

(Header by Sven)

March 2023

At the beginning of our 11th year, a big welcome to our new readers. Our new readers and our old ones, please join in.....send us your favourite Russ lyric, the song you would most like to hear him play at a gig (see below) or anything else Russ related that you would like to share.

We have three podcasts for you this month, with Russ being very interesting as always, and we have Russ's latest song to be released, thanks to Fugitive. If you were at Russ's gig at KK's in Wolverhampton last year, some of the footage in the video might look a little familiar. I love this song and the video, produced by Michael Angel himself. See what you think. Dave gives us a glimpse of the career of The Pointer Sisters. Did you know they recorded some of Russ's songs? Sue.

THIS MONTH FROM RUSS

When I was younger, so much younger than today (sounds like a song). I used to say I want to play 'live' more..."I can always write songs when I'm old". Little did I realize I'd be doing both at this time.

I've spent many years writing, as you probably know, and 3/4 of that time I've written alone, which is something I've enjoyed. Writing has been a kind of meditation....while thinking of melodies and lyrics it's impossible to indulge

oneself into one's problems. Anyway, recently I've worked with others and it's been a buzz for me.....Mike Angel, singer from Fugitive, came here over a year ago and low and behold one of those songs is released. It's called, "One Year Straight". It's a story song and tells Mike's story....I think it's great and it has been received very well by my friends 😊🎵 I think it will be a fave with their fans....take a listen.

Also, do you remember 'Space Elevator'? They came into my life two and a half years ago when they were chosen to support me on my German tour, that was sadly postponed because of Covid. I'm glad to say, we've remained friends and we're currently writing some things for their new album - I think it's all sounding amazing. David Young and Julie (guitar player/leader and singer) are great to be with and as I've said before, it's not work, it's play....Best of all, I've made three great friends....

Another similar situation, although not a writing one, concerns a singer/writer called Marley Davidson. Marley supported me on the show we played at The Caves in Edinburgh a few months ago. Marley plays keyboard and sings his own songs, which are fabulous, loads of atmosphere and feeling. Before we played the show on that Sunday night....I watched Marley from the balcony, thinking how good he is - when separately, two guys from my band said to me, this guy is brilliant. If there's a Manager out there, or record executive looking for a true artist/writer...go see Marley Davidson .

Lots of Love, see you in a few weeks....Russ xxx❤️

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

I ended last month's biog with Adam Faith and The Roulettes' concert to the British troops in Hamburg in November, 1963. We [The Roulettes] were staying outside Hamburg in what was originally a hunting lodge, owned by Adolph Hitler. It all seemed somewhat overwhelming to me, my first trip abroad and where am I staying? Hitlers House! We drove through the city of Hamburg, then along roads, through forests, then there it was, Hitler's 'Pad' in Hamburg. We stepped out of the car to be greeted by two more soldiers, who took our cases from the boot. The lodge looked very impressive to me, along the lines of a huge skiing lodge. Our new officer friend, Cameron, showed us to our rooms. He said, "Would you like lunch?" In unison we said, "Yeah". "When you've

freshened up come down to the dining room". I looked out of the window of my room. The lodge was surrounded on all sides by trees. We were deep in the heart of the biggest forest I'd ever seen. We all met downstairs. To my surprise, Cameron said, "Adam and Maurice [our co-manager] are staying at another house a couple of kilometres away". We were invited into the dining room, where we sat down at the dining table - I'd only seen a table this long on films. Cameron sat at the head, while John and Pete sat either side of him, and Bob and I faced each other...to my left there were eight vacant dining chairs plus a carver which faced Cameron, who was sitting four metres away. A soldier stood by the door of the dining room, his legs apart and his hands behind his back. Cameron called him over. He walked forward. "Yes sir", he said, "The boys will take lunch", "Yes sir". He turned and walked away to the kitchen. "We're having a cocktail party for you this evening". "Oh great", John smiled, Cameron continued, "It should be fun, everybody is very excited to meet you all". "Mmm". I'd heard of cocktail parties; never thought I'd go to one. The only parties I'd ever been to were at friends' parents' houses, where the objective was to drink as much as we could and to "pull a bird" for the night.

At 7.30 our guests started to arrive. It was all pretty formal, men in tuxedos and the women in long flowing gowns. As it turned out, the guests were all officers and their wives. I thought, what a great life the officers seemed to have in the army. The evening was pleasant, in that, 'polite', 'English', 'Middle upper class' style. When Adam turned up, there was quite a bit of excitement, especially amongst the women. It seemed these sophisticated, genteel, young married ladies, suddenly turned in to squealing girls. In these moments I could read the other Roulettes thoughts, "Great, we might get one of his cast offs".....Cameron asked, "Is there anything you'd like to do while you're here?" Tel, always the joker, replied, "yeah, drive a tank" - "Really" - "Yeah" - "Everybody?" - "Yeah" we all chorused....."I think I can arrange that", Cameron smiled.

OK, My Friends, I did say I will tell you what it was like driving a tank through the forests of Hamburg, well, I'll do that next month....I hope you'll be back.
Lots of Love,
Russ

PODCAST 1

The third part of Sven and Ian's podcast with Leo Sayer is live now. Russ joins Leo on this one. Listen in to two old friends having a catch up. You can listen on any of the places you usually listen to podcasts or via Russ's website here. <https://russballardmusic.com/podcast>



PODCAST 2

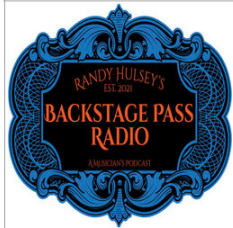
Russ often gets requests for interviews and he is usually happy to oblige. Here is a good one he did at the end of February with Denise Southworth, presenter at WFM 972, a radio station based in Manchester. It lasts around 37 minutes.

<https://m.mixcloud.com/denisesouthworth7/denise-southwort-wfm-972-fm-interviews-legendary-singersongwriter-russ-ballard/>

PODCAST 3

Russ recently did a podcast with Randy Hulseley of Backstage Pass Radio in Texas. Russ obviously really enjoyed this and Randy has him telling us a few things that are different from the usual. This is another long podcast but I am including it now as it was released today, as I write this. In case you don't have time to listen to all these podcasts I will put the link to this one in again next month.

<https://www.backstagepassradio.com/1628902/12419956?fbclid=IwAR0HCouVO7uFE2cB7L2IAmChnkDEf35fFcETG2wg1V7gKb1vysyj60tjHdQ>



[S4: E8: Russ Ballard \(Argent\) - Masterful Lyricist From Waltham Cross - Backstage Pass Radio](#)

Date: March 15, 2023
Name of podcast: Backstage Pass Radio
Episode title and number: S4: E8: Russ Ballard (Argent) - Masterful Lyricist From Waltham Cross - Originally

FUGITIVE - ONE YEAR STRAIGHT

Russ has written a lot about his working with Fugitive in the last months. Last month both he and Mike from Fugitive wrote about the story of their first single, **One Year Straight**, from their new album, **Nobody Gets Out Alive**. Now we can bring you the newly released video for One Year Straight. <https://youtube.com/watch?v=IGsOeAWDWFI&si=EnSIkaIECMiOmarE>



The single will be out on 17th March and the album is planned for mid May. Here is the link to the Fugitive shop, where you can order the single and pre-order the album. www.fugitiveweb.co.uk/shop

LYRIC OF THE MONTH

We have had a couple of fairly easy and very well known ones so far. This month we come a bit more up to date. Which song is this from...

**"She's still there flowers in her hair
Twenty four seven she'll be there
In hippy heaven"**

Scroll down to the end of the newsletter to see if you are right.

SET LIST

Russ is thinking about his set list for his 2023 gigs and he would like to know what you would like to hear so, let us know. Which songs would you like to hear him play? Remember On The Rebound in Germany? You can email to this address or simply reply to this newsletter. Would you tell us which country you are in as UK audiences are likely to suggest different songs from audiences in other parts of Europe.

RUSS'S MUSIC HISTORY

By Dave Williams

Sisters still excited



On 31st December 2022, it was announced that Anita Pointer of the Pointer Sisters passed away at her Beverley Hills home after battling cancer, aged 74. The Grammy Award winning sisters first formed when Bonnie and June Pointer began performing together in 1969. Elder sister Anita joined a year later, and the trio were signed by Atlantic Records, releasing a number of unsuccessful singles. In December 1974, eldest sister Ruth joined, and the Pointer Sisters became a quartet. Moving to Blue Thumb records, they began to achieve some success before Bonnie left the group in 1978 to become a solo artist. Despite Bonnie's departure, the revised line-up of June, Ruth and Anita went on to achieve fame and commercial success, scoring hits with "Automatic" and "Jump (For My Love)". More hits followed, including "Fire" (1979), "He's So Shy" (1980), "Slow Hand" (1981), the remixed version of "I'm So Excited" (1984), and "Neutron Dance" (1985).



The original Pointer Sisters – left to right, Anita, Ruth, June, Bonnie (Photos taken from www.thepointersisters.com)

June Pointer, the youngest sister, struggled with drug addiction and left the group in 2004, replaced by Ruth's daughter Issa Pointer. Sadly June passed away in April 2006, aged 52, from cancer. Amazingly, in 2009, Ruth's granddaughter Sadako Pointer joined, but although the group were now back to four members, they tended to perform as a trio on a rotating basis. Anita left the group in 2015 due to ill health. As well as being a co-songwriter with Bonnie, Anita sung lead vocals on the hits "Fire", "Slow Hand" and "I'm So Excited". In June 2020, Bonnie passed away at the age of 69, leaving Ruth as the only surviving original member.

At the height of their career, the Pointer Sisters released two songs written by **Russ Ballard**. First was **Come and Get Your Love**, previously recorded by **Roger Daltrey**. It features on the 1978 **Energy** album, produced by Richard Perry. **Energy** featured songs written by greats such as **Allen Toussaint, Bruce Springsteen, Loggins and Messina, Sylvester Stewart (a.k.a. Sly Stone), Becker**

and Fagan (Steely Dan), **Stephen Stills** and **Bob Welch**, so it was presumably a proud moment for Russ when this song was chosen for inclusion.



Cover sleeves - left to right, *Energy* (1978 LP), *Black and White* (1981 LP), *Come and Get Your Love* (1981 single)

Someday We'll Be Together followed in 1981, and featured on the album **Black and White**, again produced by Richard Perry. It was selected for release as a single in the UK and Canada.



Pointer Sisters in 2023, left to right, Issa, Ruth and Sadako (Photos taken from www.thepointersisters.com)

Tragically, cancer has blighted the Pointer family. Anita's daughter Jada, who was briefly in the group, died from pancreatic cancer in 2003, at the young age of 37. But, despite these terrible setbacks, the group lives on. In 2023, Ruth, daughter Issa and granddaughter Sadako continue to perform as the Pointer Sisters.

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Not one for the rockers this month, but those amongst you that used to go clubbing in the early 90s might appreciate it.

No.54



Someday We'll Be Together by Powerbass

Very little information on this one I'm afraid. It's a Garage House version of the Russ Ballard song that was originally recorded by the **Pointer Sisters**. It appears that Powerbass was the brainchild of producers Ian Gant and Robin Wright with vocalist Alison Limerick. This is the second of two records they released on Principal Records in 1989 and 1990 respectively. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SB2sS8TL5Sg>

Just my opinion, it's not one of the better covers we've featured, but a cover nevertheless.

LYRIC OF THE MONTH - ANSWER

This is from **Annabel's Place** from the album, **It's Good To Be Here**, released in 2020. If you don't know it, have a listen. If you do know it, have another listen!

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=vWXuGTbt9x8&si=EnSIkaIECMiOmarE>

