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Alan Hawkshaw

In a long and distinguished career spanning well over forty years, Alan Hawkshaw has always been at the top of his profession as one of the most in-demand studio musicians, owing to his virtuosic and sensitive technique on a variety of keyboard instruments, but most notably on the piano and Hammond organ.

In the very beginning Alan was a member of the rock'n'roll group **Emile Ford & The Checkmates** who recorded several hits in the 1960's. During this time he toured with **The Rolling Stones** and socialised with **The Beatles**. In the 1970's, he joined **The Shadows**, while at the same time; he enjoyed working as **Olivia Newton-John's** Musical Director and arranger/pianist for which he was awarded *Best Arrangement* by The American Academy of Arts and Sciences for *I Honestly Love You*.



It then followed that Alan was instrumental in a host of hits and worked with such artists including: **Barbra Streisand, Dusty Springfield, The Tremeloes, Cliff Richard, Serge Gainsbourg, Tom Jones, Lulu, David Bowie, Marty Webb, The Marmalade, Maynard Ferguson, Ella Fitzgerald, Albert Finney, Alec Constandinos, Cerrone, Ray Davies** (of **Button Down Brass** fame), **Isabel Adjani, Jane Birkin, Englebert Humperdink, Geoff Wayne, Sacha Distel, Donovan, Catherine Deneuve, Cilla Black** and **Shirley Bassey** plus many, many more...

During the golden era of the British session musician - Alan's keyboard artistry featured on a staggering amount of recordings. You may not be familiar with Alan Hawkshaw but he has one of those names that you've read on countless album covers or single labels as arranger, writer or keyboard player and this is not surprising as Alan has played on approximately 7,000 recording sessions!

As a composer, Alan Hawkshaw has written the music for more than 35 films and countless television programmes including **The Outsider, The Silent Witness** (for which he was awarded the **Ivor Novello Award for Best Film Score**), **Dreams Lost Dreams Found, Magic Moments** and the classic television themes for **Countdown, Grange Hill, The New Statesman, Channel 4 News, Channel 4 Racing, Love Hurts** (for which he earned a **BAFTA nomination**), **Tucker's Luck, Bellamy at Large, The Dave Allen Show** and **The Kenny Everett Video Show**. Alan has also enjoyed a fruitful association with the doyen of science fiction writers, **Arthur C. Clarke**, composing for successive series of **Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious Universe**.

His library track **Chicken Man** was first famously utilised as the theme for **Give Us A Clue** and has since been sampled excessively. Artists Worldwide are discovering and sampling Alan's music and recent hits and writer collaborations include: *Pray* by **Jay-Z** from the **American Gangster** Album and his track *Chainsaw* features in the movie **The Ugly Truth** (starring Gerard Butler and Katherine Heigl)...with the track *Move, Move, Move* in **Nacho Libre** (starring Jack Black) to name but a very few...

Alan has collaborated with many writers over the years including: **Alan & Marilyn Bergman, Don Black, Barry Mason, Geoff Stevens** and composer/arranger **Keith Mansfield**. Another of Alan's longstanding musical associates is drummer, composer and **Shadows'** member, **Brian Bennett**, and Alan's unique and percussive Hammond organ style features heavily on *A Change of Direction* and *The Illustrated London Noise* - the albums Brian recorded under his own name for EMI in the late '60s.

As far as British Hammond organists are concerned, and session players in general, they really don't come any better or more talented than Alan Hawkshaw. In the latter part of the '60s he developed a technique and sound on this instrument as personal and technically brilliant as the great American Hammond organists such as Jimmy Smith, Johnny Hammond and Richard 'Groove' Holmes. The hallmarks of Alan's Hammond style are the seething energy and sheer excitement he invests his playing with, helped in no small measure by his breathtaking virtuosity.

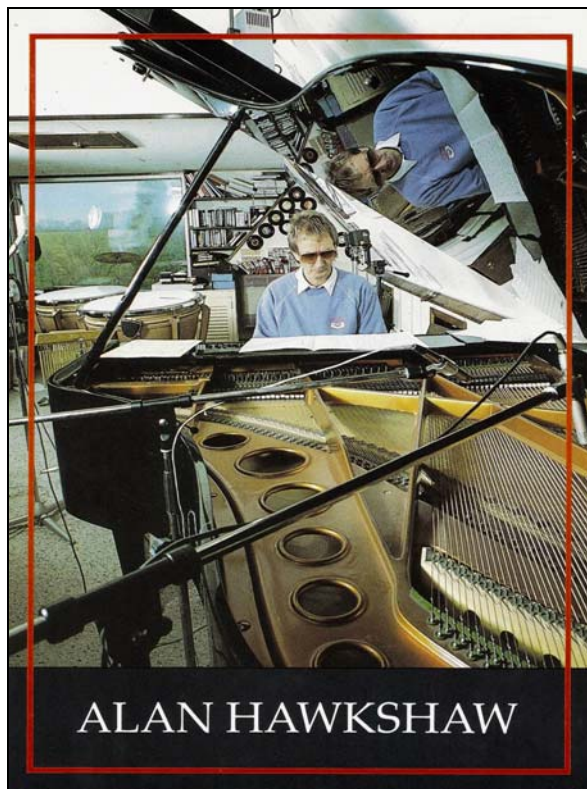
Alan Hawkshaw is the undisputed king of library music! Writing library music has been and continues to be, a large part of Alan's career and throughout the '60s and '70s it provided him with a major outlet for his own compositions. During this period, KPM and later Bruton Music, were the companies for which he wrote extensively but he also has writing credits within the libraries of companies including Amphonic, Music House, Cavendish Music, de Wolfe, Themes International (a company he co-owned with drummer Barry Morgan and guitarist Alan Parker and latterly Noise Pump Music, now known as Atlas Production Music). From a funk perspective, many of the best and most collectable KPM LPs of the '60s and '70s are thanks to the presence of Alan's compositions. *Speed and Excitement* (KPM 1076, 1970), *Music for a Young Generation* (KPM 1086, 1971), *Move with the Times* (KPM 1123, 1973) and *Sounds of the Times* (KPM 1170, 1975) feature the Hawkshaw brand of funk, with original vinyl issues continuing to sell for hefty sums. All this has seen Alan become something of a legend amongst funk collectors.

The popularity of this aspect of Alan's career has obscured to some extent his other musical abilities. He is a superb jazz pianist and improviser, harmonically and melodically inventive with an elegant sense of swing, and a supremely gifted orchestral arranger. One of the best places to hear this side of Alan's talent is on the *Misty* LP, recorded by **Collage** in 1973 for EMI's Studio 2 subsidiary. Collage was a studio band consisting of electric bassist Dave Richmond, Brian Bennett on drums and Alan on acoustic and electric pianos and organ, and was assembled solely for this project.

It gave Alan one of his few opportunities during the '70s to record in a straight-ahead jazz trio setting, and he came up with spellbinding improvisations on evergreens such as **Errol Garner's** *Misty* and **Anthony Newley's** and **Leslie Bricusse's** *Who Can I Turn To?* It also allowed him to score enchanting orchestral arrangements of standards such as **David Raksin's** *Laura* and **Michel Legrand's** *What are You Doing the Rest of Your Life*. Alan's song compositions continue into the 21st Century having composed, produced and arranged the entire **Bob Saker** album, *On A Night Like This* and **Des O'Connor's** *Inspired* album (both currently available on i-Tunes!). Aside from all this Alan is currently delighted to be working with renowned Theatre and Film Screenwriter David Soames, on their exciting collaboration of the Musical **Berlin**.

In addition, Alan is the MD of Petal Music and Alan Hawkshaw Music. Petal receiving two prestigious awards from BMI for over 3million sales on two of its titles *Let Me Be There* and *If You Love Me Let Me Know*.

His Board duties have included 5 years serving on the APC (Association of Professional Composers) now under the BASCA organisation.



And finally, when Alan isn't performing with talent he's investing in it! In 2004, in association with the Performing Rights Society (PRS), he setup **The Alan Hawkshaw Foundation** at Leeds College of Music (LCM) - the area he hails from - which is a scholarship programme providing financial support to gifted young musicians enrolled on the College's Music and Jazz degree courses. The Foundation specifically helps students studying full time at the LCM and is Alan's way of giving something back to the music industry by helping to ensure financial difficulties don't prevent Britain's brightest musical talent from gaining access to expert tuition and from kick-starting professional careers in music. John Dankworth CBE, one of Britain's best known jazz musicians, composers and commentators is a patron.

"We are proud to be associated with Alan Hawkshaw, one of the UK's most prestigious composers and fully support his scheme to fund underprivileged students in the field of music."

Together with Leeds College of Music, Alan has created a bursary fund, which will contribute towards tuition fees, instrument costs and will most importantly give the next generation of artists and musicians the opportunity to follow their dreams.

We fully commend Alan Hawkshaw for his promise to give something back to the new composers and lyricists of tomorrow. This kind of support and generosity is vital to our industry and we would have no hesitation in recommending being associated with this venture".

David Ferguson
Former Chairman BASCA

In Radlett, where Alan lives he has paid for the Sound System at the Radlett Centre for Performing Arts and also underwrites the Radlett Junior Tennis Tournament, now in it's 8th year (an LTA approved event).

Aside from investing his time and finance in the music industry, for the past 25 years, he has also donated 10% of his income towards the welfare of people less well off, specifically those victim of the effects of natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina.

If you haven't heard of Alan Hawkshaw, there's a very good chance you will know him through his music... the man is simply a Legend!...





**GOLD
BADGE
AWARDS**

On winning the music industry's prestigious, Gold Badge Award...

"Happy memories Alan. Many congratulations on this well-deserved award"

Sir Cliff Richard

"Congratulations HAWK! Well deserved"

From all your friends at KPM, Music House, EMI Publishing

"Congratulations Hawk. 'I Honestly Love You'... I must say you played so beautifully on that track. Love and light"

Olivia (Newton-John)

"I was asked if I could come up with a few words about Alan Hawkshaw. Well let's start with musician, composer, arranger...then add imagination...flair, boundless enthusiasm and you will have only a thinly sketched outline of The Hawk"

Des O'Connor



Further accolades...

"Big Al has been a friend and a major musical force for as long as I can remember and he hasn't peaked yet. I have heard some of the gems from his new musical theatre venture and as the great Al Jolson used to say - you ain't heard nothing yet"

Don Black

"The biggest applause of the evening was reserved for Hawkshaw, whose theme to 'Dave Allen at Large' fizzed with a sense of occasion that latter-day TV themes struggle to match. It was also an evening that saw a few long-standing questions finally answered. What was that instrument on the bouncy Grange Hill music? For the curious, it was a guitar fed through some sort of pedal"

The Times on The KPM All-Stars concert at Camden's Jazz Club

"It is most rare in our complex world of music, to come across such a great musician/composer and arranger who, to this day, retains such professionalism and exuberance not only for his own excellence, but for his peers also, in his chosen career."

The Hawk (as he is fondly known) is certainly 'up there' with the best, and I am most fortunate to count him as being one of my closest friends and colleagues over the years.

Continued success my dear friend...Sincerely, Les"

Les Reed OBE.FCL (London)

"Hawk, doyen of Radlett society, master keyboardist and composer of some of the most annoyingly memorable tunes ever to worm their way into my brain..."

John Cameron



"So let us tell you about Mr Alan Hawkshaw: He's the undisputed king of Library music composers and is responsible for a wealth of TV and movie theme tunes, namely The Channel 4 News tune, Countdown, the Cadbury's milk tray advert and of course the theme tune to Grange Hill. We owe a lot to this man. Download and love"

From: WE ARE NOT A ROCKBAND



"Alan was my first choice keyboard player when I became a freelance arranger in 1965. He was not only a good reader, but his sense of time was great for 'pop/commercial' records and he always managed to add something fresh to the written part.

We first met in Denmark Street (London's 'Tin Pan Alley') when I was working in the arranging department of KPM Music and Alan was playing piano on demo sessions in KPM's studio. KPM was to become a big part of both of our lives because it gave us our first chance as composers of library / production music. Many of these compositions became very popular TV themes.



Forty years ago Alan developed a very distinctive 'funky' percussive style of playing the Hammond organ, which is still much admired (and sampled) today. You can get lucky in the music business for a while, but only talent will sustain that success for a lifetime".

Keith Mansfield



"I first met 'The Hawk' in 1960 when I produced my debut top 5 hit for Pye Records – Emile Ford's 'Counting Teardrops'. 'Big Al' was the piano player with The Checkmates, Emile's backing group and he managed to keep me sane on that session. Always one of my favourite keyboard players, we've worked and socialized together many times ever since. Thanks, Al, for not only being a great musician with a wicked sense of humour but also for the long friendship we've enjoyed".

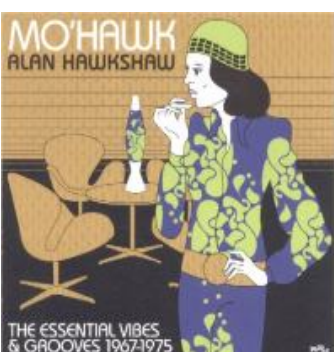
Tony Hatch



"As a result, one Alan Hawkshaw showed up, and from that first session, I knew why he was the 'guvnor' keyboardist in the UK - piano, organ, if it had keys, he could make them sing. What he also became, was a great songwriter and composer of numerous scores for television, and his theme for Channel Four News remains to this day a classic. You only need to hear the opening notes, and you know where you are.

Our careers and friendship has now probably spanned upwards of 35 years - not bad considering I may never have gotten to know Big Al if I hadn't started my sessions at 8 a.m"

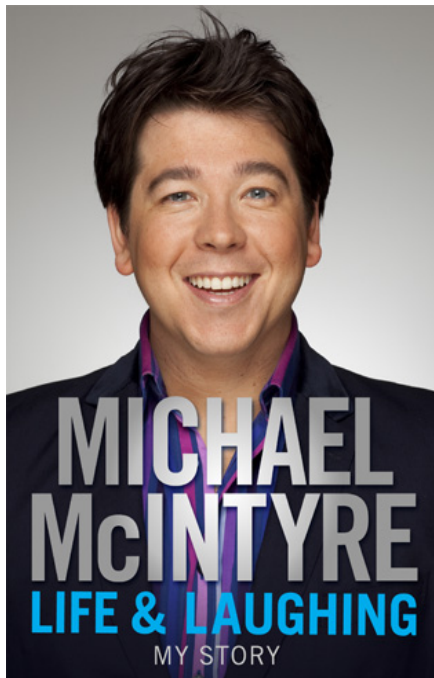
Jeff Wayne



"27 Top TV Themes" - "Any platter touched by the hand of The Hawk gets a good deal of attention these days. This is one that is well deserving of such demand. It contains a lot of excellent cheesy funk-ups, mostly in medley format, of generally up-tempo TV tunes. Nice! Brian Bennett on the skins, Ray Davies parping his horn and Hawkshaw grinding away at the keys: what else do you want? Jam on it?"

Vinyl

Book mentions...



"As indicated by my birth certificate, my dad was primarily involved in the music industry. It was during 'Jokers Wild' that he met Clive Dunn and recorded 'Grandad'. He and his partner Alan Hawkshaw (who signs his emails 'Hawk') were writing and recording songs. I met Alan when I was about thirteen. He's a hilarious character. My dad, my sister and I went to his enormous house in Hertfordshire. Music had been good to the Hawk, one piece of music in particular. He wrote a thirty-second tune that made him a fortune. Can you guess it?"

Here's a clue . . . Its exactly thirty seconds long Here's another . . . Du-du . . . Du-Du . . . De-de-de-de . . . Boom!

Yes, that's right, Countdown (I actually met Carol Vorderman once in a lift. I got in and she was standing at the numbers and asked me, "What floor?" If I couldn't make a joke in these circumstances, I'm in the wrong business. "One from the top and four from anywhere please Carol.") Those thirty seconds netted the Hawk a fortune. His house had its own recording studio, swimming pool, snooker room. He gets paid every time it's played, that's every weekday at about 4.56pm. He actually gets paid by the second, so the longer it takes for people to guess the conundrum, the more money he makes. You can imagine him in the eighties, turning on the telly at 4.55pm., hoping the contestants can't decipher the conundrum so that he can afford a better holiday.

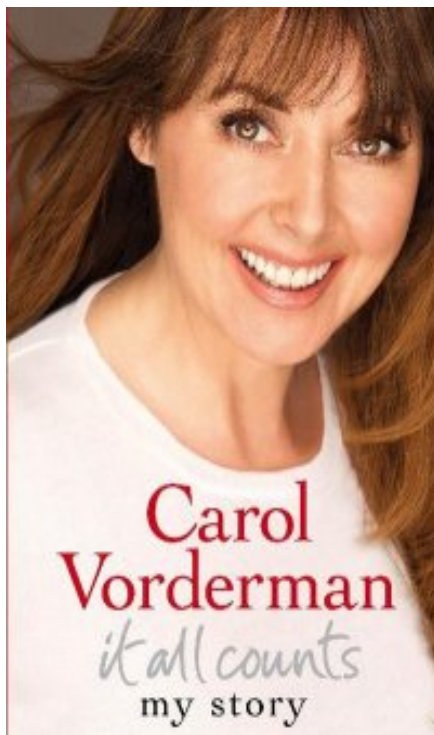
Countdown aficionados (judging by the number of adverts they have for Tena Lady in the break, Countdown is mainly watched by women who pee in their pants) will know that if the contestant buzzes in to guess the conundrum, the clock stops. If they correctly identify the jumbled-up nine-letter word, the game is over. However, if they get it wrong, the clock restarts, which means more money for Alan. You can only imagine the excitement in the Hawk household, whooping and cheering when they guess incorrectly, wild applause, back-slapping and champagne corks popping when the tune reaches its 'De-de-de-de . . . Boom' climax.

My sister and I loved Alan as soon as we met him. He was a charming and personable man. Within moments of our arriving, he sat at his grand piano and dramatically played various TV themes he had written that we might recognize, including the Grange Hill theme. It's wonderful to see someone so proud of their work, and I have to say his rendition of Countdown was one of the most moving thirty seconds of my life. We drove for a pub lunch in his new Japanese sports car, in which he played all his own music, announcing, 'I only ever listen to my own music in the car'.

As the pub was about ten minutes away, I remember thinking, 'I'm glad he has an extensive canon of work-otherwise we'd have to listen to Countdown twenty times back to back'.

So Alan and my dad were writing music and producing records in the sixties and seventies"

Michael McIntyre



"Right from the start, everyone had a view about the Countdown theme tune, written especially for the programme by the seasoned television composer Alan Hawkshaw. But Alan had almost said no to one of the most lucrative commissions in TV history. The station's head of music, Keith Morgan, had asked him to write it. He was busy with Arthur C. Clarke's new series, but said he could just about manage to squeeze it in. With only a few weeks left until we were in the studio, after hearing nothing, Keith rang Alan to remind him about the theme tune.

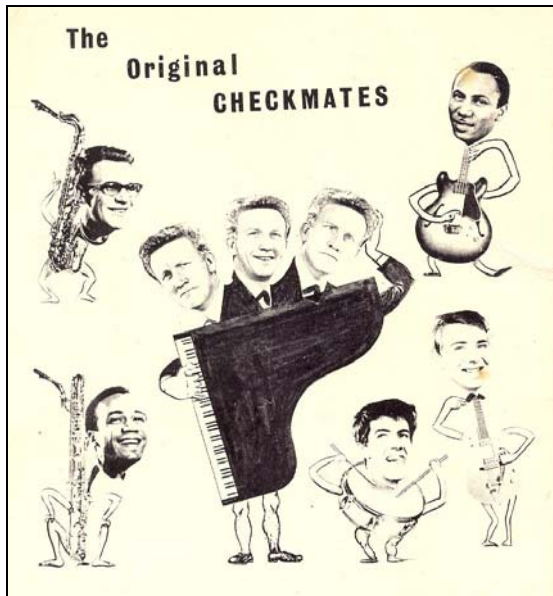
Alan told him it was coming along nicely - without admitting that he hadn't actually started working on it properly. Now, with next to no time to write it, he had to come up with something fast. He went to the toilet and started writing the theme tune there and then.

Years later, he told us that this was how he'd found the inspiration for the cheerful piddly-piddly-ping at the end as he sat on his enamel throne!

This was a Hawkshaw technique employed many times. He wrote the tunes to Grange Hill and the Dave Allen comedy series on the same toilet seat and the music for Channel 4 News in his bath. Putting them all down on paper later on, as it were.

It was this theme tune - complete with Alan's toilet tinkling at the end - which played out at 4.45 p.m. on 2 November 1982"

Carol Vorderman



The Rolling Stones on The Checkmates

"I think they are great, and after continually watching their act night after night, I still find them amusing, their pianist Al Hawkshaw is fantastic!"

Bill Wyman

"One of the most colourful and varied acts we have had the pleasure of working with - great!"

Mick Jagger

THE CHAMP

The Hawk Talks (Autobiography)

Alan has been busy writing his memoirs over the past few years collating stories from many diaries and memories from a life less ordinary! From his early childhood beginnings growing up in a modest working-class family in Leeds, through to becoming one of the UK's most successful and much loved musicians. Alan's writing is personable, riveting and hilarious... much like the man himself!

The Autobiography is entitled **The Champ (The Hawk Talks)** after one of Alan's famous tracks of the same name. The book is scheduled for release in December 2010.

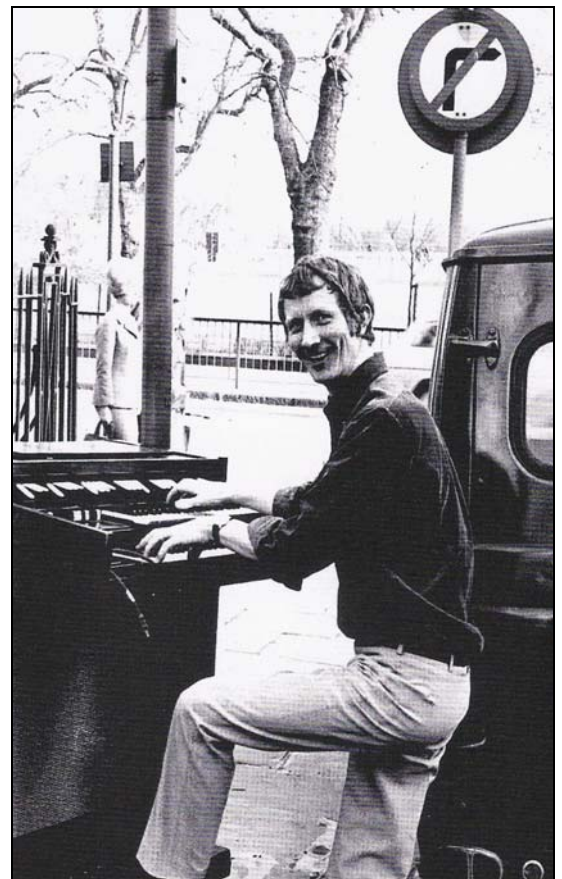
For readers wanting something unique, the book will also be released as a Special Limited Edition which includes a copy of Alan's Album for *Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious World*.

For further information, you can find updates about the book on *The Champ – The Hawk Talks (by Alan Hawkshaw)* on facebook.

Regarding press, PR and interviews, please contact Alan's Agent: Amanda Street at DNA Music Limited at the numbers or email above.

For further information visit: www.alanhawkshaw.com and www.dna-music.com

For those wanting a taste of what's to come, the Foreword to Alan's book is below - read on...





THE CHAMP

(The Hawk Talks) by Alan Hawkshaw

Foreword

Let me start at the very beginning.

Well as close to the beginning as I can get. I suppose it was John Hauckshay, born in 1615 just outside Leeds that started the ball rolling. . . (that's as far back as I could get with my genealogical research). He lived in one of the small hamlets that existed on the main road from Leeds that ran in a north-westerly direction towards Ilkley, the town that inspired the famous song *On Ilkley Moor 'baht hat*, meaning 'without one's hat', a description that could only be understood by a Yorkshireman.

'Put wood int' oil'..... 'shut thee gob'.....'hey-up'....'ee bah gum'... were frequently uttered in Yorkshire, translated as '*Shut the door*' ... '*Shut your mouth*'....and, well 'hey-up' can mean '*watch out*' or '*how's it going?*' or even '*look-out*', while 'ee bah gum' is indefinable, even to me. So clearly, I was destined for an articulate if not bright future, only to be hampered by the fact that nobody outside Yorkshire would know what the heck I was talking about.

John Hauckshay didn't let these limitations stop him from pursuing and marrying a local girl, spawning a son named Samuel, (born 9.9.1632), who begat Henry, who begat Samuel, who begat Henry, who begat Christopher, who begat John, who begat Christopher, who begat Louis, who begat Walter, who begat William.

Well, William Alan actually, and that's where I come in.

Almost without exception, all of the above rose no further than farm labourers, or vendors of some kind including Henry (b. 1737) (*begatted* by Samuel), who turned out to also be a part-time vigilante. In the mid 18th century, chicken rustling and sheep stealing were the equivalent of car-theft nowadays, but forming a posse of irate urbanites today to deal with it would be highly frowned upon by HM Constabularies. In those times of course the law was on the side of the victim, so presumably the local cops turned a blind eye . . . well good for you, sixth generation Uncle Henry!

Without a doubt though, all those mentioned above were a much different class of ancestor than those of my wife Christiane, whose pedigree make mine look comparably low-life. Mayors, doctors, priests, vicars, professors and others in noted positions preceded her. She rarely rubs it in though. A certain look she sometimes gives me does that for her. I cower into submission, always . . . I KNOW MY PLACE!

I do have one ace up my sleeve though. Sir John Hawkshaw, born 1811 and died 1891, who had become a most prominent Civil Engineer in the UK, almost as distinctive as Isambard Kingdom Brunel, (with a name like that he'd *have* to be distinctive). Sir John was responsible for the design and structure of Blackfriars Bridge, Charing Cross station, the whole of the UK's northern railway network, consulted on the Suez and Panama Canals and crammed lots more engineering wonders into his 79 years. I can't claim he is a direct ancestor as he came into the world via a 10th generation uncle of mine, but nevertheless he provides *some* mark of distinction in my broader ancestry. Sir John's son, John Clarke Hawkshaw, married into the Wedgewood family, the famous pottery people, another name I can ancestrally drop. Digging even deeper there is a connection to Charles Darwin, but I'll settle for the more comfortable riff-raff pedigree and move on.

Anyway here I was, born into a troubled world, Adolf Hitler getting ready to try and control the very Freiheit (freedom) of Europe, previously painfully fought for by our brave lads in the 1914-1918 war. My dad was part of that war, surviving it with both his brothers, a miracle in itself. On their return to Leeds they were then able to enjoy a relatively calm period throughout the twenties and thirties, despite a major economic depression around 1930. Dad still had a good job as a machine-minder in a print works, plus his piano-playing pub gigs. Meanwhile, Adolf and his buddies had other ideas . . . nothing to do with my dad's gigs . . . but which would result in yet another world war a few months after my second birthday. Not a great start to life, but at least I was too young to fight in it.

About all I can recall of the early war years are air-raid sirens waking the whole neighbourhood, and me being gathered up in my mother's arms, to rush down to the air-raid shelter in our back garden. Yet not many bombs fell on Leeds. Those that did may have actually improved things a little, considering the

ugliness of some of the housing estates closer to town, especially around Water Lane, Leeds's most depressing street, home to the print-works I was destined for. My three elder brothers all served in the military . . . Eddie, the oldest and next to him Walter, both caught up in the last years of World War 2. Raymond, born in 1930 did his national service in a postwar Germany.

So with this brief history of my forefathers in mind and my entry onto planet Earth, we can get down to the point of this book, which is partly in response to a question that I am repeatedly asked, namely: 'How did I get into the music business'?

Well, there is a short and a long answer, so for the purposes of this book I decided to provide the long answer to the question, starting with a little pre-birth background, intended to establish, due to the bunch of commoners I am a descendent of, whether I was destined to be delinquent, ordinary, normal, or perhaps a genius.



I can claim to be none of these. One cannot be in the music business for 40-odd years and expect to be normal, ordinary even. Delinquent and genius are possible, but I'm neither of these either. So if we assume that I am blinkered in some aspects, but visionary in others, what results is someone who though short on left-brain matter, is compensated by a musical imagination that may or may not have come from John Hauckshay, but which was already becoming apparent through the musical skills of my father, his brothers, and perhaps my grandfather. They of course would never get the opportunities that would eventually present themselves to me. Logie Baird hadn't yet invented the television and BBC radio didn't start broadcasting until 1922, about 20 years after Marconi invented it.

Having said all that, this book was actually started in the year 2000, although I put it aside after writing about a hundred pages or so, because the Yorkshireman in me kept emerging, telling me it was pretentious, and who the heck cares anyway about somebody who's had a very average career in the music business?

Quite a few people it seems, probably due to the ever-growing global library-music enthusiasts who not only collect, trade and comment on my contribution to the industry in general, but to production-music in particular, and I'll get around to the definition of library music later.

Critics though, may suggest there's another reason for this book . . . *egotism*. Well maybe. Nobody writes an autobiography without exercising the ego, I'll concede that, but I am also writing it because in my early years I had very little confidence in myself. I was incredibly shy as a young boy. This developed into an inferiority complex that made me want to BE somebody. OK, I was pretty good at rugby and cricket, but not much good at anything else, and the school I attended was for the children in our community, a collection of rough and ready academic failures, who were not expected to try and improve their future lives. As ever, the ruling classes and some of our greatest military leaders knew we could be effective in a war, but only in vast numbers, expendable, as cannon fodder.

My only hope of escape from the *tres ordinaire* life virtually mapped out for me, was music. I knew this from a very early age. Whatever I had to do in the meantime though, had to be done on others' terms. Despite all those who thought I was just a dummy, a waster, I hoped music would one day earn me some credibility, some respect, and on my terms, but I soon found out it would take effort.

Playing my 12-bass accordion at a local Leeds audition centre when I was about 10 years old came as a great wake-up call when the other kids blew me off the stage with their playing. If they'd put me on earlier, I wouldn't have been aware of the competition I was up against. The pitying looks from the contestants' parents as I exited the stage planted in me an angry determination that one day 'I would show 'em'!

Music acted as a magic carpet that allowed me to soar over all other of life's challenges. But like most things, and in retrospect, it came at a price, with the carpet making frequent stops to let me experience life from all angles, up, down, left, right, in and out. I've gone hungry, lived through one world war and been made to serve my country in a later conflict. I've been hired, fired, insulted, ditched, made a fool of, bashed, humiliated, tempted, yelled at, spat on. And rescued.

Rescued from what? From my own fear of failure for one thing, a curse that dogged every aspect of my life. Nobody likes to fail, but I've finally learned failures are necessary for growth, for strength, that they are the building blocks of positive progression. The failed audition above was the seed of this way of thinking.

But most important of all, I've been privileged, honoured, befriended, rewarded, blessed. And I *mean* blessed. What great people have come into my life, enhanced it, enriched it, making it so worthwhile that I would willingly do it all again. And if I did I wouldn't want to change a thing - no, wait a minute, that's not true - a *few* things maybe - just keep reading and we'll get around to some of them.

The fact of the matter is I'm happiest when I'm working with real musicians, singers, writers, and enthusiastic people to bounce off. All creative people need feedback, positive praise, recognition and encouragement, but constructive criticism should be welcomed, a lesson I was slow to accept.

Since I'm philosophising, I've also learned that talent is a privilege, a gift, an opportunity to give as well as receive, a *responsibility*. Talent is God given. It is for the benefit of others as well as the one on whom it's bestowed. Any creative skill becomes redundant without people to appreciate it, the listeners, the viewers, the critics even. What's more, in the music business, talent cannot and will not ever succeed on its own. Its success depends on talents of a different kind; personal management, producing, publishing and so on. It's just that the bearer of musical talent, or any talent for that matter, gets all the credit. In the music business, who you know and being there at the right time are significant factors and often the key to success, providing you have all the right ingredients; ambition, a willingness to listen, a passion and a hunger for the arts. And yes, luck plays an enormous part in it, but everybody has the means to create openings for luck to work, for serendipity to unfold. All you have to do is find it, because it won't come to you.

End of philosophical indulgence.

This book will hopefully satisfy the curiosity of the library music enthusiasts from the many countries it now exists in. Nobody I know of actually wrote library music as a career. It was always done in-between other commitments, session-work, film and TV and so on. There was never any pressure associated with writing library music. OK, a couple of exceptions would have been the Dave Allen theme, Grange Hill, even Channel 4 News, all written close to the recording sessions, but generally it was something done in our 'down-time'. Many media composers were too busy to compose for the libraries, with TV, Film and Radio being just too demanding, and financially rewarding. No fees were ever paid to a library writer, and no such composer would see any income for at least a year from the issue dates, with nothing guaranteed. In other words it was a slow-burner at best, therefore priorities were with earning an immediate income.

My library composing career came about because of the opportunity given to me by the then head of the KPM Music Library, Robin Phillips. I am greatly indebted to Robin, and to the guy who introduced me to him, Guy Fletcher, probably my oldest buddy in the business. Guy and I had met in a newspaper talent competition, both our respective groups competing for the £1000 prize and the attendant publicity. Although my group The Original Checkmates won first prize, the real prize was meeting Guy and its effect on my future.

But getting down to the business in hand, I hope to provide some of the facts, figures and events leading up to the recordings, the dates and times of key sessions and the personnel on them. Also, I will write about some of the artistes I have worked with: Serge Gainsbourg, Cliff Richard, David Bowie, Tom Jones, Olivia Newton-John, Donovan, Barbra Streisand and a whole bunch more. I know, I know – I'm unashamedly name-dropping, but if I'd used their real names; Harry Webb (Cliff Richard), Donovan Leitch (Donovan), Terence Nelhams (Adam Faith), William Perks (Bill Wyman), David Robert Jones (David Bowie), David Albert Cook (David Essex) Arnold Dorsey aka Gerry Dorsey (Engelbert Humperdinck and so on, it would have lost something. Just reading their real names makes me realize they were a bunch of *Herberts* to start with, just like the rest of us.



I have constantly referred back to my diaries, the earliest of which began in 1967 and through until 1981 that journalised my London studio years, although my 1967 diary went missing somewhere down the line. If anybody sees it for sale on Ebay, I'm bidding.

The weird thing is that as I look back and scrutinise the day-to-day entries in the diaries I find myself recalling everything in detail, even the asides written between the actual bookings such as . . . 'Pick up kids from school' . . . 'Call Olivia for routining . . . (meaning sorting vocal keys) . . . 'Ring Benbo for golf' (Brian Bennett) . . . 'No work today, Boss Cat' . . . a reference to the time I was so busy I had to book time off to see my then favourite TV show, *Boss Cat*. Video and digital recordings didn't exist, so one had to view the live broadcast.

The reference to '*Golf with Benbo*' reminds me how I nearly got fired from playing piano with Cliff Richard. We'd miscalculated an afternoon game, making us arrive with only minutes to spare for the evening performance at the London Palladium. Entirely Benbo's fault of course, he would insist on that extra hole. I had just enough time to change into the upper half of my dinner suit, leaving on my colourful golf trousers. This didn't matter because my lower half would be hidden from the audience. I was on a boxed-in raised platform of three keyboards situated centre-stage directly in front of the band and right behind Cliff's centre microphone. I could have been sitting *without* trousers and no one would have known.

The show was going well until halfway through that old pop standard *Many A Tear Has To Fall*. I turned from one keyboard to another, a black-cloth-draped electric piano facing the audience. As I lay my hands on it to play, the instrument left the rostrum, its legs having been set too close to the edge. The noise as it hit the stage was deafening, but even worse, my lower half was now exposed to the audience, the golf trousers bathed in a reddish glow from the stage lighting. The odd socks I was wearing, one blue, one yellow, added to the farce. Had I been pant-less, they'd have had to call the interval.

Attempting to lift the keyboard back on to the stand as the song continued was a mistake. Apparently the entire audience lost interest in Cliff . . . all eyes now focused on me in my struggle to lift the piano with its splayed legs back up onto the makeshift platform. Rescue came as the song finished and two yellow-jacketed stagehands rushed on to help me - or take me away as someone suggested they should have done.

Harry . . . I mean Cliff, never batted an eyelid.

And here's another reason for this chronicle. Most musicians have a wicked sense of humour. The stories you will have to endure if you continue to read on are kosher, unelaborated, a behind-the-scenes insight into the old saying, 'If anything can go wrong . . . it *will*.' And it often did. We'll get around to that.

But before we get into the real story, let's fast-forward to the 21st Century for a minute. Non-touring, one-off live performances I still find exhilarating. Over the years I've appeared in live shows and concert tours with Cliff Richard, Olivia Newton-John, Emile Ford, Johnny Preston, The Shadows and others, usually performing the same repertoire night after night. Yet it's the occasional live show that works better for me, some of the best being the KPM All-Stars concerts at the Camden Jazz Club and at the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Lengthy tours lose their spontaneity. When Keith Mansfield and I sat down to write our various library pieces 45 years or so ago, separately or together, we never envisaged how popular they would be in the 21st Century, and certainly never expected them to be performed live on the concert and jazz stages. The music business never fails to amaze me! And just for the benefit of any of you anticipating entering this industry, don't ask me for advice. It will always remain a mystery to me how I stumbled from one career event to another in the hands of fate, yet always seeming to land on my feet.

Come to think of it, in the early stages of my professional life I was always inches away from having to get 'a proper job'. I never regarded any area of the music business to be hard work, be it session-work, producing, composing, arranging or publishing. That's only because I enjoyed it so much . . . but to contradict myself, the fact is, as I became more and more involved in the different parts of the business, it did become incredibly stressful, multi-tasking, never finding that happy balance. But it was infinitely preferable to the alternative!

And so I served two apprenticeships, one in the printing trade and one as a professional musician that came with an obstacle course laid with hidden traps, precipices, minefields, challenges, successes and failures, highs and lows. With no academic musical education, no real practical experience, I would find myself learning the trade on the shop floor, as I did in printing, except there was little room for error, in a profession where reputation is everything.

As you read on, give me the benefit of the doubt and accept these chapters for what they are, a self-indulgent account of a failed 11-plus student who got lucky despite an uneventful ancestral history.
