

LET'S GO!

Benjamin Orr and The Cars

By Joe Milliken

There can be no denying the huge impact that the CARS had on the Rock and Roll scene in America, and really around the world. From 1978 to 1988 the CARS set the bar for all New Wave/Pop/Rock bands. With singer songwriter Ric Ocasek on rhythm guitar, Ben Orr lead vocals and bass, Elliott Easton lead guitar and back up vocals, Greg Hawkes keyboards and back up vocals, and David Robinson on drums and visual concepts, The CARS were truly original Rock Stars that burst out of the Boston Rock scene in 1978 and never looked back.

I consider myself lucky enough to have not only have been around the Boston scene during those times, but to also be friends with them. And if that wasn't lucky enough, I got to work with some of them. Elliott Easton played on my album in 1983, and I have worked with nearly all my musical projects with CARS drummer and creative multi-media artist, David Robinson. And I'm happy to say that we've remained close friends since 1978. So, it's safe to say, I know a little bit about them.

But after reading this book? I know a whole lot more about them.

It was fascinating to read about their early beginnings. I knew some of it, (especially David's unique history in the Boston rock and Roll scene) but not all of what I learned from Milliken's book. For instance, the GRASSHOPPERS. That was one of Ben's earlier bands. And I found it so sincere and thoughtful to read about his former bandmates, and the lasting impression he left on them. It's obvious that they all loved him, and the early fans from Cleveland were true fans, who remained loyal right to the end of his career.

Ben was a bona fide Rock Star. There's just no denying that. He was what all Rock Stars seek.

He had the looks, the voice, the presence, and the personality that most Rock Stars lacked. Ben would treat you like a friend. There was never the prima donna attitude that some Rock Stars were cursed with. Ben always made you feel like you were his buddy from the neighborhood. That's what I remember about him, and that's what comes through in spades in this book.

The story of The CARS is a must read for any fan of Rock and Roll. And with the recent passing of founder Ric Ocasek, it becomes even more important. It's hard to fathom that both Ric and Ben are gone from this earth. And I know I am not alone, when I say there will never be another band like the CARS. For those of us who knew them, and loved their music, we will always have that special place in our hearts for those early days in Boston, when everything was so incredibly exciting and fresh.

Joe Milliken did a great job in telling their story. I highly recommend reading it. Long Live The CARS!