

My Encounters with CSNY

by Gary Goltz - Updated January 19, 2023

I pondered the day when the hope for a CSNY reunion tour would be gone. Now with the passing of David Crosby, I will relish the memories of the times I got to see them perform and meet them evermore.

On Thursday, September 12, 1996, I went to see a concert of my favorite singer/song writer Neil Young at Irvine Meadows, in Southern California. My friend suggested I drive my 1955 Broderick Crawford *Highway Patrol* Buick, as he had knew Neil was a classic collector. After the show, I was allowed to park my Buick next to Neil's tour bus.

The tour bus itself was a tribute to classic Buicks. It had two 48 Roadmaster roofs mounted on the top, with a 48 Roadmaster grill mounted on the front, and 61 Buick tail lights mounted on its rear. It also had a set of 54 Buick portholes on its side.



After a short wait, Neil came out of the backstage exit on his way to the bus. Upon seeing my Highway Patrol car he paused to admire it with a true Buick lover's glow in his eyes. I played the *Highway Patrol* theme song through the car's P.A. system. This brought a smile to Neil and the estimated 30 people that had gathered around. I switched to a new Neil Young CD (Mirror Ball). With my classic Buick's mike still in his hand, Neil began singing along to the first track in front of the crowd that had formed. I asked if we could get a picture together and Neil ordered the late Eliot Roberts (his manager who had been haggling with me to sell Neil my car to which Neil just rolled his eyes) to *TAKE IT*, then handed him my camera. The result is the photo above.

A year later the HORDE Festival seeing Neil, I wore a tee shirt I had made with the picture of us on it. When I got to go back stage after the show Neil walked past me and looking pretty tired.

I yelled out to him and he initially said, "hey man I'm ready to call it a night". But then I said look at my shirt to which he glanced down and immediately got a smile on his face saying, "I remember you and that cool Buick". I asked him to sign the shirt which he did while I was wearing it. I told him the problem was now that he signed it I couldn't wear it anymore since I was going to have it framed. Below is the signed tee shirt along with the mic he sang into.



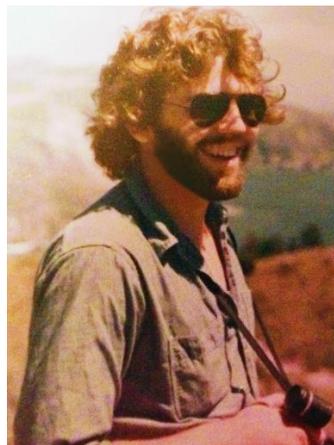
For those who may not know, Neil's song *Long May You Run* is a tribute to his 48 Buick Roadmaster hearse he called *Mort*. It the one he was driving in Los Angeles back in 1966 when he ran into Stephen Stills and formed the Buffalo Springfield. I have since further dedicated the song to my 1955 Broderick Crawford *Highway Patrol* Buick too.



In March of 2002, I met David Crosby and [Graham Nash](#) back stage at a CSNY show in San Diego with my wife Sharon and got this great picture of the four of us.



A few months later in June I met [the late David Crosby](#) again backstage at a CPR show in Pasadena this time wearing a Simpson's CSNY caricature t-shirt which he apparently had never seen. Crosby was so enamored with it that I asked him if he wanted it and he said I can't take it right off you man. I thought about it for a second then literally gave him the shirt off my back figuring it would make a great story.



Me in 2002 right before I gave Croz the t-shirt and in 1974 when I first saw CSNY

I asked Crosby if he recalled the scene he was in on the Simpson's to which he said no. So I shared with him as my son had refreshed my memory prior to the show. It entailed Crosby encountering Barney at an award ceremony where Barney exclaims *David Crosby, I love you*. Crosby response was, *you like my music?* To which Barney said, *you make music?* Crosby cracked-up and thanked me profusely for the t-shirt. A friend mine who was nearby, kindly supplied me with his Levi jacket to wear. (This story appears in the 2022 book [Music is Love by Francesco Lucarelli](#).)



I finally got to meet [Stephen Stills](#) who was with his lovely wife Kristen at a Beverly Hills book signing for Judy Collins' autobiography; *Sweet Judy Blues Eyes*, on Monday, February 4, 2013.



Then on Thursday, November 7, 2013 I ran into Neil at the annual SEMA show in the Las Vegas Convention Center. Neil was a featured speaker at this world renowned aftermarket auto performance accessory exhibition where his 1959 [LincVolt](#) classic car he had converted to run on batteries was on display.

This time I got a picture with Neil in front of his car. We talk for about 5 minutes on array of subjects including our mutual love of Buicks, the recent Bridge show, CSNY doing a tour next year, and more.



I also got an opportunity to meet and talk to Neil's son Ben who was with him at the SEMA show.



On April 13, 2013, my good friend Joni Milken and I went see an exhibit of photography of Graham Nash at the famous [Morrison Hotel Gallery near Hollywood](#). There we ran into Graham as well as long time CSNY photographer Joel Bernstein.

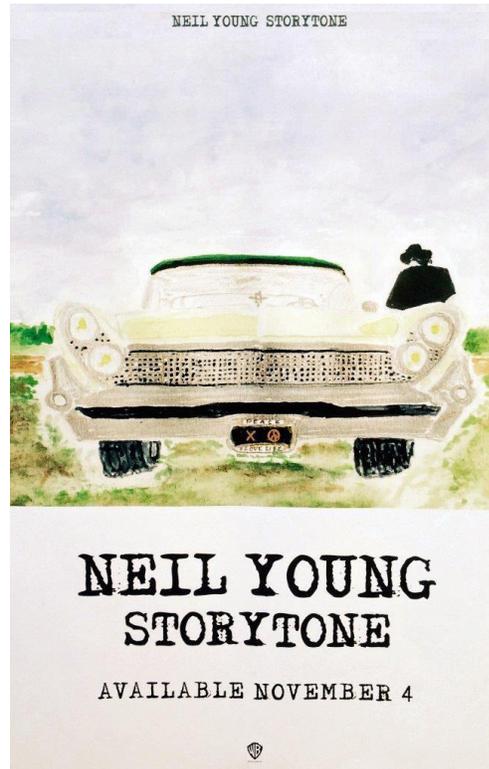


Over the years, I've also had the pleasure of meeting several of my Laurel Canyon heroes including the classic rock photographer, [Henry Diltz](#) who shot covers for CSN, Doors, Eagles, etc. to name a few.



These pictures were also taken in April 2014.

In November of 2014, Neil at the [Robert Berman Gallery](#) in Santa Monica Neil had a display of all the watercolor paintings he did for new boo; *Special Deluxe*, Thanks again to my CSNY Soul Mate Joni's cousin, Danae who scouted the venue out earlier in the day. She got the owner to extend me an invite to park my Buick next to Neil's LincVolt which of course I took advantage of. The coolest thing was when Neil pulled out at the end of the night and the car drove away in total silence!





Micah Nelson (Willie's son) who's group Promise of the Real was on hand to play.

A few weeks after seeing Neil at the Berman Gallery, I went to see Crosby playing nearby at the Troubadour. Sitting in the front row I swear he smiled seeing me wearing that t-shirt again.



My next encounter was with Nash at a pre-show warm-up in LA. He played Simple Man for one of my friends then commented on that same t-shirt I was wearing at the end of playing the song.

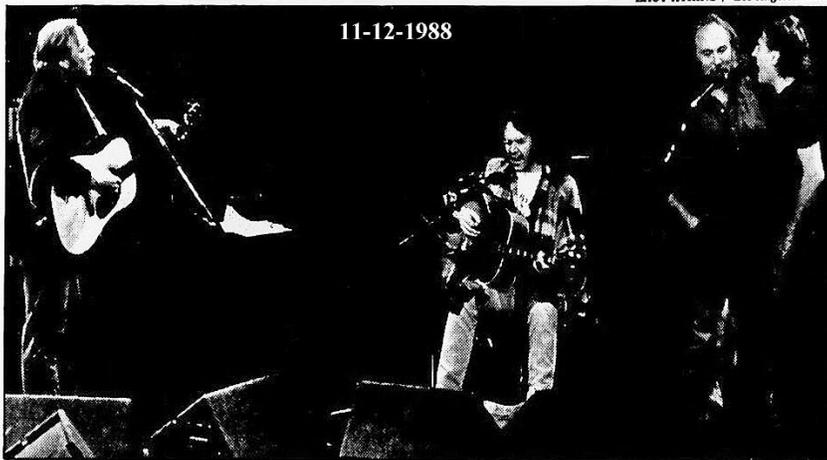


Probably my most interesting encounter occurred at the Fox Theater in Pomona near my home in Upland. Neil booked the venue to play two shows in between his appearances at Desert Trip in Coachella with the Stones, Sir Paul, Dylan, Roger Waters, and The Who. During his second show at the Fox Thursday October 13, 2016, Neil tossed to harmonicas to me which is captured in its entirety in this video.



I also recall seeing them several times in the late 80's right after 'American Dream' was released in Hollywood at a fund raiser for UNICEF. They did only a few songs that day. Afterward my wife and I were standing at the stage entrance where we saw them exiting the show. Crosby was with Drew Barrymore who he was sponsoring for her drug rehab. A fan stopped him for a few seconds and asked him to sign an album to which he picked up a pen and then switch gears pushing the album and the fan away saying something along the line 'you only want my signature so you can sell it' and abruptly walked away. Jackson Browne who had also emerged from the venue seemed more relaxed talked to us and a few others then walked to his car, a plain old off white Dodge Dart and causally drove out of the parking lot.

LACY ATKINS / Los Angeles Times



Stephen Stills, Neil Young, David Crosby and Graham Nash sing in benefit for kids in the Americas.

Nash & Friends Raise Money for Hungry Kids

By STEVE POND

Everybody knows about Jerry's Kids—the young victims of muscular dystrophy for whom Jerry Lewis raises money during his annual telethons.

Say hello to pop music's counterparts: Graham's Kids. These are the youngsters who go to bed hungry or malnourished in North, Central and South America, the kids for whom Graham Nash and a bunch of

his friends raised about \$100,000 during a nationwide radio broadcast on Saturday afternoon.

Officially titled "Graham Nash's Children of the Americas Radiothon," the event consisted of a live broadcast of concert performances from the Palace in Hollywood and the United Nations building in New York City. The four-hour program was broadcast on KLSX-FM in Los Angeles and about 65 stations around the coun-

try, said Richard Linnell, the show's executive producer.

While the day's lineup included Jackson Browne, Randy Newman and Midnight Oil (the last two from New York), the main attraction was the appearance by Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young—their first performance since recording their first studio album in almost two decades, the just-released "American Dream."

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The re-teaming of the four, whose work together in the early '70s has been heralded as among rock's most creative collaborations, marks the end of the obstacles that kept Neil Young from participating with his former partners, who had continued working together in various configurations.

The quartet's seven-song, 45-minute set at the Palace included four tunes from "American Dream," plus the chestnuts "Love the One You're With," "Southern Cross" and "Long Time Gone." The crowd reaction at the Palace to the group's familiar harmonies was overwhelming.

In radio-land, though, the audience was falling short of expectations. When the CSN&Y set ended, listener pledges totaled \$89,650, short of the \$100,000 the organizers were hoping to raise.

So as soon as they finished performing a drastically revamped version of "My Country 'Tis of Thee" with John David Souther and (on tape) acoustic guitarist Michael Hedges, Graham Nash and David Crosby said they'd make up the shortfall by giving \$5,000 each.

The show had many of the earmarks of traditional telethons: appeals from celebrities (George Harrison, Tom Petty), a toll-free number for viewer contributions (1-800-FOR-KIDS), pledges from entertainment industry heavies (\$10,000 from Bruce Springsteen, \$5,000 each from Rod Stewart and Atlantic Records) and needy beneficiaries (World Hunger Year and UNICEF).

But while Nash says he wants to be known for helping these children, he doesn't like the idea that the event—which is in its second year—is billed with his name up front.

"Graham Nash's Children of the Americas' is just too pompous for me," Nash said backstage at the Palace. "I understand why they want to bill it that way, but it makes me very uncomfortable, and I think I'll change it next year. It should just be the 'Children of the Americas Radiothon, with your host Graham Nash.'"

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A longtime activist for liberal, environmental and humanist causes, Nash got involved in an annual hunger-themed radiothon by New York radio station WNEW-FM, and decided it had the potential to be a nationwide effort to help starving children throughout the Americas.

"When all's said and done, we're going to be gone a lot sooner than our kids are," he said. "We're going to leave this planet to them. I hope it can sustain them, I hope it will make them flourish instead of being blown apart in a nuclear holocaust, I hope that AIDS doesn't totally screw up the planet. . . ."

"I hope for a lot of things, but I know that I'll be gone and they'll still be here. They are our future, and I can't put my energy any better place than this."

And what about Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young? They've said they don't plan to tour together, but with the new album, the radiothon success and another appearance due soon at a benefit show in Oakland, might they change their minds?

"I don't know, I truly don't know," Nash said. "I don't think any of us do. We're reeling under the realization that we've made what we consider to be a great record. So we'll sit back, see what happens . . . get Christmas under our belts and look at the new year. Then we'll figure out what we're going to do."

Nash said that Young wants to make another CSN&Y album before considering a tour, but he added with a laugh: "We've already got 25 years of music to draw on. . . . We could do a hell of a show."

Radio

TIPS FOR TODAY

All-Day—Veterans Food Bank Radiothon, fund-raiser for agencies that supply free food for the needy, continues until 4 p.m. Sunday, KLOS-FM (95.5).

1-5 p.m.—UNICEF: Concert for the Children of the Americas: Live from the Hollywood Palace, features appearances by Crosby, Stills and Nash, Jackson Browne, Pat Benatar, James Taylor, George Harrison, KLSX-FM (97.1).

11-12-1988

POP & ROCK

Graham Nash has asked a few of his good buddies—David Crosby, Stephen Stills, Neil Young, Jackson Browne and Randy Newman—to join him Saturday in a four-hour broadcast designed to raise money for UNICEF and other children's organizations. More than 125 stations are expected to participate in the radio concert (including KLSX-FM, 97.1, in Los Angeles) broadcast, which will emanate from the Palace in Hollywood.

—JOHN VOLAND and STEVE WEINSTEIN

Below is a photo I took at my first CSNY show in the Oakland Coliseum - July 13, 1974



This shot by Joel Bernstein used on the cover of their newest box set shows me in the audience



[This story as it appears on Neil Young Archives](#)