

## American Flyer – Bio

American Flyer was formed in 1976, and the line-up of this *country rock* supergroup was Craig Fuller [b. July 18<sup>th</sup> 1949 in Portsmouth, Ohio, guitar], Eric Justin Kaz [b. 1947, Brooklyn, NYC, guitar], Steve Katz [b. May 9<sup>th</sup> 1945 in Brooklyn, NYC, guitar] and Doug Yule [b. February 25<sup>th</sup> 1947 in ?, bass].

In Columbus, Ohio circa 1970, Fuller had been a founding member of the country rock aggregation, Pure Prairie League, and appeared on their first two albums **“Pure Prairie League”** [1972] and **“Bustin’ Out”** [1972]. Forced to serve a sentence for being a conscientious objector to the draft, Fuller left the group and performed community service in a hospital for two years. In February 1974 **“Bustin’ Out”** finally charted, and the League scored a Top 40 single the following month, ironically, with Fuller’s “Amie.” In the mid-sixties Kaz had been a member of the Children Of Paradise, a band that also featured Artie & Happy Traum. At the close of the decade Eric joined the Blues Magoos, and then signed a solo deal with Atlantic Records and cut the albums **“If You’re Lonely”** [1972] and **“Cul-De-Sac”** [1974]. Linda Ronstadt and Bonnie Raitt have cut his songs. Katz was a member of The Blues Project [1966/67] and Blood Sweat And Tears [1968/73], while Yule had previously played with The Velvet Underground, taking John Cale’s place in 1968 when the Welshman left to pursue a solo career.

Signed the United Artist Records, the band’s self-titled debut album was produced by George Martin and recorded at three studios in the Los Angeles area. The support players included Larry Carlton, Rusty Young [Poco], and Byron Berline [Dillard And Clark Expedition, Flying Burrito Brothers]. All of the band members contributed songs to **“American Flyer,”** but the twelve-song recording failed to make any headway commercially. The fact that a couple of the band member’s refused to tour in support of the album, surely contributed to that outcome. The band cut its sophomore album in Canada, at Eastern Sound Studios in Toronto, and they co-produced **“Spirit Of A Woman”** with Ken Friesen. The guest players on the disc included vocalists Tracy Nelson, Sylvia Tyson, Linda Ronstadt and J.D. Souther. Just over thirty minutes in duration and only featuring nine songs [once again there were songs by all four members, although Kaz contributed by far the most with 6 credits including co-writes], the second album also sank without trace and the band members subsequently parted company. In 1978, Craig Fuller and Eric Kaz released a ten track, self-titled duo album on CBS, which was produced by Val Garay.

Discography : **“American Flyer”** [1976] ; **“Spirit Of A Woman”** [1977] ; **“American Flyer/Spirit Of A Woman”** 2 on 1 CD reissue [2003] :

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Kerrville Kronikles 11/03

[430 words]