

Biography

NINE BELOW ZERO: A BULLET POINTED HISTORY

1977 Dennis Greaves forms Stan's Blues Band with bassist Pete Clark, drummer Kenny Bradley and Harmonica player Mark Feltham.

1978 Stan's Blues Band play the London pub circuit and start to develop a strong reputation as an excellent live act.

1979 A tape of a live concert, recorded at The Apples & Pears pub in Bermondsey, starts to earn the band bookings at London's credible club venues. The band find management after a blistering show at The Thomas A Beckett pub, and a change of name comes swiftly, one that preserves the Blues flavour and in tribute to Sonny Boy Williamson, the guys adopt one of his song titles and are renamed Nine Below Zero.

1980 Nine Below Zero release the 'Pack Fair and Square' EP. Shortly afterward, the band sign to A&M Records and are able to give up their day jobs. March 1980 sees Mickey 'Stix' Burkey replace Kenny Bradley on drums. On July 16th, Nine Below Zero release their first album, Live At The Marquee and Derek Green head of A&M Records says I have booked the Hammersmith Odeon for a headline gig in three months' time. They sell it out with special guest Alexis Korner and the support act was Jools Holland.

Throughout **1980** the band takes just one week off.

1981 Recording sessions for their second album 'Don't Point Your Finger' - their first studio album produced by the legendary Glyn Johns, who says they are the best he has seen since The Who. The album enters the charts twice, remaining there in all for five weeks. The band play tours dates supporting The Who (after Kenny Jones saw them in the studio) & The Kinks. In June 1981 the band part company with bassist Pete Clark, who is replaced by Brian Bethall. Towards the end of the year Nine Below Zero record TV appearances for 'The Old Grey Whistle Test', the 'South Bank Show'.

1982 Nine Below Zero start recording a new album at Glyn John's studio in West Sussex. The classic '11+11' is written during these sessions. Nine Below Zero make their legendary appearance on the very first-ever episode of The Young Ones, performing '11+11'. This recording of this new album is completed under the production ears of Simon Boswell and becomes 'Third Degree'. Probably the most underrated Nine Below Zero album, Third Degree does not deliver the progress the band is expecting and results in a 'time out' for the band.

1983- 1989 Dennis Greaves forms 'The Truth' and this keeps him busy for the remainder of the eighties, including a Top 5 R&B hit in the US charts and several tours of the USA. Mark Feltham, having earned a high reputation as a harmonica player, enters the session world and quickly establishes himself with some amazing credits.

1990 After some serious persuasion from various sources, a 10th Anniversary gig is announced at The Town and Country Club in October. The gig sells out and another gig is subsequently announced. Gerry McAvoy and Brendan O'Neill are in the process of leaving Rory Gallagher's band and, through Mark Feltham, hear that Dennis is looking for a rhythm section to complete the line-up for the new Nine Below Zero. The chemistry is tested and the results are explosive. The public welcomes back Nine Below Zero with open arms and a sell-out UK tour takes place in December.

1991 Nine Below Zero sign to China Records and 'On The Road Again', a significant and apt title, is recorded and released in April. Tour after tour continues for the rest of the year, establishing Nine Below Zero as a force in the UK once again, and earning them high regard in Europe.

1992 Mark Feltham himself takes a time out and Alan Glen, who has previously played with B.B. King, Johnny Winter and Albert Collins, fills the gap. As the touring continues, another album called 'Off the Hook' is released on China Records, garnering rave reviews.

1993 The band secures the support slot for Sting on his European Tour.

1994 With a diary full of live dates and healthy record sales, all the hard work is starting to pay-off. The band's reputation has reached the ears of Eric Clapton who has loved what he's heard. Nine Below Zero are invited by Eric to open for him at The Royal Albert Hall, playing the whole Twelve Nights and going down a storm. In the audience at one of these Twelve Nights concerts is Sting, who loves the band so much he signs them to his newly formed record company, Pangea Records, distributed through A&M. After this, long-time Nine Below Zero fan Ray Davies books the band for his UK tour, which includes a date at Wembley Arena. Following these dates, Brian May invites the band to play six shows during his UK solo tour. October and November 1994 sees the band touring America and Canada with Alannah Myles & Alvin Lee, promoting their U.S. album 'Hot Music for A Cold Night'.

1995 Alan Glen leaves the band due to the heavy touring commitments. Alan is replaced by Billy Boy Miskimmin, from Ireland.

1996 Nine Below Zero release a new album, Ice Station Zebro. With several tracks co-written with Nik Kershaw, the album is regarded as the best they have recorded up to this point. Nine Below Zero headline many festivals across Europe and, finally, get the chance to headline The Colne British Blues Festival. Towards the end of the year Nine Below Zero receive an invitation from Bruce Willis to play with him at Planet Hollywood in London after the premiere of Twelve Monkeys.

1997 Nine Below Zero form their own record company called Zed Records.

1998 The year starts with a tour of Bangladesh. Working with The British Council, this was a truly memorable experience for the band. The band takes to their task as ambassadors & blues representatives very well, making a lot of friends along the way. Even in Dacca people want to learn how to play Hideaway like Freddie King! The band then start work on the 'Refrigerator' album and record a single for the first National Curry Day with Indian artist Bappi Lahri.

1999 - The band successfully negotiate with A&M Records to license their back catalogue to Zed Records, culminating with the release of 'Live at the Marquee' on CD for the first time in October 1999. The band finishes recording and mixing the 'Refrigerator' album.

2000 The band spends the whole year touring Refrigerator. This album has eleven self-penned songs and is critically acclaimed by MOJO Magazine. The band celebrates the 20th anniversary of Live at the Marquee with two shows at The Thomas a Beckett pub, where they started their career. Mark Feltham plays both nights and the shows are electrifying. 'Don't Point Your Finger' is released for the first time on CD.

2001 'Third Degree' is released early in the year. This sees the completion of The A&M years, released on CD. Significantly, Mark Feltham rejoins Nine Below Zero after the success of The Thomas a Beckett concerts in London. The definitive band is now back together again and concert tours, festival appearances, and interview requests start to flood in. The band then work constantly for the best part of the next seventeen months.

2002 - 2003 The ON THE ROAD AGAIN DVD is filmed and recorded in Wilbarston, England and is released in May, complete with interviews and a full two-hour concert. In addition, the band release an acoustic album called Chilled. Recorded over a two-week period in deepest Hampshire, the album was produced by Stephen Smith, with Paul McCartney and Pretenders guitarist Robbie McIntosh adding some background guitar to Dennis Greaves already weeping blues guitar. Nine Below Zero then set off around Europe to tour the album, with rave following them on the exhausting touring schedule they have embarked upon.

2004 As Nine Below Zero fulfil the dream of playing one of Europe's greatest blues festivals, PISTOIA BLUES, in Italy. Dennis and JOHN MAYALL chat away backstage with ALVIN LEE and STEVE WINWOOD, as SANTANA headlines the following night. NBZ are to later meet up again with MAYALL at the BANDOL blues festival in France. Before the year is out, Nine Below Zero recorded a truly

analogue blues record, where the guys literally take off their hats to some of the great blues artists they love so much. The record is recorded in KONK studios London, owned by RAY DAVIES of The Kinks, who regularly pops in to see his old mate Dennis to see how the project is going. The resulting record is aptly named HATS OFF, and yet again, the band takes off with contributors BEN WATERS and PETE WINGFIELD on the subsequent shows around Europe.

2005 One of the highlights of the year is two sold-out shows at The 100 Club in Oxford Street, London. PETE WINGFIELD of The Everly Brothers and Albert Lee fame has become such good friends with the band that he has become an unofficial 5th member whenever the situation warrants some classic blues piano. Tours in SERBIA, SLOVENIA, MACEDONIA, and CROATIA take the blues to places that have been starved of touring artists for a long time. Nine Below Zero are by now regarded as a truly international band.

2006 Sights and Sounds Vol. 1 is released, which includes many rare video & TV appearances the band have made during their career, and comes complete with an accompanying CD of live tracks. The rest of 2006 sees the band touring extensively throughout Europe.

2007 Nine Below Zero film two acoustic concerts at Rheged in Lancashire, UK. The results are worked on over many months to produce the DVD Bring It On Home, and including a live CD, which has by now become a tradition of the band. Bring It On Home is eventually released in the autumn of 2007 after a successful but exhausting summer festival season. Rave reviews for the DVD followed, along with a sold out G.A.S. tour. On one of the dates to promote Bring It On Home, Gary Moore sits in with the band.

2008 The year starts in fine fashion, with the band being asked by special request to open the show for the legendary Chuck Berry at The 100 Club on Oxford Street. Dennis, after a chance meeting with his neighbor Glenn Tilbrook in a local Restaurant, is asked to come play guitar on a few tracks Glenn is recording for his Solo album Pandemonium Ensues. The band also starts work on a forthcoming original CD, It's Never Too Late!, the first collection of new songs

since Refrigerator. The recording was done at Glenn's studio 45RPM, the fruits of Glenn and Dennis's chance meeting. In between recording sessions, the band plays a string of festival dates, including The Colne British Blues Festival.

2009 The band prepares to release It's Never Too Late while taking in shows across the UK and Europe. The band also start working towards a special concert to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the release of their debut album, Live At The Marquee.

2010 - 2011 After being asked by Glenn Tilbrook of Squeeze to collaborate on a Mojo Magazine Cover Mount CD anniversary of The Beatles, Abbey Road, the band and Glenn record 'You never give me your money' This leads to a further collaboration with Glenn and a project and a release of an album under the name 'The Cooperative' A successful tour of the UK and Ireland follows.
The end of **2011** see's Gerry McAvoy leave the band.

2012- 2014 Sees the return of Brian Bethell to the NBZ on Bass Guitar. Universal Records re-release Live at the Marquee, Don't Point your Finger and Third Degree Special Editions with Bonus Tracks on CD. The Band also tour the UK with the Stranglers.

2015 Original Drummer Mickey Burkey re-joins the band to make it the classic line up with Mark, Dennis and Brian who last played together on the BBC's Young Ones and go on tour to promote the A&M years back catalogue. The Band also tour this year with From the Jam. Mark and Dennis release their first work as a DUO, with an album release in April. As well as playing unplugged versions of NBZ material, the DUO cover songs by Blues legends such as Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, Jimmy Reed, Slim Harpo and Leadbelly.

2016 Bassist Ben Willis joins the band with Brian Bethell stepping aside. The band return to Glenn Tilbrook's 45 RPM Studio to set about recording their own versions of rare blues and soul tracks with the help of Johnny Chandler former DJ and now Universal back catalogue executive. The album is titled 13 Shades of Blue. The four piece is augmented on these tracks by the addition of a Horn section,

Keyboards and Charlie Austen on Vocals, to create an exciting new NBZ BIG BAND. With Live performances on the BBC. The highlight is being asked to play Glastonbury.

The Big Band makes its live debut on the Acoustic Stage at GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL **2016**.

2017 The Big Band set off to promote 13 Shades of Blue and tour with former stable mates at A&M, Squeeze. NBZ are Special Guests on a 30 Theatre date Tour around the UK. More European festivals and critical acclaim for 13 Shades of Blue sees the band raise its profile.

2018 Sees the band start a new project and line up. Dennis's Son Sonny Greaves joins the band on Drums. They scale back to a four piece with Ben, Mark, Dennis and Sonny touring with Bruce Foxton's From The Jam and again festivals all around Europe.

2019 Another project! This time Charlie Austen comes back on Vocals and Tom Monks joins on Keyboards and Guitar for another new NBZ Sound. They write and record an 11 track self-penned album called AVALANCHE, again recorded at 45RPM but this time mixed at Super Fly studios by Wayne Proctor. Artwork is provided by local artist Peter Tingy. Released in September of this year AVALANCHE is received well by both critics and fans.

2020 NBZ start the year with a successful tour of Italy and then embark on a UK tour to promote AVALANCHE. After 2 concerts the World is hit by a Pandemic and the band come off the road. The last show was March the 12th. Who would have known it would be 18 months before Nine Below Zero play again.

2021 August the 5th the band play Wickham Festival, their first show for nearly 18 months. They then pick up the baton and hit the road for 32 shows to promote the 40th anniversary of Don't Point Your Finger. It is an emotional tour for both fans and band due to the uncertainty caused by COVID 19.

2022 Bassist Ben Willis leaves the band after 7 years. The band are working on a Live album and are looking at releasing never heard before archive material.