



(Header by Sven)

June 2023

Time is passing really quickly as we approach the RB Experience '23 and it is keeping us busy just now. We are really looking forward to seeing a good number of you there. We have people flying in from Germany, Ireland, Portugal and Switzerland and people driving from many parts of the UK.

Russ has some exciting family news for us this month and we have an elusive TV programme from long ago.

Don't forget you can join in and write something for the newsletter if you would like to...articles, memories, questions or just a comment in a "letter".

If you are in the UK, enjoy the summer while it lasts!
Sue

THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

What did I do these past weeks? Well, as usual, I have been in my studio, although, a good friend came to visit on Saturday, 6th May, her name, Cecelia La poor Power. We first met 25 years ago, when I heard her sing. I was looking for a classical singer to sing some songs that I'd written with my friend Chris Winter.

After recording some demos, we stayed friends, however, she moved away from London and we lost touch. Cecilia still has a beautiful voice and I'm pleased to say, she's still singing and has recently supported Russell Watson on a tour. We had dinner and decided to stay in touch. She now lives in Bath.

I'm still developing songs with David Young and Julie Maguire from Space Elevator; so much of my time has been working for them. However, on 18th May my old friends, Mod and Margaret Rogan came and stayed for a few days. I've known Margaret since we were teenagers and Mod and I met when we both backed Adam Faith as members of his backing group, The Roulettes. That Thursday evening we had a Chinese meal in Brookmans Park, then next evening had an Indian takeaway. Next day after a long walk and a good 'Chinwag' we walked to a venue quite close to my house to celebrate my friend's 80th birthday....it was John Dalton's surprise celebration...we have been friends since we were age 14 or 15. A special evening, with many old friends.

Another visitor, who is a new friend, Professor Simon Gunn, he contacted me six months ago and told me he'd started writing a book on the pop music business between the years 1957 and 1970. It was his second trip here and we talked about the Elvis Presley phenomenon which actually started earlier 54/55....through the Lonnie Donegan years, Rock and Roll, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis etc...The Swinging Sixties, which is when I became a pro musician, then my career as a backing guitarist, composer, producer and artist....he recently sent a draft of the book. It's very impressive.

I don't often say much about my family, I think maybe they'd rather not be mentioned in my diary. However, I have spoken quite a bit about my son, Christian, probably because he, like me, is in music and I have believed for years he is very gifted in sound (as an engineer & musician) also a very creative composer. In the recent past he's had hits on 'The Deep House' charts, including a number one....Again this week he is number one and number four. So I know he won't mind if I just say, "well done Son". My beautiful daughter, Karis has always amazed me. I'm very proud of her, not only for the love she shows but, also for the energy she gives to her family and life.

I don't know if you have heard the brilliant news that Karis & Sam's son, Emilio (Emi) has just been signed by Wolverhampton Wanderers. Emi is nearly fifteen and for the past six years has been playing for Watford Academy. Also Emi's sister, 10 year old Elodie, has been making waves in the musical world in dancing and singing, winning many awards over the last two years, and representing England. Christian's two sons, Arch & Lennie, are doing well in academic subjects

at school as well as being important members of their football teams. During the football season my weekends are always taken with either football or Dancing and song, or, often both.....

I Love it ❤️😄

Still a week or so to go before July is here, I'll be back then. Be Happy, I wish you all the best...

Lots of Love,

Russ xxx

Sue: A little taster of Emi's skills. Watch out for #11 in yellow. https://youtu.be/iI9SL_w8tgY

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

I'm starting the biography in April 1963. Bob Henrit and I were part of Adam Faith and The Roulettes and we were about to begin three consecutive weeks in variety. For you who are wondering, "What is variety?" It's live stage entertainment. It's called 'Variety' because the artists appearing can be almost anything....Singers, dancers, comedians....ventriloquists, groups, big bands, small bands....In our case, Adam was headliner, or, in 1963, headliner was called 'Top of the bill'. I'd seen live variety shows before, usually with Mum and Dad. When I was eight or nine. we travelled by bus to the Finsbury Park Empire to see my dad's favourite comedian, Max Miller. He was called the Cheeky Chappie, because his jokes were just about as rude as you could hear on the public stage without the joke teller being locked up. I enjoyed the live shows at The Empire. Mum and Dad also took me to see Josef Locke, the famous tenor, then a show starring Frankie Vaughan.

Our weeks would include, The Palace, Manchester, a second week at , The Princes Theatre in Torquay, The Sunderland Empire....and The New Theatre in Coventry. The show would begin with a pit orchestra playing an overture, while the audience became settled, then on would bounce a juggler, then a pretty girl with a frilly frock singing something like "I Could Have Danced All Night". The curtains would come down as she finished her final song. Next a 'stand up' comic. They came in all shapes and sizes. One might sit on a stool and tell us about problems with his wife and mother-in-law. Another would be loud and sometimes pretty crude....others would dress up as maybe , a Farmer or a drunk

Gentleman....meanwhile, behind the curtains the stage was being set for these young boys, The Roulettes, who were completely miscast in this variety show, when we really should be playing in a sweaty rock club somewhere. It was a strange time. Variety had peaked and was on its way down, while a young group called The Beatles was making big waves in the charts and media. Everyone could feel life was changing....Anyway, the comic introduced us. "Give a big hand to The Roulettes" - The young girls in the audience screamed, while older members politely clapped. The curtains opened and we struck up. To the mums and dads who came for the juggler and the comic, they must have thought they had been transported to a different planet...we were very loud....

RB EXPERIENCE '23

Thank you to everyone who has responded to the invitation to the party of the year. I see most of you have experienced this "experience" before so you will know what to expect. We are not as pushed for space as we thought we were going to be so, if you would like to come but haven't yet replied, there is still time. Thank you also to everyone who has made their contribution already. Please don't forget to click on "Friends and Family" on PayPal otherwise they assume it is a business transaction and take a fee.

If you are coming, you should have received an email with details. Outlook has been playing up a bit since I "upgraded" it so, if you haven't received it, please let me know. From now on, only those who have accepted will receive the party emails and I will be sending tickets over the next few days.

Here is a taster from the last RB Experience in 2019. <https://youtu.be/8Ckq5xyEzIs>

POP QUIZ

This just popped up on YouTube. I just had to share with you! I knew it existed, but I haven't managed to catch it before. Pop Quiz on BBC1 in August 1981. Just look at that team Captain!

https://youtu.be/X_SsE1tIPnw For me, this starts in the middle of the programme for some reason, but you can just run it back to the beginning and that seems to work.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

I have a collection of interviews, videos etc that readers have sent in to me over time, or which I have pinched from other places! 🙋 This review of Russ's Winning album was put on the Voices group in April by Liam Wilson. It is an article from Sounds magazine from 14th February 1976. It is only a couple of minutes read.

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

LYRIC OF THE MONTH

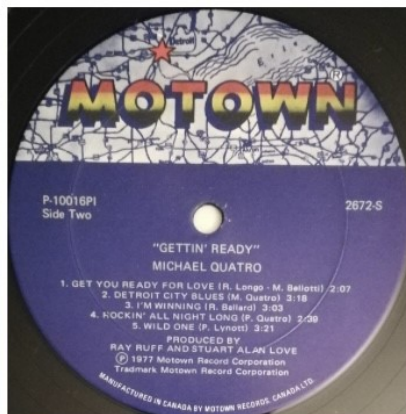
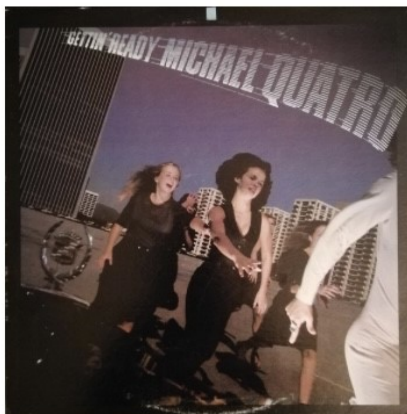
You might not recognise this one but there is a clue in this lyric. If you have a favourite Russ lyric, send it in and I will include it.

**So good the feeling to go back in time
And do it all again with you
'Cause time will change everything
We could make now the new.**

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Russ Ballard songs have been covered in lots of different musical genres, his name has popped up as a songwriter on just about every label imaginable. Probably all of the biggest record companies, with the exception of Motown maybe? Why would a song by Russ Ballard feature on the Detroit label that used to brand itself as The Sound of Young America? Well, if you thought it unlikely, think again!

No.58



I'm Winning by Michael Quatro

Any relation to the singer / bass player Suzi Quatro, I hear you ask? The answer is yes. Susan Kay Quatro, shortened from Quattrocchi, was born in 1950 in Detroit, Michigan. She has three sisters, a brother, and one older half-sister. Her father, Art, had his own jazz trio and Suzi originally played drums and percussion in the line-up. Music ran through the family. Older sister Patti was quite well known in the States as lead guitarist in the all-female group **Fanny**, replacing founder member **June Millington** in 1974. Whilst two of his sisters were carving out stage careers, their older brother Michael was simultaneously establishing himself as a progressive rock keyboard player.

In 1977, Motown signed Michael to their subsidiary label Prodigal, established to promote white artists signed to Motown like the Rare Earth label that preceded it. An album was released in 1977 titled **Gettin' Ready**. In the US and Europe, including the UK, the album was released on Prodigal Records, but in Canada it actually came out on the parent **Motown** label.

Neither Prodigal Records nor Michael Quatro achieved much success at Motown, and it was no surprise when both the label and the artist's association with the Corporation was short lived. Undeterred Michael has continued to record and has now sold over 20 million albums.

So, Russ Ballard on Motown? **Gettin' Ready** featured this cover version of **Winning**. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSbGdocEzIM>



[Michael Quatro I'm Winning](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSbGdocEzIM)

Michael Quatro Greatest Hits I'm Winning TOP 10
by Santana 1979 Quatro/Motown 1997 RAY
PARKER JR. - GUITAR

www.youtube.com

LYRIC OF THE MONTH - ANSWER

From "It's Good To Be Here" it is "Time Machine". Have a listen to the whole song.

<https://youtu.be/V8T9wwmjQl4>