



(Header by Sven)

## December 2024

Welcome to our new readers.

Our newsletter friend, Tony Dawson Hill, was having a clear out and discovered he has two copies of *The Seer* on CD. He is very kindly offering one copy, free, to anyone who doesn't already have a copy. If you would like it, just reply to this email. The first person to reply with their name and address will win it. I will forward their email to Tony, who will post the CD out. Because of postage costs, this offer is only open to readers in the UK.

This month we have some anniversaries, a new gig, some stats, three podcasts in one and a letter from new reader, Jim, which got a response

from Russ. Thanks, as always, to our special Dave for all his hard work to put the sparkle in the newsletter.

Happy Christmas to you all. 🎄📺👤

Sue

## **THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY**

*This past November I joined friends on stage for a celebration for Rod Argent. Rod has decided to step back from touring with The Zombies. It was a special evening, performing with good friends celebrating Rod's great career. I wish you all the very best Rod.*

## **RUSS - LIFE STORIES**

*I ended last month's autobiography telling you about the escapades at our bungalow in the little town of Broadstairs....the parties with friends - One friend who stayed quite a while was Sandie Goodrich. It was Sandie who we first spotted at The Hammersmith Commodore, the only problem with her being there was she didn't tell her mum and dad and they reported her missing to the police...We didn't realise this fact until days after she left. A lot was to happen to Sandie in the year that followed, more about that later.*

*I'd been with Adam and The Roulettes for a year and a half, and a lot had happened in my life.*

*While we were in Margate the radio station, 'Caroline', started. It was situated on a ship three miles off the coast of the UK.. This was 1964, 'Swinging Britain' and BBC radio was still playing 'Big Band' music, and we only heard the new releases occasionally, so when Radio Caroline started we heard the latest releases on almost every show.*

*Before Caroline, the BBC had a monopoly of how much music would be heard by the public, so it was great to hear back to back pop releases. Caroline was not a licensed station, that is why it was situated on a ship.*

*Because we had now produced some 'hits', Adam and The Roulettes had been offered one of the perks of a 'hit name' and it was sponsorship of a guitar company....in this case it was Framus Guitars and specifically their twelve string.*

*The deal would mean Thorpy and I would be photographed sitting and playing them. It seemed a simple thing to do to get a guitar and it was also free advertising. When we took possession of the instruments we both thought they sounded 'tinny' and hard to tune. They were left out of their cases and were invariably on the floor of the bungalow. On one particularly funny drunken night after a party, we arrived back at 33 Seaview Drive with our friends, we turned on the light of the lounge, saw the guitars lying on the floor and with one 'bound' we jumped on the 12 strings, turning them in to firewood. It was strange, although we'd always mentioned throwing them away, we'd never thought of smashing them and we appeared to carry out the demolition with complete spontaneity and synchronisation.*

*Well, I'll continue the story next month...I wish you all a Merry Christmas, my friends.*

## **SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES**

We can't let 2024 go by without recognising two special anniversaries. The first "Russ Ballard" album was released in September 1974 and the second "Russ Ballard" album was released in December 1984. So it is Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.



The 1974 album was Russ's first solo album after Argent. He plays all the instruments except the brass and he produced the album himself along with Dan

Loggins. This is where we first heard Russ's own recording of I Don't Believe In Miracles, which had been a hit for Colin Blunstone.

The 1984 album was Russ's sixth. It was produced by Russ and John Stanley and debuted one of Russ's most successful songs, Voices. Two of the songs, Voices and In The Night were featured in the 80s TV series Miami Vice. The sax solo on Living Without You was performed by Raf Ravenscroft, who also played on the huge hit track, Baker Street.

All songs on both albums were written by Russ, of course.

## COMING UP

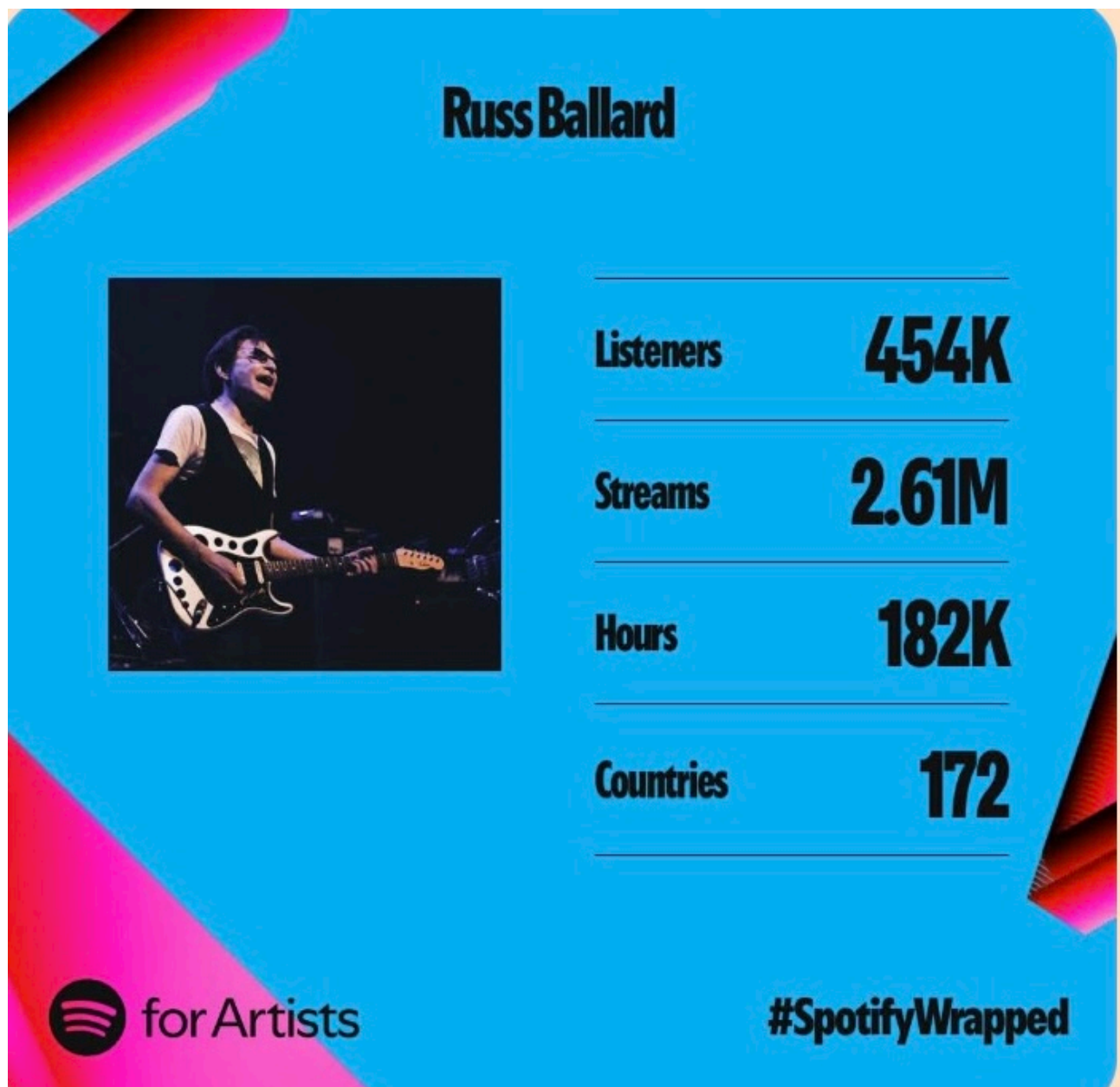
Here is another treat for our friends in Germany. We have no more information about this yet.





## SPOTIFY

Here are Russ's Spotify stats for this year. Thank you to everyone for your support.



## VOICES OF RUSS BALLARD PODCAST

These podcasts have come out since the last newsletter. Ian spoke with Ray Greene, who was the vocalist for Santana. You will be aware that Santana recorded Russ's song, Winning. The podcast is in three parts. This

is the link to Part 3, which includes a chat with Russ. If you follow this you will find parts 1 and 2 on Russ's website.

<https://russballardmusic.com/podcast>



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

I think I have mentioned before that Bob Henrit has been having a clear out. Our Team RGB Ian has acquired a lot of his music memorabilia including this old footage of a charity gig the members of Argent took part in along with other bands. This is from a charity show on behalf of Nobby Dalton of the Kinks around 1978. This is the part of the show which features Russ.

<https://youtu.be/-gw6HzDcepl?si=w-uw3LO2QCXMkDHu>

## READERS LETTERS

Thank you for adding me to your email newsletter. Although I've never seen Russ perform live, songs such as Since You've Been Gone are part of my long-term rock and roll playlist and I sing it out loud in the car...every time!

As per the encouragement in the newsletter intro letter, here is a question from my office mate, Lisa. We sing “God Gave Rock and Roll to You” often in the office, including our university president, when we want to lighten up a stressful afternoon, or feel thankful that we can take a minute to share each other’s company and talk rock music in between meetings and projects. This is a minor thing in the scheme of life but one we enjoy. What was the most inspirational story that Russ has ever been told or heard about the impact of “God Gave Rock and Roll to You” on a person or group of people?

Thanks in advance.

Here is a copy of the single that hangs on the wall, including an excerpt from an article about the song, and a few faces of our office mates pasted on who have also stopped by to sing!

Jim Roberts

US



*For Lisa and Jim, The Chief of Staff Misericordia University Dallas*

*Hi, I’m glad you’re singing the song, guys ....I imagine you make up your own words too. 🤪*

*Believe or not, although people are interested in how I came to write the song, I can't recall anyone being facetious about it ...well, not to my face. 🙄 My mum had the deep faith in our family....and I'm sure it was her influence - she always had the perfect Biblical quote at the right time. I must say, 'God' is a great subject for a song - He/She/ Whatever....Can be Praised, Blamed, Hated, Loved ....There's so much there. I guess that's why I often include the word in songs.*

*Thank you for the question - I don't often have the opportunity to review old songs....I've enjoyed this...*

*I Wish You & Yours a Merry Christmas and Peace & Love,*

*Russ* ❤️

## **AMATEUR HOUR**

### **From Dave Williams**

One of the great things about You Tube and other social media websites is that it provides a platform for anyone and everyone to demonstrate their talents. This month we once again feature **You Can Do Magic**, tackled this time by **The Hindley Street Country Club**.



When a bunch of musicians get together to re-arrange and re-create classic covers, then post them onto social media, then amass over 590 million YouTube views and 1 million subscribers globally, they have to be worth investigating.

**Hindley Street Country Club (HSCC)** was formed in 2017 by arranger / producer Constantine Delo, as an assembly of musicians from Adelaide. Hindley Street is located in the centre of the city, and many of the musicians who have played with HSCC had gigs in bands up and down that street in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. There is no actual 'country club' on Hindley Street, the name is a play on the



reputation of the street, which in addition to pubs, clubs, amusement arcades, cinemas, fast food outlets and ice cream parlours, featured adult entertainment, tattoo shops, motorcycle gangs and a steady stream of traffic cruising up and down the strip.

HSCC tracks are recorded live in one single take, with everyone in one room. The singers use Shure In-ear monitors to hear themselves as there is no PA or monitor speakers to hear themselves in the room. This ensures sound can be captured through the microphones as isolated as possible to make the job of the mixing engineer easier.

Following on from major internet success, The HSCC now tours throughout the world to audiences far and wide, whilst amazingly continuing to release videos weekly on YouTube every Friday. Their schedule for 2025 is already packed with bookings right up to October and includes a visit to the United States of America in January. This will be followed by their **Just Gets Better** tour, which will see them play across the whole of Australia. The tour, which currently consists of 32 dates, commences in New South Wales and goes on to cover South Australia and Northern Territory, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, before winding up in Western Australia.



In fact, to feature them under our 'Amateur Hour' banner, is to do them an injustice, as they were recently labelled as "the best covers band in the World". Who knows, maybe one day they will get the opportunity to bring their sell-out show to Europe and other continents inhabited by our subscribers.

HSCC's version of **You Can Do Magic** can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WPxWEdNQQk>

But don't stop there. More HSCC treasures can be found on their Facebook page and YouTube channel.

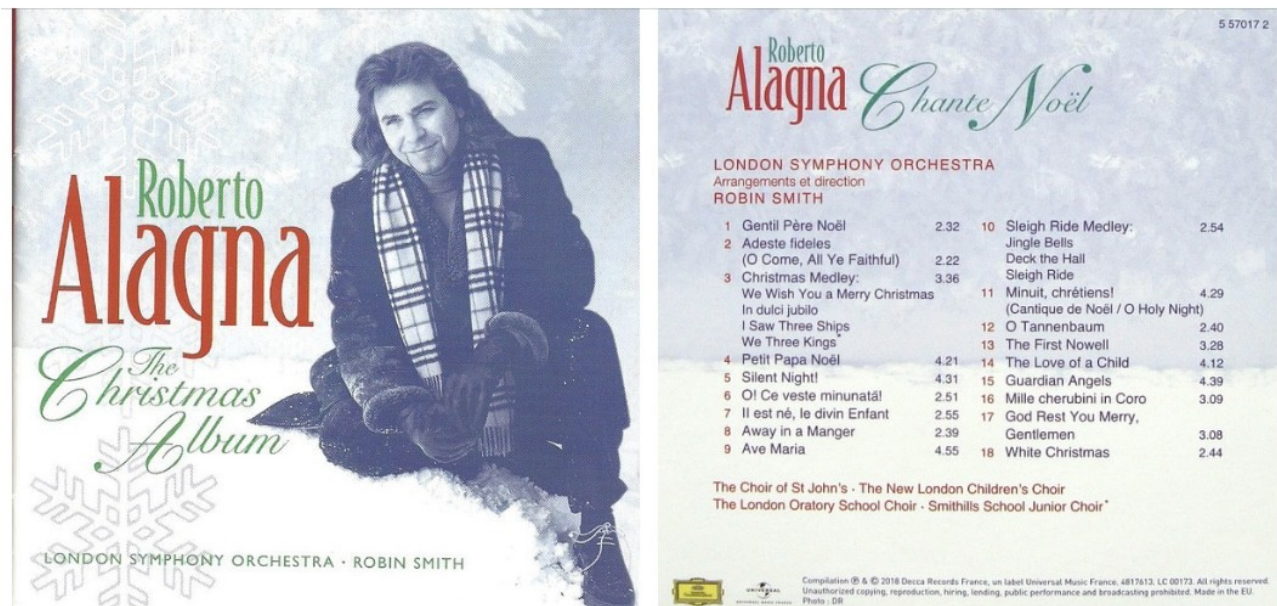
**YouTube page link:** <https://www.youtube.com/@theHindleyStreetCountryClub>

**Facebook page link:** [https://www.facebook.com/hindleyscc/photos\\_by](https://www.facebook.com/hindleyscc/photos_by)

## DAVE'S COVER QUEST

It's that time of the season, Christmas, the season of goodwill. So, to get us in the mood, here's a nice festive offering from the French tenor, Roberto Alagna.

**No.76**



**The Love of a Child by Roberto Alagna**

This song is one of many excellent songs co-written by **Chris Winter** and **Russ Ballard**, and this one was composed for Robert Alagna's Christmas Album released in the year 2000.

Alagna was born in Clichy-sous-Bois, near Paris, in 1963. As a teenager, he began busking in Parisian cabarets before switching to opera, self-taught but influenced by **Mario Lanza**. To date, he has performed in about 40 operas, including works by Puccini, Verdi, Offenbach plus many others. He was awarded the title of **Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur** by the French Government in 2008, the highest French Order of Merit established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802.

**The Love of a Child** features on Alagna's EMI Classics **Christmas Album** recorded in 2000 with the **London Symphony Orchestra** arranged and conducted by **Robin Smith**. Backing vocals were provided by **Lance Ellington** and **Miriam Stockley**., along with the two writers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57YTaDU84sQ>