



(Banner by Sven Kramer, krameronline.eu)

A big welcome to our new readers. I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and you will join in with some contributions....stories, questions, photos, letters, dream set list or any other good idea related to Russ and his work.

Many thanks for all the birthday greetings you sent for Russ. I was able to put most of them into one email and the rest I forwarded on to him.

Did you hear Russ on Johnnie Walker's Sounds of the 70s? If not, below is a link for Listen Again but don't leave it too long.

Sue

THIS MONTH...

Russ: *"October seemed to come and go so quickly.... More about the Johnnie Walker radio prog., Sounds of The Seventies - JW. asked me some questions about the song writing process and, in particular, the writing of 'New York Groove'. Strange really, because it's the one song that I wrote entirely in the studio, as we were recording. The show also featured 'Since*

You Been Gone', 'Hold Your Head Up' and 'God Gave RnR To You'....Good fun!

"I had a good moment in the past Month - Pete Thorp phoned and asked if I would be home, because, he was coming past my place and would pop in for a cup of tea - [Pete was the other guitar player in the Roulettes with Bob Henrit, Mod Rogan and Myself in the sixties, when we backed Adam Faith] - Anyway, I told Pete I would be in, and it would be great to see him. And what do you know, the other two guys turned up along with him....Sometimes it's wonderful to get together and talk about so long ago - Actually it's amazing we're all still here....When we looked at the people who used to travel with us, Adam's tour Manager, Bert Harris, died many years ago...Fred Wilkinson, who was The Roulettes Roadie, died twenty six years ago...and of course, Adam left us twelve years ago....We had so many great memories, and I think we went through them all, three weeks ago...

"For my Birthday...Karis had a great surprise for me!...I thought I'd be having a quiet Family restaurant dinner - She told me a few hours before, she'd invited some people and that they were dressing in Halloween costume, so I might as well get 'made up'....it turned out to be a funny evening.....I don't know where she found the Chef from, but the food was amazing!! She is brilliant at organizing.

"I would like to thank everyone for the Birthday Greetings....it was a beautiful thought and a great day! xx"

A little reminder of The Roulettes.... <https://youtu.be/ArQ8X9cpo3E>
Such a shame there were no videos in those days but this is what we used to look at while the music was playing!

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Russ: *"There are certain texts that I find inspiring, and have stayed with me, some for many years. There's an inspirational verse on COMMITMENT...I quote this, because, it suggests that it takes ACTION to make things happen in life...[We might feel very secure, sitting in one chair, being fed and watered, but nothing much worthwhile would happen] - COMMITMENT - THE MOMENT ONE COMMITS ONESELF THEN PROVIDENCE MOVES TOO. ALL SORTS OF THINGS OCCUR TO HELP ONE THAT WOULD NEVER OTHERWISE HAVE OCCURRED, A WHOLE STREAM OF EVENTS AND MATERIAL ASSISTANCE COMES FORTH THAT NO ONE COULD HAVE DREAMT WOULD APPEAR....SO, IF YOU CAN DO SOMETHING, OR DREAM YOU CAN...BEGIN IT!....BOLDNESS HAS GENIUS, POWER AND MAGIC IN IT!*

This text has stayed with me for around twenty years and as I watch my life go by, I must say, these words have proved to be very powerful....in as much as, Life appears to provide everything we need, when we decide to COMMIT ourselves."

AN EVENING WITH...

Tickets are on sale for 'An Evening With Russ Ballard'. See attachment for this very classy ticket designed by Sven Kramer. This event will take place at the Leicester Square Theatre in London on 20th January 2016. Russ will be chatting with DJ Mike Read and there will be some acoustic music.

<https://leicestersquaretheatre.ticketsolve.com/shows/873542737>

TOUR/GIGS 2016

We have another couple of dates to add, although, not all tickets are on sale yet. Who is going where? Please let me know. [See attachment to see Brian's Robin 2 tickets.]

Sat 5th March - Torrington Plough Arts, Great Torrington, Devon <http://www.theploughartscentre.org.uk/>

Tues 8th March - Milton Keynes, Stables http://www.stables.org/Whats_on/Event/Russ_Ballard

Fri 11th March - Gwynedd HRH AOR Festival <http://www.hrhaor.com/line-up/friday-line-up.html>

Sat 12th March - The Flowerpot, Derby http://www.rawpromo.co.uk/gig_guide.html

Sun 13th March - Robin 2, Bilston, Wolverhampton http://www.therobin.co.uk/whats_on/?m=201603

While Russ is no longer playing in Skegness at the Butlins Big Weekend, he could now be playing at the "Giants of Rock" weekend at Butlins Minehead, starting on Friday 29th January 2016.

SOUNDS OF THE 70s

On Sunday 1st November, Russ was on Johnnie Walker's show. It will be available for a short time, 30 days from broadcast, here.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06mbgb6>

YOUR QUESTIONS

For me, listening to music is a very emotional thing. Can you listen to music purely emotionally or do you listen to it as a technical thing?

Russ: *"I can listen to certain songs without analyzing...There are definitely songs that are more emotional than others, and I'm less likely to listen to the production, sound, performance etc....Sometimes I do try to analyze, why a particular song has been a hit, and, you know, usually, for me, it's the song and the performance..."*

LETTERS

Dear Sue

I recently finished reading a book entitled "Gene, Ace, Peter & Paul – A Detailed Exploration of the 1978 KISS Solo Albums". Included in that book is a lengthy interview with Russ. I believe it was conducted some time in 2013, and it touches mainly on the songs written by Russ that have been recorded by KISS or members of KISS – namely "New York Groove", "Let Me Rock You", "Some Kinda Hurricane", "In The Night" and "God Gave Rock'n'Roll To You". Of course, Russ also talks about various other aspects of his work. I thought you and your readers might be interested to learn about this (in case you didn't already know!). I have been a KISS fan for many years, and the KISS connection is how I came across the name "Russ Ballard" for the first time back in 1978 ☺.

Here's a link to the book at Amazon: http://www.amazon.co.uk/Gene-Ace-Peter-Paul-exploration/dp/0982253761/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1445852198&sr=1-1&keywords=gene+ace+peter+and+paul

It's also great to know that Russ supports the Spurs – so do I! ☺

Hoping for a concert in Switzerland in 2016!

Best wishes,
Greg

Hi Sue,

Sometime ago I asked if Russ had ever performed in a band with Norman Jago as I remember seeing them on stage. I got in touch with Norman who now lives in America and he said he was in a band with Russ and Russ's brother Roy and Bill Brown. I remember they were very good.

Brian

Russ: *"Norman was my Hero at Waltham Cross Secondary school....When I first arrived there, as a twelve year year old, Norman was already in the fourth year, and looked like a young Marlon Brando... Although the School had a uniform, Norman wore tight demin jeans, a white T Shirt, Black leather Jacket and Hob-Nail boots and sported the first skin head haircut I remember seeing....He was Brando as Terry, the young boxing contender, from 'On The Waterfront' - [Normans Brother, Brian was a pro Boxer] - We became friends, when, on one morning break time, as I was running across the playground, I kicked a tennis ball, that bounced in front of me....I did what any twelve year old boy would do, I kicked it, as hard as I could...The ball went twenty feet in the air, disappeared over a wall, in to the kitchens...It was then that I realized I'd interrupted a fourth year football match that was taking place between every hooligan from the fourth year, including Norman Jago....The first reaction from the mob was to scream at me, but before they could lynch me, Norman did what any Hero would do...He ran at the Kitchen wall, jumped over, threw the ball back - and from that moment, Norman was my Friend....And Hero, up there with Elvis. I don't know how he became the singer in my group, but he was, and still is a great Friend...[Even though he lives in LA, I see him when he comes to Herts.]"*

Brian: "I was one of the hooligans Russ mentioned playing football with Norman. We played in the school football team."

RECORDED BY OTHERS

After last month's track by an ex member of Kiss, here is another ex Kiss member. As mentioned by Greg in his letter above, several of Russ's songs were recorded by Kiss and it's individual members. Peter Criss was the drummer and founder member of the band. He left the band in 1980 for his solo career. His second solo album, Let Me Rock You, included two of Russ's songs. This one is Some Kinda Hurricane.

<https://youtu.be/slhcsXepH50>

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