

SAMPLE BIOGRAPHY

Tell your story. Add interesting but relevant facts. A journalist should be able to build a story around your biography so bear this in mind.

AVERAGE WHITE BAND - BIOGRAPHY

Average White Band – three words synonymous with the very best in funk and soul music. Since their first legendary gigs at The Marquee in London, when word went out that something new and wonderful from Scotland was afoot, to the Eric Clapton ‘comeback’ concert which featured AWB as support and presented them to the world’s assembled music bigwigs, their rise to fame was inevitable – though the path would not be smooth nor easy.

The debut album, *Show Your Hand*, was released in 1973 with little fuss or fanfare, but it quickly garnered a solid fan base in the UK, and that summer it was a must-have on London’s hip turntables. No riches and no promises of stardom ensued, however, so the group ditched everything they had, and headed for the USA - the home of the jazz & soul music that had inspired them – and to what would amount to a showdown with the parent record label in L.A.

Having begged, borrowed and scrounged everything possible to make their next album, AWB was living on a wing and a prayer in Los Angeles but great music was oozing out of their pores. Two weeks in Clover studios, graciously donated by owner Steve Cropper and engineer Robert Appere, and the band had what they thought was a killer album. Unfortunately, the hierarchy of MCA-Universal thought otherwise, and gave their efforts the big thumbs down.

Hearts in mouths and pride on the line, the band demanded their tapes back, and the right to go elsewhere; fortune smiled, the bosses agreed, and a meeting with Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records was maneuvered by AWB’s caretaker-manager Bruce McCaskill; Jerry heard their tape – he later said in his autobiography that the music “hit me where I live” – and the group was signed immediately to the label they had most coveted since day one. They were now stablemates of Aretha Franklin, Donny Hathaway, Roberta Flack, and the Spinners and were in the care of the famed Atlantic ‘coaching staff’ who knew their game inside-out.

The re-recording of their L.A. opus was done in New York in just three weeks of April ’74, with Arif Mardin producing, and this time there was no mistaking the quality and the destiny of this record, eponymously titled simply “AWB”. However, fate dealt a bad hand later that year when lynchpin drummer Robbie McIntosh collapsed and died after an astonishing week at LA’s Troubadour club where the great and good of the West Coast music scene had come to marvel at these Scottish upstarts.

It was bitter irony that Pick Up The Pieces should become their anthem – it was literally what they had to do, with new drummer Steve Ferrone – but with that single at the top of both the black and the white US charts, and the album at No.1 simultaneously in February 1975, they had come out of the corner and into the straight at full speed, and were ready to take on all comers. That they did, and went on to record another five hit albums for Atlantic, two for Arista and two for RCA (one of which spawned the 1980 hit, Let's Go Round Again), while receiving three separate Grammy nominations, before the hostile musical climate of the 80s forced them to pause. The dregs of Disco morphing into New Romanticism, while the other side flexed their punk muscles, made for hard times in the worlds of jazz and R&B.

Soul survivors they were, however, and by the end of the decade had reformed with two talented young Americans, a critically-acclaimed album entitled Aftershock, and were back in the saddle, if not totally back on the road. Since 1994, though, AWB's star has risen again. The music flowed anew, their grooves were sampled by a pantheon of HipHop and Rap giants (among them P Diddy, Ice-T, Public Enemy and even Janet Jackson) and their tracks have been in a dozen or more major movies & TV adverts. The sound of Average White band is unmistakable – if you're of a certain youthful age you may not necessarily know their name, but I guarantee you know this music from your funky club scene – and their touring schedule is now busier than at any time in their considerable career.

They are in a rare bracket, with Earth Wind & Fire, Tower of Power, Kool & The Gang, War and Gap Band their contemporaries and their peers, musicians' musicians every one of them, but like AWB their records speak to generation after generation of soul-stirrers and true believers. This year AWB hits the UK in May and early June and is about to embark on their 18th record, a live CD, which will be on release by summer of 06.....perhaps another sweet soul summer in the making. Catch them if you can.

Average White Band are:

Alan Gorrie – Singer, bass & guitar
Onnie McIntyre – guitars & vocals
Klyde Jones – Singer and multi-instrumentalist
Fred Vigdor – Horns, keyboards & vocals
Rocky Bryant – drums & percussion

Their Records are:

Show your Hand	Averagewhiteband.com
AWB (the 'White' album)	SonyBMG UK
Cut The Cake	“
Soul Searching	“
Person To Person Live	“
Warner Communications	“
Benny & Us (w. Ben E King)	“

Atlantic Allstars at Montreux	“
Feel No Fret	“
Volume VIII	“
Shine	“
Cupid's In Fashion	“
Aftershock	Averagewhiteband.com
Soul Tattoo	“
Face To Face Live	“
Living In Colour	“
Greatest & Latest	Roadrunner UK

