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[An Interview With Mike Tobin About Stackridge](#)

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I recently had the pleasure of [reviewing](#) a DVD about a British band. Stackridge is not well known in North America, but it should be. Their origins lay in the early 70's, and their genre is hard to pigeon hole, maybe folk rock, or maybe not. Like many bands they have seen both good and bad times, even complete dissolution. In 2007, armed with the some of the original heavy hitters from the 70's they decided to have another 'Kick at the cat'.

By luck and happenstance, I discovered that Mike Tobin was back as their manager, Mike had been their first manager, and had helped them take their first faltering steps 35 years ago. Everyone is older and wiser now, can the good ship Stackridge make it this time? I think it can. Based on the DVD that I watched, this is a great band. They do not need a million dollar light show, they don't need Britney Spears' bikini clad dancers, they just need a stage and an audience.

Mike Tobin was gracious enough to spend some time talking to me about this new Stackridge.

As I understand it the band has had a couple of reincarnations. Can you tell us a little about the band, and how this latest reincarnation came about?

Stackridge had a fluctuating line up in the very early years, but what most regard as the "classic" line up was 1970-74. Then there was a period where Andy Davis continued with the band but with a series of line up changes until the final break up in 76. It was not until 1999 that the first reformation took place, which featured original members James Warren & "Crun" Walters it was instigated by Violinist Mike Evans (who joined the band in 1970) & his wife Jenny, who managed this incarnation. Although there were some great musicians involved and several gigs were superb, Including an appearance at the Glastonbury Festival. the project finally failed and it seemed as if the story was over.

However James started to do local gigs under the banner "James Warren & Friends" with "Crun" once again on bass and Glenn Tommey on keys (who had worked with James in The Korgis). During 2006 Andy & James discussed the idea of having one more try at Stackridge. They finally persuaded "Mutter" Slater to also join in. With the entire back catalogue of albums from the 70s on re-release via Angel-Air Records the time looked ripe for us to give it one more try. Gigging started in earnest in 2007.

If you want the 'blow by blow' version of us, I recommend that you check out www.stackridge.net, where we have a much more detailed history.

You said that you are actively gigging in the UK, where can people find out when and where?

An up to date gig list can also be found on our web site, and also on www.stillgigging.com.

Is there another album in the works?

James/Andy/Mutter and Crun are prolific writers, both separately and collectively. As there is such a wealth of material from the last 35 years. New fans will be discovering this from the live shows, the effort at the moment is to "sell" that material. However (and this is very "hot off the presses") plans to write routine & then record a whole new album in 2008 with a top producer & hopefully release on a major(ish) label are currently under way. Not a lot of people know this.

Mike, my lips are sealed, I won't tell anyone about this project till you say so!

When can we expect a US tour?

The USA?. Many people, me included have long thought that America would love this band. We would love to have a crack on conquering the USA. However as we are not signed to a major label, we have no real track record. No "hits", it is a tough call to get the ball rolling. The advice I am getting, is that even to get work permits would be impossible without the backing of a major American organisation. If we were to try and do it In a "small way" to start we would still need somebody to finance the airfares and at least the costs of travel/hotels initially. Probably an initial stab at the East Coast would make most sense, Boston, Connecticut etc. etc. Arty /University towns. Maybe across to Seattle too. If we could build media interest before and during the trip it could build into something much bigger and better. All help and advice is welcome!

Ok all you big record execs, give Mike a call!

I understand that you are a radio host, can you tell me a little about that?

Apart from Stackridge my other great musical love is early 50s Rock n Roll. I have been singing R n R with local bands since 1957!!! I host a show called "Mike Tobin's Rock n Roll Melting Pot" on a small community radio station called Thornbury FM, which at the moment only broadcasts twice a year for 4 weeks, in an effort to gain a full licence when one comes up. Next series of shows is scheduled for Nov. 2007. It can be listened to world wide via www.thornburyfm.org

Stackridge has a very loyal fan base, I know that because I have heard from some of them, what is the appeal? I liken it to the grateful dead followers, but from a different social strata.

They are so devoted! Most of them are now (like the band) in their 50's & followed the band back in the 70s when they were gigging night after night up & down the U.K. However there are also odd fans dotted around the world who picked up on them via their original albums, plus we seem to be gaining new fans from all age groups . No idea what the appeal really is.....I can't explain why I love them so much. !

All that I can say is that there is something about their music which makes you smile, not because it is "funny" or "comic" but because it just seems so uplifting. The only true comparison to any other music has to be The Beatles, purely because on every Beatles album you waited with bated breath when you first heard a new album as you just could not guess what would come next. Stackridge music is like that, unpredictable, diverse, not of any one genre, always surprising and never, ever boring.

Thanks for talking to me Mike, I am sure that the rest of the folks here at BNN join me in wishing you and Stackridge the best success. I also want comp tickets when you come to Calgary to play (my wife liked the DVD as well)!

Simon Barrett

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