

(New header by Sven)

October 2026

Welcome to our new readers.

Have you checked in with Russ's website recently? https://russballardmusic.com/ The website was constructed and is looked after by Sven Kramer. You can read Russ's story there as well as the story of his guitars, all the gigs he has done with upcoming gigs and ticket links, all the albums he has made, his band members past and present and there is an archive of previous newsletters going back to the first one in March 2013, when we had no idea where we were going with it or what it would become. You can also sign up for the newsletter there although you probably know that as you are reading this.

Do you live near Wolverhampton, Devizes, Milton Keynes, Worcester, Hull, Blackpool, Cardiff, Exeter or Southampton? Do you have a family member or a friend who is a Russ fan? Your Christmas present problem is solved. Tickets for one of Russ's gigs in his UK tour in January and February. You know it will be good. Even if they are not (yet) a fan, take them along with you and they soon will be. To make it nice and easy for you, all ticket links are below....just a couple of clicks.

This month we have full coverage of Russ's 100 Club gig thanks to Marco Gandolfi and something from Dave to think about the next time Russ has some new music out.

Sue

THIS MONTH - RUSS'S DIARY

Recently, a great friend, and one of my favorite people, Chris Winter, passed away - On the 5th October, along with a packed congregation, I attended his funeral in Westerleigh South Gloucestershire.

My great friend, Robert Hart, introduced me to Chris's music before I met the man. Robert played two songs from his first album 'Mankind' and 'A Little Love is Overdue'. I thought they were amazing, especially 'Mankind'. I feel it's just one of the best ideas ever and in my top 5 songs ever. I phoned Chris and told him how his songs affected me. From then, we were best of friends. We started writing together every six weeks or so for 25 years. Apart from being a great musician and writer, Chris was funny, kind and wonderful company.

I remember the first day we wrote together, he sat down at my piano and I stood with pen and pad in my hand and that's how we continued for over two decades. I wanted Chris to express himself, however, I did make suggestions when I thought it appropriate. We came up with some good things, "No Dream Impossible", which was U.K.'s entry for the Eurovision Song Contest in 2001. Also "Hope" which became the theme song for the 2012 Football World Cup which was held in South Africa. The icing on the cake being Nelson Mandela adding a spoken section toward the end…now the song is called "Mandela's Hope".

Chris was a great musician, singer and saxophonist. He was a comedian and mimic. He joined my band for some tours, mainly in Europe and one in Japan.

I miss him, I'll miss his companionship and kindness…
He was a light in the world.
R.I. P.

RUSS - LIFE STORIES

ARGENT - THE END OF ARGENT'S TOURING IN AMERICA…..

It's June 1970 and Rod Argent, Jim Rodford, Bob Henrit and myself, as the group, Argent, have just completed their final tour of America. For the past seven months Janet and I had been living with my Mum and Dad. On one of Mum's spikes days, she said to me, ''Janet's got to go. You can't have two women in a household'' and when mum laid down the law, we didn't argue…we did as she said. Well, actually, we did argue but she always had her way. My dad had some

great quotations. "When there's peace in a household someone's having their own way''. Anyway, Janet and I went house hunting and we found a great detached house in Thrush Lane, Cuffley, just a few miles from where we were in Cheshunt. It was a lot of money at the time. I had some royalties coming in from my song 'LIAR'. The money came after the group 'THREE DOG NIGHT' had recorded the song after hearing it on Argent's first album, and for the first time I was earning real money….''THREE DOG NIGHT' had recorded another of my songs, 'CHAINED'. My mood, confidence and bank balance were all improving and I could feel the cloud of depression lifting. We started to write songs for a new album…along with gigs, two or three times a week. Rod, Bob and Jim sometimes complained about our management, or should I say, Manager, Mel, and thought maybe we needed a fresh team…..I felt I should support Mel.

CHRIS WINTER'S MUSIC

Just a little taste of Chris's talent. The tracks Russ mentioned above.

Mandela's Hope, written by Chris and Russ https://youtu.be/6lsrR7cfflE?si=V4NKyUBzGbRktzDZ
Mankind, Robert Hart, written by Chris. https://youtu.be/UhRGWI-Y_bQ?si=M9sCllJ0Nv217Chy
A Little Love Is Overdue, Robert Hart, written by Chris. https://youtu.be/mpob2X3Ut0Q?si=gqi4xqXm1aA5GtJX
No Dream Impossible, written by Chris and Russ. https://youtu.be/qxrp0XzzpzY?si=d_GaMBTSvl4EXYJ_

100 CLUB - 22nd September

This appeared on YouTube after the 100 Club gig. Voices in full and a taster of the rest of the evening, including Russ's intros and plenty of chat. Thanks to Marco Gandolfi, who put this together for Music News.
https://youtu.be/ZrSItQZFQkk?si=WEStksEiq2YKmLsV

An interview with Marco before the gig for Music News. It took place in the van.
https://youtu.be/eljEJT4bHVM?si=kum7aczqIZEBwcyJ

And Marco's review of the gig.
https://www.music-news.com/review/UK/16788/Live/Russ-Ballard-100-Club-London

COMING UP NEXT

BEGIN HERE FESTIVAL

Every year in October/November, the Zombies put on a weekend festival/"fan experience" celebrating The Zombies' legacy, in their home town, St Albans. This year it will be from 30th October - 1st November. Russ has been invited as a special guest to join Colin Blunstone at an "intimate candlelit concert" in St Albans Cathedral on 31st October (yes, his birthday). This is a private event for Zombies' fans but there are some tickets available for this concert.
https://www.thezombiesmusic.com/eve.../begin-here-festival-1



COMING UP - NEXT YEAR

RUSS BALLARD AND HIS ALL STAR BAND - "HE CAN DO MAGIC TOUR" - UK

January and February 2027



(Poster by Sven)

Here are the ticket links.
Thursday 14th January - The Robin, Wolverhampton.
Tickets: https://www.gigantic.com/russ-ballard-tickets/wolverhampton-the-robin/2027-01-14-19-30

Friday 15th January - Long Street Blues Club, Devizes.
No ticket link yet but here is their website. https://www.longstreetbluesclub.co.uk/gigs.html

Sunday 17th January - The Stables, Milton Keynes.
No ticket link yet but here is their website. https://stables.org/whats-on/calendar/2027/01

Thursday 21st January - Huntingdon Hall, Worcester. Russ returns! See some of you there!
Tickets: https://purchase.worcestertheatres.co.uk/ChooseSeats/207801

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

Sunday 24th January, Russ is headlining on Sunday evening at UK Blues, Rhythm & Rock at The Imperial Hotel, Blackpool. This is a 3 day festival and, as far as I can see, tickets are only available for all 3 days.
Ticket link: https://www.solidentertainments.com/blues/uk/tickets.html

Friday 12th February - Acapela, Cardiff.
Tickets: https://www.tickettailor.com/events/acapelastudios/2311670

Sunday 14th February - Exeter Phoenix, Exeter.
Tickets: https://exeterphoenix.org.uk/events/russ-ballard/

Sunday 21st February - The Brook, Southampton.
No ticket link yet but here is their website. https://www.the-brook.com/whats-on/

RUSS BALLARD AND HIS ALL STAR BAND - "HE CAN DO MAGIC TOUR" - GERMANY

April 2027

Russ is going back to Germany. The German gigs are always popular so get your tickets now.



(Poster by Sven)

Get your tickets here. https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventim.de%2Fnoapp%2Fevent%2Fruss-ballard-band-muffatwerk-a

GRAHAM BONNET - NEW ALBUM

Russ has three songs on Graham Bonnet's new studio album, "Circuit Breaker" to be released on 26th March 2027. You can read about the album in this article including Russ and Graham's connections and Russ's contributions to this album.

https://blabbermouth.net/news/watch-graham-bonnet-and-bruce-dickinson-join-forces-on-the-fifth-force-of-nature-single-from-graham-bonnet-band

OLD STARS, NEW HITS — THE HERITAGE CHART

by Dave Williams

Last month, I asked readers to imagine how different Russ Ballard's career might have been if today's internet, social media and streaming services had existed during the 1970s and 80s. I ended by mentioning an interesting link between yesterday's music industry and today's. Well, here it is.

For those of us who grew up listening to the Top 40 on Sunday afternoons, the singles chart was an essential part of the musical week. We followed our favourite artists as their records climbed, stalled or, occasionally, disappeared without trace. And there was always the excitement of hearing a new release by someone whose music we'd followed for years.

But times have changed. Many of the artists who provided the soundtrack to our younger lives are still recording excellent new material yet getting that music heard can be an uphill struggle. Mainstream radio tends to concentrate on current chart acts, while the veteran performers are often remembered for what they recorded forty or fifty years ago rather than what they're producing today.



Enter former Radio 1 DJ Mike Read and the Heritage Chart.

The idea is simple. Give established artists a platform for their new music, alongside other performers who might otherwise struggle to attract mainstream attention. And instead of relying on record sales or streaming figures, let the listeners have their say.

Each week, music fans vote for their favourites from the Heritage Chart's Top 40 and Breakers, with votes coming from more than 100 countries. The results determine the following week's chart positions.

And this isn't simply a chart tucked away on an obscure website. There's a dedicated Heritage Chart radio station, a television programme presented by Mike Read, and the chart show is broadcast by numerous radio stations. In other words, it provides genuine opportunities for new music to be heard.

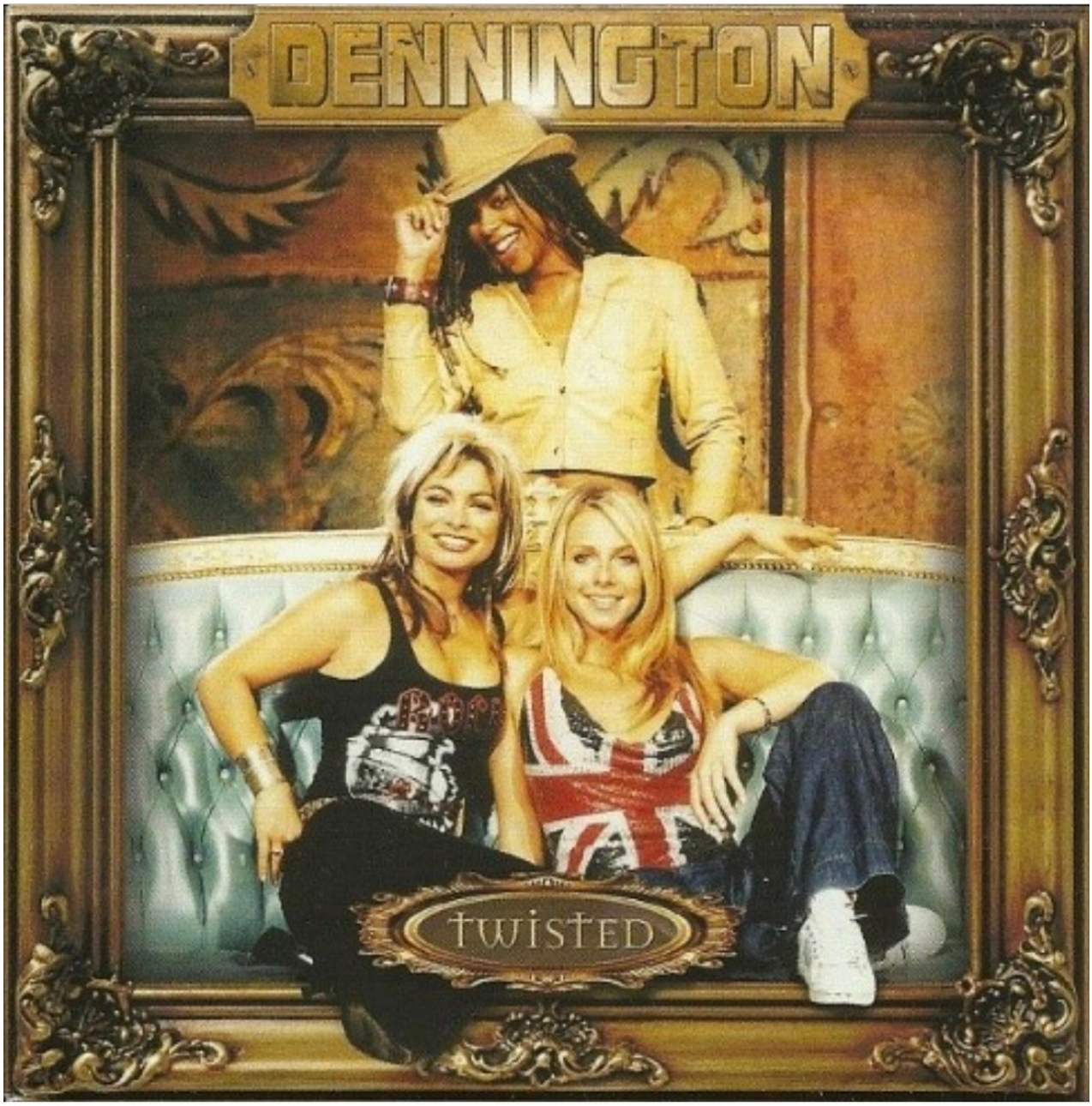
Among the artists featured are names such as Paul Carrack, Lulu, Bryan Adams, Jim Lea, Don Powell and Jefferson Starship. Proof, if it were needed, that reaching a certain age doesn't mean an artist has stopped making worthwhile music.

Which brings me, inevitably, to Russ Ballard.

Russ has continued to write and record long after many of his contemporaries retired from the business. His songwriting achievements are well documented, but there is much more to his career than the songs that made him famous.
Wouldn't it be interesting to see a new Russ Ballard recording featured on the Heritage Chart? With his international following, and the ability of fans to vote online, it seems the sort of platform that could introduce his latest work to a wider audience.
Of course, the Heritage Chart isn't the same as the official UK singles chart, and a No.1 on one doesn't mean a No.1 on the other. But perhaps that misses the point. It's an opportunity for established musicians to have their new material heard, appreciated and recognised.
And surely that has to be a good thing.
Wouldn't it be interesting to see a new Russ Ballard recording featured on the Heritage Chart? Having just enjoyed his recent performance at the 100 Club in London, rest assured there's life in the old Barnet Dog yet.
Maybe when the new material reaches us we can start voting!
If you haven't already discovered it, take a look at www.heritagechart.co.uk. You might be pleasantly surprised by just how many familiar names are still making new music.

DAVE'S COVER QUEST

Here's an interesting one. Whoever thought of two Russ Ballard compositions competing with each other for a place in Eurovision. Apparently, it happened.
No.98



Twisted *by* **Moneypenny / Dennington**

Most Russ Ballard fans will remember that “No Dream Impossible”, co-written with Chris Winter, won the BBC's *A Song for Europe* competition in 2001 and went on to represent the United Kingdom at that year's Eurovision Song Contest in Copenhagen. Performed by Lindsay Dracass, the song finished in 15th place. Chris, of course, sadly passed away last month, and his collaboration with Russ on the song was just one of many during their long musical association.

It’s now come to light that Russ actually had two songs competing for Eurovision selection that year?

The other was “Twisted”, co-written by Russ, his son Christian and Andy Murray — presumably not the tennis player! Also credited as songwriters were Sara Eker, Dawn Joseph and Lucy Abbott.

According to Eurovision records, “Twisted” was performed by a group called Moneypenny in the *A Song for Europe* radio semi-final on 26 January 2001. Unfortunately, it failed to secure enough votes to progress to the televised final, where Lindsay Dracass went on to triumph with “No Dream Impossible”.
So, rather remarkably, Russ had a hand in both a winning entry and an unsuccessful contender in the same year's UK Eurovision selection process.
But the story doesn't end there.
In October 2001, “Twisted” appeared as a CD single in France and Germany, this time credited to a group called Dennington. The sleeve identifies the three members as Dawn Joseph, Sara Eker and Lucy Abbott — the very same three women credited as co-writers of the original Eurovision entry.
The CD, released on the Hot Tracks label and distributed by Sony Music, featured both the original recording and an instrumental version.
Were Moneypenny and Dennington actually the same group, perhaps operating under different names for different markets? It certainly seems a strong possibility, although I haven't found definitive confirmation.
Whatever the explanation, “Twisted” remains an interesting and little-known addition to Russ's songwriting catalogue, and a reminder that there was rather more Russ Ballard involvement in Eurovision 2001 than many fans might realise.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoAsaAcRZLI
There is a second video available on You Tube, which documents the making of the original song video.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVEsE2ygSJ4&t=246s