

## Gordon Smith - Complete Blue Horizon Sessions (2008)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Diving Duck Blues* - 3:31 2. *Highway 51* - 2:21 3. *One Dime Blues* - 2:55 4. *Having A Good Time* - 2:56 5. *Instrumental No 2* - 1:59 6. *Walking Blues* - 3:52 7. *Rolling And Tumbling* - 5:03 8. *I Been Down So Long* - 3:33 9. *Instrumental No 4* - 1:12 10. *Pearlie Blues* - 3:00 11. *Woman Down The Hall* - 1:16 12. *Big Road Blues* - 3:16 13. *Instrumental No 3* - 1:30 14. *Worried Life Blues* - 4:28 15. *Nobody's Fault But Mine* - 1:30 16. *One Dime Blues* - 2:54 17. *Instrumental No 2* - 1:43 18. *Walking Blues* - 2:51 19. *Rolling And Tumbling* - 3:28 20. *Walking Blues* - 2:56 21. *Pearlie Blues* - 2:35 22. *I'm So Glad* - 2:23 23. *Instrumental No 1* - 1:40 24. *When You Got A Good Friend* - 2:18 25. *I'm So Glad* - 2:15 26. *Too Long* - 2:46 27. *Funk Pedal* - 2:59 28. *I'm Sitting On Top Of The World* - 2:45

Gordon Smith – vocals, guitars, harmonica Duster Bennett – harmonica Peter Green – harmonica Derek Hall – piano John McVie – bass Mick Fleetwood – drums Rick Haywards – guitars Mike Vernon – drum Harold McNair – flute Ian Whiteman – tenor sax Mike Evans – bass Roger Powell – drums

Gordon Smith, an only child, was born to Gordon, Snr. and Olive Smith on March 12 1949, at his grandparent's house, 42 School Loaning, Simonside, South Shields, Tyne & Wear. Gordon received his education at South Shields Primary and Secondary schools, but he was not interested in instruction and training. As he says, "school was not really my thing". Gordon's family frequently played music, especially on his mother's side, and at family gatherings, his mother played mandolin banjo and her sister accordion.

Gordon's interest in blues artists started at age 14, when he heard compilations from Pye International records featuring the likes of Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf. Because of this interest, his father bought Gordon his first acoustic guitar. His first attempt at imitating the 'blues masters' was at playing alongside a Muddy Waters album. "I couldn't figure out the bottleneck stuff at that time - I was just working on the basic chords and getting the feel right". Gordon researched and practised the art of using the bottleneck and by age 17 was singing and playing at a local folk club, The Fort. Gordon's father planned for him to become a printer and Gordon applied at the South Shields Gazette but was rejected. Instead he finally landed a job at a men's

outfitters as a salesman. Through Gordon's girlfriend, a window dresser, Gordon met his now life-long friend Charles Biggs, a salesman at a similar shop to Gordon's. Charles persuaded Gordon to move to London permanently and the pair lived in a two-bedroom flat in Shepherd's Bush with their girlfriends. After six months the four returned to Tyneside but on March 23 1967 Gordon and Charles returned to London followed by the two girlfriends and Gordon has remained in London ever since.

At this point, Gordon had not played guitar in public during either of his stays in the city, instead working menial jobs such as washing dishes or stacking shelves in a delicatessen. In the summer of 1968, Gordon finally ventured out to Portobello Road to work as a busker where, one day, two fellows approached him and suggested he go to The Nag's Head. Gordon played a short interval set and Mike Vernon's wife Judith called up Mike to come listen to Gordon. The very next day, June 9 1968, Gordon Smith became a Blue Horizon recording artist and an unreleased session took place. Within weeks, he was back at CBS Studio, New Bond Street, London to begin work on an album with Derek Hall on piano and Fleetwood Mac members, Peter Green on harmonica, John McVie on bass guitar and Mick Fleetwood on drums.

After six months, with at least five separate sessions during that time, the "Long Overdue" LP was completed. Reviews were complimentary, and the album sold in excess of 6,000 copies. In the summer of 1968, Gordon had signed a management deal with Clifford Davis, manager for both Peter Green and Fleetwood Mac. As a result, he went from playing small clubs to appearing at festivals and supporting the likes of Muddy Waters, Fleetwood Mac and Duster Bennett.

With the success of the album, a follow-up LP in a 'band' setting, alongside a single release, were planned. Gordon was placed with bass guitarist Mike Evans and drummer Roger Powell of Mighty Baby and the single "Too Long" b/w "Funk Pedal" was released on July 25 1969. Three further backing tracks were recorded for "Dynaflow Blues", "Avenue Breakdown" and "Last Night's Dream" with Evans and Powell at a later session but the album project came to an end at that point. In 1972, Gordon married Australian Pamela Rebecca Bluett after meeting her on Carnaby Street but the marriage broke up a year later and Pamela returned to Australia. During the 1970's Gordon was a member of The Kevin Coyne Band, with whom he recorded several albums for Virgin. He also released two solo albums on the Italian Appaloosa label, "Takin' Time" (1979) and "Down on Mean Streets" (1980) as well as a solo country blues album "Out of the Bottleneck" issued in 1999. A CD of new material was released on the Note Music label in 2008, entitled "The Essential Gordon Smith". --- 45cat.com

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