



(Header by Sven Kramer)

A big welcome to our new readers. There have been quite a few of you this month. Please feel free to contribute to the newsletter.

An exciting month! The Portugal concert is approaching quickly. Lucky those people who managed to get tickets.

This month we have some more feedback from the RB Experience '19. Thanks to Bob Henrit and to Eddy Bonte. We have a few more photos in attachments here.

I am betting that none of you will know the song, written by Russ and Chris, that Dave has featured in his Cover Quest this month. So many of Russ's songs still to be heard!

Best wishes

Sue

## THIS MONTH

**Russ:** *"I've been furiously revising old recordings that I made through the eighties - the reason? - I've been told by Emanuel, my Portuguese friend and promoter, I should include certain songs that I've never played*

*before when we play a concert at Casino Estoril , on 25th May...'We' are Myself, Bob Henrit, (drums), Steve Smith (keyboards), Mike Steed (bass), Roland Jones ( guitar) and now, Claire Jones - Roly's lovely wife, who's a great singer and will be supplying that 'fairy dust' on the high notes. Although I'd played Lisbon twice before, for Emanuel ...it's only now he's told me, we should perform these other songs, which people know and want to hear. However, I'm really getting a kick out of re-learning words and arrangements. So different from revising homework from school, all those years ago (which I hated)...It's good for the brain, going back over old songs. It's stimulating, adding a new arrangement, learning a guitar solo and studying lyrics that were written 34 years ago...Does it sound like work? - Oh No!! -*

*THANK YOU GOD!*

*If you're coming - I look forward to seeing you....If not, Lots of Love, Russ"*



**PORTUGAL – CASINO ESTORIL**

*Remember Me*

PRESENTS

RUSS BALLARD LIVE



*Down On In The Night  
Voices Hey Berradette*

# RUSS WITH HIS BAND BALLARD

## LIVE IN PORTUGAL

**E** CASINO  
ESTORIL

SALÃO PRETO E PRATA

MAY 25<sup>TH</sup> 2019

*The Fire Still Burns  
One A Rebel On The Road  
Liar I Can't Hear You No More*

VERY SPECIAL GUEST

**BRIAN  
SPENCE**

THE OFFICIAL RUSS BALLARD NEWSLETTER

RUSSBALLADMUSIC.COM

**SOLD  
OUT**

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Good news for Russ, bad news for those who missed out....the Portugal gig was sold out five weeks before the event. We have readers who are going. Hopefully one, at least, will do a little write up for us. We know they will have a wonderful time.

## QUESTION

What's it like listening to your own albums? Do you think you would change bits if you were recording it today?

**Russ:** *"If I was recording my songs today, they would certainly be very different. I've just re-recorded 'Since You Been Gone' with strings, and made it very slow and soft. It almost sounds like a different song...There's sometimes a case for not trying to fix it, if it ain't broke -(as they say)..."*

## RB EXPERIENCE

We have more feedback from that great evening in Ware on 6th April. Click on the link to see the review reader and media man, Eddy Bonte has written for his website and then you can read Bob Henrit's own unmistakable account of the evening.

<http://www.keysandchords.com/live---the-rb-experience-2019-with-russ-ballard-the-roulettes-chris-andrews-etc---6-april-2019---the-southern-maltings-ware-herts-england.html>

The R&B Experience 2019

[LIVE - The R&B Experience 2019 with Russ Ballard, The Roulettes, Chris Andrews, etc. - 6 april 2019 - The Southern Maltings, Ware \(Herts., England\)](#)

The RB Experience is Russ Ballard's way to say 'Thanks' to all the fans – not just the fans of Russ Ballard the solo artist (°1945), but also the fans of the artists he worked, has worked or still works with (Chris Andrews, The Roulettes, Argent), covered his songs (Ray Bradbury of 'Hello'), are in his current band (Stevie Smith, Michael Steed, Roland Jones, Bob Henrit) or bear ...

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

## **From Bob Henrit**

### **When we was Fab.**

April 6th 2019 besides coincidentally being the 45th Anniversary of the day that Abba won the Eurovision Song Contest in Brighton with "Waterloo", was also the night of Russ Ballard's gig to the members of his newsletter. Besides that, it wasn't quite the 56th anniversary of me, Russell, Thorpy and Mod getting together in the final aggregation as The Roulettes but, give or take a month, it was close enough for jazz as we used to say. (This was something groups like us used to jokingly say when we were tuning our instruments before a show, or a recording session.) It's nothing to do with anything but I recall Adam Faith aligning all the tuning keys neatly on John Rogers' bass as we waited in the wings seconds before walking onto the stage in a theatre somewhere in the UK!

This time things were going to be slightly different to last year's gig even though the venue was the same - albeit they've added snazzy dressing rooms since we were there last. The Southern Maltings is one of a trio of very large buildings where they used to produce malt. I'm guessing at least a few people out there didn't read last year's journal so I'll reiterate a paragraph I wrote before about them.

Nigel Manders, who runs the place gave us a history lesson about what Maltings actually once did and what they were hopefully going to do with theirs now. He's one of the driving forces behind the development and the idea is to turn it into a thriving arts centre with workshop areas for painting, music, ceramics, dance and so on with a proper gig below with a capacity for 300 people.

Last time I was forced to admit that I didn't actually know what a maltings was in its heyday, but I learned a great deal from the internet. A maltings, or if you prefer a malt house, is a building with a slanting oast-house-like chimney which turns automatically to follow the wind and dry the hops to help make beer. With the malt process though grains of barley are converted into malt by first soaking them in water and allowing the grains to sprout before drying them to stop any further growth. The substance produced is used in brewing beer, whisky and in certain other foods. (I fondly remember something called 'Vimaltol' which I assume had something to do with this process with delicious (?) halibut liver oil added to it. We undernourished baby boomers used to have a spoonful of this everyday along with some weird sort of orange juice before we walked to school at five years old. Both commodities were designed to keep us healthy.)

But I digress. Malt must have been really big business at one time because we're led to believe there were literally hundreds of these huge aircraft-hanger sized buildings in Ware. The malt they produced was eventually loaded onto barges and shipped up the River Lea past where Russell and I lived in Waltham Cross and on to its eventual destination. Here endeth the lesson.

Chris Andrews was coming just like last year, but the big difference this time was in the fact that he was bringing a friend with him called Jurgen Weber to sing Adam's songs. Nicola Amos, who sings in one of Mickey Steed's bands, was going to do a couple of Sandie Shaw's songs written by Chris Andrews. So now we had the whole gamut of Evie Taylor's stable of artists covered: The Roulettes, Adam, Chris, and Sandie. (The only ones who weren't covered were Jackie Dennis, Chance Gordon, John Barry, Val Doonican, Dusty Springfield and Jackie Trent.)

We Roulettes had all been out to Hamburg for a couple of days in February to see a musical play called "Yesterday man, The first time and Tomorrow" which Chris and his wife Alexandra had created and produced in which we were depicted. Jurgen played Adam in this show while a singing coach called Chantal Hartmann played our friend Sandie in her barefoot days.

There was time to do a handful of songs from 'Blues Submarine' too and at the end of the proceedings it would be time for the man who had a hand in taking Rock and Roll from God: Russell Ballard. But that wasn't all, we also had Derik Timms with us and Roland Jones; both of whom would contribute a solo piece or two.

We'd done our rehearsals round at Russell's Studio and we'd managed a couple of run-throughs with Jurgen and Nicola just before the gig and everything sounded great. So as they say in Canada "we were good to go".

We'd discovered that there is a law pertaining to how many people you could have in the Southern Maltings and it seems we had come very close to breaking it last year. So this year everybody who would be coming needed to be listed and checked-in before the event to make sure we didn't exceed that limit.

We hadn't long finished checking the sound when the punters came in. Looking around at them before I went on with Blue Submarine I realised I knew everybody; just like at Jim Rodford's 'Celebration of a life' tribute gig which took place in January at St Albans Arena which was a splendid affair hosted by The Zombies, which I've written about elsewhere. It was impossible to move around the Southern Maltings without bumping into someone whose face you recognised and were pleased to chat with.

Eventually there was nothing else for it - it was showtime and Ian Street got the show on the road by announcing the first act.

Blues Submarine is a new venture for me and what it does is cleverly hidden in the title, blues versions of Beatles songs mixed with a few from the Kinks like "Tired Of Waiting". Derik Timms joined us to keep the Fab Four spirit going with Eleanor Rigby which I don't think anyone (other than Derik) had ever attempted before - at least not without a safety net.

If my memory serves me well, Mod, Thorpy and Russell joined me and Steedy for a walk down memory lane with "La Bamba", which morphed seamlessly into "Bad Time" and "Settle Down", a song which none of us had given a thought to, never mind played, for well over half a century. In those days we would all have



sung the song at the front of the stage with Adam and I would have used a tambourine. I'd like to say there wasn't enough room at the Maltings for that but the truth is that as hard as I looked in the outbuildings that morning I couldn't find the bag with all the percussion toys in it.

The next item on the agenda was no surprise to us: it was the infamous 'Sausage Song', something which the author assured us earlier he definitely wouldn't be doing! Another surprise to all of us, including I think to Mr Rogan, was the song he sang it in: Mustang Sally. It went a bit like this. Having established the riff, Mod launched into "I went to the butchers, for some sausages for some sausages" etc. (Obviously I can't reproduce any more of the lyrics for reasons of copyright, but I'm sure dyed-in-the wool Rogan fans will know it ends with an accidental penisectomy. Along the lines of the one John Wayne Bobbitt was given in his sleep by his vindictive wife Lorena!. [Actually, before you start writing letters to the editor, I am aware it's called a penectomy but frankly that word isn't anything like rude enough.]

We had a lot to cram in and we went at it very professionally. Steve Smith came on to add some orchestral accompaniment as Jurgen Weber arrived next to stand in for our old boss and we segued through the same hit medley, starting with "What Do You Want", we'd first played in variety theatres during our possibly somewhat reluctant all-round entertainer days. Chris came on after "How About That" in time to sing "The First Time" (pun intended) and "It's Alright" which was our first successful record in America and used in Robin Williams's film 'Good Morning Vietnam' for which he was nominated for an Oscar in 1964.

Nicola Amos came on next to make a great job of singing a couple of songs Chris had written for Sandie Shaw and by this time we were cooking with gas: Bob Bradbury from Hello (the band, not the magazine) joined us on the now happily crowded stage to sing theirs and Russell's New York Groove song. You know the one with the infectious Hambone rhythm.

Chris came on to give us "Yesterday Man" and "To Whom It Concerns" eventually followed by several rock and roll tunes.

In the fullness of time Russell came on and we toughened up a little with some of the heavy stuff we normally play with him. We were just about to begin what was due to be the last song (technically that is) before Roland Jones caught my eye and mouthed the words "See You In My Dreams". Mercifully, I realised he



wasn't just trying to get round me and that this is a tune he used to play on ukulele when he was one of Joe Brown's Bruvvers. We'd agreed this should be near the end of the show and dedicated to dear old Chas who'd recently joined the list of people who'd 'crossed over the wide river' which I'd read out at last year's gig. Immediately after we'd dried our eyes Spencer K Gibbins launched into Johnny B Goode.

Russell led us into the guitar intro of what was supposed to be the last number, but we knew it wouldn't be! "God Gave Rock and Roll To You" was enthusiastically followed by what I think i remember was Little Queenie. A tune which always includes a keyboard battle between Steve and Russell on a single instrument.

So, we've completed our third tribute-to-ourselves gig and even though I'm not completely sure we're ready for Broadway yet, I plan to investigate the possibility. (I could always talk to Harvey Weinstein who was very close to becoming my manager by taking charge of a band I was in with John Verity and Brian Connolly - shortly after his time in The Sweet. Fortunately for all concerned that nameless band didn't come to fruition even though we made an album which

allegedly has become known amongst Sweet aficionados as the 'lost' Brian Connolly album. Next years' bash will mark the 57th anniversary so I'll have to come up with a snappy title along the lines of '57 Varieties' - or not. I do know that Donald Trump's family are related to the Heinz family so I have a year to explore that connection and write something salacious.

I've wracked my brain to try to remember the exact sequence we played the songs in and failed miserably. I can give you all the titles because other than the first and last I cant really help you. I was thinking my inability to recall them was a lot like the Morecambe, Wise and Andre Previn skit where Eric played all the notes but "not necessarily in the right order"! It's the same with this report and the solution is rather than offend anybody and to protect the innocent, I've put the ones I can remember we played in alphabetical order.

Starting with A.

Bad Time, Dock Of The Bay, Do You Know What It's Like To Be Lonesome, Eleanor Rigby, Folsom Prison, Girl Don't Come, God Gave Rock and Roll To You, Hold Your Head Up, Hoochie Coochie Man, How About That, I Don't Believe in Miracles, I Wanna Love You, I'll See You In My Dreams. It's Alright, It's Too Late, Johnny B Goode, La Bamba, Long, Long Live Love, Mustang Sally, New York Groove. Poor

Me, Settle Down, Since You Been Gone, Someone Else's Baby, The First Time, To Whom It Concerns, What Do You Want and Yesterday Man.

Those I've missed you'll surely pardon - as we're told people used to sing in their English country gardens.

While I was scribbling this down I stumbled on the fact that we had run the gamut of a lot of musical styles that night much like we used to do with Adam. We started with The Blues, then songs from The Swinging Sixties, some fifties rock 'n' roll and we eventually did some heavy progressive stuff with RGB like "Since You Been Gone, Hold Your Head Up, and even at least one Ballard ballad. (Did you see what I did there?)

Having had a conversation with Ray Davies over coffee in Cafe Rouge in Highgate recently, it became obvious that the sad deaths of Jim Rodford and Chas Hodges had had a profound effect on us and how we really should get together more. Once a year at the Kinks Konvention and a couple of coffees every so often around the corner from Ray's house are simply not enough. We started this [Roulettes] get together in 2013 in the King and Tinker which is not only my local it's the oldest pub in London - at least that's what I've told visitors. Five years later we did another in Ware followed swiftly by this year's jamboree in 2019. This of course has guaranteed us at least one gig a year! I idly wondered whether, with that in mind, we should do every six months before eventually moving it to once a month! As far as my longest-serving friend Russell Ballard is concerned, he and I have played together for sixty-one years and it don't seem a day too much. It's always a joy and I'm not afraid to profess my love for him!

Someone at the gig who must remain anonymous because, try as I might, I can't remember who it was, asked me if we would do it again next year and I responded with a phrase they almost completely used in 'Field of dreams' -

"we would do it if they would come".

## 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.9



## Would I by Casanova

**Casanova**, a German rock band, was formed in Dusseldorf in the early 1990s and featured **Michael Voss** ex **Mad Max** and **Bonfire**, plus former **Warlock** drummer **Michael Eurich**. The band put out a couple of albums in the early 1990s that were well received but eventually split before reforming later on.

**Would I** featured on their 4th album, **All Beauty Must Die** released in 2004. Not surprisingly the song was co-written with **Chris Winter** with whom **Russ** was writing at the time. Nothing more to say other than enjoy this wonderfully strong track.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0X\\_tPVpsEY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0X_tPVpsEY)



[Casanova ♠ Would I ♠ HQ](http://www.heavyharmonies.com/cgi-bin...)

All Beauty Must Die 2004 <http://www.heavyharmonies.com/cgi-bin...>  
[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)





















