

# Shoals musician 'opening a new door'

By Robert Palmer  
TimesDaily

FLORENCE, Ala. (AP) — David Hood is not ready to hang up his rock 'n' roll shoes.

Most 71-year-old men have retired and found creative ways to spend their spare time.

Not Hood.

The bass guitarist with the legendary Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section is in the opening stages of a world tour with British rock band the Waterboys.

They played a New Year's Eve gig at Stirling Castle in Scotland. They played three shows to warm up: one in Limerick, Ireland, and two in Amsterdam.

"We had two days of rehearsal in Dublin," Hood said. "Me and the guitar player, who's from Austin, Texas, had never played with them except when we were recording the album."

Mike Scott, the singer and main songwriter with the Waterboys, contacted Hood almost a year ago and asked him to play bass on their new album, which was recorded in Nashville. It will be released Jan. 19, titled "Modern Blues."

Their first show was outdoors in Limerick earlier this month.

"We drove from Dublin to Limerick. Ireland is the greenest of green," Hood said. "It's horse country. It's really

pretty.

"We played in a tent. It was so cold. I didn't have the right clothes," he said. "But it was sold out, and the crowd was great."

This version of the Waterboys is an international mix of people, both geographically and stylistically. The guitarist, Zack Ernst, is from Texas and is the youngest band member. Hood is, of course, from Alabama, while the drummer, Ralph Salmins, is from London. Scott and fiddler Steve Wickham have Scottish and Irish backgrounds, which is sometimes heard in their music.

Hood's reputation was built on his work as a session musician, first at FAME Recording Studios in Muscle Shoals and Norala Studio, and later as a co-owner with the other rhythm section members at Muscle Shoals Sound Studios. Hood's bass can be heard on hundreds of recordings, including with artists such as Etta James, Clarence Carter, Percy Sledge, Aretha Franklin, the Staple Singers, Paul Simon, Rod Stewart, Millie Jackson, Willie Nelson, Bob Seger and Dan Penn.

His reputation hasn't diminished, said Dick Cooper, curator of the Alabama Music Hall of Fame.

"It is indicative of how relevant Muscle Shoals music still is to the world that he is sought out by a band of this caliber to be a part of their world tour," Cooper said.

Only once as a professional musician has Hood embarked on a world tour with a band. That was in the early 1970s when he, rhythm section drummer Roger Hawkins, guitarist Jimmy Johnson and keyboardist Barry Beckett went on the road with the British rock band Traffic in Europe.

That was 40 years ago. Hood said he had to test the waters again because he was becoming musically restless.

"I thought, man, I need to do something new, or I'll continue to play 'Mustang Sally' in a bar somewhere," he said. "I'm opening a new door to my life doing this. It is very energizing. It's fun playing new music to new people."

Acclimating to the stage instead of the studio is an adjustment, too.

"The hardest part from being a studio player is being able to hear on stage properly. I normally wear headphones, so I can hear what I want," he said. "On stage, you must get the monitors right, and it's hard to see facial cues to know when I should do certain things."

But Hood said the travel and adjustments have been worth the effort.

"I even heard the first single ('November Tale') off the album on Dutch radio," he said. "After all these years, I still get excited hearing music we recorded on the radio. That's what got me into music. It's a sort of validation."

## TOP WEATHER: Cold and heavy snow made the news in 2014

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occurred on Highway 12, five miles east of Rimrock Tunnel. Wind gusts to 68 mph were reported on the Hanford Reservation and a tree was uprooted northwest of Pendleton.

5. Record November cold: Arctic air became entrenched the second week of November. Many locations did not reach above freezing for over a week. After the snow fell and the skies cleared, temperatures plummeted even further. Several sites had one of their coldest all-time November mornings on record November 15 and 16. Meacham and Sisters recorded their coldest average temperature for any November.

4. Mid-November snow: Early season snow was heavy in a several locations such as The Dalles, La Grande, Cove, Heppner, Wallowa, Maupin, White Salmon, Seneca, Spray, Terrebonne, Pendleton, Prineville, Sisters and Redmond. The heavy snow caused a roof collapse at a wood products mill in Prineville.

2. (Tie) Hot July: It was

the hottest on record at Bend, Condon, Whitman Mission and Yakima. A top-five hot July was recorded at Prineville, Bickleton, Goldendale, Heppner, Long Creek, Sisters, Trout Lake, Moro, Pelton Dam, Pendleton, Kennewick, The Dalles and Walla Walla.

2. (Tie) Heavy snow February 6-9: Heavy snow fell in most areas with 1-2 feet accumulating in Sisters, Condon, Camp Sherman, WNW Bend, WSW The Dalles, Bickleton, Echo, Naches and La Grande.

Three fatalities were associated with the heavy snow. An elderly couple died while stranded in the cold and snow in Crossroads outside Sisters, and a man died while shoveling snow in Bend. Rain occurred during the snow melt a few days later with minor flooding across Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook and Wheeler counties.

1. December wind: A deep low-pressure system moving north, just off the Oregon and Washington coast, brought widespread wind gusts over 60 mph which caused tree and building damage, power outages, and vehicular accidents. Wind gusts at least 80 mph were reported at Condon, Pikes Peak, Cayuse, southeast of Dixie, south of Ione, WNW of Ruggs and NW Heppner.

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