



(Header by Sven)

February 2026

A big welcome to our new readers. There was a glitch in the connection between the website sign up and the newsletter email, so apologies to anyone who tried to sign up and nothing happened. We have had a rush of new readers since we put this on Russ's Facebook page so I am very pleased that you tried again.

As you can see on the header, the newsletter started in 2013. The first edition actually went out in March 2013, mostly to a small band of Russ's die hard followers. So this month's newsletter completes 13 years. And we haven't missed a month. We now go out to over 800 people all over the world, from the west coast of the US to Japan and from Finland to New Zealand.

Russ's January run of UK gigs was hugely successful with wonderful feedback. You will have received Ian's tour blog by now in a separate email. If you haven't, please let me know. I had tickets for Barnoldswick, The Stables and Worcester. Sadly, because of illness we only made it to Worcester. What a show, though! It was great to meet up with friends there (including Carole, who looks after Russ's Facebook page. We communicate every day but don't get the chance to meet up very often) as well as a few of you newsletter readers. On the merch stand a number of people put their names and email addresses down for "info" but many of you are already signed up for the newsletter. Again, welcome to our newbies.

Inspired by Dave's article last month, our reader, Garry Smith, has written a great article for this month. Also we have a podcast about the three Barnoldswick gigs from Stewart Griffin. We love it when we get contributions from readers. Many thanks to Garry, Stewart and, of course, our Dave.

There's a lot to read, listen to and watch this month. Keep this email and come back to it for the bits you don't have time to watch in the first place.

Sue

THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

I guess anyone reading this 'diary' will probably know what I've been up to, as Ian wrote a very comprehensive piece on the recent shows in Hull, Barnoldswick, Milton Keynes Stables and finishing at Worcester. How uplifting playing live is - Especially with the audiences that came to our shows this past month. I might have stressed this before, forgive me if I have, the audiences at these shows gave back so

much to us on stage....it's as though the atmosphere 'slices & dices', multiplying, as the time goes by....Thank you for everyone who came to the shows. Now, for PJ, Marc, Paul, John and myself, it's heads down, learning a new set of songs for gigs in Sweden in April and The Magnificent Casino Estoril in Portugal...I look forward to seeing you there ...

I Can't Wait 🕺💃🍸❤️

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

I'm continuing my bio from November/December 1969....Argent had just played their first live shows in Germany and Rome...

Our first album was released on The Epic label, a subsidiary of CBS, and it was decided we needed to tour as the album went to radio stations. Our manager, Mel Collins, flew to New York to meet Sid Bernstein, a prospective agent, who would handle our affairs for us in the States. When Mel returned we had a meeting in his office in Dean Street, Soho. Mel told us Sid was going to be our man in America. Sid was the first man to promote the Beatles in the U.S. and put on the famous "Beatles at Shea Stadium" show in New York.

In a few weeks a tour was planned. It was to be a three month tour, starting on the East Coast, then ending on the West. The venues we were to play were famous to us from the English press....'Fillmore East' New York, Electric Factory Philadelphia, Kentucky then East town, Detroit, Chicago, then San Francisco, Fillmore West, ending at The Whiskey Agogo in LA. A single and B side were chosen from the album. As luck would have it, both sides were my songs, 'LIAR' for the A side and 'Schoolgirl' for the 'B'. So the album was released, February 1970.

COMING UP NEXT

Russ's next gig, at the moment, is in Sweden at the Wings Of AOR festival over the weekend 24-25 April. With his usual band he will be playing both his albums, "Russ Ballard (1984)" and "The Fire Still Burns". Also on the bill is Joe Lynn Turner, who was the vocalist on Rainbow's I Surrender and Brian Spence, who has supported Russ a couple of times in Estoril, Portugal.

Here is the ticket link.... <https://www.tickster.com/se/sv/events/8taane97mz63u07>

SKOGSRÖJET, ROCKNYTT AND A STAR ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

WINGS OF AOR FESTIVAL

APRIL 24-25 2026 • ARBIS, NORRKÖPING

JOE LYNN TURNER
PERFORMING THE ENTIRE ALBUM "RESCUE YOU" (1985) + HITS

RUSS BALLARD
PERFORMING THE ENTIRE ALBUMS "RUSS BALLARD" (1984) AND "THE FIRE STILL BURNS" (1985)

EASY ACTION brian SPENCE FIREBIRDS ONE DESIRE

GOK GATHERING OF KINGS PERFECT PLAN Daytona EMOTIONAL FIRE

TICKETS OUT NOW ON TICKSTER.SE

SKOGSRÖJET ROCKNYTT STAR ENTERTAINMENT Arbis Comfort

COMING SOON AFTER

The next gig is in Estoril in Portugal on 8th May. Emanuel at Remember Minds requested the two album gig again. Russ will be supported by Tyketto. You will need to buy tickets soonish if you want to go to this one. It usually sells out. Ticket link here... <https://ticketline.sapo.pt/evento/russ-ballard-tyketto-live-in-estoril-2025-96795?>

Remember Minds M/18

RUSS BALLARD

PELA PRIMEIRA VEZ
OS DOIS ÁLBUNS NA ÍNTEGRA

8 MAIO 2026 CASINO ESTORIL
SALÃO PRETO E PRATA | 21:30

TYKETTO

CASINO ESTORIL >> TICKETLINE ACTIONMEDIA.PT

The poster features a large black and white photograph of Russ Ballard wearing sunglasses. In the top left, there are two small album covers: 'RUSSELL BALLARD' and 'THE KING OF THE STREETS'. At the bottom, a group photo of the band Tyketto is shown. The event details are prominently displayed in a white banner across the middle.

THE VOICES OF RUSS BALLARD PODCAST

Here we have the second part of Ian's podcast with Rod Argent, which is the first part of the discussion with Russ and Rod. There is a lot of love here. Have a listen. It is very enjoyable. Brilliant poster by Team RGB, Sven. <https://youtu.be/munr97-nWPE?si=lveugsRz8BdHmi3l>



BARNOLDSWICK PODCAST

A new member of our newsletter community, Stewart Griffin, was lucky enough to attend all three of the amazing shows in Barnoldswick. Stewart has a podcast and has recorded his experience and impressions of the weekend. Have a listen here and it will be almost like you were there.

<https://www.mixcloud.com/radio7stewart/with-russ-ballard-at-barnoldswick-back-in-the-barlick-groove/>



CHUCK NEGRON

ANOTHER SAD LOSS

From Dave Williams



It has been announced that Three Dog Night singer songwriter Chuck Negron has passed away at the age of 83. He had been suffering with health problems and died peacefully on February 2nd at his home in Studio City, Los Angeles. Chuck was a founding member of the band, who had a hit in the United States with their cover of Russ Ballard's Liar, although it was Danny Hutton that sang lead vocal on that song. He did sing lead on another Argent song Chained, written by Russ, which featured on their 1972 LP Seven Separate Fools. After the band split, Negron went on to have a solo career and eventually did sing lead on Liar when he recorded a live album in 2001. He also recorded a cover version of Voices on his 1996 album Am I Still In Your Heart

LYRIC OF THE MONTH

Still on Songs From The Warehouse...getting you to listen to this fabulous album again! (by the way I still have a few signed copies of this double album if you haven't got one yet...£20 plus p&p)

Hold me in your hands - Fold your fingers - crush me again
In times like these I can't live with the pain

Scroll to the end of the newsletter for the answer and a link to the track.

FROM GARRY SMITH

All Together Now – The Argent Reunion That Nobody Mentions

(inspired by He's Not There – The Argent Reunion That Nobody Wanted)

Dave's article in the last newsletter about an Argent reunion concluded with mention of "a trilogy of unreleased videos". That reminded me that I know of another one, so that we now have a tetralogy rather than a trilogy!

By the time you read this I should have seen Russ on stage, for only the third time, at the Stables near Milton Keynes. The second time was also at the Stables. I would have said that it was a couple of years ago, but I have just checked the date, to find that it was in February 2022! Who knows where the time goes?

And the first time was, enigmatically, at the Stables but not at the Stables as we know it. I don't know the exact date, but I think it was probably in 1999.

Time for some history. The Stables was founded in 1970 by world-famous jazz couple John Dankworth and Cleo Laine, in the grounds of their home at Wavendon, just outside Milton Keynes. As you could guess, a former stable-block was converted or incorporated into the venue – although I am sure that I also recall talk of chicken sheds being used.

Anyway, given the Dankworths' reputations, contacts and knowledge of musicians' and audiences' requirements, it was an instant and lasting success.

Come the late 1990s, and it was time to rebuild and expand. Money had to be raised.

Rod Argent was a friend of the Dankworths, having worked and released music with John. So he devised a fundraising show.

I have been an Argent (and Zombies) fan since I was a kid in the north of Scotland. The first rock album that I ever bought was Argent's All Together Now. Not only did it include their massive hit, Hold Your Head Up, but also their follow-up single, Russ's song Tragedy, which I loved then and still do. And by pure coincidence I now live in Argent's "home town", St Albans. But back to Wavendon...

The first Stables was a bit undeveloped when compared to the modern venue which we know and love today.

To start with, the car park was unsurfaced, and very dimly lit. Getting out of the car, my wife stumbled, and bumped into a slight gentleman making his unsteady way through the darkness up to the venue.

"For heaven's sake, watch who you're bumping.", I hissed to her. "That's Russ Ballard, and he can afford better lawyers than we can!"

Inside, the auditorium was rectangular – I seem to remember that it was wider than it was deep from front to back, but I could well be wrong. A low stage was against one (long) wall, and there were seats on three sides of it. We were in the first row, but round the corner, stage left or house right. We were more or less level with the front of the stage, and we were very close to it.

The show was in three parts – the first two parts, then an interval, and then the third part.

I may have the first two parts the wrong way round, but what I think came first was a jazz trio – Rod playing piano, Jim Rodford on bass, and legendary session man Bobby Graham on drums. We were sitting just behind Bobby Graham – could have leaned forward and tapped him on the shoulder. Absolutely fascinating to sit so close to a master of his art – we could see everything that he was doing, and it all looked so simple. Why can't we do that?

I can't remember exactly what they played, but of course they weren't going to do atonal free jazz or anything like that. It was just really good music, and very enjoyable.

The second part was Rod solo at the piano, performing classical pieces. His album "Classically Speaking" was out at the time – I have signed copy number 2, who has number 1? – so this dates the show to around 1999. Again, very enjoyable – great to have such a variety of music.

The interval came, and we just stood around, to stretch our legs. A rather tall, well-spoken gentleman wandered past us, with his young daughter. She spotted a one-pound coin under my seat, and he insisted that she give it to me, saying that it must have fallen out of my pocket. I only realised in the second half of the show, to my chagrin, that this was Colin Blunstone. His daughter must be in her early 30s now – and I know that she was very well brought-up!

The second half of the show was, of course, a set by Argent – Rod, Russ, Jim and Bob. I had only ever seen Argent once before, and that was the Grimaldi-Verity line-up, so this was my first time ever seeing Russ in the “classic” line-up.

As with the jazz set, they made it look so easy. I just sat there marvelling at how four guys effortlessly playing apparently straightforward stuff could so accurately replicate their full album sound. Brilliant.

Russ was stage left, literally a few feet away from us. He had a fancy-looking rug on the stage under him – who do you think you are, Carl Palmer? It was getting crunched up, and my wife became convinced that he was about to trip on it and fall straight into her arms. Catching him would be atonement for bumping into him the car park!

They played for about an hour or so. All of the other original Zombies were sitting in the front row at stage centre, so they hauled Colin up on stage – well, OK, it was only a short step for him – for a couple of songs. I read later that he had had no intention of doing this, but it was this show that gave Rod and Colin the idea of working together again, which of course they did so successfully.

Setlist? Can't remember, but it would have had all the classic Argent songs in it. I do remember that they practically had to drag Russ off the stage at the end of the night. He looked as though he was up for another hour.

A great night!

The unreleased video that I mentioned at the start? Well, there were three or so fixed video cameras on tripods, operating all night.

I would have dearly loved a copy of the video, because it was a fantastic night of great music, with the added bonus that we must be in the video, sitting in the front row beside the stage. I wrote to Rod Argent's website and to the Stables, but I never received a reply.

The “reunion that nobody mentions”? Well, there are plenty of online records of Argent reunions, and I've heard them talk about reunions during interviews. But does anyone ever mention this show at the old Stables? No. Not at all. Not that I have seen, anyway.

I can't believe that they've all forgotten about it. So if Russ, or anyone else here, has any memories of that show, I'd love to hear them.

And I would still dearly love a copy of that video, so if anyone here knows anyone there....

VIDEO OF THE MONTH

ARGENT

With Russ writing about his time in Argent and Garry writing about his Argent experience, when I saw this pop up on YouTube today, I thought it might be a good time to put it in here. Many of you will have seen this documentary about Argent before but, probably long ago. I have it twice on DVD. The second one was a mistake...I thought it was something different. But when I opened this video I got stuck in front of it again. It's over an hour. Enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/MGGYHo-Foc8?si=VZGT-t4SmZG1O0s6>

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

I usually try to uncover some songs that are new to me, and hopefully our subscribers, and very occasionally Russ himself. This month however, I'm going to feature an 'Oldie but Goldie' song brought to our attention by our "German Correspondent" Markus Linten. Markus frequently contributes articles for the newsletter, which is great, because it eases the pressure on the rest of the team. There are many covers of this song which could feature in the future, but this one is hot off the press, released just a few days ago. Thank you, Markus!

No.90



Since You Been Gone by FRONTM3N

Widely known and loved in Germany and Scandinavia, the cleverly named Frontm3n are a British vocal and guitar trio featuring Pete Lincoln, Mick Wilson, and Peter Howarth. Between them, they boast an exceptional musical pedigree, having fronted iconic bands such as The Sweet, 10cc, and The Hollies at various stages of their careers. Along the way, they've also worked with major artists including Sir Cliff Richard, Tina Turner, Shakin' Stevens, and S Club 7.

The trio released their first album of original material in 2018 and have continued to build a strong following ever since. Pete Lincoln is currently fronting 70s hitmakers Smokie, while Mick Wilson, formerly of 10cc, once secured a songwriting deal with Jobete Music, the publishing arm of Motown Records. In addition to his solo projects, Peter Howarth has been the lead singer of The Hollies since 2004 and has also starred as Roy Orbison in Bill Kenwright's Only the Lonely at London's Piccadilly and Whitehall Theatres.

Their latest release, Now and Then, arrived last month. The new double CD includes a lovely acoustic version of one of Russ's most popular songs, offering a fresh and intimate take on a familiar favourite.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amG7wNgADZQ&list=OLAK5uy_kA2qdgPsd45nH1zokwNMFkLsjGbdAxdU&index=2)

[v=amG7wNgADZQ&list=OLAK5uy_kA2qdgPsd45nH1zokwNMFkLsjGbdAxdU&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amG7wNgADZQ&list=OLAK5uy_kA2qdgPsd45nH1zokwNMFkLsjGbdAxdU&index=2)

LYRIC OF THE MONTH - ANSWER

This month's track....The One Who Breathes Me

Have a listen <https://youtu.be/g6rLe1nS2W4?si=tCy21BTS4NsGTMEK>