

## The Kingston Trio – Bio

The original incarnation of The Kingston Trio featured Bob Shane [christened Robert Castle Schoen, born 1<sup>st</sup> February 1934 in Hilo, Hawaii], Nick Reynolds [born 27<sup>th</sup> July 1933 in San Diego, California] and Dave Guard [born 19<sup>th</sup> October 1934 in Honolulu, Hawaii, died 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1991 in Rollinsford, New Hampshire].

Guard and Shane met as classmates while attending Honolulu's Punahou School from which they graduated in 1952. Sharing an interest in folk music, during their junior year the pair formed a group that played at local island events. Encouraged by his civil engineer/U.S. Army Reserve colonel father to enter the business world, Guard enrolled as an economics major at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California and graduated in 1956. Shane's father, a wholesale distributor of toys and sporting goods, planned that Bob would eventually take his place. With that in mind, Bob enrolled as a business major at Menlo College in Atherton, California. It was there, during an accounting class, that Bob met another musically inclined teen, Nick Reynolds, and the pair began performing together and were subsequently joined by Dave Guard. As a trio they performed in public as The Calypsonians and went on to record some demos. Of those song demos "Run Joe" and "Fast Freight" appeared on recordings the Kingston Trio made for Capitol Records.

In late 1956 Bob returned to Hawaii to work in the family business. Guard and Reynolds continued to perform together and recruiting bassist Joe Gannon and his vocalist fiancée Barbara Bogue performed as The Kingston Quartet. Undertaking a concert date at the Italian Village in San Francisco they invited publicist Frank Werber to see their show. They had met Werber some months earlier, at the Cracked Pot in Palo Alto, when Bob, Nick and Dave were still performing as the Calypsonians. Werber suggest that the Quartet line-up was not as 'musically' strong as its predecessor. Reynolds phoned Bob Shane and asked if he wanted to become a member of The Kingston Trio. Shane's love for music was to great and he accepted the invitation. Gannon worked as the Trio's business manager during the 1960's.

Signing with Capitol Records the Trio's self-titled debut album, produced by the late Voyle Gilmore [d. 1974], was released in 1958. The Trio's debut hit single "Tom Dooley, # 1 U.S. Pop during 1958, reputedly sold over six million copies. Over the ensuing two years, culled from their albums, a string of less commercially successful chart singles followed including "The Tijuana Jail" [# 12, 1959], "M.T.A." [# 15, 1959], "A Worried Man" [# 20, 1959], "El Matador" [# 32, 1960] and "Bad Man Blunder" [# 37, 1960]. In 1959, with categories for Folk Music yet to be conceived, the Trio scored the first Best Country & Western Performance Grammy for "Tom Dooley." The following year they won the first Best Ethnic or Traditional Folk Recording Grammy for "**The Kingston Trio At Large.**" During the early 1960's the Trio, simulataneously, had four Top 10 selling recordings in the U.S. Album Chart.

Having recorded ten albums for Capitol, citing 'musical differences' and under somewhat acrimonious circumstances, Guard departed from the Trio during 1961. Guard then recruited, high school friend Cyrus Faryar, Kingston Trio accompanist David "Buck" Wheat [upright bass] and Judy Henske, and formed the Whiskey Hill Singers. The quartet recorded one self-titled album for Capitol and contributed to the soundtrack of the movie "**How The West Was Won**" [1962]. In 1962 Guard relocated his family to Australia where he remained for six years, teaching guitar and hosting the television show "**Dave's Place.**" On his return to the States, through the seventies, Guard authored several books, including music books, and recorded Gabby Pahinui but subsequently faded from public view and died, aged 57, of lymphatic cancer.

Guard's replacement in the Trio was John Stewart [born 5<sup>th</sup> September 1939 in San Diego, California], founder and leader of The Cumberland Three a folk music act who recorded for Capitol Records. Several Stewart compositions had been recorded by the first incarnation of the Trio. The second incarnation of the Trio continued to record for Capitol and the first Stewart era album was titled "**Close Up.**" During Stewart's initial tenure with the Trio they scored a number of chart singles including "Where Have All The Flowers Gone?" [# 21, 1962], "Greenback Dollar" [# 21, 1963], "Reverend Mr. Black" [# 8, 1963] and "Desert Pete" [# 33, 1963]. With the subsequent Stateside arrival and commercial success enjoyed by The Beatles and other British bred pop bands the Trio's popularity began to wane. Having cut a total of eighteen albums for Capitol, in 1964 the Trio signed with Decca, and cut four albums for the imprint beginning with "**Nick Bob John.**" The second incarnation of the Trio disbanded after performing

at San Francisco's Hungry i on 17<sup>th</sup> June 1967. The Collectors Choice release "**The Final Concert**" [2007] features that final performance.

Titled "**Signals Through The Glass**" [1968], and produced by Gilmore, Stewart cut one duo album with his wife Buffy Ford, then launched his solo career with the classic Nick Venet [d. 1998] produced album "**California Bloodlines**" [1969]. During his subsequent solo career Stewart has recorded some four dozen albums and enjoyed three commercially successful songs – The Monkees took "Daydream Believer" to # 1 U.S. Pop during late 1967, John scored a # 5 U.S. Pop single in 1979 with "Gold," and in 1988 Rosanne Cash covered "Runaway Train" and, released on a single, it reached # 1 in the U.S. Country Singles Chart. Stewart has recorded albums for/had albums reissued by, a number of labels including Capitol, RCA Victor, RSO, Allegiance, Bear Family, Affordable Dreams, Polydor, Line, Feegie, Shanachie, Takoma, Folk Era, Laser Light, Cypress, Wrasse, Homecoming and Appleseed.

In the summer of 1967 Reynolds retired to Oregon, bought a ranch and raised a family. In 1983, and featuring a guest appearance by Lindsey Buckingham [Fleetwood Mac], Nick cut a mini album with Stewart titled "**Revenge Of The Budgie**" and during the period 1988-1998 he performed once as a member of The Kingston Trio. These days Reynolds lives in Coronado, California. In 1967 Shane had objected to the Trio disbanding and two years later formed The New Kingston Trio. In 1976 Shane bought out Messrs. Reynolds and Werber thereby gaining exclusive right to use the name, The Kingston Trio. Shane retired in 2004, due to poor health, but retains ownership of the name. Shane currently resides in Phoenix, Arizona. Subsequent members of Shane's Trio's, including accompanists, have been Pat Horine, Stan Kaess, Frank Sanchez, Ben Schubert, Tom Green, Cary Black, Paul Garielson, Jim Connor, Roger Gambill, Bobby Haworth, Bill Zorn, Rick Dougherty and George Grove.

Since disbanding the Stewart incarnation of the Trio their old recordings [including album made with Guard], and new recordings by subsequent incarnations of the Trio, have appeared on a multitude of labels. A double album, the 1969 Tetragrammaton release "**Once Upon A Time**" featured previously unreleased live recordings made, at Las Vegas' Sahara-Tahoe Hotel, during 1966. Through the 1980's the Folk Era label issued a series of Trio compilations including "**Tune-Up**," "**Rediscover The Kingston Trio**," "**Treasure Chest**" and "**Hidden Treasures**" which contained non-album tracks issued as singles. The most comprehensive overview of recordings by the first and second incarnations of The Kingston Trio were presented as 10 CD box sets "**The Guard Years**" [1997] and "**The Stewart Years**" [2000] by the German label Bear Family Records. In recent years the Illinois based reissue label Collectors Choice took up the baton and reissued a series of '2 albums on 1 CD' by the Guard and Stewart incarnations of the Trio. Their most recent releases "**Live At The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium!**" and "**The Final Concert**" feature the final performances by the first [+ ] and second incarnations of the Trio, while "**The Lost 1967 Album**" is a previously unreleased collection of studio recordings made during the final months of the Stewart Trio. It appears that while the public appetite exists, the tide of 'new and old Trio releases' will never ebb. Collectors' Choice program of Kingston Trio releases continued through late 2007 with the reissuing of "**Once Upon A Time**" and the first **release** ever of the concurrently recorded "**Twice Upon A Time**" [2007].

Last year's **The Lost 1967 Album**" was sub-titled "**Rarities Vol. 1**" and the 2008 release "**Turning Like Forever**" bears the title "**Rarities Vol. 2**." "**Vol. 2**" featured fifteen songs, a September 1963 radio interview with the group and a dozen 'radio spots' recorded during April the following year.

#### **Note.**

[+] – Recorded on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1961, three weeks before Guard announced his departure, this release claims to be the last known recording by the Guard, Reynolds and Shane line-up.

#### Discography :

**Note.** As far as possible, this discography ignores releases in the form of reissued albums, 2 for 1's, compilations or box sets, although the titles/release date of some of the foregoing are referred to in the narrative.

"**The Kingston Trio**" [1958] ; "**...From The Hungry i**" [1959] ; "**Stereo Concert**" [1959] ; "**The Kingston Trio At Large**" [1959] ; "**Here We Go Again**" [1959] ; "**Sold Out**" [1960] ; "**String Along**" [1960] ; "**The Last Month Of The Year**" [1960] ; "**Make Way**" [1961] ; "**Goin' Places**" [1961] ; "**Close Up**" [1961] ; "**College Concert**" [1962] ; "**Something Special**" [1962] ; "**New Frontier**" [1962] ; "**#16**" [1963] ; "**Sunny Side**" [1963] ; "**Time To Think**" [1963] ; "**Back In Town**" [1964] ; "**Nick Bob John**"

[1964] ; **“Stay Awhile”** [1965] ; **“Somethin’ Else”** [1965] ; **“Children Of The Morning”** [1966] ; **“Once Upon A Time”** [1969] ; **“The World Needs A Melody”** [1973] ; **“Aspen Gold”** reissued in 2004 as **“Once Again..The Kingston Trio”** [1979] ; **“25 Years Non-Stop”** [1982] ; **“Looking For The Sunshine”** [1983] ; **“Everybody’s Talking”** originally a cassette and video only release, part of video soundtrack was reissued in 2001 as the CD **“The Houston Tapes: First Set”** [1989] ; **“An Evening With The Kingston Trio”** [1988] ; **“The Kingston Trio Live At Newport”** [1994] ; **“Live At The Crazy Horse”** [1994] ; **“The New Kingston Trio: The Lost Masters 1969-1972”** [1995] ; **“By Special Request”** [2001] ; **“Live In Reno”** [2001] ; **“The Kingston Trio: 45th Anniversary Tribute”** [2002] ; **“Still Goin’ Places”** [2005] ; **“Snapshot: Live In Concert 1965”** [2006] ; **“The Lost 1967 Album”** [2007] ; **“The Final Concert”** [2007] ; **“Live At The Santa Monica Civic Auditorium!”** [2007] ; **“Once Upon A Time”** [2007] ; **“Twice Upon A Time”** [2007] ; **“Turning Like Forever”** [2008] :

### **Arthur Wood**

Kerrville Kronikles 09/07, 03/08 & 07/08.

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