

Interview with Jack Eadon **Author of *Got to Make it!***

Reader Views is happy to be talking with Jack Eadon, author of his 1960's memoir, "Got To Make It!" Jack is being interviewed by Juanita Watson, Assistant Editor of Reader Views.

Juanita: Thanks for talking with us today, Jack. We first met when you talked with us regarding your book "A Consequence of Greed." I'd like to welcome you back and talk about your own personal, in-depth memoir "Got To Make It! (Collectors' Edition)" Would you please give readers some background into the rich experiences that make up the history you share in "Got To Make It!"

Jack: At the very young age of fourteen, in concert with the Beatles' popularity in America, I began a rock group that developed, after a decade, into a fairly good band that saw a lot of highs and lows, but mainly highs as it persisted and evolved with the times. Since those of us in the band were also evolving as young teens, it was a rich time for us personally and as a group. In my own case, having come from a fairly dysfunctional family, the counterpoint of the band really helped me during a tough developmental time.

Juanita: Why did you decide to write your memoir?

Jack: I decided to write *Got To Make It!* when my band was rediscovered in Eastern Europe in the 90's and the album we had cut in 1970 was valued by collectors as "the most valuable recorded music on the face of the planet."

Juanita: I understand that this is a Collectors' Edition? What can readers expect from this edition?

Jack: I am very proud of this edition. Not only does it capture my story as a young teen but also my band during a very important time in our history. It is loaded with references to sixties occurrences like Kent State, the Kennedy and King assassinations, and the worldwide march for hunger. It has an extensive photo gallery and includes a CD of songs from the band, remastered from the original tapes. The fun thing is that the individual tracks of the CD are referenced in the text so you can read the book, then play the CD when a specific song is mentioned. So, it acts a lot like a book-on-tape.

Juanita: Why did you decide to come out with the Collectors' Edition of *Got To Make It!*, along with the inclusion of this great remastered CD and photo album?

Jack: Since becoming a cult band worldwide was part and parcel of the story, the CD was the realization of the band's success, so hearing the songs as they emerge from the minds of the band

members and referenced in the text makes the experience rich. The photos only make the journey that much richer when you realize that there are real people behind the story.

Juanita: What type of band experiences do you talk about in *Got To Make It!* (Collectors' Edition)?

Jack: Many of the experiences are those that are inevitable in the sixties, personal reactions to things like the Kennedy and King assassinations and the hunger march. Other experiences are more subtle in that they capture mini-moments of history, like when the band played a real concert instead of just at a dance club, so the book in its entirety captures much of what living and growing up in the sixties was like. It was a time of true change!

Juanita: Jack, tell us about the sixties you remember. What sub-culture were you a part of and what was your mindset at that time?

Jack: Not unlike my band mates, I was very liberal and anti-war. Ironically, perhaps, I had a strong economics background so was one of those rare breed who was anti-war and Democratic when it came to social issues, but Republican when it came to Economic ones. I was very confused during my first election in 1968!

Juanita: What was your band's name and tell us about your band mates?

Jack: My band had three names in its ten year history, but the final name was Khazad Doom, metaphorically taken from Tolkein's "Lord of the Rings." My former band mates are currently a research librarian who played for years in a jazz band, a designer, and a church music director.

Juanita: Are you still in touch with any of them?

Jack: I still talk to several of them on occasion.

Juanita: What role did your band play for you as a coming-of-age teenager?

Jack: Given my ragged home life, the band served as a steadying influence during a time when the world was unstable. The success of the band wasn't complete, but it is amazing that we had so much of it, recognized even today around the world (Just Google Khazad Doom). I still hear of chat rooms worldwide that comment on the band, as if it were alive and well and performing today! Just recently I was privy to a chat room in Greece that was talking about our CD like we were together to this day!

Juanita: Sounds like Khazad Doom has reached historic status in the hearts and minds of music fans around the world. Why do you think your music had such a powerful effect on your fans, to the point where your original records are revered by music collectors?

Jack: Most of the magic for collectors was, indeed, because the original album we did was released as a true limited edition, only 180 copies have ever existed. Beyond that the band played music that

was popularized after the Wall came down and a new post eastern bloc era in world history was begun. The concepts locked in the music are deep too, so there is a sense of amazement amongst collectors that a young band was able to tackle difficult concepts like love and peace and make them so salient.

Juanita: It seems every teenage boy dreams of being a musician. Why was this dream so important for you that you put everything into it? Where did your passion come from?

Jack: It seems that during that time—the sixties—anything seemed possible. In a lot of ways the Beatles led the way, just four lads from Liverpool, so it seemed that, like many bands, we could succeed—and we did in our own way, and a lot more than other bands.

Juanita: What were some of the success you had over the years that you write about in “Got To Make It!”?

Jack: I think the biggest success is the amount of persistence the band demonstrated as it strove to reach the top. But beyond that, some of the concepts we tackled—like writing a song based on a Greek myth and drawing a three song suite about hunters and killing, and other creative challenges were immense. Performance-wise, there are several scenes that capture the true awesomeness of some of the performances, too, like the Corral and the Hunger March, the latter when we played to 15,000 people. Some of the scenes would indeed make great film, much more so than other films which have tackled the sixties band topic. Our experiences were truly amazing!

Juanita: You talk about “The Jinx” in your book. Would you tell us about “The Jinx”?

Jack: In a way the Jinx was the thing that spurred me on with the band. What I couldn’t have successful in my personal life, I could make successful in my music, in the part of life I could control.

Juanita: What were some of the important life lessons you learned by pursuing your dream of becoming a famous musician?

Jack: I think the main thing is learning an appreciation for the value of persistence. I mean, when you think of it, it’s really quite amazing that four young teens would devote a decade of their lives to a band. It still sort of amazes me! And I still have that drive I had back then.

Juanita: What do you miss most about that time in your life?

Jack: I think I miss the freedom of expression. Sure, I still do that as a writer, but as a musician during those times, you really operated on the cutting edge of what was being done, in the studio technically and on stage performance-wise. Some of the songs we wrote back then still amaze me to this day. I wonder how we were able to come up with deep concepts like “Love Which We Share Among Us” and “the Hunters” at the ripe young age of eighteen.

Juanita: What was your creative process as a band? How did you develop your songs, and what are some of the classics that make it to the Collectors' Edition CD?

Jack: Most of the time the chief writers of the band, myself and Steve Yates, would lead the others in a realization of the tune we had written. At first, that realization would be awkward, but then as each of us contributed to it through experimental arrangement, it would become shaped into something recognizable and repeatable. Often we would just stage "vocal" practices with a single guitar as we made the vocal parts more and more intricate. As the leader, I played a key role in all practices, saying when things were OK, but the extent to which we began to think like a veritable "mass mind" cannot be denied. After practicing five nights a week for years, we began to really take advantage of that which we learned from each other. We knew when we "got it right."

My personal favorite classic songs are Al's(Steve's) "In This World" as well as my songs "The Hunters" and "Stanley's Visit to Kerkle-Morff." These three in particular have been reviewed worldwide and received major kudos. One site, managed by a young UK writer named Jim Eadon who is probably a distant cousin of some sort, is

<http://www.eadon.com/comment/khazadencore.php>

It's really a very good review in that it fairly captures the *nature* of the band and the individual members' roles in it.

Juanita: Jack, who would enjoy reading "Got To Make It! (Collectors' Edition)"?

Jack: I think the book would appeal to two groups in particular: First, those who were there during the sixties and would like to relive a lot of it and second, those born later, who would like to dip into that decade and get a realistic view of what it was like. Those interested in those times and this book should explore its web site, <http://www.khazad.com>. "Got To Make It!" is a true time machine into the sixties.

Juanita: Jack, you've written many books over the years. How did this one-time musician become such a prolific author?

Jack: I think quite naturally. Then, as I wrote songs, I did much of what I do today. Then I had to see my creative output as poetry; I had to visualize a story. Today I do the same thing. In fact, as I write a story, I tend to listen to the same music—whatever it is—over and over. The music still puts me in the appropriate mood.

Juanita: How can readers find out more about your life now, and your current endeavors?

Jack: Anyone interested in my work now should visit my main web site and one of many, <http://www.eadonbooks.com>. The other sites are worth a look, are specific to individual books, and can be reached from my main web site. At my main web site, readers can see all my books and order them, and see how each of my many careers led to separate book! If readers are interested in my

current projects, they should just drop me a line and I'll add them to my quarterly email newsletter that tells of current projects, book signings, etc. My email can be found at my main web site.

Juanita: It has been a pleasure talking to you once again Jack. "Got To Make It! (Collectors' Edition) sounds like a fun and interactive trip back to the 60's and the life of Khazad Doom. Do you have any last thoughts for your readers?"

Jack: It's worth reading it and listening to it with a buddy. Because some of the things that affected us growing up were so universal, sharing thoughts about those times while reading the book would be fun! Also, it may seem obvious, but the next generation really wants to know what those times were like, so sharing some of the book with kids-growing-up or giving the book as a gift to young teens would be a great idea!