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and their dad, Bobby Dean*
August 2023 Kitchener Blues Festival



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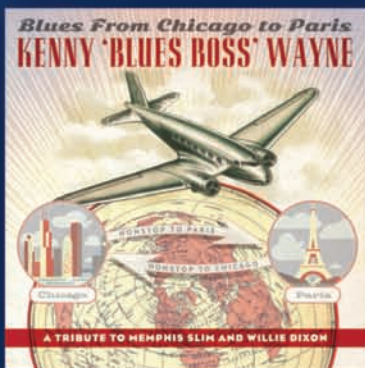
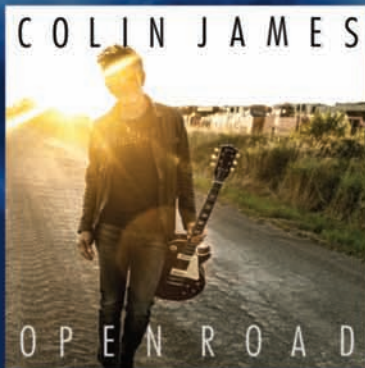
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DAMON FOWLER
THE WHISKEY BAYOU SESSION



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BIG CITY **BLUES** VIEWS

"I Ain't Complaining, I'm Just Explaining!" O' Canada!

After spending my mid-life in the wonderful musical odyssey called the Motor City - Detroit, I was always thrilled to say to people "Canada is south of us." Windsor, Ontario that is! We spent many summers at the Windsor Blues Festival courtesy of the Canadian South Blues Society and **Louise & Ted Boomer**. They were the host with the most. They took all the musicians in like they were family! Good stuff! But the great story I have is when Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine hosted a tour with **David "Honeyboy" Edwards** and **Bobby Rush** in southern Ontario in December of 2007 that ended at the famed nightclub—**Hugh's Room Live!** We started out the tour at **Bert's Warehouse** in Detroit where the two Mississippi blues legends Honeyboy Edwards and Bobby Rush put on great blues show. Then we crossed the border to Ontario as an 100 year blizzard was approaching. Our first stop was at the **Dirty Dog** in London - Honeyboy performed followed by Bobby Rush, then they played together. After the autographs and schmoozing all of us were ready to go back to the hotel as the blizzard began outside and we were tired. We said, "Honeyboy, let's go!" And Honeyboy asked for another Heineken. So Honey is the boss and we waited. Finally we saw Honeyboy sneaking out the back door with a twenty-something waitress from Amsterdam. **Michael Frank** and I grabbed



Honeyboy Edwards and Bobby Rush at Hugh's Room Live! December 2007

Honeyboy from disappearing in London, Ontario. We said, "Honey you can bring her back to your room but we can't lose sight of you." But the bloom was off the rose, they departed and Honey came back to the hotel. The next day we got up and drove through an icy blizzard to Toronto. We had a gig lined up at Hugh's Room Live and there was a line around the block. Great show, great crowd! The next day we had to drive down Route 4 to get these men back home. As we approached the tunnel and customs, someone mentioned to Honeyboy about that waitress in London that had a crush on him. Honeyboy smiled and said, "Yes, she gave me a Christmas gift." "Whoa!" we exclaimed. "What was it?" Honeyboy replied, "Some stinky gange." We stopped the van before entering the tunnel and U.S.

Customs."Where is it?" we asked. "No it's my Christmas gift," said Honeyboy. We finally found it in his socks and quickly disposed of it. Honeyboy was old school and did not cuss much but on this occasion he did: "Goddammit!" So we got across the border and everyone got home safe. A POSTSCRIPT: Sugar and I would always go to Chicago near the holidays and to bring to our elders' homes a fruit basket. After we stopped by Koko Taylor's home, we stopped in at Honeyboy's apartment. He answered the door and introduced us to his twenty something girlfriend. Then we gave him a fruit basket and a couple of my cannabis cookies called "**Junior's Cooper Snaps**" to make up for the "Christmas gift" that we had to lose in Canada. He smiled and brought Sugar to his bedroom

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On the cover: Photo by Laura Carbone at the Kitchener Blues festival 2023



Ted Boomer, Sugar and Junior in Leelaneau Peninsula.

and said, "Sugar you didn't need to worry about me in Canada, I had my derringer!" as he pulled out his gun from his waistband to show her. The moral of the story is: if traveling with an elderly person, strip search them! Canadian blues!

I had another incident around the border of Canada on March 4th, 1977. I got a call from an esteemed writer who was at the **El Mocambo Club** in Toronto where the **Rolling Stones** were hanging out and this reporter said there was no shortage of drugs there but

no cannabis. So I got cleaned up and wore a suit and got a haircut and headed for the border with 30 thai sticks strapped to my legs. No,' not happening!' - all the weed was taken by Canadian customs and I got a 5 year ban on entering Canada. Canadian blues!

Canada and its festivals and nightclubs pay the U.S. musicians better than the U.S. does. In the 1950's musicians went to Paris and did not come back. The way they treated and paid was much better than at home. Oh Canada!

We have as many Canadian

Top 11 Songs on Junior's Juke Box

1. Bobby Rush, "All My Love For You"
2. Doug Deming, "Grooving At Groove Now"
3. Tom Hambridge, "Blu Ja Vu"
4. Larry Taylor, "Generations of Blues"
5. Anthony Rosano, "Cheat the Devil"
6. Poppa Chubby, "Live at G. Bluesy Juke Joint"
7. Larry McCray, "Blues Without You"
8. Johnny Rawls, "Going Back to Mississippi"
9. Ana Popovic, "Power"
10. Kingfish, "662"
11. Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine's CD Sampler #34

subscribers as we have in the U.S. Thank-you! This issue is a tribute to them. Subscribe to keep us alive! It's cheap and easy! If we have helped you and your music in any way, please drop us a few dollars to say thank-you and the magazine will continue to thrive and come your way! Subscribe now at www.bigcitybluesmag.com!

Lots of thank-you's coming: Thank-you **LAURA CABONE** for your photos and guidance with this Canadian issue! Thank-you **Louise & Ted Boomer** for keeping my magazines dry and safe! Thank-you **Jimmy Jabo** and his wife **Josephine** for helping us move to our Glen Arbor studio! Let's fish! Thank-you **Ed Love** for continuing to support our efforts to build our home! Thank-you **Charlie Auringer, Bob Monteleone and Guy Powell** for keeping the blues alive with **Big City Rhythm & Blues Magazine**. And finally my wife, my partner, my life - **Sugar** for keeping the love light burning in my life. I am lucky and blessed.

See you all down the road, down the river, at the festivals, when you come to the crossroads—take it, take the high road, may the river be with you, may the wind be behind your back, surf's up, mahola, aloha and don't forget to boogie!

Love & happiness, hope & peace,

Best,
Robert Jr. Whitall

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