FEBRUARY 2020

INTerview with
Bob Hall

Steve Chilvers:
PTSD, Guitars and
the Blues

Lawrence
Lebo’s Column

Book Review

Reviews

Videos

BiTS contact: email: editor@bluesinthesouth.com  Web: www.bluesinthesouth.com  Twitter: @bluesinthesouth
31/01 Strange Crew @ The Kings Arms, Lymington
31/01 Vince Lee & Thomas Ford @ The B Bar, Plymouth
31/01 Pete Harris & Hugh Budden @ The Vine, 2 West St, Hambledon PO7 4RW
31/01 Paul Jones And Dave Kelly @ Arlington Arts Centre, Newbury
31/01 Blue Hayz @ O'Neill's, Winchester 22:00
31/01 Jo Harman @ The Forge, Basingstoke 9:45
31/01 Kent Duchaine @ Crawley Blues Club, The Hawth, Crawley 9:45
31/01 Zoe Schwarz And Rob Koral @ YC's Cafe, Dorchester 20:00
31/01 Grizzly Rhys Morgan @ Katie's Vinyl Bar & Kitchen, Gosport
01/02 Grizzly Rhys Morgan And Simon Clark @ The Anchor, Cowes 21:00
01/02 The Mo Joes @ Millbridge Inn, Plymouth 21:00
01/02 Stompin' Dave @ The Wheatsheaf, Shedfield 21:00
01/02 Hugh Budden & The Blue Chords @ The Inn On The Furlong, 12 Meeting House Lane, Ringwood, BH24 1EY
01/02 Sykick Surfers @ The Wicor Mill, Fareham 21:00
01/02 Jack J Hutchinson Band @ Echo Hotel Music Club, Hook 9:30
01/02 Bad Knees Blues Band @ The Union Inn, Saltash 21:00
02/02 Jack Grace Band @ The Platform Tavern, Southampton 20:30
02/02 The Big Blue @ The Dolphin, St Denys, Southampton 7:00
02/02 Helen Hardy Band @ The Thomas Tripp, Christchurch 21:00
02/02 Benny Guitar Carr @ The Old Albert, Torquay 6:00
02/02 Jam Dang Doodle Blues Jam @ The Bugle, Brighton 4:00
02/02 Riverside Blues Band @ The Lord Nelson, Poole Quay BH15 1HJ:00
04/02 Zoe Schwarz And Rob Koral @ Ye Olde George Inn, Christchurch 9:30
04/02 Stan's Blues Jam @ The Thomas Tripp, 10 Wick Lane, Christchurch BH23 1HX
05/02 Animals And Friends @ West End Centre, Aldershot
05/02 Beth Hart @ Brighton Dome
05/02 Open Mic With Jim Crawford @ Champ, 5 Meeting Street, EX39 1RJ
06/02 Storm Warning @ The Cellar Bar, Farnham Maltings 20:15
06/02 Andy Fairweather Low And The Low Riders @ Concorde Club, Eastleigh 21:00
06/02 Zoe Schwarz Blue Commotion @ Bullfrog Blues Club, Southsea 21:00
07/02 This Way Up Blues Band @ The Half Moon, Midhurst
07/02 Becca Langsford & Vince Lee @ The Blue Peter, Polperro
07/02 The Blues Band @ Cheese & Grain, Frome 20:00
07/02 Nigel Bagge Band @ Scratchers, The Three Lions, Farncombe 21:00
07/02 5 'N Dimes @ The Cider House, Plymouth 21:00
07/02 Hugh Budden & Andy Stone @ The Greyhound, The Square, Corfe Castle, Wareham BH20 5EZ 20:00
07/02 Robin Bibi Solo @ The Red Lion, Arundel 21:00
07/02 Harry And The Hounds @ The Hothampton Arms, Bognor Regis 21:00
07/02 Sykick Surfers @ The Red Lion, Stubbington 21:00
07/02 Malone Sibun Band @ The Wedgewood Rooms, Portsmouth 9:30
07/02 Monthly Jam @ The Admiral Benbow, Penzance, Cornwall

Listings are provided as a guide only. Don’t forget to check the venue before you leave home to ensure that the gig is still on. The listing here is far from complete, so check out www.bluesinthesouth.com as that is updated all the time. Last date for inclusion here is the 10th of the preceding month - ie 10 Jan for Feb.
08/02  Will Wilde Band @ The Brunswick, Brighton
08/02  The Mustangs @ The Square Brewery, Petersfield
08/02  This Way Up Blues Band @ The Tudor Rose, Romsey
08/02  The Blues Band @ The Harlington, Fleet
08/02  Strange Crew @ Christchurch Con Club, Bargates
08/02  Bluesoul Band @ The Crown, Bridport
08/02  The Fat Marrow Band @ Evershot Village Hall, Evershot 20:30
08/02  The Voodoo Sheiks @ Reds Bar And Lounge, Dorking 20:30
08/02  Nigel Bagge Band @ The Jolly Tanners, Staplefield 21:00
08/02  Blues Club @ The Rec Rooms, Horsham 20:30
08/02  The Jackals @ The stag's Head, Portslade 20:30
08/02  Aynsley Lister Solo @ Winchester Discovery Centre 20:00
08/02  Navajo Dogs @ The Southgate Inn, Devizes 21:00
08/02  Zoe Schwarz & Rob Koral @ Number 10 Cafe Bar, Bridport
08/02  Chicago 9 @ Central Club, Chandlers Ford 21:00
08/02  Catfish @ Cranleigh Arts Centre 20:00
08/02  Sykick Surfers @ The Ironmaster, Fareham 21:00
08/02  Becca Langsford & Vince Lee @ The Park Pavilion Cafe, Devonport 20:00
09/02  Becca Langsford & Vince Lee @ The Queen's Arms, Plymouth 20:30
09/02  Smokestack Blues Band @ The Hothampton Arms, Bognor Regis 7:00
09/02  R G Winfield Blues Band @ The Lion, Pagham 6:00
09/02  Steamer @ The Owl's Nest Beer Festival, West Parley, Bournemouth BH22 8SS
10/02  Blues Jam @ Qudos, Salisbury 20:30
12/02  Hugh Budden & Andy Stone @ The Thomas Tripp, Wick Lane, Christchurch BH23 1HX 21:00
12/02  Jon Amor Band @ Cheese & Grain, Frome 20:45
12/02  Open Mic With Jim Crawford @ Champ, 5 Meeting Street, Appledore, EX39 1RJ
13/02  Robin Bibi Band @ The Cellar Bar, Farnham Maltings 20:15
13/02  Harv & Hugh's R & B Jam @ The Cricketers, 12 Park Lane, Wimborne BH21 1LD 20:30
13/02  This Way Up Blues Band @ The Glen, Hythe, Southampton 20:00
13/02  Chicago 9 @ Angola 76, Shaftesbury 9:45
13/02  Brixham Blues Second Thursday BBT2@The Old Coaching Inn, Fore Street, Brixham 20:30
13/02  Blues House @ Buccaneers Bar, Crediton, Devon
14/02  Kyla Brox Duo @ Crawley Blues Club, The Hawth, Crawley 9:45
14/02  The Mo Joes @ The Beach, Exmouth 21:00
14/02  Trevor Babajack Steger @ Southgate Inn, Devizes 21:00
14/02  Riverside Blues Band @ The Platform Tavern, Town Quay, Southampton SO14 2NY 21:00
14/02  Emiliyah & The Almightyz All Stars @ The Emsworth Music Club 9:00
15/02  The Big Blue @ The Smugglers Inn, Pevensey
15/02  This Way Up Blues Band @ The Royal Oak, Hollywater, Bordon
15/02  Harris And Son @ The Wheatsheaf, Shedfield
15/02  Jimmy Carpenter And Blues Move @ Forest Arts Centre, New Milton 9:30
15/02  Gerry Jablonski & The Electric Band @ Arlington Arts, Newbury 20:00
15/02  The Bluescasters @ Scratchers, The Three Lions, Farncombe 21:00
15/02  Blues Club @ Chichester Inn, Chichester 20:30

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15/02 Navajo Dogs @ The New Inn, Amesbury 21:00
15/02 Hugh Budden & The Blue Chords @ The Victoria, 377 Ashley Rd, Poole BH14 0AT 21:00
15/02 Catfish @ Basingstoke Blues Club 20:00
15/02 The Uncles @ The Anchor, Cowes, IOW 21:30
15/02 Retread @ The King's Head, Wickham 21:00
15/02 The Blockheads @ The Rec Rooms, Horsham 9:30
15/02 Blues N' Booze Festival @ The Winchester Gate, Salisbury. Hiproute, Andy Twyman, Head Back Holler, Dan Sowerby, Pete Robson, Here Come The Crows And Pete Leonard 5:00
16/02 Tailspin @ Jolly Tanners, Staplefield 6:00
16/02 Benny Guitar Carr @ The Cross Keys, Cawsand 6:30
16/02 Zoe Schwarz & Rob Koral @ Royal Portland Arms, Portland 7:00
16/02 Hugh Budden & Andy Stone @ The Platform Tavern, Town Quay, Southampton SO14 2NY 4:00
18/02 This Way Up Blues Band @ The George Inn, Widley, Portsmouth 21:00
19/02 The Lord Nelson R&B & Electric Mayhem Jam @ The Lord Nelson, The Quay, Poole BH15 1HJ
19/02 Stan's Blues Jam @ The Platform Tavern, Town Quay, Southampton SO14 2NY 20:30
19/02 Blues Night @ The Lemon Tree. Acoustic Blues Open Mic At The Lemon Tree Cafe, Teignmouth Triangle. Free Admission. Acoustic Only 20:00
19/02 Open Mic With Jim Crawford @ Champ, 5 Meeting Street, EX39 1RJ
20/02 Ben Poole @ Arlington Arts Centre, Newbury 20:00
20/02 Pete Robson @ Belgium & Blues, Southampton 20:30
21/02 Pete Harris Blues Band @ The Park Hotel, Exmouth 21:00
21/02 Lee Ainley's Blues Storm Album Launch @ The Factory Live, Worthing 9:00
21/02 Kent Duchaine @ The Southgate Inn, Devizes 21:00
21/02 Red River Hogs @ The White Swan, Swanage 21:00
21/02 The Hop Back Blues Band @ The Avon Brewery Inn, Salisbury 21:00
21/02 Shovelhead @ The Park Hotel, Exmouth 21:00
21/02 The Uncles @ The Wheatsheaf, Chilton Foliat 21:00
21/02 Geno Washington And The Yoyos @ The Rec Rooms, Horsham 9:30
22/02 The Big Blue @ The Swan, Crawley
22/02 Paul Cowley @ Milford Blues Club, Community Centre, Milford On Sea
22/02 Beth Hart @ Plymouth Pavilions
22/02 King Street Turnaround (Jon Amor) @ The Southgate Inn, Devizes
22/02 This Way Up Blues Band @ The Windsor Castle, Gosport
22/02 Kent Duchaine @ The Lansdown Arms, Lewes 20:30
22/02 Richie Quain Band @ The Thomas Tripp, Christchurch 21:00
22/02 Dan Sowerby Band @ The Avon Brewery Inn, Salisbury 21:00
22/02 Not Dead Yet @ The Wig And Quill, Salisbury 21:00
22/02 Chicago 9 @ The Square Brewery, Petersfield 21:00
22/02 The Worried Men @ The Station Inn, Andover 21:00
22/02 Kat Pearson @ Boarhunt Blues Club, Fareham 20:00
22/02 Vince Lee And The Big Combo @ The Rod And Line Inn, Tideford 21:00
22/02 Bad Knees Blues Band @ Millbridge Inn, Plymouth 21:00

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23/02  Ruzz Guitar's Blues Revue @ The Three Horseshoes, Bradford On Avon 5:00
23/02  Pete Harris And Bob Pearce @ Platform Tavern, Southampton 4:00
23/02  Hugh Budden & The Blue Chords @ Poole Hill Brewery, 41-43 Poole Hill, Bournemouth BH2 5PW 5:00
23/02  Blues Jam @ The Back Beat Bar, Brighton 4:00
23/02  The Mo Joes @ Eyre Court Hotel, Seaton 6:00
24/02  Beth Hart @ O2 Guildhall, Southampton
24/02  Harv & Hugh’s R & B Jam @ The Bull Hotel, The Headlands, Downton, Salisbury SP5 3HL 20:30
25/02  Benny Guitar Carr @ The Cove Cafe Bar, Hope Cove, Kingsbridge 20:00
26/02  Stan's Blues Jam 2 @ The Owl's Nest, 196 Christchurch Road, West Parley, Ferndown, Bournemouth BH22 8SS Free Entry 20:30
26/02  Open Mic With Jim Crawford @ Champ, 5 Meeting Street, EX39 1RJ
27/02  Rebecca Downes @ The Lemon Grove, Exeter
27/02  Rag Mama Rag @ Otterton Mill, Budleigh Salterton
27/02  Catfish @ The Electric Palace, Bridport
27/02  Blues Power @ The Cellar Bar, Farnham Maltings 20:15
27/02  Charlie Cole Band @ Belgium And Blues, Southampton
27/02  Brian Downey's Alive And Dangerous + Support Rebecca Downes @ The Lemon Grove, Exeter 9:30
28/02  Rag Mama Rag @ The Square And Compass, Worth Matravers
28/02  The Relics @ The Queen's Head, Exeter 21:00
28/02  Benny Guitar Carr @ The Victoria, Ashburton 9:00
28/02  Zoe Schwarz & Rob Koral @ YC's Restaurant, Dorchester 20:00
28/02  Blue Dog @ The Wig And Quill, Salisbury 21:00
28/02  Hugh Budden & Andy Stone @ The Kings Arms, St Thomas Street, Lymington, SO41 3NB 21:00
28/02  Crackling Jack @ The Hothampton Arms, Bognor Regis 21:00
28/02  Pete Gage Blues Quartet @ The Cornerhouse, Frome 20:30
29/02  The Cinelli Brothers Feat Georgia Van Etten @ Coolham Live Music Club, Horsham
29/02  Kris Dollimore @ Winter Beer Festival, Corn Exchange, Devizes
29/02  This Way Up Blues Band @ The Fountain, Chichester
29/02  Kent Duchaine @ The Bridge Inn, Exeter 20:00
29/02  Johnny Boxcars @ Belgium And Blues, Southampton 21:30
29/02  Retread @ The Brewery, Botley 21:00
29/02  Stompin' Dave @ Platform Tavern, Southampton 21:00
29/02  Catfish @ Exeter Phoenix 20:00
29/02  The Rhythm Kings @ The Pavilion, Hailsham 9:30
29/02  Riverside Blues Band @ The Spitfire, 18-20 High Street, Eastleigh SO50 5LD 20:30
29/02  Rag Mama Rag @ The Market House, Castle Cary 22:00

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# Most Played Album Top 40 – Annual Chart for 2019

Collated from the playlists of the Independent Blues Broadcasters Association Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>KYLA BROX</td>
<td>PAIN &amp; GLORY</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ELLES BAILEY</td>
<td>ROAD I CALL HOME</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>CATFISH</td>
<td>BURNING BRIDGES</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>MIKE ZITO &amp; FRIENDS</td>
<td>ROCK 'N' ROLL: A TRIBUTE TO CHUCK BERRY</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>THE ACHIEVERS</td>
<td>THE LOST ARC</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>JIMMIE VAUGHAN</td>
<td>BABY, PLEASE COME HOME</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>SAMANTHA FISH</td>
<td>KILL OR BE KIND</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>RORY GALLAGHER</td>
<td>BLUES</td>
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<td>MARTIN MCNEILL</td>
<td>CAT SQUIRREL</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>24 PESOS</td>
<td>FLESH &amp; BONES</td>
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<td>EMMA WILSON</td>
<td>LIVE &amp; ACOUSTIC</td>
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<td>GILES ROBSON</td>
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<td>CONNIE LUSH</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>REBECCA DOWNES</td>
<td>MORE SINNER THAN SAINT</td>
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<td>THE MOJO PREACHERS</td>
<td>MAN MADE MONSTER</td>
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<td>MARTIN HARLEY</td>
<td>ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES</td>
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<td>JOHN PRIMER</td>
<td>THE SOUL OF A BLUES MAN</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>LEWIS HAMILTON BAND</td>
<td>ON THE RADIO</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>DOM MARTIN</td>
<td>SPAIN TO ITALY</td>
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<td>THE CASH BOX KINGS</td>
<td>HAIL TO THE KINGS!</td>
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<td>JOANNE SHAW TAYLOR</td>
<td>RECKLESS HEART</td>
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<td>BIG WOLF BAND FEAT. ZOE GREEN</td>
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<td>DANNY BRYANT</td>
<td>MEANS OF ESCAPE</td>
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<td>WILY BO WALKER &amp; E D BRAYSHAW</td>
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<td>DELBERT MCCLINTON &amp; SELF-MADE MEN + DANA</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>THE ALLMAN BETTS BAND</td>
<td>DOWN TO THE RIVER</td>
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<td>SEAN WEBSTER BAND</td>
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<td>JOHN MAYALL</td>
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<td>KEB' MO'</td>
<td>OKLAHOMA</td>
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<td>RUTH WYAND</td>
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<td>TEDESCHI TRUCKS BAND</td>
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<td>ALTERED FIVE BLUES BAND</td>
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<td>CHRISTONE 'KINGFISH' INGRAM</td>
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<td>KATARINE PEJAK</td>
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<td>JAKE LEG JUG BAND</td>
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<td>LAURENCE JONES</td>
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<td>TRAVELLIN' BLUE KINGS</td>
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<td>WILLE &amp; THE BANDITS</td>
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<td>ARIEL POSEN</td>
<td>HOW LONG</td>
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<td>Position</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>MIKE ZITO &amp; FRIENDS</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>BEN POOLE</td>
<td>TRIO /// LIVE '19</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>ANDY LINDQUIST</td>
<td>FULL PAIN LOVE</td>
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<td>HALF DEAF CLATCH</td>
<td>THE SATURATION SESSIONS</td>
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<td>JIMMY CARPENTER</td>
<td>SOUL DOCTOR</td>
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<td>EDDIE MARTIN</td>
<td>THIRST</td>
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<td>THORBJÖRN RISAGER &amp; THE BLACK TORNADO</td>
<td>COME ON IN</td>
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<td>THE LEWIS HAMILTON BAND</td>
<td>ON THE RADIO</td>
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<td>BLIND LEMON GATORS</td>
<td>GATORVILLE</td>
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<td>KYLIA BROX</td>
<td>PAIN &amp; GLORY</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>JIMMY JOHNSON</td>
<td>EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE</td>
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<td>SAMANTHA FISH</td>
<td>KILL OR BE KIND</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>BB FACTORY</td>
<td>LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL</td>
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<td>HÅKON HØYE</td>
<td>NIGHTS AT THE SURF MOTEL</td>
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<td>ELLES BAILEY</td>
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<td>TENNESSEE REDEMPTION</td>
<td>TENNESSEE REDEMPTION</td>
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<td>THE B. CHRISTOPHER BAND</td>
<td>TWO RIVERS BACK</td>
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<td>JULIAN TAYLOR BAND</td>
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<td>JOANNA CONNOR</td>
<td>RISE</td>
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<td>TERESA JAMES &amp; THE RHYTHM TRAMPS</td>
<td>LIVE</td>
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<td>TRICKBAG</td>
<td>25 YEARS OF HOSEROCKIN' RHYTHM 'N' BLUES</td>
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<td>BIG WOLF BAND FEAT. ZOE GREEN</td>
<td>BE FREE</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>BYWATER CALL</td>
<td>BYWATER CALL</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>MALONE SIBUN</td>
<td>COME TOGETHER</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>MATTHEW ROBB</td>
<td>DEAD MEN HAVE NO DREAMS</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>GILES ROBSON</td>
<td>DON'T GIVE UP ON THE BLUES</td>
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<td>CASH BOX KINGS</td>
<td>HAIL TO THE KINGS!</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>BREEZY RODIO</td>
<td>IF IT AIN'T BROKE DON'T FIX IT</td>
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<td>CHRISTONE 'KINGFISH' INGRAM</td>
<td>KINGFISH</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>GARY GRAINGER</td>
<td>LIVE AT THE BARRELS</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>DIANE BLUE</td>
<td>LOOK FOR THE LIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>RONNIE WOOD WITH HIS WILD FIVE</td>
<td>MAD LAD: A LIVE TRIBUTE TO CHUCK BERRY</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>MOJO PREACHERS</td>
<td>MAN MADE MONSTER</td>
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<td>GARY FLETCHER</td>
<td>RIVER KEEPS FLOWING</td>
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<td>MARTIN HARLEY</td>
<td>ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>GHOST TOWN BLUES BAND</td>
<td>SHINE</td>
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Robert ‘Bob’ Hall is an English boogie-woogie pianist. A long-time collaborator of Alexis Korner, he also performed regularly with bottleneck bluesman Dave Kelly and his sister, Jo Ann Kelly. Bob was a founder member of several British blues bands including The Groundhogs and Savoy Brown.

BiTS:
Can you tell me first of all about your upbringing? Was there music in the house when you were growing up as a kid and what led you to play the piano?

BH:
Well, I’m a Cockney, you know. My family originally came from Bermondsey, although by the time I can remember anything much, my parents had moved just out to East Dulwich which wasn’t terribly far away. My father was a pianist. Not professionally but he had a tremendous ear. He was a man who could play any tune. You whistled it to him once and he could play it and he was very popular at parties and those are the days when everybody had a piano and you stood around a piano and sung and what have you. So I saw his popularity and I thought well, maybe that’s the thing to do. Maybe learn to play the piano, so I started when I was about six, but I didn’t have his facility and I’m left-handed so really, I ended up playing boogie-woogie because that was what you could play if you were left-handed.

BiTS:
Is it really easier to play boogie if you’re left-handed?

BH:
Well, I don’t know because I’ve no experience of being right-handed, but it’s easy to play if you’re left-handed, yes.

BiTS:
How did you get into blues and boogie music then?

BH:
I’m much older than I look and when I was young, boogie-woogie was still relatively popular and there used to be a West Indian lady called Winifred Atwell.

BiTS:
I remember Winifred very well.

BH:
She used to have little programmes on the television when there was just the BBC and they would have gaps in their programming through the evening and they needed to fill it up with something. It was either the potter’s wheel or some other little thing they would throw in. But Winifred made these little 15-minute slots and they put them in, and I’d follow those avidly because she played some really quite good stuff. I guess that was my earliest influence and the first real piece of music where I heard the blues piano was Humphrey Lyttelton’s Bad Penny Blues, which was what, 1956? Something like that. And Johnny Parker’s piano on that really impressed me, so I tried to learn to play that and then I think it must have been about the same year, a friend of mine, a school friend, invited me back to his house and played me the two blues records that he had and one of them was a Clarence Lofton ten-inch album which I thought was fantastic but even more than that, he had a little EP of Howlin’ Wolf doing Smokestack Lightnin’ and one or two other things with some great piano behind it and from then onwards I just wanted to play piano like that.
BiTS: How did you go about that? Did you join a band? Did you form a band?

BH: I tried from then onwards. I was trying to form bands. At that time there wasn’t a great deal of interest and I guess when I was 18, I went up to Durham to university and that was pretty disastrous. There was no interest in any kind of music up there. It was mostly rugby and fighting and drinking. But I used to thumb lifts home whenever I could and what I found was that when I came back, London had changed and there was a scene going on. Chris Barber used to play at the Old Marquee Club under the Academy Cinema in Oxford Street, and he did half an evening of Dixieland and the other half of the evening he got up Alexis Korner and Cyril Davies and they played rhythm and blues. And that was what I wanted to listen to and then I discovered the Swing Shop in Streatham which at that time wasn’t too far from where I lived and Dave Carey who ran the Swing Shop used to bring over a lot of American kind of drug store label records. Crown and those sort of labels and so you could buy in Dave’s shop relatively cheaply, American artists. On Crown, there were people like John Lee Hooker, Howlin’ Wolf, Elmore James and whenever I could I’d save up my pennies and buy those.

So that’s how I got started and then I met people at the Swing Shop. I met Jo Ann Kelly who was fantastic singer and she and I formed a duo and we used to play the interval between jazz bands at the Star in Croydon. We did that for quite a while, and they paid us I think 25 shillings in old money.

BiTS: As much as that.

BH: It wasn’t very much and after about six months or so I went to the manager and said, look 25 shillings, by the time I’ve paid my petrol and picked up Jo and brought her down here and gone back home and all that, there’s nothing left. I said, how about making it 30 shillings, and he sacked us.

BiTS: [Laughing] Oh, dear.

BH: [Chuckling] Jo was fairly indefatigable. We’d go round to folk clubs the pair of us and do a floor spot and she’d harass the organisers for a gig and so that was how we started. All the time I was answering ads in the Melody Maker for piano players. Mostly though, the ads were for organists, because Jimmy Smith was very popular. Eventually, I answered an ad where they actually wanted a pianist. Two people answered the ad and the other guy didn’t show up, so I got the job and that was with a band called The Groundhogs.

BiTS: I was going to ask you about The Groundhogs, of course. Were you considered to be a founder member of The Groundhogs?

BH: When I joined them, they were called The Dollar Bills and I think prior to me joining they had a saxophone player and when I joined, he quit. I guess there was just one too many people in the band and I don’t remember when there was a name change but it might have been after we had toured with John Lee Hooker. John Lee Hooker came over and Roy Fisher, the manager of The Groundhogs, managed to get us some dates backing him, and he liked what we did so we ended up touring with him quite a lot. That was a fun time because John, at one time I think, had two records in the top twenty, so we would go and play places and the first three or four rows would be like 15-year-old girls all hopping up and down. John had the time of his life.
They do say that John Lee was a particularly difficult person to follow. That’s certainly true for guitar playing. Is it the same for a keyboard person?

BH:

John, he was a lovely man and yes, he was quite difficult to follow but once you’d got the hang of how he played, it was, how can I describe it, it was stream of consciousness playing. As it came to him, he played it and after a while we got to follow that, you know, to anticipate what he was going to do. It was a great learning experience of playing with other people.

BiTS:

What happened after The Groundhogs then, Bob?

BH:

I was with The Groundhogs, I don’t know, on and off because all the time that I played with bands I still had a day job and I never wanted really to give up the day job because I liked it and also it was security and frankly, it was quite well paid. So what tended to happen was that I joined a band and it would get successful and then they’d all go out on the road and I’d do as many of the gigs as I could and then I couldn’t do some and then they’d find somebody else. So I guess I was with The Groundhogs for maybe 18 months, two years.

BiTS:

I think I’m right in saying that the day job was a patent lawyer. Is that right?

BH:

Yes, I was a chartered patent attorney.

BiTS:

That can tend to be lucrative.

BH:

It’s a licence to print money, yes [chuckling].

BiTS:

I guess it supported your night time job.

BH:

Yes, it’s certainly a lot more reliable than going out on the road as a musician, although I have to say, I’ve been tempted at times. But yes, I guess after The Groundhogs, two guys turned up on my doorstep one day. It was John O’Leary and Kim Simmonds. No, it wasn’t John, it was the drummer, Leo Manning and Kim Simmonds and they said we’re forming a band. Will you come and join us? I said, well who else have you got? And they said, we haven’t got anybody else. I said, when you’ve got somebody else, give me a call. About a year later they phoned, and I went around to Battersea to their manager, Harry Simmonds place and we rehearsed upstairs in his house. God knows what the neighbours must have thought. And I was very impressed with the band. Brice Portius was the singer at the time and Kim was a fantastic guitarist. Even then. He couldn’t have been more than about 17. So I joined Savoy Brown as a founder member and I was with them really up until 1969, 70 and I really tried to hang on with them as long as I possibly could and do all the gigs because that was a great band. But then they had an offer to go to the States and I remember telling Kim and he reminds me every time we meet, you’ll never make any money playing this kind of music in America. You’ll never do it. They’ve got loads of blues people, why would they have you? Of course, they went out and they ended up playing baseball stadiums and they had a great career. But once they left and moved to the States obviously, I couldn’t play with them any more, so that was the end of that. In fact, they have come back from time to time and occasionally Kim’s called and said do you want to come and do a tour with us in Europe. So I’ve done that too.

BiTS:
You must have played over the years with literally dozens of musicians who are famous names in the blues and boogie-woogie world, is there one gig that is particularly outstanding? One where perhaps you were sitting there playing and you suddenly thought, “What on Earth am I doing here? This is absolutely fabulous.”

BH:
I think the week I played with Chuck Berry was probably a high point for me. He was one of my earliest heroes and he had a reputation of being difficult with bands and showing you up if you couldn’t play and I was determined that he wasn’t going to do that, so for months I worked on his material and I bought every one of his records I didn’t have. I learnt all the introductions. I learnt the keys and it went really well and I think he and I had fun together on the stage. We were swapping solos. He made me feel not small because he could make you feel very small, but he made me feel very big and I loved him. I thought he was just wonderful.

BiTS:
You hear some dreadful stories about the way he treated bands. It’s a delight to hear somebody praising him for his involvement.

BH:
If you think of the band he had, it was Mickey Waller was the drummer and Bob Brunning was the bass player and I was the piano player and the tough thing about Chuck is he doesn’t tell you what he’s going to play and he doesn’t tell you what key he’s going to play it in. So basically, you have to know the introductions and once you know the introductions and you can figure out what it is he’s going to play, then you’re home and dry. It was really a matter of doing your homework and that’s in your contract. He had a contract which said the promoters have to provide him with a piano, bass, drums, rhythm section who know his material. So that’s what we did, and we had a really great week with him. The agency that booked that show phoned me up some months later and said Chuck’s coming back for a six-week tour, can you do it? I said no, I’ve just started a new job. [Chuckling] I can’t take six weeks off and they never phoned me again.

BiTS:
Oh, what a shame. What a great shame.

BH:
Yes, but I had my moment in the spotlight and I’m very grateful for that.

BiTS:
Well, you’ve had a few moments in the spotlight, one of which is with The Blues Band. Do you play pretty regularly with them at live gigs?

BH:
I haven’t actually played with The Blues Band for a while. I used to do all their gigs and then I only did some of them and then eventually, really when I lived in London it was possible because The Blues Band is more or less based in and around London. It was possible for me to do most of the dates. If they could do them, I could do them because The Blues Band for long periods, all of them had other jobs as well, so we all had to kind of fit it in. But when I moved, I’m currently in Sheffield, when I moved up here it got to be much more difficult and so gradually, I dropped off playing with them. It was sad but I just couldn’t fit it in with my other commitments. For the last few years I’ve mostly played with Lil’ Jimmy Reed, whom I’ve brought over and we do three or four tours a year in Europe and for the last couple of years, Jimmy’s been my saviour really because I had some issues with the little finger on my left hand which is a bit of a problem when you play boogie-woogie.

BiTS:
Yes, indeed.

BH:
So, for the last couple of years, I’ve been playing with nine fingers and it’s only in the last I guess three or four months that that’s cured. It’s gone away completely so now I can play back again with ten fingers but Jimmy’s kind
of saved me for the last few years because I could play with him with my wife Hilary on bass and Jimmy playing the guitar. People didn’t notice I was only playing with nine fingers.

**BiTS:**
Is it an arthritis problem?

**BH:**
Well, that was what the doctor said, but arthritis doesn’t get better and this has got completely better, so whatever it was, it wasn’t arthritis.

**BiTS:**
Well, I’m glad to hear that anyway.

**BH:**
Yes, as I say for the last two years, I haven’t done any dates other than with Jimmy but now I think I’m over that so I’m going to try and put in some more solo dates, dates with my wife as a duo. Just do some more shows together, as well as the stuff we’re doing with Jimmy. We have quite a year with Jimmy as well.

**BiTS:**
I’m going to ask you what I think is probably the most difficult question I could ask you, do you have a favourite piano player?

**BH:**
Not really. I have dozens of favourite piano players. It really depends. I was listening to Amos Milburn this morning, but I like the older style. At the moment I’m trying to learn a particularly difficult Montana Taylor piece. I’m trying to learn his second version of Indiana Avenue Stomp which is one he recorded in the 40’s. It’s really quite difficult. Another 20 years or so, I’ll get the hang of that. Clarence Lofton, of course, I still like and particularly Jimmy Yancey. I think Yancey for all his limitations, was one of the most soulful pianists ever.

**BiTS:**
What other piano players? Contemporary piano players, for example.

**BH:**
Don’t know many. I have a huge respect for Carl Sonny Leyland. I knew him when he was a teenager. He used to come round to my house and play for hours and hours and hours. This guy he’s going to be a star because he puts such effort into it. And indeed, he can play anything. I saw him play a few years ago in the States. He was phenomenal. Axel Zwingenberger’s been a friend for many years and is a great boogie-woogie pianist. He doesn’t spend enough time in the UK, but I’ve seen him many many times on the continent and he’s always great and he always pulls terrific crowds too. He’s got a real charisma about him. So I guess of modern pianists those two would be my favourites.

**BiTS:**
Have you ever tried playing anything else? I mean jazz, for example. The kind of Oscar Peterson stuff or anything like that.

**BH:**
Not really. I’m really just an intuitive pianist. I mean I never had any real lessons and I know nothing about harmony and all that sort of thing. It’s all by ear. I can play a range of popular jazz standards, but I don’t think I play them to the level that would be necessary to join a professional jazz band. I think I’d have to be a lot more dedicated than that and anyway, I like the blues. I like simple stuff.

**BiTS:**
[Laughing] It’s very far from simple. It sounds it, but it’s not.

**BH:**
It’s a feel music. You have to feel it, don’t you?
BiTS:
Okay, then one final question. Where do you see yourself in five years’ time?

BH:
Well, hopefully still above ground and hopefully still playing. Lil’ Jimmy’s my idol. He’s 81 now and he’s still topping the bill at festivals. I’m 77, so I’m getting up there but if I can still be playing into my 80’s that will be great. As long as people would like to come and see me play, I’m going to do it. And I’ve got actually some plans to do some little short videos of tunes that I’ve written that are in the boogie-woogie style but are kind of melodic little melodies that I’ve done. I’m going to put those up on some of the boogie-woogie sites.

BiTS:
That sounds wonderful.

BH:
We’ve just acquired a little video camera and I’m going to set that up and put those things up. Hopefully, over the next six months or so. See how that goes.

BiTS:
That is excellent stuff. Bob, I won’t take any more of your time. Thanks very much indeed for speaking to me. It’s been an absolute delight

BH:
Oh, that’s fine.

BiTS:
Okay.

BH:
Yes, good, well, thanks very much. Thanks for the invitation.

BiTS:
You look after yourself.

BH:
Yes, I shall do my best and you too.

BiTS:
Bye.

BH:
Bye-bye.
INTERVIEW WITH MULTIPLE AWARD WINNER AND NOMINEE SUGARAY RAYFORD

Everything about Sugaray Rayford is super-size! His voice, his passion, his drive, his heart, and his stature! It’s no surprise that he is nominated for five Blues Foundation 2019 Blues Music Awards, in the categories of: B.B. King Entertainer of The Year, Band of The Year, Instrumentalist Vocals, Soul Blues Album, and Soul Blues Artist. In addition, his latest album “Somebody Save Me” is nominated for a Grammy.

Born Caron Nimoy, in Smith County, Texas, USA, on February 13, 1969, “Suga”, as he prefers to be called, is no stranger to youthful tragedy. He and his siblings’ lives were poverty-stricken, with his mother dying of cancer. About the experience Sugaray recounts; “She suffered, and we suffered. Then (when she passed), we moved in with my grandmother and our lives were a lot better. We ate every day and we were in church every day, which I loved. I grew up in gospel and soul.”

Gospel and soul permeate Rayford’s big vocal sound and awe-inspired performances. Each one is like a spiritual revival awakening! One can’t help but being caught up in Sugaray’s pure musical joy and enthusiasm.

I asked Suga’ about his career and what this time is like for him. This is what he told me:

LL: This must be a very exciting time for you! Everything seems to be falling into place in your career. You are nominated for 2019 Blues Music Award’s in 5 different categories and nominated for this year’s Grammy for “Best Contemporary Blues Album”. How does it feel?

SR: It has been really weird, unbelievable highs and devastating lows. My wife fighting cancer, then winning a lot of awards, nominated for a Grammy, and unable to really share that joy with her.
LL: Nothing ever comes easy. Can you tell us about the path that led you to where you are today?

SR: Ha-ha! I don’t think we have time for all that, but let’s just say it’s been an uphill battle, and having the help, love, strength of my wife, and a won’t quit attitude of positivity, we’ve made this far!!

LL: You started out at age 7 singing and playing drums at your church. Did you play drums for very long? When did you decide to focus solely on singing?

SR: Yes, actually I started playing drums at the age of 5! And still dabble here and there! I played until I went into the Marine Corps! At that time, I stopped all music for about 16 yrs. or so until I met my wife Pam! It was she who reawakened the music passion in me!

LL: You have six Sugaray Rayford releases to date. Do you have a favourite release? A favourite song?

SR: I’ve done about 16 albums and collaborations, but songs are like children! I don’t want to pick favourites.

LL: My husband is my bassist, so I get the dynamics that can arise when married folks work together. Your wife is your manager. How does that play out between the two of you?

SR: It has been our daily lives! She has always been better at business and has great foresight! So, it was a no-brainer to marry and partner with her!

LL: You have performed on the theatre stage. How did that come about and can you tell us a bit about that experience?

SR: I’ve done 4 plays! And sang on many TV shows and commercials! Long story short, I met Dan Wheetman in another show some years ago! He invited me to LA to audition for a show. I got the part but couldn’t do it, as I was leaving on my first European tour! Years later Dan was the musical director for the Broadway show “Ain’t Nothing But The Blues”. The lead actor had passed away. Dan told the producer about me, and I got the
part! I’ve had the pleasure to work with Randal Myler and Dan Wheetman on other projects, since then.

LL: You’ve done a fair amount of touring. Mind sharing a road story or two?

SR: One I will share is that I have the worst karma when it comes to flights! I’ve had at least 7 times where I’ve flown for hours and hours because of flight troubles, and gotten off the plane somewhere around the world, walked directly onstage, played for 75 to 90 minutes, showered, and right back on the plane to fly home! That’s happened at least 7 times. Fly 18 to 24 hours, play one hour, and fly right home!

LL: Would you tell us a bit about the band you’re currently touring with?

SR: My band consists of (musical Director) Drake Shinning on keys, Allen Markel on bass, Lavell Jones on drums, Aaron Liddard on tenor sax, Giles Straw on trumpet, and Gino Matteo, Alastair Green, and Danny Avila on guitar. Some of them have been with me for over 10 years. It’s a powerful band and a lot of good friends.

LL: What’s coming up for you that we can look forward to?

SR: A lot of touring, great shows and the start of a new album! SRB (Sugaray Rayford Band) and I are here to stay!! May Karma bless you all!

~ Lawrence Lebo

EDITOR’S NOTE: Sugar Ray was a runner up in Best Contemporary Blues Album category. It was won by This Land — Gary Clark Jr.
BiTS:
Steve, I just want to talk to you about this wonderful CD that you’ve produced and the guitars that you made. Can you start off by telling me something about yourself? What’s your background?

SC:
Originally, I was a cabinet maker and then I went through some emotional problems. The whole thing is about mental health awareness because I bottled quite a lot up for a while, and I ended up drinking and ended up with alcoholism. Part of my recovery was that I changed everything. I changed my lifestyle, started knocking around with people in the music industry. People might think I was a bit crazy, but I did. I started building guitars and it just took off from there really. I used to make cigar box guitars, and somebody said why don’t you try making a proper guitar, as such, so I made one for Tobias from the band Mudlow in the UK. I don’t know if you know them.

BiTS:
Yes, I do know them actually.

SC:
He was my first. I made him a Gibson, a flat-top Gibson. A limited-edition, Marquet on it with the F-holes and I watched him play that and it really took off from there, to be honest. And then a guy in America called Kenni Lee Burgess, he’s on the album as well. He does a lot of tutorials on Facebook and stuff. He had this dream of making a depression-era guitar. I know he’d been to quite a few luthiers to give them the idea. He really wanted to bring it back on the scene.

BiTS:
Is it a straightforward shift from cabinet making to guitar making? I wouldn’t have thought it was very easy.

SC:
It is actually, believe it or not. I’ve got a bit of a guitar graveyard because I did a lot of experimenting trying to work out how to do it. And when I started doing the depression-era guitars I made a couple of prototypes. Sent one to Kenny Lee Burgess. We’d love to try and get them into production if we can. Back in 1920, 1930’s an Oscar Schmidt Avalon would be like $15, $16: the catalogue guitar. So I’ve recreated the Avalon and we’re hopefully, next year trying to get it into production. If you give it an equivalent price in todays terms, it would be about £380 money-wise, but obviously, there’s inflation and cost of materials. So we’re trying to put that sort of guitar out for about the £500 mark so the everyday man, everyday Joe, would be able to afford it. The guitars are around £2-3000 now. Just keeping it real really. Keeping it about the blues and not four grand for a blues guitar. That’s not the blues to us guys.

BiTS:
I presume that the speed that you can make a guitar has diminished considerably over the years. How long does it take you to make a guitar these days?

SC:
Well, to be honest, I work full-time, so it’s been a part of my recovery. All my spare time really, I build guitars. I don’t know, if I build an Avalon, depending on how much I customise it. I do all the old-fashioned pearlised fretboards and headstocks and everything, ten days. Something like that. If I’m on a roll. Some of my guitars are hand-painted. I don’t know if you’ve seen the link on Instagram and Facebook. What I’ve done is for the first 150 CD’s sold. Those first 150 CD’s will go into a draw to win this Oscar Schmidt Avalon I’ve done that’s hand-painted.
BiTS:
I’ve missed that, but I shall look at it now and you’ll get a bit of publicity from Blues in the South, if there’s any luck.

SC:
Yeah, I mean it’s a lovely guitar. I painted the artwork from the book Love in Vain, Robert Johnson. It’s a man on the rail tracks, a train pulling away, laid down with a guitar and his head in his hands sort of thing. It’s nice. It’s a nice thing.

BiTS:
In a previous life, I used to be a psychologist and I know very well that one of the ways in which you can deal with the condition that you suffered from, is that you do something which stops you from thinking about things.

SC:
Exactly. I got diagnosed with PTSD. I had three very tragic events happen in one day, to be quite honest. Then I started self-medicating obviously, having a drink and then that just got me, and I had like five years of hell, to be honest. It’s part of it to admit, isn’t it, what you are and stuff and then just moving forward and changing things. But you’re right. It’s about filling time. It’s filling that space. A couple of guys said to me we’ve got to get some of these tracks down. I do it more for the love of it and to hear my instruments being played is amazing and especially the old-style blues and stuff. I love it. So that was it. I’ve made 14 guitars in 18 months for all these artists. Every song on the album is played on one of my guitars and the idea, we wanted it to be like a bit of a, you know like the old recordings, it was like that, but there’s a couple of lads that have been in the studio, Mudlow and stuff, but I don’t know if you’ve had a chance to listen to the album. It’s just a real mix of things.

BiTS:
Indeed, how did you manage to get hold of Eric Bibb to do something for you?

SC:
Do you know what it was really, how can I put it, being upfront and a bit bolshy. I was on the Blues Cruise this year and he was playing and I’m a massive fan of his. I got talking to him and I explained that I built guitars and I was showing him some pictures of my guitars and there was one guitar that I’d sort of half done and he just fell in love with it. He said, oh my God, I love it. I said well look, I’ll finish it and you can have it. He went, seriously? And we’ve been quite friendly since then and I sent him the guitar and the Candy Man track that he plays on the album, he played on my guitar that I built him. So it was a great honour that.

BiTS:
What about Cedric Burnside?

SC:
And the same with Cedric Burnside. I met Cedric Burnside at the Red Rooster Festival and got talking to him. Showed him pictures of my guitars. Explained why I built stuff and it went from there really. It’s crazy. At that point, I didn’t ask them to do tracks for me, but they sort of heard what was going on and when I asked them and to be honest, I didn’t think they would because of obviously publishing and stuff like that. R L, I’m a massive fan and I love his style and I just
got talking to him, explained that I built guitars and I just said look would you like me to build you a guitar because I’d started building steel resonators at the time as well. And that was all a big experiment and he’d listened to a few recordings of guys playing my resonators and he just said, oh God, I’d love one. And I sent him one and we’ve been in touch ever since, really. I asked him to do a track and there was just no hesitation at all. The support has been amazing. It’s just been really, really good.

Brilliant. I really do appreciate your support. We were laughing, don’t get me wrong, there’s some amazing commercial blues. There is. There’s some great stuff. And we’d been talking, a few of the guys and it’s literally cheaper than you can get it on iTunes.

**BiTS:**

Clearly, you play yourself. You are on the opening track. What kind of stuff do you play when you’re just enjoying yourself?

**SC:**

I’m a big hill country fan myself. And I like Hooker. I’m a bit mixed, but I love my hill country. I love Robert Belfour. I’m a big fan of Belfour. R L, Belton Sutherland. All that stuff and I like Charley Patton. I like the old stuff, but you can’t beat a bit of John Lee Hooker boogie and stuff as well.

**BiTS:**

You sound like a man after my own heart, to be honest with you.

**SC:**

Do you know what, the album is just full of genuine appreciation and love of music? There’s no thrills and spills. Even Cedric Burnside and Eric Bibb. They said don’t feature us as such, just put us on it. We just want to be one of the guys. There’s some guys on there, they’re not the best players, but do you know what, they’re on an album with Cedric Burnside and they’re doing their best and actually the way it’s been put together, they sound awesome. It sounds how it should be. It’s from the heart.

**BiTS:**

I must say that the quality of it is as good as anything I’ve heard coming from a big studio.

**SC:**

Funnily enough, Paul Pascoe from Mudlow, who works in Church Road Studios, some of the recordings have been done in the back of a van on a phone, some are in a studio and Paul’s done an amazing job and he’s mixed it all up for me and we had long discussions how we wanted it to pan out. Hence what Cedric Burnside said at the end. He’s got a thank you at the end. Richard Wall, obviously the author, he wrote me the poem Beginning Journeyman. I’ve known Richard quite a while and he knows what I’ve been through. We were just going to print that on the cover, and it was Tobias from Mudlow, said no, we’ve got to put this down.

**BiTS:**

Steve, I won’t take any more of your time Thanks for talking to me

**SC:**

Thanks. Nice to speak to you.
Thanks to the generosity of Solid Entertainments, we are able to offer a PAIR of single day tickets to the Looe Blues Festival for your choice of day.

Your task, should you decide to accept it, is very simple. In the listing for the event, identify three (3) artists/bands who come from the BiTS area ie. South of the M4.

List them and send your list to competition@bluesinthesouth.com with complete contact details and the word Looe in the subject line.

DEADLINE 12 MIDNIGHT SUNDAY February 9, 2020
YOU MUST SAY FOR WHICH DAY YOU WANT THE TICKETS
THE FIRST ANSWER RECEIVED FOR A GIVEN DAY WILL BE DECLARED THE WINNER.
PRESS RELEASE

TOP US BLUES STAR ANNOUNCED AS BLUES AT THE BARN 2020 HEADLINER

CHARISMATIC American blues star ALVIN YOUNGBLOOD HART has been announced as the headline act for this May's Blues at the Barns 2020 festival.

Promoters of Essex's acclaimed festival of acoustic blues, folk-roots and Americana, scheduled for Sunday, May 3, at Creeksea Place Barns, Creeksea, near Burnham-on-Crouch, have confirmed singer and guitarist Hart to head an exciting international lineup for the fourth annual event, on Sunday, May 3.

Other acts gracing the festival's twin stages over nine hours will include feisty female roots-rockers Dana Immanuel & the Stolen Band, Swedish/American singer and multi-instrumentalist Sofie Reed, Essex trio Joel Fisk & the Breakdown, folk, blues and jazz star Helen Watson and country-rockers The Bay Horse Boys.

Tickets went on sale on January 1, with festival goers promised a stunning lineup of live acts playing non-stop from 2pm through to 11pm at the site site, in Ferry Lane, Creeksea, near Burnham.

The full lineup also includes Essex pagan folk group Morrigan's Path, Kent-based duo Dave Ferra and Katie Bradley and - recalling the festival's origins - singer and guitarist Ben Tyzack, whose band the SPIKEdrivers headlined the very first BATB festival.

Promoter, Burnham musician Tim Aves, said: "We're really excited about the lineup this year and particularly about being able to bring an artist of the calibre of Alvin Youngblood Hart to Burnham. He's an amazing talent and someone we had been hoping to get for some time.

"All this year's acts - and there are nine in total - are top-quality and will offer the depth and variety of music for which Blues at the Barns has become famous. Quite a few people said last year they wanted to hear a bit more from the acts, so we've listened to feedback about last year's and changed our approach to programming to give each act more playing time."
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FRI 10 - GLASGOW - FRUIT MARKET
SAT 11 - MANCHESTER - ACADEMY
SUN 12 - YORK - OPERA HOUSE
TUE 14 - BIRMINGHAM - TOWN HALL
WED 15 - NEWCASTLE - BOILER SHOP
FRI 17 - LONDON - ELECTRIC BALLROOM

TICKETS: WWW.THEGIGCARTEL.COM
24 HR BOX OFFICE: 0844 478 9898
WWW.KINGKING.CO.UK
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Band</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14th January</td>
<td>The Gary Fletcher Band</td>
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<tr>
<td>21st January</td>
<td>Mike Vernon &amp; The Mighty Combo</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th January</td>
<td>The Connor Selby Band</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th February</td>
<td>The Head Hunters Blues Band</td>
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<td>11th February</td>
<td>The Dave Kelly Band</td>
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<td>18th February</td>
<td>Broken Levee</td>
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<td>25th February</td>
<td>Brave Rival</td>
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<td>3rd March</td>
<td>The Dan Burnett Band</td>
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<td>10th March</td>
<td>Ma Bessie</td>
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<td>17th March</td>
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<td>The John Verity Band</td>
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<td>7th April</td>
<td>The Tom Killion Band</td>
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<td>14th April</td>
<td>The John Doe Trio</td>
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<td>21st April</td>
<td>The Chris Corcoran Band</td>
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<td>28th April</td>
<td>Jamie Johnson &amp; The Lucky 13's</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th May</td>
<td>The Jupiter Blues AND Ashley Sherlock</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th May</td>
<td>Austin Gold</td>
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<td>19th May</td>
<td>The Kyla Brox Band</td>
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<td>26th May</td>
<td>Storm Warning</td>
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<td>2nd June</td>
<td>The Mike Ross Band AND When Rivers Meet</td>
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<td>9th July</td>
<td>The Bad Day Blues Band</td>
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<td>16th June</td>
<td>The Jack J Hutchinson Band</td>
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<td>The Wily Bo Walker Band(s)</td>
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<td>30th June</td>
<td>The Lewis Hamilton Band</td>
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<td>7th July</td>
<td>The Robin Bibi Big Band</td>
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<td>14th July</td>
<td>Del Bromham</td>
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<td>21st July</td>
<td>The Rebecca Downes Band</td>
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Also coming Delta Fuse, Connie Lush Band, Saints & Sinners, The Mentulls, RHR, Black Market III, Dom Martin and more!

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**The Tuesday Night Music Club**

**Live Music Coming Up**

*Finalist in The UKBlues Awards for 'Blues Club/Venue of the Year'*

**The Tuesday Night Music Club**

*Finalist in The UKBlues Awards for 'Blues Club/Venue of the Year'*

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**The Tuesday Night Music Club**

Is at

The Comrades Club, 194 Brighton Rd, Coulston, Greater London CR5 2NF

Advance tickets are available from the bar at The Comrades Club or via

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23rd OLOMOUC, CZ
24th BUDAPEST, HU
25th VIENNA, AT
27th REichenbach, DE
28th VILLEFRANCHE, FR
29th MONTBELIARD, FR
31st PARIS, FR

APRIL

2nd MANCHESTER, UK
3rd DERBY, UK
4th GLASGOW, UK
5th NEWCASTLE, UK
6th KINROSS, UK
9th MORECOMBE, UK
10th NANTWICH, UK
16th WORCESTER, UK
17th SUTTON, UK
18th TORRINGDON, UK
23rd SOUTHAMPTON, UK
24th ARLINGTON, UK
25th HOLMFIRTH, UK
26th LONDON, UK
29th BILSTON, UK
30th CHESTER, UK

photo by Anthony Firmin
February 11th

Bob Pearce Blues Night

Venue:
The Queens Head Pub
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PO14 4AQ

Note:
the evening will also include an interview with
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and Christian faith

'The Net' is usually held on the second Tuesday of the month at 8.00pm.
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For more information contact:
Gordon Curley 01489 582395 - 07889 798636
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BRISTOL INTERNATIONAL JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES 2020 PROGRAMME

Running 26 – 29 March 2020, Bristol International Jazz & Blues Festival presents a tantalising weekend centred around Park St, with high-quality concerts in St George’s, blues and trad jazz in Folk House, and a Bond spectacular at O2. It embraces new partners - working with Worm Disco and UWE – whilst continuing its dynamic relationships with Bambalan and Bristol Music Trust.

The Festival opens on Thursday 26 March with Manfred Mann band leader and radio presenter Paul Jones performing his personal blues and swing favourites with a big band.

Big bands and large ensembles continue to be a theme through the weekend: Clare Teale and Denny Ilett are joined by a large ensemble to celebrate the ‘60’s Bossa movement, performing Doris Day’s Latin for Lovers and Sinatra / Jobim’s album in full. And on the closing day internationally acclaimed Bristol saxophonist Andy Sheppard brings his brilliant work, Bump 5250 originally commissioned for the Bergen Big Band. Featuring the cream of South West musicians together with Sheppard’s regular band, the large-scale work explores the ups and downs of falling in love.

Festival patron, saxophonist Pee Wee Ellis has hand-selected a special band to join him in performing a selection of classic and original blues tracks, well-loved tunes that he has carried with him through his extraordinary career which saw him as MD for both James Brown, and Van Morrison.

The Festival commission this year celebrates female songwriters and composers. What She Said features a brilliant ensemble of singers and instrumentalists – fronted by Rebecca Nash, Sara Colman, Ruth Hammond and Katya Gorrie – performing re-imagined and new works inspired by composers such as Joni Mitchell, Esperanza Spalding, Kate Bush, Nina Simone and many more.

Winners of MOBO Best Jazz Album 2011 Kairos 4Tet release their third album this autumn and the Jazz & Blues Festival have grabbed this exciting UK success story as they tour around the country with Swedish singer Emilia Martinsen.

Andy Hague’s Kind of Blue sold out earlier this year. For 2020, he has selected a lesser known but equally vital piece of work in the history of jazz, Oliver Nelson’s The Blues and the Abstract Truth which featured Freddie Hubbard, Bill Evans and Eric Dolphy.

Singer, broadcaster and all-round dazzling soul diva China Moses wowed audiences last year with her rendition of Billie Holiday’s Lady in Satin. In 2020 this dynamo of glorious jazz energy returns with her own band, marking the release of her forthcoming album.

In 2020 the Festival presents its first full programme at the intimate Folk House where it will celebrate the roots of blues, trad, gospel and more.
Guitarist and Guitar Techniques magazine and their exemplary players will be focusing on the period between the acoustic blues sound of the 1930’s and the advent of rock ‘n’ roll in the 1950’s. This was the era of giants such as Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker and T-Bone Walker who harnessed the power of the then new-fangled guitar amplifier and literally changed the musical landscape forever.

The Saturday continues with celebrated guitarist and jump blues band leader Chris Corcoran on tour with his septet following the release of his new album.

Closing the day, the Festival has put together a dazzling line up for Ladies Sing the Blues. Victoria Klewin, Lady Nade and Elles Bailey will be performing songs by the early blues queens Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey and Ethel Waters before moving into the 1950s with Etta James, Ruth Brown and Big Mama Thornton.

Sunday opens with the faultless performance of Pete Long and his sextet recreating Benny Goodman’s famous 1940 sextet.

Continuing her family lineage (she is the niece of celebrated singer and Festival patron Lillian Boutté), New Orleans singer Tricia Boutté holds an unmissable foody workshop cooking up the smells and flavours of gumbo, followed by a performance that encapsulates her home city New Orleans’ celebrated music scene.

Portishead guitarist Adrian Utley closes the Folk House programme with his new project, a tribute to Blue Note guitarist Grant Green which premiered at the London Jazz Festival last November.

The Festival is excited to be working with partners around the city; Worm Disco, UWE and Bambalan. On the opening night, UWE students will be performing together with the Ronnie Scott’s All Stars at 1532 Theatre at Bristol Grammar School. On Friday and Saturday Worm Disco present two nights of the most exciting new wave of jazz at Fiddlers, headlined on Saturday night by Emma-Jean Thackray’s band, with the full programme to be announced before Christmas. Bambalan will be hosting the Festival’s now famous late-night jam, where local house bands cut loose with Festival headliners.

The Festival will be announcing a programme of films, talks, and workshops over the next month or two, offering a range of inspiring and stimulating events that complement the live performances.

Bristol Jazz & Blues Festival has survived through the generosity of individuals supporting its crowd funder campaign. Now at the halfway point, the crowd funder campaign continues, check out ideas for unique Christmas ideas at: https://www.fundsurfer.com/crowdfund/bristol-international-jazz-blues-festival-needs-you

www.bristoljazzandbluesfest.com

Tickets:

St George’s: 0845 4024001 / www.stgeorgesbristol.co.uk

Folk House telephone: 0117 926 2987

Folk House and O2 online: www.headfirstbristol.co.uk

Partners: 

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# Programme schedule

**Thurs 26 March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20:00</td>
<td>Paul Jones Big Band Bash</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£26 / £22 / £18 + bf</td>
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**Friday 27 March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>What She Said</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£22 / £17 / £12 + bf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:30</td>
<td>Pee Wee Ellis</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£26 / £22 / £18 + bf</td>
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**Saturday 28 March**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Kairos Quartet</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00</td>
<td>Bright Lights</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>Gilad Atzmon: Charlie Parker 100</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£22 / £17 / £12 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>18:00</td>
<td>Chris Corcoran Septet</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>Teal &amp; Ilett: For the Love of Bossa</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£26 / £22 / £18 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>Ladies Sing the Blues</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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**Sunday 29 March**

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<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Goodmania</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>Hague: The Blues</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>Tricia Boutté - Gumbo Europa</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00</td>
<td>Andy Sheppard Bump 5250</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£22 / £17 / £12 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>China Moses</td>
<td>St George’s</td>
<td>£26 / £22 / £18 + bf</td>
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<tr>
<td>21:00</td>
<td>Adrian Utley plays Grant Green</td>
<td>Folk House</td>
<td>£15 + bf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further gigs, workshops, films and talks to be announced
Stan’s Blues Jam at The Owl’s Nest

Last Wednesday of Every Month

Free Entry

Backline Provided

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www.stansbluesjam.co.uk
FEBRUARY 2020

05 Brighton Dome
08 London Eventim Apollo
09 Birmingham Symphony Hall
12 Cardiff St David’s Hall
14 Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
15 Gateshead The Sage
17 Manchester Bridgewater Hall
20 Sheffield City Hall
22 Plymouth Pavilions
24 Southampton O2 Guildhall

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OUT SEPTEMBER 27TH 2019
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MusicGurus and BiTS believe that you should only pay for what you use so we don’t charge subscriptions. Buy lessons and personal tutoring sessions with a one-off payment and that’s it, they’re yours to watch whenever, wherever and as many times, as you want.

Tutors in the blues and jazz field include Marcus Bonfanti (guitar), Matt Walklate (harmonica), Paddy Milner (piano), Ron Sayer (guitar) and many more. For a full list of tutors go HERE.

Click this line for a list of available courses
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BLUES REVUE

SATURDAY 14th March

Tickets £10
Doors open 9pm

Devizes Sports Club, London Rd Bridge, Devizes SN10 2DL
JENNIFER NOBLE - PHOTOGRAPHY AND INTERVIEW COMPILATION

Chicago Blues Hall of Fame inductee 2014 and the Director of Photography for the Chicago Blues Guide, Jennifer has been photographing legendary blues artists for over 30 years.

At first glance you might be forgiven for thinking that this is one of those pretentious books that people leave in their sitting rooms so that when they go to make the coffee, folk will glance at them and think ‘what an erudite and with-it soul this person is’. Well, you’d be mistaken. This is a beautifully produced AND researched book, worthy of a place in any blues aficionado’s book case. It is not a puff of air -(Vol-au-vent) but an erudite work.

Jennifer Noble’s photographs are at the top of the tree. She has an eye for a framed shot, making the images both beautiful and thought provoking. Each image comes with an essay, often based on an interview conducted by Jennifer and there are many revelatory insights to be found in them. In a recent interview with Jennifer she told me how sad she was that she had been unable to get an interview with Mavis Staples, who, despite appearing on the front cover, does not have a full essay.

This is a truly outstanding book, ideal for a gift to a loved one, including yourself. At the end of the day though, I am left wondering why no one has done this before, and praising Jen for taking on such a mammoth task and fulfilling it with such skill and panache.

Ian K McKenzie

Hardcover: 240 pages
Publisher: Aurora Metro Books (29 Nov. 2019)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0993220789
I'm not really a fan of blues rock but I can't help liking Popa Chubby (Ted Horowitz), he's a fine guitarist, a good singer and versatile songwriter and he has a sense of humour and doesn't take himself too seriously – as in the first track “The Flavor Is In The Fat”. What's more, he is the epitome of blues rock in that he can rock out but he also has that blues edge - “It's A Mighty Hard Road” chugs along like an old Chuck Berry song with a lovely fluid guitar solo worthy of Freddie King and “It Ain't Nothin'” sees him playing slide. The first four tracks were recorded live at New York's G. Bluey's Juke Joint last February and the sound is really good, with the remaining tracks being recorded throughout 2019 at Popa’s ‘Chubbyland' in the Hudson Valley. “Let Love Free The Day” is a more modern sounding melodic song but “If You're Looking For Trouble” is back to driving blues, with biting blues guitar, while “The Best Is Yet To Come” is a lovely relaxed soul ballad – one of my favourite tracks.

“I'm The Beast From The East” is more Chubby humour, while “Gordito” is a tasteful instrumental and “More Time Making Love” is relationship advice set to a catchy tune. “Lost Again” is a laid back jazzy blues that could be a Tom Waits song (and has a lovely subtle guitar solo) but Leon Russell’s “I’d Rather Be Blind” steps up the tempo and intensity, with more nice guitar, while the album finishes with Popa’s funky take on Prince’s “Kiss”. This is a really good album, 15 tracks with lots of variety and with Popa showing that he can be subtle as well as his more usual in-your-face shtick. His singing, guitar playing and songwriting are first class throughout and the band of Dave Keyes on keyboards, Steve Holley or Don Castagno on drums and VD King or Brett Bass on bass back him up superbly.

Graham Harrison

Kevin Brown 6 Strings and a Dream DooDah Records ASIN: B081WZG6ZH

Kevin Brown

I’m ashamed to say that I’d never heard of singer/guitarist Kevin Brown, despite us being the same age, being born 20 miles apart in Lancashire and now both living in the West Country. However, I’ve now got the pleasure of being able to check out his back catalogue, which goes back to the 1980s. This ten-track collection begins with “Oh Jackie” a charming, relaxed reggae-ish number, then it's “Little Green Shack” another laid back song featuring nice blues lead guitar and with lap steel providing the rhythm (possibly about his own ‘shack' in Goa). “Wake Up And Be Wise” is a nice country song with pedal steel and piano, and “Square Peg In A Round Hole” is a ballad with a catchy chorus and more plaintive pedal steel. “Your Train Will Come” is modern Western Swing, a mixture of country and jazz driven by the pedal steel and with additional slide guitar - with a beautiful skipping rhythm section.

The title track is darker than anything we’ve heard before, with a bubbling funky groove and lyrics that relate the story of the blues, with name checks for Charlie Patton, Son House and Howlin’ Wolf. "Don't Tailgate Me" is another bluesy track that we can all relate to about driving at night (complete with nice Hammond organ) and with “High Blood Pressure Blues” we're back to country, while “Shadows On The Wall” sounds very much like Mark Knopfler (who apparently Kevin has worked with) with its chugging guitars. The final track “Clarksdale” is a re-telling of the story of the blues, this time with name checks for Bessie Smith, John Lee Hooker and Sam Cooke. This is a very good record, very original – a mixture of blues, rock and country – with
excellent playing and singing from Kevin and also great support from the band - Mick Candler and Dominic Greensmith on drums, Duncan Kingston and Tommy James Allen on bass, Robyn Dawson and Stephen Smith on keyboards, with Mark Goudswaard, John Green and Sebastian Brice on additional guitars and Bob Dixon on pedal steel.

Graham Harrison

Prime Movers Blues Band Modern Harmonic ASIN: B07Y9ZCWFJ

The Prime Movers were formed in 1965 in Ann Arbor, Michigan by brothers Michael Erlewine (lead singer, harmonica) and Dan Erlewine (lead guitar) and after seeing Paul Butterfield’s band they later became The Prime Movers Blues Band. This record features unreleased live tracks recorded in 1966 and features Robert Sheff (keyboards), Jack Dawson (bass) and on drums one James Osterberg – later to find fame as Iggy Pop! The record features blues classics like “Everyday I Have The Blues” and others by their Chicago heroes such as Muddy Waters’ “Walking Thru The Park” and “Little Walter’s “You Better Watch Yourself”, as well as an early cover of B.B. King’s “Rock Me Baby”.

The story goes that Motown reportedly wanted to record and promote them but they refused preferring to go their own way. In retrospect Motown’s approach seems a strange choice as they wouldn’t have fit with the rest of the label’s roster but maybe they wanted a British-style band or one to rival Paul Butterfield who was popular at the time. In truth they sound similar to other 60s British R&B bands - The Stones and The Pretty Things etc. - maybe a bit more authentic but without those bands’ crossover appeal. Certainly some of the playing is a bit suspect at times with the technique not quite keeping up with the ambition - Sheff’s Farfisa organ sounds awful compared to say, Graham Bond’s Hammond in Britain and the Erlewine brothers’ guitar and harmonica work is also a bit dodgy at times. Paul Butterfield may have said that they were “the second best white blues band in America” but in reality there was a big gap between his own band and The Prime Movers.

For many, the real nugget here is Osterberg (Iggy) playing the drums and singing on Bo Diddley’s “I’m A Man” and while this may be the first ever ‘punk’ vocal, really it is just a straight copy of The Yardbirds’ version of the song, with a bit of added attitude.

Graham Harrison

Black Cat Bones/ Tattered & Torn/ Own Label

Now here’s some fine blues and rock from this band out of Tucson, Arizona. In Charles Pitts, they have a fine and versatile vocalist who is as much at ease with a Free-styled subtle blues-rock number like ‘When I Get That Feeling’ as he is with a slow grind blues such as ‘The Race’, with its mournful riffing horns from guests The C Section horns. ‘Led To Believe’ has something of a contemporary indie-rock approach, whilst still fitting in well on this bluesy release, partly thanks to the excellent twin guitar work from Richard Rivera and Gary David, whilst drummer Jerry Sommers and bass player/ vocalist/ acoustic guitarist, and co-leader Jeff Daniels completes the line-up. ‘Lowdown’ is a nice up tempo blues, Lean Lobo’ flits between rock and blues, and ‘Pay You Back With Interest’ is a heavy blues-rocker with fuzzed-out guitar in the backing, and
‘Just Around The Corner’ is an inventive blues with echoes of Pink Floyd and it works! An interesting and very enjoyable release all round, this one.

Norman Darwen
(www.blackcatbones.net)

Jay Gordon’s Blues Venom – Slide Rules! (Shuttle Music)

That CD title is pretty accurate – Jay Gordon does indeed play a mean electric slide guitar, backed by Sharon Butcher on bass and Tom Parham drums. On the thirteen tracks of this set, Jay employs a gritty, aggressive sound, drawing in equal parts on the heavy sound of blues-rock and the rawer approach of today’s “indie-blues”. It is very much an “in your face” style, and the pace rarely lets up from beginning to end. But then Jay does show an awareness of the blues itself – there are covers of Robert Johnson’s ‘Travelin Riverside Blues’ (with a little more subtlety than some other tracks) and Elmore James’ ‘Stranger Blues’, and his lyrics contain references to the likes of Robert Johnson (as on ‘Dockery’s Plantation’), Muddy Waters and Buddy Guy, whilst most songs deal with topics certainly well within the blues canon. The final number, ‘Train Train’, is a cover of southern rock band Blackfoot’s 1979 hit and makes for a fine closer. Yes, you have to like it nice and rocky to enjoy this set, but if that’s your bag, then do check it out!

Norman Darwen
(www.bluesvenom.com)

Dana Immanuel & The Stolen Band – Mama’s Codeine (Own label)

Here’s an all-female band from London with a rather different take on Americana, and there are certainly elements of what has been described as “old weird America” here. This release is a five track CD EP, and you’ll find Dana herself plucking away on banjo alongside blues-rock electric guitar riffs, fiddle playing and Tom-Waits-like lyrical concerns with the darker side of life. Then there’s ‘WD40 & Duct Tape’ which musically sounds more than a little like Howlin’ Wolf’s version of ‘Spoonful’ – though, as noted, with banjo and fiddle as prominent as Feadora Morris’ guitar work - and ‘Shady Grove’ is a traditional sounding number somewhere between an Irish jig and an old-timey fiddle breakdown before the manic electric guitar break. Different then, and not all blues by any means, but it does feel like it fits here.

Norman Darwen
(www.danaimmanuel.com)
Kern Pratt – “Greenville, MS ... What About You?” (Endless Blues KPEBR1032019)

Yes, singer and guitarist Kern was born in Greenville, Mississippi and he plays and sings the blues, backed by some first rate musicians. A track like the slow to mid-tempo ‘Torn Between Love And Hate’ has a touch of vintage Robert Cray about it, with Bob Dowell’s keyboard playing creating a firm cushion. There are some excellent slow blues, such as the lengthy ‘Something’s Gone Wrong’, with a powerful vocal and moody horns, and Mick Kolassa’s intense ‘Baby’s Got Another Lover’. The keyboards player Larry Van Loon’s ‘Rita’ has a smoother soul- and jazz-inflected sound married to a fine blues guitar, and ‘Whatcha Gonna Do?’ is an excellent straight blues shuffle. Though there is not a poor track here, I really must comment on the closing track, a powerful version of Bobby Rush’s ‘Chicken Heads’, his breakthrough single from 1971. Kern keeps the down-home funky blues of the original and adds some notable guitar sparring with Jeff Jensen. The result of all this is a finely-crafted modern blues CD that certainly comes recommended, of course.

Norman Darwen
(www.kernprattmusic.com)

The Neville Brothers  Great American Radio Volume 3  Floating World  FLOATM6397

The Neville Brothers were/ are a New Orleans institution, with a tortuous musical history. It goes back through various solo outings and session work to the aptly-named ‘Mardi Gras Mambo’ of The Hawketts in the early 50s (the line-up included Art Neville), via the likes of Lee Dorsey and especially the funky approach of The Meters in following decades, until their formation in the late 70s and their rebirth with 1989’s “Yellow Moon” album. This set shows off many facets of this long musical career, and a strong sense of pride in their Crescent City heritage. The album’s sub-title is “Telluride Jazz Festival, Colorado, June 8, 2008” but the Big Easy permeates proceedings, from Aaron Neville’s sublime 1966 hit ‘Tell It Like It Is’ through Professor Longhair’s ‘Tipitina’ and ‘Big Chief’ to The Meters’ funky classic ‘Fire On The Bayou’. There’s some jazz here as well, with a fine version of ‘Watermelon Man’, and a nod to the city’s Caribbean connections with reggae in a few places. ‘Yellow Moon’ is here too, of course, and a couple of vintage R’n’B numbers in ‘Fever’, given a distinctive treatment, and – it’s difficult to avoid using the word sublime with regard to Aaron Neville again, this time for his version of Sam Cooke’s iconic ‘Change Gonna Come’. Alan Robinson’s fine notes make the point that we can all use The Nevilles’ ideals of unity and brotherhood – Amen to that!

Norman Darwen
Rae Gordon Band – Wrong Kind Of Love (Own label)

The opening track here is a fine funky slab of soul music, with a tough vocal, kicking rhythm, punchy horns and a fine, concise guitar break. It is followed by the fine mid-tempo blues of ‘Don’t Look Now’ where Rae states her case for her man’s possessions in no uncertain terms (though with some humour), with the brass somewhat abandoned, and some backing vocals to underline the point, and then it is into a Curtis Mayfield styled ‘How You Gonna’ before the boogaloo of ‘Might As Well Be You’. So hopefully now you are beginning to get some idea of the approach on this rather nice album. You want blues? Then lend an ear to ‘Last Call’ or the slow, West side Chicago styled ‘Sea Of Love’. Blues-rock? Take a listen to the throbbing title track. A good old-fashioned blues ballad – that would be ‘How Much I Love You So’. Some Stax styled soul? Then there is the closing ‘Get Right With The World’. An impressive album then, and it is good to note too that rather unusually for these days, the instrumental solos are just as likely to come from the trumpet of Allan Kalik or saxophonist Scott Franklin as from guitarist Kivett Bednar (impressive though he is).

Norman Darwen
(www.raegordon.com)

The Jimmys – Gotta Have It (Brown Cow BCP 006)

The last time I reviewed The Jimmys they were recording live in Transylvania so it is good to see they escaped OK and have managed to put some daylight between themselves and old Vlad. Tony Braunagel drummed and produced these thirteen tracks, whilst singer and keyboards player Jimmy Voegeli wrote the majority of them. Guitarist/ singer Perry Weber also supplies several, including the rocking opening track, ‘Ain’t Seen Nothin’ Yet’, with its big sounding horn section. Marcia Ball (who guests on vocals) and Braunagel helped to co-write the Crescent City flavoured ‘Write A Hit’ with its delightful sticky rhythm, the Billy Boy Arnold-inflected ‘Always A Woman’ is from Gary Nicholson and Kevin McKendree, and Jim Liban was the source for the slow, BB King influenced blues of ‘Someday Baby’. The title track is a fine 50s styled slab of guitar driven jumping R’n’B, ‘Started Up Again’ draws unashamedly from Slim Harpo’s ‘Scratch My Back’. The closing track is a fine early 60s styled organ instrumental with a hint of New Orleans to it. Really, though, there’s not a poor track on this recommended release.

Norman Darwen
(www.thejimmys.net)
Sloe Train is a five piece band from Swindon & Oxford, that I have not heard before. The first thing that struck me about this CD is the beautiful tone Jerome Braud produces on the guitar. It reminds me a lot of the kind of sound that Peter Green produced in the early days of Fleetwood Mac. But he is not stuck in a rut, being capable or taking his music to new places.

The band members working with Jason are Chris Burrows providing a solid and inventive keyboards presence and Peter Carlisle, providing powerful vocals, Chris McCormack providing some excellent drum work and Tony Ecclestone, bass who fills the bottom-end with rhythmic and melodic bass lines. The band mesh like they have been playing together for forty years.

The album is excellently recorded and mixed. Take for example Big Black Cloud, a walking pace Chicago style blues in which you can hear every note of every instrument all the time. Try also Gone Too Soon, a Caribbean melody reminding me a bit of Bob Marley and with some harmony choruses from the band. Delightful.

Chris Burrows comes to the fore in Here To Stay with backing to Peter Carlisle’s vocal, a rather nice love song in the Whiter Shade of Pale mould, once again with a lovely sounding guitar break. Family Man is built around some funky chords and comes with some really clever lyrics. Twelve songs here, all of the same high quality. Check it out, you will not regret it.

Ian K McKenzie

Various Artists - Holy Grail

https://www.holygrailvintagerootsguitars.com/cd

Steve Chilvers is a self taught luthier with a background in cabinet making. See the interview on page 16, for more information. He always had a big interest in blues and roots music and vintage guitars. Over the years, many of the guitars he made, from one string cigar box, to beautifully finished, full size resonators, fell into the hands of top flight musicians. Steve had the brilliant idea of putting some of them on a CD and this is the result. The cast list consists of Steve Chilvers himself, Mudlow, Paul-Ronney Angel, Hollowbelly and from Sweden, Bottle Neck John. Other artists include Keni Lee Burgess & Bill Helferich, Dollar Bill, M.T. Blues, Rail Spikes, Jonney Boxcars, Chilly Cool Kev, The Phillbilly, and from the USA, blues super star, Eric Bibb and blues royalty Cedric Burnside.

Unfortunately there is not sufficient space to say something about all these tracks, save that if you are a fan of roots music, played and sung with skill and panache, this is a must for you. IMHO outstanding tracks are Further On Down The Road, by Mudlow, great guitar work and a laid back vocal; Too Bad You Had to Leave, by Bottleneck John and the outstanding contribution by Eric Bibb
of Rev Gary Davis’s version of Candy Man. Honourable mention too to Cedric Burnside for his song Thank You. A great thank you to Steve Chilvers for his magnificent luthier skills.

For reasons made clear in the interview ALL PROCEEDS FROM CD SALES WILL GO TO THE MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION. Use this website link.

Ian K. McKenzie

MORE NEWS ABOUT HOLY GRAIL

Steve Chilvers has agreed to provide some prizes for a BiTS competition. The prizes are a copy of the CD and a tee shirt, for each of three winners. To win a prize please answer all the following questions:

1. What is the name given to a homemade musical instrument, usually consisting of a wooden board and a single wire string, stretched between two screws, and played by plucking while varying the pitch with a metal or glass slide held in the other hand?

2. Who was Cedric Burnside’s grandfather?

3. Who wrote the lyrics for Journeyman Blues on the Holy Grail CD?

Send your answers in an email to competition@bluesinthesouth.com. The first three emails received with all answers correct will be the winners. The editor’s decision is final.

Bottleneck John’s cigar box guitar built in the UK by Steve Chilvers at Holy Grail Guitars. Metal body with pearloid overlays and a small resonator cone system.
CLICK ANY OF THE PICS ON THE LEFT AND YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO YOUTUBE FOR A GREAT VIDEO TREAT.

David ‘Honeyboy’ Edwards

Little Walter - My Babe

Pete Harris and Jeradine Hume

Ry Cooder - The Prodigal Son (Live in studio)

Mighty Mo Rodgers - Picasso Blue

David 'Honeyboy' Edwards

Little Walter - My Babe

Pete Harris and Jeradine Hume
Blues in the South
Is proud to support
Kansas City Online Radio
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Music to soothe your soul and ease your worried mind.

Buddy and Hopkins  By Jason Nocera (www.facebook.com/buddyandhopkins)