**. In 1978, **Olivia** achieved mega success co-starring in the film version of **Grease** with John Travolta. Later still she found success with **Physical**, accompanied by an exercise video that set pulses racing, a far cry from her early Country songs.

**Olivia** recorded and released one of **Russ Ballard’s** compositions. **Heartbreaker** appeared on her third album **Let Me Be There** released in 1973, and despite its commercial appeal it was overlooked for release as a single in favour of **Take Me Home, Country Roads**. No matter, the latter achieved its purpose whilst **Heartbreaker** has proved sufficiently popular to find its way onto the track listing of greatest hits and anthology collections.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCG3Af6FmuE>



## HEARTBREAKER - OLIVIA NEWTON JOHN 1973

English-Australian singer and actress, born 26 September 1948 in Cambridge, England, UK.

Mother of Chloe Lattanzi. AO - Order of Australia OBE - Officer of the Most ...

[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)