



(Header by Sven)

## January 2024

A very happy 2024 to you all. Let's hope it will be healthy and full of music.

Welcome to all the new readers who have joined us since the last newsletter. It is lovely to have you with us. Please feel free to join in.

Russ is going to be busy in the coming year with some different gigs. It looks like an exciting year.

Thank you to Markus for his contribution this month and, of course, to Dave for his ongoing hard work and his hours spent searching for interesting information for us.

Sue

## THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

*I Wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year...*

*You may or may not know, I was asked to be a Special Guest Artist on a German tour called 'Rock Meets Classic' - RMC, has become a very popular concept In Germany. The show incorporates Rock artists singing their songs with a German group but accompanied by a Classical orchestra. The tour will last for two and a half weeks ...That's ten shows plus two days rehearsals. I'm really looking forward to it.... I look forward to seeing you. The shows are in Bavaria and for*

me, it's almost a second home 😊 Much of December has been a promotion month. I've been doing interviews....Radio and magazine chats. You might know them if you're from that area...On December 4th I was interviewed by Chris Streider for Dark Stars. It was recorded, to be used later, I believe. Dec. 5th I had a good chat with Carsten who worked with a magazine called 'Bleeding for Metal'. There were seven interviews, which I won't go in to, as I'll more or less be repeating myself.

On Dec. 8th my good friends from Fugitive came down from Liverpool. Michael Angel, Paul (Ranko) and Dave are great musicians and equally good company... We had a great Indian dinner when they arrived and we wrote a song together next day.

Christmas I spent with my family and friends....it was fun. Mind you - after we opened presents I went in to the studio and continued working on a song, not really a present but I like to think it's a gift. 😊🤔🍸 HNY ❤️

## **RUSS - LIFE STORIES**

*Biog Continued....Meeting The Beatles [part two] Summer 1963*

*I finished last month's biography saying how we met The Beatles while playing a Sunday concert in Great Yarmouth. We, [Adam Faith and The Roulettes] after playing on the Pier, decided to stop at The Carlton Hotel before driving back to Bridlington, Yorkshire, which would be a good two and a half hours. While talking to Paul about so many things, he said suddenly said..."Where can we get some good suits made in London?" "The best is Dougie Millings", we said, he makes all our suits. We gave Paul Dougie's address - and indeed, it was Dougie who made all The Beatles suits from that time to the last days of their World conquest. On our journey back to Bridlington Tel said, "George lives near me, I invited him over for dinner". He said that would be good....Tel went on, "I asked him what he likes to eat?" - "Anything" he said.*

*We went back to showbiz at the Grand Theatre. During the days we took golf lessons with a pro.....Pete was a good player, so was Tel. I was an average beginner, also I preferred more energetic sports and only lasted three lessons, although Tel, Pete and Mod continued playing. Tel found a karate teacher in the town, he also taught Kendo and Aikido, two other popular, lesser known Eastern*

pursuits. The teacher's name was Norman Grundy, and he was at one time the England team coach. Norman was an impressive man, around six feet five inches tall and looked very strong. Tel and Pete took lessons every day, I think for two hours. After some weeks they told us he was in The Second World War, captured and kept in solitary confinement. Then captured by The Japanese...."They put matchsticks in his eye", Tel said. I noticed his right eye looked blind.

We became friendly with the dancers and had regular parties in our little house after the show at weekends. We were young and all of us learned a lot about girls and what it's possible for a boy and girl to get up to. The Sexual Revolution began in Bridlington in 1963, as far as The Roulettes were concerned.

## GERMANY - ROCK MEETS CLASSIC

Coming up in April...it won't be long! Russ will be playing with a band (not his) and an orchestra. He has been doing a lot of interviews recently in preparation for this. He will be playing just a few songs, the list isn't finalised yet but most likely....You Can Do Magic, Voices, The Fire Still Burns, and God Gave Rock n Roll To You. Russ is their "very special guest". Others on the bill include Midge Ure and Robert Hart. I know several of our readers already have tickets.

MAXIMED HEUTEIN VERANSTALTUNGS GMBH PRESENTS

**ROCK ANTENNE** **LET'S ROCK TOUR 2024**

THE ORIGINAL  
**ROCK MEETS CLASSIC**  
PROUDLY PRESENTS  
**RUSS BALLARD**  
VERY SPECIAL GUEST

THE RMC BAND & ORCHESTRA

10.04.2024	LUDWIGSBURG	14.04.2024	MÜNCHEN	19.04.2024	FRANKFURT
11.04.2024	KEMPTEN	16.04.2024	OBERHAUSEN	20.04.2024	NÜRNBERG
12.04.2024	PASSAU	18.04.2024	INGOLSTADT	21.04.2024	WÜRZBURG
13.04.2024	REGENSBURG				

TICKETS AB SOFORT AN ALLEN BEKANNTEN VORVERKAUFSTELLEN - [WWW.ROCKMEETSCCLASSIC.DE](http://WWW.ROCKMEETSCCLASSIC.DE)

ROCK ANTENNE EQUIPED **Rock** **planha** **SPAT** **GETTING** **Rock It!** **guitar** [WWW.KITABOLLS.COM](http://WWW.KITABOLLS.COM) **Hard Rock CAFE**

Markus Linten, in Germany sent me this link to one of the interviews Russ did last month in the run up to this tour. It is from Classic Rock (DE). If you can find it, there is a button to click to get it in English. You can read the first part but then, unfortunately, you have to set up an account to read the rest.

<https://de.readly.com/magazines/classic-rock-de/2023-12-15/6576b4a38dd051e91fe5fc6e>

## GERMANY 2

Lucky people in Germany, further north this time! Not only are you getting Russ once in 2024, but twice! In June Russ will be returning to Germany to play at an event which marks the end of the Handel Festival in Halle. This is, once again, with an orchestra and is billed as Symphonic-Rock-Concert, "Bridges to Classics" and Firework display. From the festival programme.....

"Traditionally, thousands of visitors stream to the Galgenberg Gorge in Halle on the final festival weekend. In Bridges to Classics they witness a fascinating bridging of the gap between classical Baroque music and modern rock. This "symphonic rock concert" takes place against the breathtaking and atmospheric natural decor of the Gallenberg Gorge in Halle and closes with a firework display."

## BEYOND THE BEACH

In the February 2019 newsletter, Russ told us about some film music he had been working on with Christian. This is what he wrote then...

*I've been working on the music for a film, a documentary about war, basically, the Middle East. War and also the families trying to escape it.....The film crew travelled from London and spent six weeks in Afghanistan, where we see, close up, the horrors of war, car bombing, the casualties of war, many children stepping on land mines....Then, for the final forty minutes, we see people attempting to escape across The Mediterranean Sea...The film is heartbreaking and inspiring in equal measure. There are people in the Middle East - Europeans, some from the UK, who are working there to try to help, including a company called, 'Emergency', who have set up a hospital, with limited resources, but have dedicated people, who want to help.....they are very inspiring and I've cried every time I've seen the film and that's a lot....My Son, Christian, has been an inspiration too, always suggesting things and finding the right sounds and*

*moods for scenes.....Apart from being an amazing Musician/Producer, he's a great engineer and he's taught me a lot.....*

This month has seen the release of the soundtrack of the film, titled **Beyond The Beach**. Click the link below for the soundtrack on YouTube. There are eleven pieces, which are not songs as such, but background music for the scenes in the film. The composers for this music are Russ Ballard and Christian Ballard.

[Beyond the Beach: The Hell and The Hope \(Original Motion Picture Soundtrack\)](#)

## VOICES PODCASTS - BAND INTERVIEWS

During the 2022 Germany tour, Ian and Sven did "three minute interviews" with Russ's band members. These are fun interviews during which you will learn just a little more about the individual members. Just allow a bit more than three minutes, though....maybe ten or so. This month we have guitarist Roly Jones.

<https://youtu.be/E26rigAZcPA?si=9xQXucVjIMJ2yVWU>





## LYRIC OF THE MONTH

This is a more recent track and I have a feeling not as well known as most of Russ's songs. Events got in the way. I love it, though. One hundred points if you know this without checking!

**We stood under the same sky  
The journey's over I just learnt to fly  
You took it for granted, so did I.**

Scroll down to the end of the newsletter to find, and listen to, the answer. Then find your album and have another listen to the whole thing. There are some great songs on there.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Thanks to Carole for finding this one....an article about Russ on his work just after leaving Argent, from the magazine, International Musician & Recording World, Nov 1975.

It starts, "Russ Ballard is a man of many talents". Well, we know that!

<https://www.muzines.co.uk/articles/russ-ballard/6704>

## UP TO DATE

I like to keep an eye on YouTube to find anything new coming up. This appeared on 15<sup>th</sup> January...it is an amateur review of Russ's Winning album. It doesn't tell us anything new but the reviewer, Ian, has some nice things to say. It is just under 10 minutes long.

[https://youtu.be/qgZXVydZELQ?si=ItnimN-bTadP\\_NDq](https://youtu.be/qgZXVydZELQ?si=ItnimN-bTadP_NDq)

## FROM DAVE

### **Goodnight, Kiss**

On December 2nd, 1983, four years after setting out on their **End of the Road World Tour**, US rock giants **Kiss**, returned home to New York City's Madison Square Garden to bring their 50-year music career to an emotional end. Whilst most of the performances in 2020 were put back a year due to Covid, the band still played a gruelling schedule of 250 shows, and what better place to end than the place where it all started?



Formed in New York City in 1973 by Paul Stanley (vocals, rhythm guitar), Gene Simmons (vocals, bass guitar), Paul 'Ace' Frehley (lead guitar, vocals), and Peter Criss (drums, vocals), the group were known for their face make-up, stage outfits and lavish stage show, which included levitating drum kits, fire-breathing, smoking guitars, rockets and pyrotechnics.

Russ Ballard fans will be well aware of the fact that **Ace Frehley**, who took on the persona of a spaceman, scored a solo hit in his home country with **New York Groove**, the song being initially a hit for the English band **Hello**. The song formed part of a solo album. As part of their recording contract with Casablanca, Kiss were required to provide a solo album from each member, which were released simultaneously on the same day, September 18th, 1978. None of the members performed on any of the other member's recordings, so it was an opportunity for each member to show off their own talents and their preferred style of music.



Left and middle: New York Groove by Ace Frehley, right: Kiss in costume as l to r, Spaceman (Ace Frehley), The Demon (Gene Simmons), The Starchild (Paul Stanley) and the Catman (Peter Criss) (© Shutterstock)

Later on, Kiss went through several line-up changes, with Stanley and Simmons being the only ever-present members. Peter Criss left in 1980 due to 'creative differences', and Ace Frehley departed two years later. They were replaced by Eric Carr and Vinnie Vincent, then Bruce Kulick respectively. The original members reunited in 1996, staying together until 2001, after which Criss and Frehley again departed. Eric Carr later died in 1991 and was replaced by Eric Singer. The final line-up featured Paul Stanley, Gene Simmons, Tommy Thayer (lead guitar, vocals), and Eric Singer (drums, vocals).

It was certainly true in the early part of their career that their records didn't sell particularly well, and they were better appreciated playing live. Record sales picked up after they released a live album.

In 1987, Ace Frehley went on to form Frehley's Comet and recorded a cover version of Russ Ballard's **Into the Night**, released as a single on Atlantic Records.



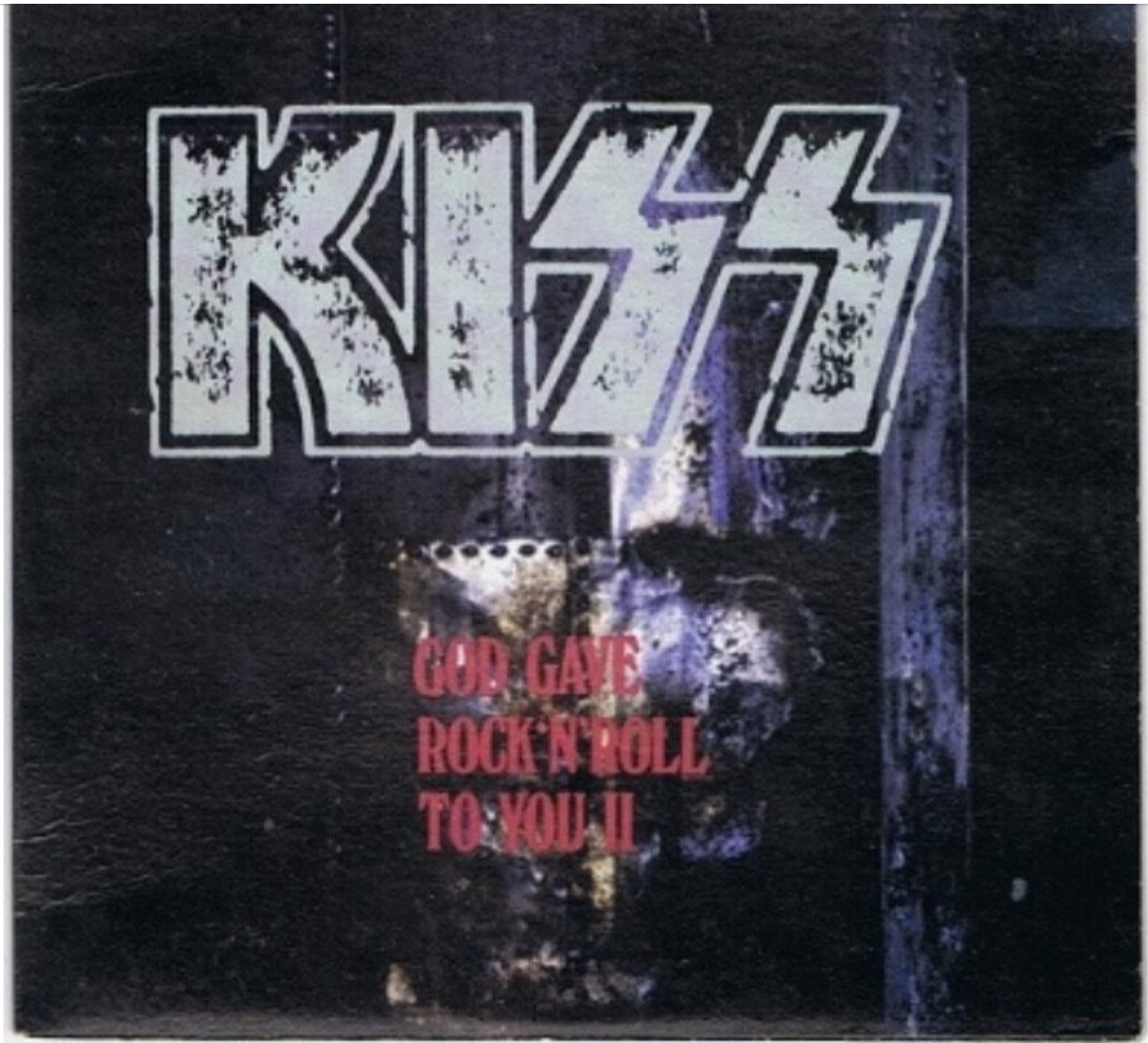
Meanwhile, **Peter Criss** was also leaning on Russ Ballard in a bid to launch his solo career. In 1982, he discarded his Kiss 'catman' outfit for the release of his album **Let Me Rock You**, which featured the song of the same name, written by Russ. Also included was his cover of Russ Ballard's non-album single **Some Kinda Hurricane**.

However, whilst Frehley and Criss recorded and released four Russ Ballard songs between them, it was Kiss as a group that can lay claim to having the greatest success with one of Russ's songs. In 1991 they released their version of the Argent classic God Gave Rock and Roll To You.

Taken from the soundtrack of the film **Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey**, Kiss certainly attempted to 'lay claim' to the song, re-writing some of the lyrics to fit the film, renaming it as **God Gave Rock and Roll To You II**, and then crediting themselves as co-writers. Was this right or wrong? I'm not sure, but if Russ was hugely upset by it, he doesn't appear to show it. Rod Argent, Jim Rodford and John Verity have been more vocal in pointing out that the song was written by Russ, and "Argent



recorded it first". Does it matter that much? Well, on the positive side, it brought the song to a whole new generation of music lovers and brought in some royalties that wouldn't otherwise have existed. As someone once said, 'half of something is worth more than everything from nothing', or did I just make that up?



God Gave Rock and Roll To You II by Kiss

I actually really like Kiss's version of the song. My only frustration is that so many people don't know the song's origin, just as many Rainbow fans have no awareness of Russ Ballard's original version of **Since You Been Gone**, but I've noticed that Russ's army of fans, me included, are quick to politely put out the correct information on the Facebook and You Tube forums.

That aside. It seems strange to learn that Kiss, as a band, has now come to an end, and will be confined to the history books. Love or hate them, they were a class act, both live and in the studio. They came up with some classy songs of

their own, **Crazy Crazy Nights** and **I was Made for Lovin' You**, being just two examples. Who knows whether or not they will reverse their decision as many have done before them, but whatever the future holds, I think it's fair to say that Russ has been good for Kiss, and Kiss has been good for Russ.

## DAVE'S COVER QUEST

As our monthly Cover Quest enters its 6th year, we start 2024 with a song that's better known as being a hit for Agnetha, the blonde girl in ABBA.

**No.65**



### **Can't Shake Loose** *by* **Susanna**

It's refreshing when an artist takes a familiar song and makes it their own, rather than replicating the original. This is exactly what Norwegian singer **Susanna**

**Karolina Wallumrød**, did in 2008 when she released this haunting version of the song originally recorded by Agnetha.

Born on 23rd June 1979 in Kongsberg, Susanna hails from a musical family. She is the sister of the drummer Fredrik Wallumrød and the pianist Christian Wallumrød, and cousin of the pianist David Wallumrød. Susanna herself plays piano and guitar and is married to the music producer Helge Sten.

**Can't Shake Loose** is one of a number of covers featured on Susanna's 2008 album *Flower of Evil*. Other covers include Thin Lizzy's *Jailbreak*, Black Sabbath's *Changes* and ABBA's *Lay Your Love On Me*. I've managed to find a live video of the song. It has echos of Russ's slowed-down version of **Since You Been Gone**. I've picked a live version for the video link.

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



### [Susanna 'Can't Shake Loose' LIVE VIDEO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daqEKjclpYE)

Susanna 'Can't Shake Loose' Video recorded at Kulturkirken Jakob in Oslo, Norway  
Susanna - vocals and piano  
Helge Sten - guitar  
Pål Hausken - drums and vocals  
Son...

[www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

Leg warmers at the ready. In a strange twist, there is another release of *Can't Shake Loose* by the similarly named Susanne, a Swedish TV Presenter / Fitness Guru. Born on 24th September 1946, **Susanne Lanefelt** was inspired by Jane Fonda's workout programs, and decided to start workout groups in her parents' basement. She was later discovered by TV producer Annchristin Gjers, who offered her a training and workout show on SVT. The show "Gymping" was first broadcast in 1983 and lasted until 1987. An album was released in 1984, which featured *Can't Shake Loose*.



It's Agnetha's version that is used on the record, overlaid by workout instructions from Susanna Lanefelt. If you wish to shed some of those pounds you put on over Christmas, to a Russ Ballard song, skip to 5.58 on the video in the link. Personally, though it looks like fun and I ought to, I think I'll give it a miss!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeVzQR-R-D8>

## COVER JOB

**From Dave**

During a spare hour recently, I tried to look up some information for a future Cover Quest article. I stumbled upon a cover version I hadn't been aware of. This led to another, then another and another. I must have discovered around twenty



covers I didn't know about, and they are legitimate, because they are featured in Apple's iTunes Store. I've now counted a staggering 40 versions of New York Groove and 25 versions of You Can Do Magic, the song originally recorded by America. I also discovered a very embarrassing cover version of Elkie Brooks' No More the Fool. Worryingly, it can be purchased on iTunes. I won't name the singer just in case he or she is subscribed to the newsletter!

## LYRIC OF THE MONTH - ANSWER

Those lyrics are from **My Awakening** from **It's Good To Be Here**.

[https://youtu.be/g\\_2QYv3y3gA?si=8Mh02OBICI2\\_CsII](https://youtu.be/g_2QYv3y3gA?si=8Mh02OBICI2_CsII)