



(Header by Sven)

## February 2025

A big welcome to our new readers.

It has been a busy month for Russ with the upcoming release of his new double album, the making of the videos for the new singles and preparation for his tour in Germany.

There are two singles out now and you can hear them both below. So far, so very good!!

We have the second part of Colin Blunstone's podcast and an interesting bit of history from Dave.

Sue

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

*My friends, you may know I have signed a recording contract with Frontiers Records. Frontiers is based in Naples, Italy, and specialises in the 'Rockier' side of the music scene. They have such bands as Yes, Def Leopard, Toto and Journey to name but a few.*

*I have an album of new songs, recently written, and I'm sure a surprise to many... another album - new recordings of songs I've written that were hits for other*

Artists....Since You've Been Gone (Rainbow, Brian May), I Surrender - (Rainbow), New York Groove - (Ace Frehley/Kiss), I Know There's Something Going On - (Frida/Abba), Can't Shake Loose (Agnetha Faltskog/Abba), So You Win Again (Hot Chocolate), Winning (Santana), God Gave RnR To You (Argent & Kiss), No More The Fool (Elkie Brooks), Free Me (Roger Daltrey) and Liar, (a hit for Three Dog Night)...The hit songs album is called 'The Hits Re-wired'. The album of new songs I've called - 'Songs from The Warehouse'.

Recently, 6th February, I filmed (along with my band) two of the Warehouse songs... I think the songs are likely to be singles. The titles are 'Courageous' and 'Resurrection' - Both are story songs - Courageous is a true story I heard as a news item on BBC news at One and it affected me greatly. I haven't seen the video edits yet....But I know the band looked great, because PJ, Roly, Marc and

John told me. 🎵😂❤️

Peace & Love,

Russ

## **RUSS - LIFE STORIES**

In 1965 many big stars were playing weeks in cabaret, and Adam Faith and The Roulettes were no exception - I don't believe cabaret was Tel's scene - The fact that the money was very good made the decision for him. We didn't change our act very much, although, we usually started with a swing standard song on which I played piano. We worked the best clubs in the country....In Manchester there was 'Mr. Smiths' - also in the same area was a double [that was where we played two clubs in the same night]. Warrington and Leigh was one double, then Greaseborough and Ollerton....La Dolce Vita in Newcastle was popular with artists and the public. Sometimes we made a double of Dolce Vita and a club in Stockton, The Fiesta.

Clubs were easy to play but I was eighteen years old....Playing in night clubs for the middle aged, while English groups were taking the world by storm....

Around this time, a manager, John Barker, contacted us and said he would like to manage us if we ever decided to leave Adam. I think this gave us the impetus to try going solo - another 'carrot' was his offer, 100 pounds a week retainer, whether we worked or not. Bob, Mod, Pete and myself thought the offer was too good to turn down. So we parted from our boss and friend.

*Tel was upset, but he was taking plenty of time off, which meant we weren't earning regular money. John Barker and his Co-manager wife Ann Niven started to book gigs for us in Rock Clubs, Universities, Ballrooms and Colleges. Things were going well, we played with all kinds of groups.....there was The Who, Cream, John Mayall's Blues breakers .....We were recruited as session musicians for a television series, called, 'A Tale of Two Rivers'. It was to be a summer evening music show, featuring British Artists, singing on the banks of the Seine River, Paris, and French artists [you've guessed it] singing by the Thames in London. The UK Artists were Lulu, Marianne Faithful and Mark Wynter, who, instead of singing his usual pop songs, chose to sing standards. The only French Artist I remember backing was Richard Anthony. He looked typically French, however, he turned out to be Egyptian - Lulu was a pleasure to work with, I can't remember the songs we recorded with her but I do recall her sitting with me on the piano stool while I worked out chords and arrangements to her songs. She was very funny and friendly. Marianne recorded with a bigger orchestra....I do remember playing accordion on one of her songs.*

### **Richard Anthony**

*Richard was an easy guy to work with and an interesting character. He was fluent in five languages, French, English, Italian, Spanish and Egyptian of course. Richard had been having hit singles in France since 1958, when he wrote and recorded a French translation to Buddy Holly's song 'Oh Boy'. He had many hits in that way.*

*And next week I'll tell you more of our French Chanteur, soon to become a good friend.....*

## **NEW SINGLES**

It is fabulous to see Russ's first singles released for a long time, attracting a good amount of attention. I sent you the first one...his own version of New York Groove. What a great song! Just in case you missed it, here it is. [https://youtu.be/NWwl\\_yIRUMY?si=urwG-Zbfd0dotECe](https://youtu.be/NWwl_yIRUMY?si=urwG-Zbfd0dotECe)

On 17<sup>th</sup> February the second single was released. Another from The Hits - Rewired album, God Gave Rock n Roll To You. Personally, I love the way Russ has reworked this song. Have a watch of the video, another AI video for the hits, but

then just listen. Listen through headphones. I think you might agree with me.

<https://youtu.be/camksd6vmjc?si=vmBfqYh3rIQD9API>



There will be another single with, hopefully, a proper video coming soon. It should be new music next time.

## FRONTIERS MUSIC EVENT

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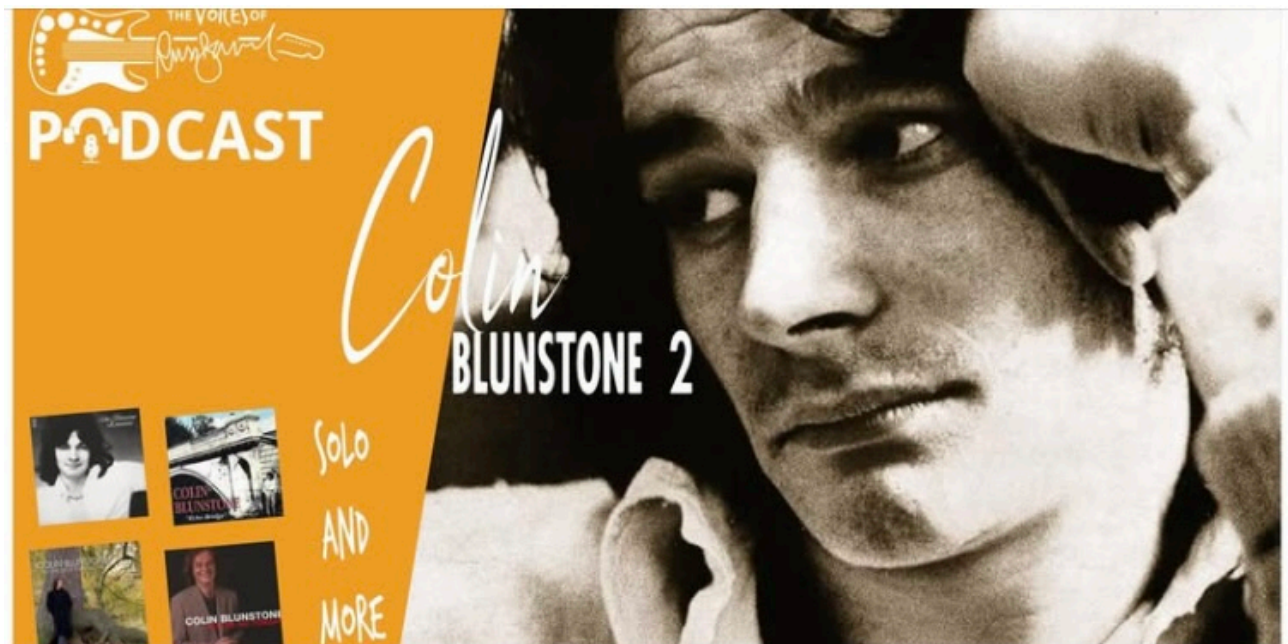
**MARCH 3RD, 2025, AT 8:30 PM**  
GOLD TOWER HOTEL (TERRACE)  
185, VIA BRECCIA A SAN ERASMO, NAPLES.  
TICKETS: €45.00

**THE BIG DEAL**  
ART NATION  
RONNIE ROMERO  
RUSS BALLARD  
**BONFIRE**

Russ is playing a five song acoustic set at the Frontiers Label Group Summit on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. This is at the Gold Tower Hotel in Naples, Italy. The other Frontiers artists there will be The Big Deal, Art Nation, Ronnie Romero and Bonfire.

## VOICES OF RUSS BALLARD PODCAST

Part 2 of Ian's chat with Colin Blunstone is out now. You can find it on Russ's Website here. <https://russballardmusic.com/podcast>



## A BIT OF HISTORY

From Dave Williams

### Who put the Great in Britain?

I turned on my local BBC Radio Station last week, and that day being the 5th anniversary of the public's vote to leave the EU, the presenter decided to hold a phone-in, inviting listeners to give their opinions on whether Great Britain was better or worse off as a result of leaving the EU. He wasn't short of callers. I'm not intending to open up that debate in this article, but one caller managed to rattle my cage. He questioned why we are referred to as "Great" Britain, as he'd never witnessed anything that suggested we were great at anything. I sat there thinking that if he'd spoken that way a few hundred years ago, he'd have been arrested and tried for treason. During the course of the conversation, he revealed that he was born in the 1980s, and I immediately understood why he might feel that way.

Those who paid attention at school might know that back in 147AD, in his work 'Almagest', the Greek Egyptian scientist Claudius Ptolemy used the terms 'Great Britain' and 'Little Britain' to differentiate between Britain and Ireland respectively. Having not paid attention at school either, this information comes

courtesy of Wikipedia. The use of the word 'Great' in Great Britain, is not associated with us being particularly good at doing things, amongst other things, we discovered Penicillin, invented the jet engine, the tin can, stainless steel, the light bulb, the kettle, the toaster, the toothbrush, the television (John Logie Baird, not Yogi Bear as I believed when I was younger), the lawnmower, the all important corkscrew and the flushing toilet. Its even claimed that King Henry VIII invented the stairlift. He was so heavy that he designed a chair that could be hoisted up and down the stairs by servants using ropes and pullies. So, clearly, we did have something in the brain department, but the same can be said for most other countries around the World.

Being born in the mid-1950s, I was just too young to appreciate the arrival of Elvis, but I was old enough to see and enjoy the excitement created by The Beatles. From that point onwards, a world that seemed to be dull and grey, as captured in old black and white photographs, opened up into a world of technicolour. London was buzzing as the swinging 60s arrived. Fashion and technology advanced very quickly over a short period of time. From colour photography and colour TV to Concorde and Apollo Missions to the moon, every day seemed to bring something new. It provided lots of fodder for the BBC's Tomorrow's World, though I have to concede that daleks seemed less terrifying once they changed from black and white to colour.

If the 60s were exciting, the 70s were more so. With jet engines came holidays abroad, though maybe not on Concorde. TV and radio took off in a big way, with the BBC forming Radio One to fight off the competition from the pirate radio stations. Scores of TV sitcoms and gameshows sprung up, many going on to become classics. There were negatives of course. Industrial unrest saw workers going on strike, most notably in 1973-74 when industrial action by miners and rail workers resulted in a 3-day working week to conserve electricity.

Domestically, homes were subjected to power being switched on and off in 3-hour cycles. You knew when the power was scheduled to shut down, so you put the kettle on a few minutes before, and prepared the candles. As with the hard winters, we just got on with it. Schools stayed open, and we learned to adapt until things got back to normal.

Fortunately, we didn't experience a major pandemic on the scale of Covid-19, though we did have to deal with major outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease in cattle and a brief return of Spanish flu. Climate wise, probably the worst we had to cope with was the winter of 1963 and the drought of 1976, which followed two very hot summers. The 1970s were marred by the constant worry of terror attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), with frequent bomb scares, but putting all these things aside, life was "great" in the 60s and 70s.

Nostalgia is rife on social media. A new building springs up and as soon as somebody posts a photo or feature on Facebook, hundreds of responses follow, claiming its an eyesore of carbuncle, and the old architecture was grander. They (or we) claim that our towns and cities were “better in the old days”, football was better in the old days, the weather was better in the old days. Even chocolate and sweets were better in the old days. Understandably, these posts drive the younger generation nuts.

One thing that I do miss from the 1970s is the music scene. Vinyl records, record shops, cassette tapes, music papers, pop charts, Pick of the Pops, Top of the Pops, wall posters, and live gigs held throughout the country in clubs, colleges and universities. The charts meant something back then. You had to sell a lot of records to make it into the Top 40, and every week there were dozens of singles released by an equal number of record companies. I’m sure, like me, you enjoy seeing the old press cuttings posted by Liam Wilson on the Voices of Russ Ballard Facebook page. They date back to a time when we relied on music papers to keep us informed.

One of my simple pleasures was picking up a copy of **The New Singles** from the record shops. This was a folded leaflet that provided a list of new single releases that would be hitting the shops that week. This was often where you discovered that your favourite singer or group was about to release new music.



*Front cover of The New Singles, published weekly by Francis Antony Ltd, between 1963 and April 1987*

The first page featured an A-Z of the new single releases for that particular week, then the next page unfolded to provide a compilation A-Z of the singles released in the previous two weeks. Just imagine how exciting it must have been to pick up the leaflet in 1974 and spotting **Fly Away** by **Russ Ballard** listed as Russ began his solo career. New Singles ran for 24 years, from 1963 to 1987. In Russ Ballard terms, that equates to the period covering **Soon You'll Be Leaving Me** by **The Roulettes** through to **Dream On**.

Hidden in these weekly releases would be all those songs that pop up in **Cover Quest**. An example is featured in the October 9th, 1981, edition shown below, with Russ represented by his song **Do You Want to Make Love**, released by our good friend **Francie Conway**.

## NEW SINGLES on sale from Oct. 9

<p><b>BIRTHDAY PARTY</b> MR. CLARINET Happy birthday AD AD114</p> <p><b>CANDY BOWMAN</b> I WANNA FEEL YOUR LOVE Since I found you RCA RCAT148(12")</p> <p><b>SARAH BRIGHTMAN</b> NOT HAVING THAT Echo 4 Whisper/Spartan WSP104</p> <p><b>BUGGLES</b> I AM A CAMERA Fade away Carrera/WEA CAR123</p> <p><b>BUMBLE &amp; THE BEEZ</b> FOOLS Working class Zonophone Z24</p> <p><b>BYRON BAND</b> NEVER SAY DIE Little by little Creole CR24</p> <p><b>ROBERTO CARLOS</b> SAIL AWAY At peace in your smile CBS A1537</p> <p><b>CHILDREN OF TANSLEY SCHOOL</b> OUR FAMILY We're all going to a birthday party EMI 5233</p> <p><b>PERRY COMO</b> MAGIC MOMENTS Catch a falling star RCA GOLD531</p> <p><b>FRANCIE CONWAY</b> DO YOU WANT TO MAKE LOVE Up against the wall again RCA 139</p> <p><b>DOLLY COOPER</b> MY MAN Ay La Bah Ace/Pinnacle NS72</p> <p><b>CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL</b> BAD MOON RISING Good golly Miss Molly RCA GOLD539</p> <p><b>ROONEY CROWELL</b> STARS ON THE WATER Ain't no money Warner K17858</p> <p><b>CURE</b> CHARLOTTE SOMETIMES Splintered in the head Fiction/Polygram FICS14/FICS14</p> <p><b>DEPARTMENT S</b> I WANT Monte Carlo Stiff/CBS BUY128/SBUY128</p> <p><b>CARLA DE VITO</b> ALMOST SATURDAY NIGHT Bloody Bess Epic EPCA 1699</p> <p><b>DION</b> WANDERER Love came to me RCA GOLD535</p> <p><b>JUDGE DREAD</b> RUB-A-DUB Dread stakes Creole CR25/12-25</p> <p><b>VINCE EDWARDS</b> GOING UP Never too late Polydor POSP346/POSPX346</p> <p><b>JOHN ENTWISTLE</b> TOO LATE THE HERO Comin' back WEA K79249</p> <p><b>STEVE GIBBONS BAND</b> B.S.A. Rock &amp; roll blues RCA 143</p> <p><b>PETER GOODWIN</b> TORCH SONGS FOR THE HEROINE (2 pts) Polydor POSP335/POSPX335</p> <p><b>STEVE HACKETT</b> PICTURE POSTCARD Second chance Charisma/ Phonogram CB390</p> <p><b>ROLF HARRIS</b> WAR CANOE Linda EMI 5244</p>	<p><b>HAIRCUT 100</b> FAVOURITE SHIRT Boat party Haircut 100/ Arista CLIP1</p> <p><b>JANIS IAN</b> I REMEMBER YESTERDAY Restless eyes CBS A1603</p> <p><b>DAVID JAY</b> NOTHING Amour AD AD112</p> <p><b>KANDIDATE</b> I WANT TO BE YOURS Family/Positive previewed* Polydor POSP337/POSPX337*</p> <p><b>KOOL &amp; THE GANG</b> STEPPIN' OUT Just friends DeLite/Phonogram DE4/DEX4</p> <p><b>LANDSCAPE</b> EUROPEAN MAN Mechanical bride RCA EDM1/ EDMT1/ EDMC1 (cassette)</p> <p><b>LIQUID GOLD</b> ONE OF US FELL IN LOVE (2 pts) Polo/Creole POLO15/12-15</p> <p><b>HANK LOCKLIN</b> WE'RE GONNA GO FISHIN' Please help me RCA GOLD537</p> <p><b>EDDIE LOVETT</b> SHINING STAR Sing about a song KR/RCA KR3/KRT3</p> <p><b>BERNIE MARSDEN</b> SHAKEY GROUND After all the madness Parlophone R6052</p> <p><b>MARTHA &amp; MUFFINS</b> WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD 22 in Cincinnati Dindisc/CBS DIN34</p> <p><b>JUAN MARTINE</b> DESIRE CAUGHT BY THE TAIL Off Iconad Polydor POSP349</p> <p><b>MARVIN</b> REASONS TO BE MISERABLE Marvin I love you Polydor POSP333</p> <p><b>MARY McGREGOR</b> TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS No B side advised Ariola/PRT ARO268</p> <p><b>JOHN MILES</b> REGGAE MAN One step closer to paradise EMI 5246</p> <p><b>MELBA MOORE</b> TAKE MY LOVE Just you, just me/What a woman needs* EMI America EA130/12EA130*</p> <p><b>TONY MOORE</b> EVERY STEP OF THE WAY I ran all the way home Zip/Graduate ZIP102</p> <p><b>NATASHA</b> STRONGEST FEELING Maybe Towerbell/PRT TOW12</p> <p><b>ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK</b> HONKY TONK FREEWAY Love keeps bringing me down Capitol CL222</p> <p><b>ELAINE PAIGE</b> FAR SIDE OF THE BAY On Major WEA K18842</p> <p><b>TEDDY PENDERGRASS</b> NINE TIMES OUT OF TEN I can't leave you alone Philadelphia/CBS PIRA1663</p> <p><b>ELVIS PRESLEY</b> GOOD ROCKIN' TONIGHT Mystery train RCA GOLD534</p> <p><b>HERMAN RAREBELL</b> I'LL SAY GOODBYE Junk funk Harvest/EMI HAR5215</p>	<p><b>JIM REEVES</b> WELCOME TO MY WORLD I won't forget you RCA GOLD539</p> <p><b>B.A. ROBERTSON &amp; MAGGIE BELL</b> HOLD ME Springreens Swan Song BAM1</p> <p><b>NICKY ROBSON</b> STARS Eye to eye Scratch/RCA SCR006/SCRTO06</p> <p><b>ROCK HEROES</b> ROCK HEROES, VOL. 1 Heroes of rock Phillips ROCK7/ROCK12</p> <p><b>ROYAL GUARDSMEN</b> SNOOPY VS. THE RED BARON Return of the Red Baron RCA GOLD538</p> <p><b>ROYAL SCOTS DRAGOON GUARDS</b> AMAZING GRACE Little drummer boy RCA GOLD532</p> <p><b>BOB SEGER &amp; SILVER BULLET BAND</b> HOLLYWOOD NIGHTS Brave strangers/Tryin' to live my life without you Capitol CL223/12CL223*</p> <p><b>BILLY SQUIER</b> MY KINDA LOVER Big beat/Stroke Capitol 12CL214(12")</p> <p><b>SHAKIN' STEVENS</b> IT'S RAININ' You &amp; I were meant to be Epic EPCA1643</p> <p><b>ROD STEWART</b> TONIGHT I'M YOURS Sonny Riva/WEA RIVA33</p> <p><b>ST. WINIFRED'S SCHOOL CHOIR</b> HOLD MY HAND We shall sing his name Music for Pleasure FP903</p> <p><b>TAVARES</b> TURN OUT THE NIGHTLIGHT Never had a love like this before Capitol CI218</p> <p><b>THIRD ARMY</b> MARCH OF 10,000 SOLDIERS Step one Elite/Pinnacle DAZZ10</p> <p><b>TUBES</b> SUSHI GIRL Mr. Hate Capitol CL219</p> <p><b>T.V. SMITH'S EXPLORERS</b> PERFECT FINE Imagination Kaleidoscope/CBS KRLA1590</p> <p><b>VIC VERGAT</b> DOWN TO THE BONE You never tell me you love me Harvest HAR5216</p> <p><b>VIRGIN PRUNES</b> SANDPAPER LULLABY Sleep fantasy dreams Rough Trade RTO89</p> <p><b>WAH</b> SOME SAY Forget the down Eternal/WEA SIMEY1</p> <p><b>JOHN WATTS</b> SPEAKING A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE Ha ha ha EMI 5239</p> <p><b>BARRY WHITE</b> LET THE MUSIC PLAY Baby we better RCA GOLD533</p> <p><b>ANDY WILLIAMS</b> REGRETS Besides you CBS A1604</p> <p><b>WRIGHT ORCHESTRA</b> OUT OF THE BOX Pacific strip Polydor POSP356/ POSPX356</p>
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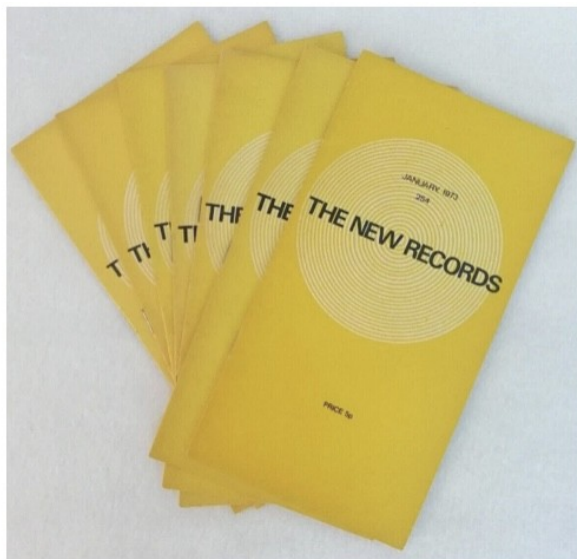
NEW THIS WEEK

THE PAST TWO WEEKS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



***The New Singles, published weekly by Francis Antony Ltd between 1963 and April 1987***

By 1987, **New Singles**, and its sister publication **The New Records**, a monthly booklet featuring long player releases, had become irrelevant. A multitude of independent labels sprung up, and many singles had multiple versions such as picture discs, it became impossible to apply the format to cover these.



***The New Records, published monthly by Francis Antony Ltd, featured new album releases sorted by genre and record label***

Also, by this time, vinyl was being joined by the compact disc, which promised to free us from surface noise and scratches. Many like me, purchased the Argent and Russ Ballard back catalogue in CD format, either disposing of the vinyl versions or confining them to a cupboard or attic. The downside of CDs is the loss of readability of the artwork and sleeve notes, an integral part of the enjoyment of owning a vinyl record.

Simple pleasures, but was it really that much better in the old days? Not really. The problem with nostalgia is that you tend to think of the good and conveniently forget the bad. Yes, we miss the individual town shops which have been replaced by the shopping malls, yes, we mourn the old football stadiums that had character and atmosphere. We overlook the fact that the shopping malls allow you to find everything you want in one large building, sheltered from the elements. We overlook the benefits of a safer, more comfortable experience of watching a game at a modern purpose-built football stadium. As for records, tapes and CDs, was it all good in the old days? Of course not. We didn't have the benefit of You Tube to provide us with an archive of music, TV appearances and live concerts by our favourite artists. Would we be prepared to trade that to go back to the old days? Of course not. Nowadays we can watch Russ performing in Germany and Portugal and we can see Argent footage that was originally broadcast on TV in America, and Bob Henrit hammering out a drum solo in New York in 1973. This was not possible before the worldwide web was born.

Going back to the guy who questioned why Britain is Great, well, geography and history apart, which he appeared to be unaware of, Britain remains a great place to live, especially when you look at some of the events happening in other parts of the world right now. The one thing I might be tempted to swap would be the nicer summer weather of the 'old days'.

## DID YOU KNOW

### From Dave

Rainbow's version of Since You Been Gone was officially certified "Gold" by BPI (British Recorded Music Industry) Limited on 21st July 2023. As the single was released before 1st January 1989 when the thresholds were lowered, this signifies sales of 500,000 units.

## DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Here's a cover version of Russ Ballard's song **Liar**. It featured on **Argent**'s debut album, and in the early 1970s there were two bands that covered the song and featured it very prominently in their stage show. These were **Three Dog Night** and **Capability Brown**, from the United States and England respectively. In 1975, another cover of Liar was released by a legendary American group called **the Meters**.

### No.78



### Liar by The Meters

New Orleans band The Meters, were formed in 1965 by Zigaboo Modeliste (drums), George Porter Jr. (bass), Leo Nocentelli (guitar) and Art Neville

(keyboards). In addition to writing and performing their own songs, they provided backing for various artists including Dr John, Lee Dorsey and Robert Palmer. Despite not achieving mainstream success, The Meters are regarded as the originators of funk music, alongside James Brown. Two of their songs, **Cissy Strut** and **Look-ka Py Py**, released in 1969 and 1970 respectively, are considered funk classics.

By 1975, the band had added Art Neville's brother Cyrille Neville (congas) to the line-up and received an invitation from **Paul McCartney** to play at the launch party for his **Venus and Mars** LP, on 24th March aboard the liner Queen Mary, at Long Beach California. Their set included **Liar**. In attendance was **Mick Jagger**, who enjoyed their sound, resulting in him inviting them to open for The Rolling Stones on their 1975 and 1976 tours.

It was at this time that The Meters released what is considered by many, to be possibly their finest album, **Fire On The Bayou**. Receiving mixed reviews, the record didn't sell as well as expected, their record company, Reprise, unsure how to promote the record given that the band's music was difficult to classify into a particular genre.

Produced by **Allen Toussaint**, Fire On The Bayou features self-penned material, bar two songs, one of which is **Liar**. Like **Capability Brown**, The Meters' version of Liar stretches to over 5 minutes, with the group members adding their own musical touches.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgITIVznbL0>

In 1977, Art and Cyril Neville left the group, joining their two other brothers and Aaron to form **The Neville Brothers**.