(New header by Sven)

Official Blog of Russ Ballard live on stage as a special guest of The Zombies at St. Albans Cathedral on Saturday 31st October 2026.
By Ian Street



This special day (for many reasons) starts for Russ quite early in the morning as his family gather to watch him open his cards and presents. Yes, it's Halloween and it's his Birthday! 🎁

The fun continues as he invites me over to watch Manchester United play Chelsea (12.30 lunchtime kick off) and as expected, we witness their latest defeat. 😤

We are picked up at 5.45 to head over to St. Albans for soundcheck. After the short journey we park up by the side of the Cathedral and walk into this magnificent building. The Zombies team are setting up the candles (rechargeable of course) around the stage and the surrounding areas. We are greeted by Chris Tutill (part of the Rocks Management who take care of the Zombies) and he walks us down some long winding stairs to the Green Room. As we walk in the only people there are Rod Argent and Colin Blunstone. Russ quickly greets them with a hug.



After a while we head back up to the stage in readiness for sound check. Russ takes his place behind the keyboards and immediately starts playing the opening to “I Don’t Believe In Miracles” and Colin follows along. The sound is amazing and they both agree they are happy after one take.



We listen to some of the other artists playing and also chat with Steve Rodford (son of Jim Rodford, the original Argent bass player). Then a nice surprise…..Paul Bond Russ's guitarist, has come along to wish Russ a Happy Birthday. Good to see you Paul!



With all the formalities complete, we head out of the venue to grab a light meal before the show. We see Brian and Jacqui, the two Nancys and lots more friends on the way out as they are shuffling in to the venue.

The Italian round the corner can just about accommodate us and we enjoy a quick bite and a chat. The place is buzzing, (well it is a Saturday evening). St. Albans is a fantastic place.

We get back to the Green Room and spend what seems an age to wait for Chris to come and get Russ for his performance. It's freezing down there! Rod Argent is warming up his fingers by playing his keyboard with headphones on.

Finally it's time and we are led to the side of the stage where Colin introduces Russ and they perform "Miracles" 😃
Russ gets a great reception and the performance is faultless. Then it's time to go back to the Green Room to greet a now totally frozen, Rod Argent. 🥶



Rod asks if I know the way to the side of the stage as he's hoping it's warmer up there and at least then he's watching the performance. I offer to take him up and Russ comes too. We watch the rest of the show from the side of the stage.

When Rod is introduced to the audience it's an emotional moment. Two and a half years since he played live but now fully recovered from his stroke, the audience gives him a standing ovation as he walks on. He and Colin rip into "Time Of The Season", followed by "She's Not There" and finally the haunting "The Way I Feel Inside". It's the Rod of old…..he's back!

Back in the Green Room Russ is wanted for photographs with The Zombies and it's not long before he says his goodbyes. A wonderful evening and another eventful birthday for the man who gave Rock and Roll to us……a unique venue and I'm sure everyone who was there will remember it for some time.



The Blog will return in January when Russ is playing a number of UK dates. Until then.

Sue: If you can access Russ's Facebook page, you will find more photos and videos there.