



Welcome to our new readers. Please join in...I would be happy to consider any Russ related contribution. Maybe a short letter to introduce yourself as Alison has done below.

This newsletter, the Facebook page and the website are all connected. I have recently had several requests, via the website, to sign up for the newsletter from people who are already on the mailing list. This is the only official newsletter. If you sign up via the website, it will bring you to me.

What a year 2020 is going to be for Russ....the album, in all its forms, the European tour and the UK tour! See below for the links you need for the first two. News about the UK tour to come soon.

There are a lot of links in this newsletter because there is a lot going on. Don't be put off just find the ones you need.

I have been asked about the "RB Experience '20". All I can say, for the moment, is that with all the stuff Russ has going on, it definitely won't be in the first half of the year so you can safely book your holidays.

Happy New Year
Sue

THIS MONTH FROM RUSS

HAPPY NEW YEAR to one and all...

For me, 28th and 29th December were working days, as an interview had been arranged with a Swedish gentleman, a rock journalist, writing for a magazine called (I think) 'Rock'n'Roll', his name is Anders Lundquist, and he is a music enthusiast, and I always like talking to enthusiasts....as one myself, I know we can talk for hours on what a casual observer might feel is something trivial. After talking on the phone for an hour and a half, I asked Anders if we could continue our chat the next day, as I needed to use the bathroom. Anders still had some questions, so it was agreed we'd talk the next morning at 11.00am. Well, the next day we continued where we left off...this time we talked for nearly two hours...Strange, but the time flew by...I'm sure the article will take plenty of editing .

IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE 🎉🎵

Release date for the album is 21st February but you can pre-order now. This is what so many people have been asking for since 2015 so, don't hesitate, get your orders in now if you haven't already. 21st Feb is approaching rapidly! You can buy a CD, Vinyl, or a supporting book. Or even a bundle of all three. If you would like **signed** copies, genuinely signed by Russ, this is the link you need.

<https://www.musicglue.com/russ-ballard>

You can also order unsigned items from..

Amazon CD:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Its-Good-Here-Russ-Ballard/dp/B081WVBKVG>

Amazon LP:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Its-Good-Be-Here-VINYL/dp/B081WR7TVV>

Amazon Digital:

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Its-Good-Here-Russ-Ballard/dp/B082FNQVFQ>

Itunes digital pre-order:

<https://music.apple.com/gb/album/its-good-to-be-here/1490497892>

If you are not in the UK, you will find these on the Amazon website for your own country or there are links for Germany and the US over on Russ's Facebook page. You might have to scroll down to find them. That shouldn't be a problem...if you

don't regularly visit the FB page, you will find all sorts of interesting things on the way.

<https://www.facebook.com/RussBallardMusicOfficial>

And, finally, a link for the "rest of the world" for downloads, just in case any of the others don't work.

<https://BMG.Ink.to/GoodToBeHere>

And here is a great review of the album.

<https://www.maximumvolumemusic.com/russ-brand-new-ballards>



[RUSS' BRAND NEW BALLARDS?](https://www.maximumvolumemusic.com/russ-brand-new-ballards)

[- Maximum Volume Music](https://www.maximumvolumemusic.com/russ-brand-new-ballards)

'Since You've Been Gone', 'You Can Do Magic', 'New York Groove', 'So You Win Again', 'No More The Fool', 'Liar'... Russ Ballard's songs are on permanent heavy rotation the world over.

www.maximumvolumemusic.com

SPOTIFY

Russ now has a playlist on Spotify. "**Russ Ballard - The Story Of My Life**" Find it here!

<https://l.facebook.com/l.php?>

EUROPEAN TOUR

Next up after the album release is the European tour. If you are intending to see Russ on this tour, you need to get your tickets as soon as you can. This link will take you to the web page of the promoter, On Stage, where you can buy tickets. But please note...Munich, Augsburg and Bremen are **sold out!**

<https://onstage-promotion.reservix.de/events?q=Russ+Ballard>

Not all of the shows are in Germany. There are also shows in Amsterdam, NL; Verviers, Belgium; and Vienna, Austria.

Russ is being supported by **Space Elevator**, who are a brilliant band, so an extra treat for those who are going. Look them up on YouTube.

Several of our UK readers are having an adventure and are going to some of these European shows. Please write about them so we can all share the experience.

BOOK OF LOVE (cont.)

Russ: *"In writing and recording Book of Love, I felt I needed a song that described my feelings about humanity and how human frailties impact on the World. This song 'Crazy World' said much of it..."*

Crazy World

We're born to Love but don't give enough,
We search in dreams for love it seems,
Is it any wonder?
Pollute the skies, kill the trees,
Everyone of the seven seas we plunder,
And the child what did he do
To deserve the fate he got from you, it's madness,

CRAZY WORLD, CRAZY WORLD,
People searching high & low,
They think they know
What's gonna make them happy now,
And wonder how they feel so sad,
OH, IT'S A CRAZY WORLD (Repeat)

You don't think twice if there's a price
Your money's king, means everything,
I don't doubt it,
But just you keep it in your head
You won't take it with you when you're dead,
Think about it.....

God if there's hope then let it be -
I look around and it seems to me
Too many fears, too many lies,

Too many tears in too many eyes,

OH, IT'S CRAZY WORLD etc....

<https://youtu.be/5H9G09s1WgE>



[Russ Ballard - Crazy World](https://youtu.be/5H9G09s1WgE)

From Russ's Book Of Love album
[youtu.be](https://youtu.be/5H9G09s1WgE)

INTERVIEWS

Russ has done several magazine interviews recently. In the February 2020 issue of **Classic Rock Magazine**, in the series, "**The Stories About the Songs**". He talks about the writing of "**God Gave Rock And Roll To You**".

For our friends in the Netherlands, he also has an interview in the February 2020 issue of **Soundz Magazine**.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

If Russ was on Desert Island Discs I would love to know which 10 songs he would take to the island.

Russ: *"It's hard to choose 10 - easier to choose 50 but here they are..."*

1. 'Hound Dog' Elvis,
2. 'Hard Times' Ray Charles,
3. 'That'll Be The Day' Buddy Holly
4. 'Natural Woman' Aretha Franklin
5. 'Drops of Jupiter' Train
6. 'Iris' Goo Goo Dolls
7. 'Nimrod' Elgar
8. 'When I Fall In Love' Nat King Cole
9. 'Why Can't We Live Together' Timmy Thomas
10. 'Lonely Boy' Black Keys"

LETTERS

Hi there, I've finally got round to contributing! My name is Alison and I live in Kettering, Northants. My earliest memory of Russ is seeing him on Top of the Pops with Argent, in the 70s! From that point, my bedroom wall was covered in posters, mainly featuring Russ and I've loved the man and his music ever since. Fast forward a few years and I had the ultimate pleasure of seeing him perform live at The Stables...a dream come true. All this topped off with a personal message, recently received from Russ! Wow, one happy grandma!! Take care everyone, love from Alison.

RUSS'S MUSIC HISTORY

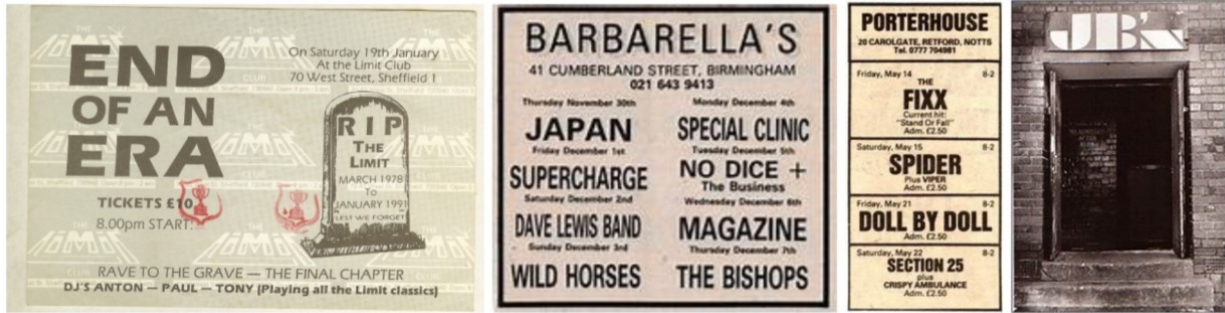
By Dave Williams

Onto the Next!

Happy New Year to all. This is a time to look forward rather than back, so let's give the history thing a rest this month.

2020 promises to be the most exciting year for **Russ Ballard** fans since the monthly newsletter was launched by Sue Robinson almost 7 years ago. Not only will we see the long-awaited release of the new album **It's Good To Be Here**, preceded by the single **Kickin' the Can**, but even more exciting is his forthcoming tour of Europe. The fan base in Europe is huge and one of the advantages of social media is that we can get to witness things that are happening right across the globe. Without seeing those postings of concerts in Portugal and Germany, I wouldn't have been able to see the size of those audiences in Portugal and Germany, or the excitement created by the band visiting Japan. Here in the UK **Russ** has a following that is loyal, but we could never claim to have the level of support that exists in mainland Europe. I don't know why that is. The records were released here just as they were in the rest of the world. The singles were played and appreciated and recognised by the DJs that played them.

In the 1970s we had small to medium size rock venues in most towns and cities. We had the college circuit, which included the universities, all putting on live bands once a week and the next step up was the City Hall type venues and, if you were big enough to pull in the crowds, you had the arenas. Sadly, the small rock venues started to close down towards the end of the 1970s.



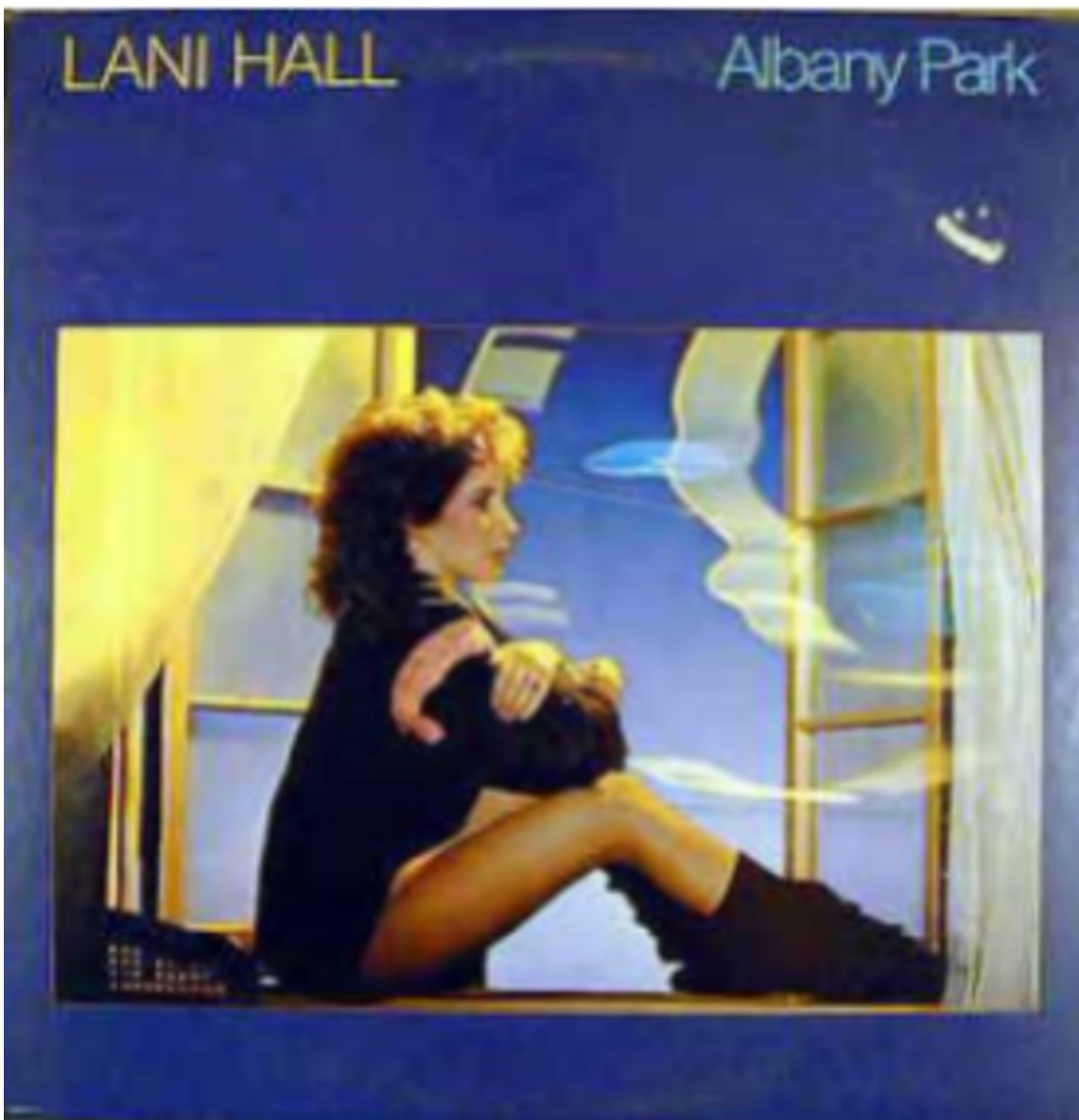
Locally we had **Cleo's** in Derby. Close by was the **Boat Club** in Nottingham, the **76 Club** in Burton, the **Porterhouse** at Retford and the **Limit Club** in Sheffield. Farther afield, the West Midlands had **JB's** in Dudley, **the Lafayette** in Wolverhampton, **Barbarella's** in Birmingham and **the Robin** in Brierly Hill. A second Robin, the one we know as **Robin 2** at Bilston, recently changed ownership and fingers crossed will continue to offer good live music. However, to stay in business you have to please the punters, and right now that 'future' appears to lie increasingly in tribute bands rather than original music. A sad state of affairs, no disrespect to some of the amazing tribute bands out there.

I've reverted to history. Thankfully we still have a few venues across the UK that continue to accommodate artists like **Russ**, and though these are much smaller than the big European venues, hopefully the feedback towards the musicians from the smaller crowds is equally as appreciative and warm. Some UK dates may be in the pipeline around June time. Let's keep our fingers crossed. If I am lucky to get a chance to catch one of these shows I promise to be a little more forgiving of those in front of me blocking my view as they film on their mobile phones. I need to bear in mind that this footage will be shared with our newsletter readers from America and beyond, who are sadly not able to catch these gigs. I'm sure if or when the band visit America, fans on this side of the pond will be eager to see what they have to share. Hopefully, **Your Time is Gonna 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. There's lots of little gems out there and I thought it might be nice to share some of these discoveries with readers. His music knows no bounds and can be found all around the globe. Short but very sweet this month with two cover version of a song from Russ's **Winning** album.

No.18



Are You Cuckoo? by Lani Hall

Leilani 'Lani' Hall, born in Chicago on November 1, 1945, is an American singer and writer and the wife of American jazz musician **Herb Alpert**. She was spotted singing by **Sérgio Mendes** in Chicago whilst touring with **Brasil '65**. When the group disbanded, Mendes invited her to become the lead singer in his new project, imaginatively named **Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66**. In 1972 she signed a solo recording contract and released a series of albums in Spanish. In 1982 she

released an album recorded in English called **Albany Park**, which featured a cover version of **Russ Ballard's Are You Cuckoo?**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AL5lWiPqbys>



[LANI HALL - Are You Cuckoo](#)

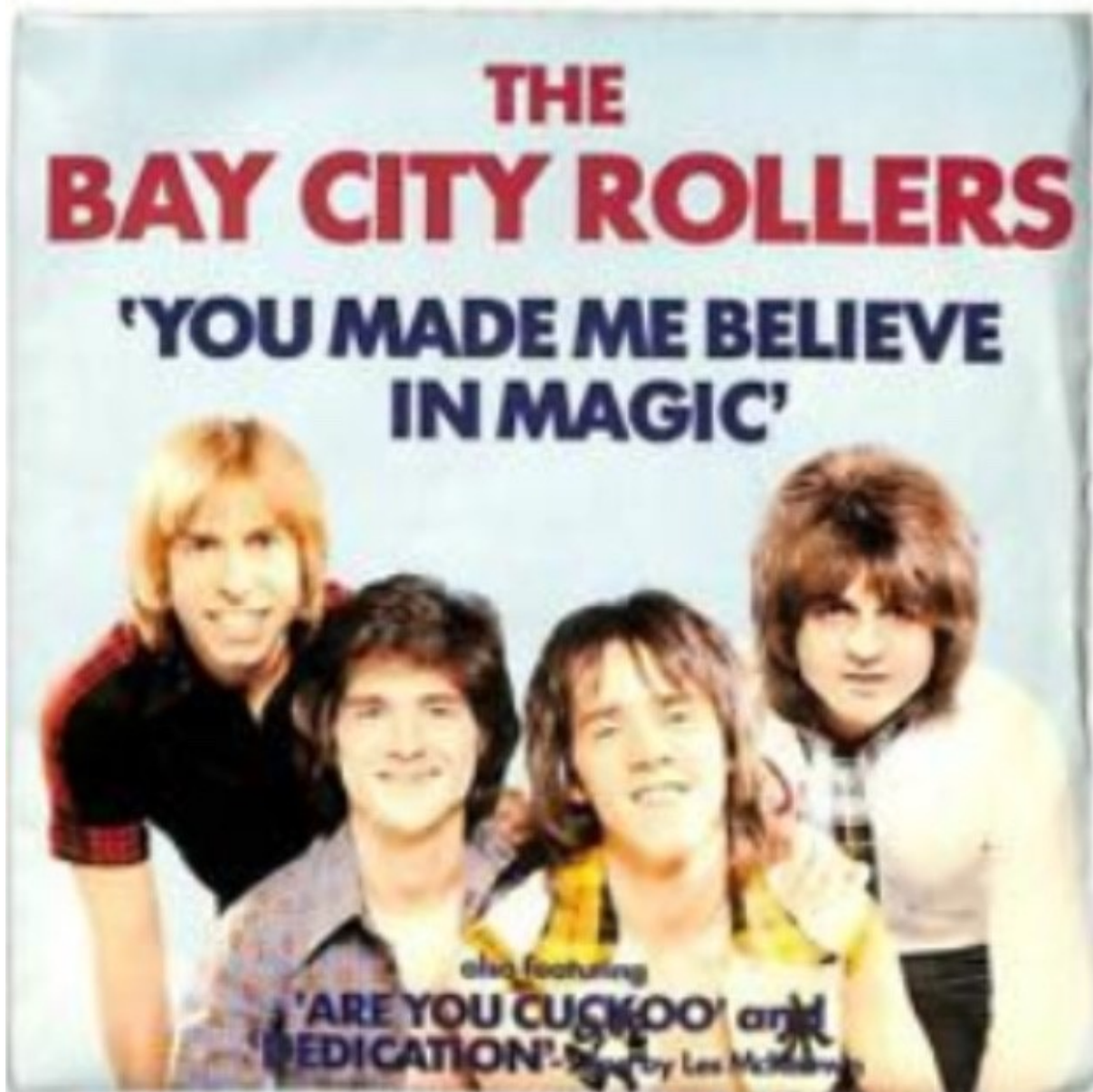
[1982](#)

LANI HALL - Are You Cuckoo 1982

www.youtube.com

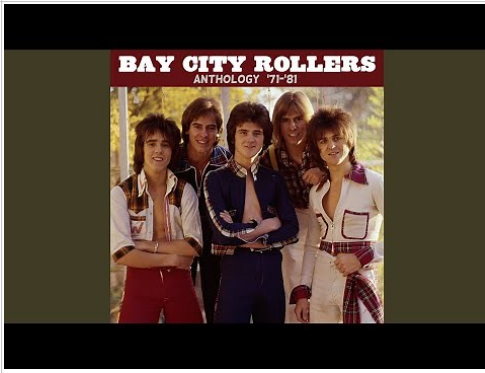
Sadly, the original recording of this track might no longer exist. On June 25, 2019, The New York Times reported that Lani's recordings were among those destroyed in the 2008 Universal Studios fire.

Are You Cuckoo? by Bay City Rollers



The tartan army needs no introduction. Fronted by **Les McKeown**, the Scottish glam band released their single **You Made Me Believe in Magic** in 1977, just as their career had peaked. By this time bassist **Alan Longmuir** had left the group. Their cover version of **Are You Cuckoo?** featured as one of two tracks featured on the B side, the other being **Dedication**. It failed to chart in the UK, surprisingly, a shame because it remains a good song.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rVo-k9UeD38>



[Are You Cuckoo?](#)

Provided to YouTube by Sony Music Entertainment Are You Cuckoo? · Bay City Rollers Anthology ('71-'81) © 1976 Arista Records LLC Composer, Lyricist: Russ Ballard Auto-generated by YouTube.

www.youtube.com