



(Header by Sven)

May 2025

A big welcome to our new readers. You are welcome to contribute to the newsletter.

Three fabulous shows in two weeks! Russ has been working hard. Sweden and Estoril were two hour, two album gigs and the Frontiers festival was an hour. Great audiences with lots of enthusiasm and love for Russ. There is a limit to the videos I can put into the newsletter but, if you can, have a look at Russ's Facebook page, where there are some of Ian's and Emanuel's personal videos. Carole has been doing a brilliant job bringing the gigs to you on the Facebook page almost as they happen thanks to Ian, who was keeping us well fed with videos and updates during the shows.

Dave brings us more of his choices of lesser known Russ songs....his solo songs this month. Some of Russ's newer fans and followers might not be familiar with these songs so click on the links to hear something new or to remind yourself just how great Russ's earlier songs were. Last month I asked for more suggestions for the Argent songs. None! I have added one of my own along with one for this month. If you have a favourite from the early days of Russ's solo career, please send it in with a few words to support it. Take an example from Dave. It's not too late if you would like to send an Argent track, but one that is not played so much.

Again we have lots of gigs to bring you, which is fabulous, but nothing new since last month so scroll past if you are not interested. There is more to read further down. Anyone going to Dunmow? Come and say hello.

Sue.

THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

On Thursday 23rd April, the band and I flew to Sweden to play a festival - it was called 'Wings of AOR'. It was requested by promoter, Ron Dalgren, that we should play, in sequence, my 1984 'Voices' album along with my 1985 'Fire Still Burns' album in their entirety. It meant that we, (PJ Phillips, Marc Rapson, John Miller, Paul Bond and myself) had to rehearse like crazy as I had never played seven of the songs live. I'm pleased to say the reaction from the audience was amazing...they sang along to every song....I thought, why have I never played this set before?

It was back to Heathrow and home....Three days later we're flying again, this time to The Frontiers Festival in MilanI talked with people in our hotel, it seemed people were there from many countries to be together and experience friendship and music. In the foyer of the hotel a man stopped me and said I'm from Peru and I came to see you...A man standing with him said, "me too", then I saw another man who appeared to be listening, I said, "are you from Peru?" "No", he said "Argentina ". It was another great night.

Then the next day we were homeward bound....To attempt relaxation....then we were back on a plane headed for Portugal, Estoril, to be exact, to play the wonderful Casino for our great friend and promoter Emanuel. He always knows how to give everyone the best time and this Casino night was just that So lucky to be living my passion

I have some more shows to do in a few days....I'll tell you how it goes next month...peace & love

Russ 

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

We, (Argent), are starting our first tour of America, beginning on the East coast, at The FILLMORE EAST, situated in Brooklyn, New York. The shows were to be alongside The Moody Blues, blues man John Mayall and organ player/Rocker Lee Michaels. When we heard him play at the sound check the volume was deafening and there were only two musicians playing on stage...Lee and his drummer, Frosty. They were the loudest musicians I'd ever heard but he could really play Hammond organ and his singing was strong, straight ahead hard rock.

We chose to play songs from The Argent album...'Stepping Stone', 'Liar', 'Schoolgirl', 'Dance in the Smoke' and also our own version of a song from the musical 'Hair', it was 'Aquarius'. Our rendition was almost like a different song...the original was very up-tempo - it was Bob's idea to play it in 6/8 time. I think it was quite impressive, if you are into Jazz and musicianship, and Rod's arrangement was clever - but our Aquarius lasted for seven minutes and it didn't have much continuity with our other songs in our set.

Sue: I did some Googling and found this. Aquarius starts at around 11.50.
Goosebumps!

https://youtu.be/jdu928ngC5Q?si=6_VJk-KQmG1SCdUZ

WINGS OF AOR FESTIVAL - SWEDEN

Russ, with his usual band, headlined on the Friday (24th April) of this festival with great success. He performed his two albums, Russ Ballard (1984), sometimes known as The Voices album, and The Fire Still Burns. In addition, as he was in Sweden, he was asked to perform the two songs he wrote which were recorded by the ABBA girls. I Know There's Something Going On by Frida and Can't Shake Loose by Agnetha. Therés Enström of the band, Emotional Fire, joined Russ to do lead vocals. Emotional Fire also performed on the Rocknytt cruise in April 2023. Here is the lesser known of those two songs from Sweden...

<https://youtu.be/hVMKxSl1gmg?si=dl6--iKlWlufuHi>

Joe Lynn Turner was headlining the festival on the Saturday. We all know that he was the vocalist in Rainbow when they had a hit with I Surrender. Russ was asked

to stay on and join him on stage for his song. Russ and Joe had never met before. Here is that performance...

https://youtu.be/mB1-fnYTvvQ?si=8O_DwTIKR2wrHX2A

You should, by now, have received Ian's tour blog from Sweden. There are more videos on Russ's Facebook page.

EXTRA GIG - 1ST MAY

Frontiers Rock Festival in Milan. Frontiers is Russ's record company. So sorry I wasn't able to tell you about this one. Russ was asked to do it only a week before to cover for someone who had to pull out due to illness. Of course he agreed and he had a quick turnaround.... home from Sweden on Sunday, off to Milan on Thursday. Phew! Someone kindly put the whole set on YouTube. https://youtu.be/2yg-3y6salw?si=OoWKIs64_6D5A-ij It was a great success.

Sorry but no tour blog for this one as Ian didn't travel with the band. He did, however, have tickets for the festival anyway so he was there coincidentally and has put some photos etc on the Facebook page.



CASINO ESTORIL - 8TH MAY

Then a few days later he did it again. I was tired just watching the videos! But Russ picked himself up and went off to Portugal for another sold out show. This is one of his favourite gigs and Emanuel always looks after him very well. Ian described the audience as "the best ever". They all know the songs, all the words and they sang along with enthusiasm. As I write there are no videos on YouTube from Estoril but, again, there are some of Ian's and Emanuel's on the Facebook page. Thank to Jorge Pereira for these photos.





COMING UP... NEXT

Russ with his old friend, Robert Hart at Dunmow Music Club. This should be an evening of stories and fun with a few songs thrown in. I believe there is a script....of sorts. Both shows are sold out. See you there?



The poster features a photograph of two men performing on stage. On the left, a man with long brown hair and glasses is playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. On the right, a man with long blonde hair is singing into a microphone. The background is dark with stage lighting.

RUSS BALLARD
AND
ROBERT HART
Songs & Stories

FRIDAY 22 MAY **SOLD OUT** 2026
SATURDAY 23 MAY 2026

FOAKES HALL
DUNMOW MUSIC CLUB

rusballadmusic.com | @rusballadmusicofficial | dunmowmusicclub.com

© Steve Kinnear

COMING UP...IN AUGUST

After Russ has a well earned holiday it is Trading Boundaries in East Sussex on 7th August. Back with PJ, Marc, Paul and John for a band gig. Tickets:

<https://www.tradingboundaries.com/russ-ballard.html>

Home / Russ Ballard

FRI
07
AUG



**RUSS
BALLARD**

COMING UP...IN SEPTEMBER

Russ and Robert are doing their songs and stories gig again for those of you "up north". Saturday 19th September in the evening and Sunday 20th September in the afternoon. I believe Saturday evening is now sold out but there are still some standing tickets for the Sunday matinee.

Tickets: <https://www.barnoldswickmusicandartscentre.com/russ-ballard-and-robert-hart>

MATINEE

PETER BARTON MANAGEMENT PRESENTS

RUSS BALLARD ARGENT
— AND —
ROBERT HART BAD COMPANY

*An acoustic Songs & Stories
September Special*

**SUNDAY MATINEE
20 SEPTEMBER
2026**

**BARNOLDSWICK
MUSIC
& ARTS
CENTRE**

TICKET HOTLINE 07712 628 366 **TICKETS £32.50 + BOOKING FEE** **DOORS 12.30PM**

 **BUY TICKETS ONLINE** www.barnoldswickmusicandartscentre.com
EMAIL: barnoldswickmusicandartscentre@gmail.com
M^cCULLOUGH'S | 18-22 RAINHALL ROAD | BARNOLDSWICK | LANCS | BB18 5AF

COMING UP - NEXT YEAR

As this is a long way ahead and was in the last newsletter, for now, I will just say....

Saturday 23rd January - Wrecking Ball, Hull. Tickets <https://wreckingballstore.co.uk/event/russ-ballard/>

Sunday 24th January - Sorry, can't say yet as the organisers haven't announced all the artists as of now.

VIDEO OF THE MONTH

This one is not Russ but an interview with his "brother" Bob Henrit. Their stories are, of course, intertwined. I don't know when this was recorded....quite some time ago....but it popped up on YouTube on 30th April. It appears to be one of a series of podcasts as part of a collaboration with The British Music Vault and The Rock History project. Around half an hour.

<https://youtu.be/w3DyOEO0UuM?si=v5k10FEBHB9z5cu0>



FROM DAVE

SIX OF THE BEST – PART TWO (The Solo Years)

Last month's Part One of *Six of the Best*, featured songs that Russ performed or composed whilst with Argent. This month looks at his solo career. I've picked out six songs that are not ones that you would instantly think of when discussing the best of Russ Ballard, but to me, they are special.

With so many album releases there's plenty to choose from, but let's give it a try.

Tonight

Into the Fire, released in 1980, is an album I strongly associate with an on-off relationship I was having with a girlfriend at the time. Mostly happy days, though there were a few Friday nights spent waiting for the phone to ring when it never did — but hey ho. It ended happily enough when she went off with someone else and became their problem. Ha, ha. We did stay friends - eventually.

After the smoothness of *At the Third Stroke*, which featured some of Los Angeles' elite session musicians, it was refreshing to hear a much more British-sounding album. This time the line-up included Bob Henrit, Dave Wintour and Bill Roberts — better known as The Barnet Dogs. It's worth remembering that here in the UK we never actually got the earlier Barnet Dogs LP. Russ sounds genuinely happy to be working in a proper band environment again, and his guitar is pushed right to the front on most of the tracks.

I could easily have chosen *I Will Be There* or *Where Do We Go from Here*, but in the end, I went with *Tonight*, simply because I love the guitar riff. Bob Henrit is rock-solid on drums, while the late Dave Wintour, reminiscent of Jim Rodford, makes full use of all four strings. And yes, the lyrics are a long way from the more philosophical themes Russ explores today — but then again, the '70s and '80s were very different times.

https://youtu.be/KfOWW3RADOY?si=lcO8c36o_-ZkClkf

Treat Her Right

On the subject of *At the Third Stroke*, despite what I said earlier, it is without doubt a brilliant album — great songs, all polished to perfection. *Treat Her Right* is especially meaningful to me because I remember waking up one morning in May 1978, switching on the radio, and hearing it playing. I immediately thought, "That sounds like Russ Ballard's voice," and sure enough, it was. It turned out to be a herald for the forthcoming album release. That's how we discovered new music back then — through radio and the music papers. The single spent time on the BBC Radio 'Featured 40' playlist but failed to chart. Then again, neither did *Since You Been Gone*, and that track not only made the playlist but was also nominated as a Record of the Week.

<https://youtu.be/dHqd9XrpACY?si=OqNONoeVTKRxWBC8>

Fly Away

Like most of us, I was saddened when Russ chose to leave Argent. Sometime later, without any forewarning, I stumbled across his first solo album in the *New Releases* rack at one of my local record shops. Wow — I had no idea it was even coming. To make matters worse, right behind it sat *Encore*, Argent's double live album. Another surprise, and not enough money to buy both. I had to choose, and in the end, Russ won.

Famously (if you read the newsletter), I took the LP sleeve to Derby's most fashionable barber shop and asked one of the girls to cut my hair in a "Russ Ballard" style. She remarked on how handsome he looked and gently explained that my hair simply wouldn't suit it. She was right — two years later, it started falling out. Hair today, gone tomorrow! Clearly, I was never cut out to be a *Barnet* dog.

From the outset, I was always drawn to *Danger Zone (both Part 1 and Part 2)*, especially the funky clavinet, but over time I've grown to appreciate the brilliance of *Fly Away*. I'd hoped Russ might revisit it one day, as he once told me, "I'd do it differently now Dave". What a great song — a lovely lyric, beautifully sung. I bet there are times when we'd all like to find our very own "mystical star angel."

https://youtu.be/FvLz19NZxP4?si=60j4ZD_GLc1VIKyN

Just A Dream Away

Whenever anyone asks me to name my Desert Island Disc, Russ Ballard's *Winning* is usually my answer. Every track is a winner — no pun intended. *Just a Dream Away* is a beautiful song that stands out, alongside *Since You Been Gone*. On reflection, it could almost be *Fly Away* Part 2.

When Roger Daltrey recorded the soundtrack for *McVicar*, the film in which he played the lead role, he was searching for songs that captured its themes of longing, escape and emotional isolation. Having previously recorded Russ Ballard compositions, he turned to him again, and *Just a Dream Away* was among the songs chosen, with the lyrics slightly adapted to suit the film's context.

<https://youtu.be/AMyCZ2JNQ6w?si=Tva3QZIXNBVgrac>

It takes a Man to Walk Away

Only two choices remain. I'm going to pass over the two EMI America albums — not because they aren't top-notch, far from it, but they're so well known that everyone's familiar with them. I want to highlight great songs that slipped under the radar.

For my fourth pick, I'm turning to *The Seer*, recorded during Russ's collaboration with Chris Winter. What a partnership that was. It's a shame the album also flew under the radar, because it's packed with fantastic songs. I didn't even know it existed until the summer of 1993, when I was on vacation in the Netherlands and stumbled across it in a tiny independent record shop. I bought it immediately, then had to wait a few days until I could get to a CD player to hear it.

My usual go-to track is *Stay with Me Tonight*, with that instant hook that only Russ can deliver. But today I'm giving my vote to *It Takes a Man to Walk Away*, one of the songs he co-wrote with Chris. I could just as easily have chosen *King for a Day* or *These Are the Times* — each one is a gem.

<https://youtu.be/HK-463o23Y?si=ZUTMC8D66tEFSgLx>

Some Kinda Hurricane

A strange choice I hear you say. Produced by Phil Wainman, famous for his work with The Sweet, this appeared as a non-album single in February 1977. As soon as I heard it, I got goosebumps and, not for the first time, shouted "Hit". Again, amazingly, it wasn't to be, and worse still I seem to recall it got little airplay on the radio compared to most of his other singles. Had it been released a couple of years earlier, things might have been different, but by 1977, Punk Rock was beginning to take hold in the UK, spreading like a virus. Russ wasn't alone in being sidelined, Rod Argent, Jim Rodford and Bob Henrit were similarly affected when Argent and Phoenix went out of fashion almost overnight. Two other artists tried their hand with the song, but neither fared any better than the writer did.

[Sue: This is the only link I can find for this song but it's not Russ] <https://youtu.be/avyTfJuK0zY?si=8LTZgeXI64-RUeu0>

Hope you enjoyed my choices What would yours be?

Sue's choices

For an Argent track I choose **Bring You Joy** from the album "Argent". Not written by Russ but sung by him. He once said that it was a bit high for his voice but he managed it brilliantly. <https://youtu.be/4OBAHJ6XLQk?si=Ojycte9Eo85nPB9b>

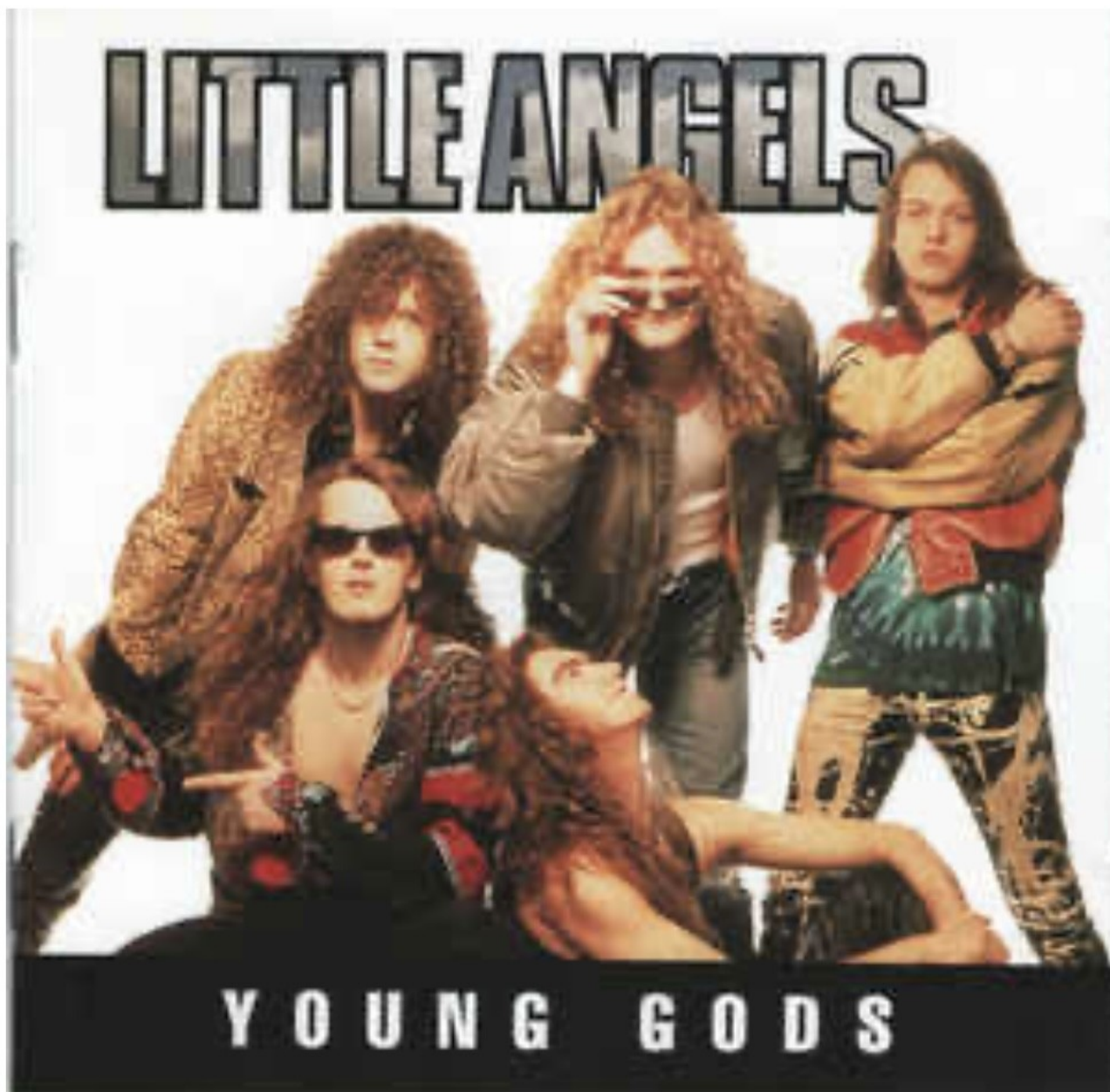
And for an early Russ solo track, for me it has to be **You Can Count On Me**. This track has been part of my life since the album, the first "Russ Ballard" album, was released. https://youtu.be/JsHJ2EFU890?si=MsGPb9Ie3EP5_Bn4

Ok, over to you for next month.

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

This month's Russ Ballard Cover Quest once again features Scarborough's finest rock band Little Angels. Some good news too, for those who used to follow the band back in the late 80s / early 90s.

No.93



Juvenile Offender by Little Angels

Formed in 1985 in Scarborough, England from the remnants of a school band called **Zeus**, Little Angels started life as **Mr Thrud**, changing their name two years later. Band members included vocalist **Toby Jepson**, bass guitarist **Mark Plunkett**, **Bruce John Dickinson** on guitar, his brother **Jimmy Dickinson** on keyboards. Drummer **Dave Hopper** was replaced

early on by **Michael Lee**, the latter passing away in 2008 at just 39 years of age.

Between 1987 and 1993, **Little Angels** released six albums, the third of which, **Young Gods**, released in March 1991, reached No.17 in the UK album charts, and featured two tracks that were co-written by **Russ Ballard** with Toby Jepson, one being **Love is a Gun**, previously discussed. This month we feature **Juvenile Offender**, which you can listen to here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEAfUarc6Vg>

In 1993, their follow-up album, **Jam**, was even more successful, topping the UK album charts. They also chalked up 11 hit singles and, on the road, provided support slots for Van Halen and Bon Jovi's UK tours.

The group split up in 1994 after disappointing record sales. Ironically their farewell tour consisted of six UK dates, all sold-out, the final concert taking place at London's Royal Albert Hall.

A short-lived reunion happened in 2012-2013, but the good news is the band have just announced that they are getting back together for a UK tour in November 2026. The line-up will consist of Jepson, the Dickinson brothers, Plunkett and **Skunk Anansie** drummer **Mark Richardson**.