

## AIR SUPPLY

by Tamela Meredith Partridge  
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For more than three decades, pop duo Air Supply have inspired an international and multi-generational catalog of listeners with their signature blend of soft rock tunes.

"The heartland of America is really where the people gave us our start when our first single, "Lost In Love," came out in 1980," says Graham Russell, who will perform with duo partner, Russell Hitchcock, at the Rosebud Theatre in Effingham on Saturday. "It began everything and helped build our fan base (their 20,000 worldwide official fan club members are known as Airheads). Going back to the heartland is always a big thing for us."



Englishman Graham Russell (songwriter, keyboards, guitars, vocals) and Australian Russell Hitchcock (vocals) met in 1975 while performing in a Sydney, Australia production of Jesus Christ Superstar. With their mutual chief influence of The Beatles, the duo first made their presence known while extensively touring in the late 70's with Rod Stewart.

The naming of the duo was virtually a dream come true.

"We'd perform in Jesus Christ Superstar every night and then go out afterwards and play in local clubs," says Russell. "We needed a name because we had a recording we wanted to start distributing. We agreed that whoever had a name by the next morning that we'd go with it. That night I dreamed of a big neon billboard with the words Air Supply in the middle flashing on and off. So we went with it -- the name has no secret or deeper meaning."

Air Supply have charted such 1980's Billboard Top 5 pop hits as "Lost In Love," "All Out of Love," "Every Woman In The World," "The One That You Love," "Here I Am," "Sweet Dreams," "Even The Nights Are Better," and "Making Love Out of Nothing At All."

"It was never intentional that a number of our songs are about love," says Russell, who continues to write or co-write a large portion of Air Supply's music. "I love the Beatles, and whether people realize it or not, a number of their songs were about love. And I've always been an avid fan of literature, poetry, and how words can create different imagery. Those combined influences were instrumental in my songwriting."

Air Supply is currently working on a new album, slated for a summer 2009 release. Russell wrote or co-wrote all 15 tracks on the project, which has a tentative working title of "Zed."

"We're pretty excited about this project because we haven't recorded a new album in about four years," says Russell.

At the core of Air Supply's music is a desire to challenge audiences to dig deeper, know their beliefs, and understand truth.

"We only have one life to live, so we need to live it to the fullest, whenever and however we can," says Russell. "We live in such a fast world. We hope our music can inspire people to slow down and take some time to think about themselves, the lives that they live, their loved ones, the things that really make them feel alive, and to follow their bliss."