

Recommended Station, Rock Review Radio, November 2022



Rock Review Radio

Station website: <https://rockreviewradio.com/>

Direct stream URL: <https://streaming.radio.co/se2aceec48/listen>

Codec: MP3 (128 kbps)

Location: West Sussex, UK

Genre: Talk

Streaming since: 2020

Non-commercial: N

Announcers: Y

Song/Talk Metadata: Y

Email Responsiveness: 5/5

Sound Quality: 3/5

Song Selection/Talk Content: 3/5

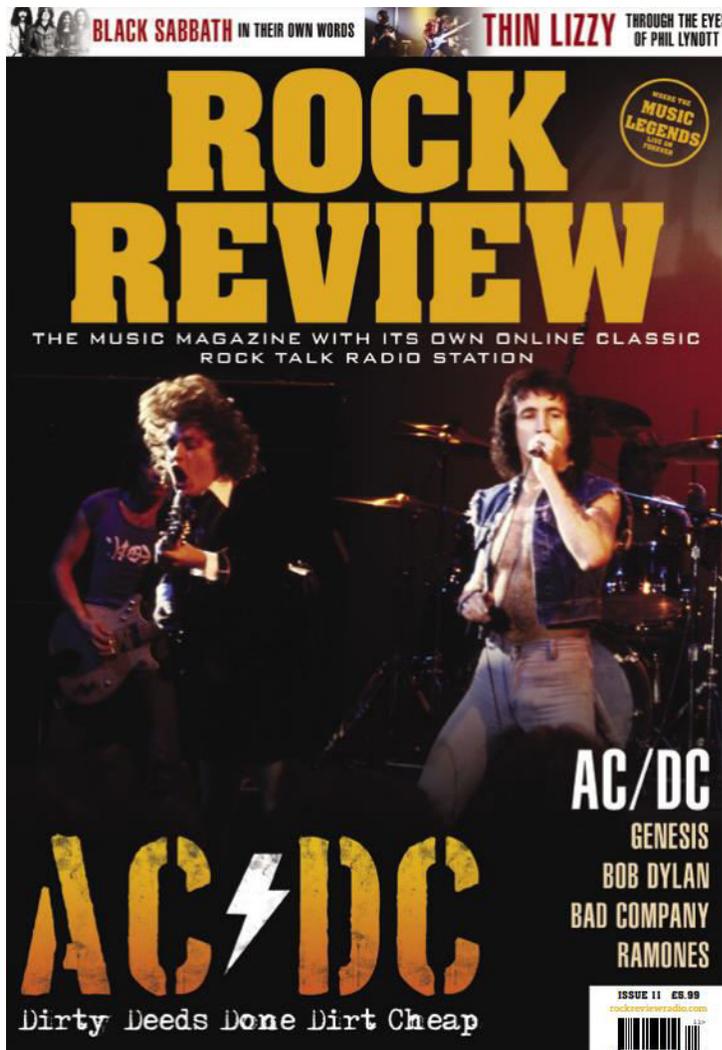
Summary: Classic rock artist interviews, profiles, and album reviews.

Rock Review Radio out of the UK is the world's first 24/7 classic rock talk radio station. No music, none of the time. It was actually a magazine before it was a radio station. There are often fascinating stories behind songs, albums, and the artists, and Rock Review Radio streams those stories. The station describes their stream this way: "This is where the music legends come to face their critics! Our unique Radio Reviews pull no punches as we compare and contrast the candid views of the world's leading broadcasters, musicologists, critics and, of course, the artists themselves."

During some of my listening I heard a great story about the early signs of Syd Barrett's (Pink Floyd guitarist) mental health problems, a history of Iron Maiden, and stories about The Police, RUSH, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I could list many more examples but I'd rather you tune in for yourself and experience Rock Review Radio first-hand.

The segments in their library are culled from in-depth radio show interviews and documentaries conducted by legendary UK broadcasters like the late Tommy Vance, ‘Whispering ‘Bob Harris, Annie Nightingale, and Mary Ann Hobbs.

Another unusual thing about Rock Review Radio is that it streams at 128 kbps (MP3). Many talk stations stream at lower quality because it’s all about talk not music. However, as with many talk stations, you’ll need to turn up the volume a few extra notches than if you were listening to a music station- at least I had to.



Rock Review Radio out of the UK is the world’s first 24/7 classic rock talk radio station. No music, none of the time. It was actually a magazine before it was a radio station. There are often fascinating stories behind songs, albums, and the artists, and Rock Review Radio streams those stories. The station describes their stream this way: “This is where the music legends come to face their critics! Our unique Radio Reviews pull no punches as we compare and contrast the candid views of the world’s leading broadcasters, musicologists, critics and, of course, the artists themselves.”

During some of my listening I heard a great story about the early signs of Syd Barrett's (Pink Floyd guitarist) mental health problems, a history of Iron Maiden, and stories about The Police, RUSH, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I could list many more examples but I'd rather you tune in for yourself and experience Rock Review Radio first-hand.

The segments in their library are culled from in-depth radio show interviews and documentaries conducted by legendary UK broadcasters like the late Tommy Vance, 'Whispering' Bob Harris, Annie Nightingale, and Mary Ann Hobbs.

Another unusual thing about Rock Review Radio is that it streams at 128 kbps (MP3). Many talk stations stream at lower quality because it's all about talk not music. However, as with many talk stations, you'll need to turn up the volume a few extra notches than if you were listening to a music station- at least I had to.



The image shows a screenshot of the Rock Review Records website. At the top, a red banner reads "FREE UK DELIVERY ON ORDERS OVER £30". Below this is the Rock Review Records logo and a navigation menu with links for "CDs", "VINYL", "SPECIAL OFFERS", "COLOURED VINYL", "CASSETTES", "BOOKS & MAGAZINES", "ROCK REVIEW RADIO", "ARTISTS", and "MAGAZINE". A search icon is also present. The main content area features a large orange banner with the text "AMAZING VALUE VINYL ALBUMS JUST £9.99!". Below the banner are four vinyl album covers: "BOWIE SOUNDS + VISIONS", "THE BEATLES GREATEST HITS '62-'65", "PRINCE & THE NEW POWER GENERATION LIVE IN SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA JAM", and "THE RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS AMERICAN GIRLS".

The station's website is also interesting. Strangely, there's zero information about the Internet station itself. Instead, the focus is on selling classic rock records, cassettes, and CDs many of which are pressed on their own label, Rock Review Records. Some examples of their offerings: An 8-CD set of The Beatles "lost performances" for 10 pounds (UK currency), a live Prince concert on purple vinyl, and live Eagles tracks on sand-colored vinyl.

In my Station Summary I classified Rock Review Radio as "commercial" because you'll hear adverts promoting the fore mentioned records and CDs they sell. As of this writing, those are the only ads you'll hear and they are infrequent.

I tracked down the very busy station Director, Bob Carruthers, to get the story behind the station.

Peter: *What are the sources of your spoken word segments?*

Bob: Rock Review Radio broadcasts the soundtracks from around 400 music TV documentaries which analyse the musical and social factors which shaped the creation of the classic rock masterpieces we all know and love; it's a talk radio station for music lovers who want to approach their favourite music from a more intellectual angle through the eyes of the musicians and their critics. The documentaries were made for the broadcast market from 2005-2012 they were shown on the likes of Sky Arts and on the Sky platform. They are a wonderful source of

insights and give a new perspective on some artists the listener may be unfamiliar with such as Cult Legends like Curved Air and Caravan.

Peter: How does Rock Review Radio cover expenses? Bob: The station is funded by CD and vinyl record sales. The store stocks all the things you'd expect to find. Although we do plan to sell advertising but only to other artists and labels so everything will always be music oriented.

Peter: Regarding the LPs, CDs, and tapes sold on the station's website, are they bootlegs?

Bob: No, we don't sell bootlegs, we sell mainly classic rock albums from the likes of Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, AC/DC and Deep Purple, but our listeners are keen to find more obscure live performances and broadcasts. We also spend a lot of time making orchestral versions of the likes of Queen Led Zep, Genesis, Beatles, King Crimson, etc. Some recordings of TV and a radio broadcasts published by the labels are now public domain but all necessary music clearances and MCPS licenses are obtained by the labels. Our starting point is the UK copyright law, however, every country on earth has different copyright laws so it can be a minefield and disputes are expensive and time consuming, so best avoided. The quality of the TV and radio broadcasts is always professional, but sound quality varies according to original source. For example, The Beatles US TV shows were recorded and broadcast in mono using the American NTSC system so the quality of sound has built in technical limitations. Some radio shows are stereo and Hi-fi quality.



Peter: I noticed many of the LPs come in clear plastic sleeves instead of traditional cardboard sleeves with artwork. Bob: Some of the coloured vinyl discs offered by the labels are sold in clear picture disc sleeves with a sticker as some consumers prefer them. My own preference is for a card sleeve with a die cut hole so the colour vinyl is visible.

Peter: *What's Rock Review Radio's listenership look like?* **Bob:** We haven't launched properly yet as we have been getting the shows back on air. Currently we reach about 60,000 listeners a year.



Bob Carruthers. Photo from <https://clancarrutherssociety.org>

Born in Scotland, Carruthers is just as interesting as his station if not more so. He started off as a movie and television producer and writer. He was behind Disney's *Dinosaurs: Myths and Realities* for which he won an Emmy. In 2000 he founded Classic Rock Productions which produced documentaries and concert films and promoted rock groups like Uriah Heep, Asia, and Focus. In addition, Carruthers is a record producer, musician, arranger, best-selling author, and the owner of Edinburgh Rugby.

Carruthers is currently working on a video project related to music. I got a glimpse of the website which is in its infancy but I've been sworn to secrecy so you'll just have to wait until the formal unveiling.

One thing I'd like to hear on Rock Review Radio is some exclusive original content, especially in light of Carruthers' pedigree. For example, I had suggested to Carruthers to create some features around classic rock holiday songs and albums to air on his station next month. Since technically this is a talk station, it would also be interesting if there was a call-in show where listeners could call in and talk about classic rock music. The next best thing to listening to classic rock is talking about it. It seems a rocker is always making the news for something.

Speaking of news, that's the other thing I wouldn't mind hearing...classic rock headlines. What newest records have dropped? Newly published rock-related books? Who is in the news for doing or saying what? Who is the latest rocker to bite the dust? What band is celebrating an anniversary? And which rockers are celebrating Birthdays this month? You know the sort of thing..interesting tidbits that keep you in the know.

If you like classic rock or appreciate stories about legendary rock musicians, songs, and albums, Rock Review Radio is the station to listen to. You're bound to learn something new with each listen as I did. Rock (Review) on.

Trivia: *According to masterclass.com, the classic rock genre has 4 distinct attributes: (1) Similar core instrumentation; (2) Over-driven guitars; (3) Personal lyrical content, and; (4) Subversive public image.*