

# Henry Gross Biography

Henry Gross was born on April 1st, 1951 in Brooklyn, New York. Henry's introduction and subsequent addiction to Rock & Roll came at a very early age. His mother Zelda's life long love of music, which included a brief stint with the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, encouraged his pursuit of a performing career. By age thirteen his first band, The Auroras, performed at The New Jersey pavilion of the Worlds' Fair in New York City. At age fourteen he was playing regularly in local clubs all over the New York area and spending his summers playing at Catskill Mountain Resort hotels. His dad, a pharmacist, gave his support as well, though tempering it with words of caution about the life of a musician, which always fell on deaf ears!

At age eighteen, Henry was a founding member of the Rock & Roll revival group, SHA NA NA. He sang two songs on the group's 1969 debut LP "Rock & Roll is Here To Stay", cover versions of The Earl's "Remember Then" and the Little Richard classic "Long Tall Sally". The groups' popularity soared after legendary performances in the Fillmore Auditoriums East and West and at the Woodstock Festival, where he was the youngest person to perform. With the groups' appearance in the film "WOODSTOCK" and the accompanying Cotillion Records 1970 LP of the same name, their popularity became a worldwide phenomenon.

Leaving the band in 1970 to pursue a career as a singer songwriter Henry signed his first solo deal with ABC DUNHILL RECORDS and in 1971 his first solo album was released. The albums' lack of commercial success did not discourage him. After performing at colleges and clubs all over the country, he was signed in 1973 to a production deal by Terry Cashman and Tommy West, legendary producers of Jim Croce, who placed him on A&M RECORDS.

His first A&M album, "HENRY GROSS" (AKA "The Yellow Album") sold very well and had several regional hits including "Simone," "Come On Say It," "Skin King" and a near gold cover of Lindisfarne's European hit "Meet Me On The Corner."

Henry's second A&M album, "Plug Me Into Something" received great reviews and sold just short of gold, garnering him a devoted following. Legendary songs like "One More Tomorrow" and "Southern Band" were especially popular in the South. Besides being praised as an exciting, dynamic performer, he began to achieve national recognition as a fine guitarist in publications like Rolling Stone Magazine and The New York Times. As a session guitarist, Henry, most notably, played on recordings by Dion and the late, great Jim Croce.

For his next album he was moved to Cashman & West's new label, Lifesong Records. His first single release in 1976, "Shannon," a song written about the passing of Beach Boy Carl Wilson's Irish Setter of the same name, went gold in the US and Canada on it's way to becoming a worldwide hit. Sales of the album called "Release" were strong with the second single, "Springtime Mama", selling sold just short of gold.

In 1976, Henry also performed the Lennon McCartney penned, "Help" on the soundtrack album "All This and World War II." On his next album, 1977's "Show Me to the Stage", Henry mixed Rock & Roll songs with Phil Spector and Brian Wilson influenced production. While the album had strong sales it produced no national "hit" singles.

Henry's recording career continued with albums on CBS Records, 1978's "Love is the Stuff," reuniting him with producers Cashman and West, and on Capitol Records 1980 Bobby Colomby produced LP, "What's in a Name" on which Henry duets with legendary R&B vocalist Chaka Kahn.

Henry recorded an additional, as yet unreleased Capitol record, tentatively titled "Henry Gross and the Pineapples"- "Subway Virgin" produced by Anthony Battaglia (studio guitarist and re-mixer of the latest N' SYNC single) and Ed Machal (engineer of all the Eagles records). Henry hopes this inventive, ahead of its time, record will someday see the light of day.

In 1981 Henry performed in the road company production of the hit Broadway musical "Pump Boys and Dinettes." With a cast also featuring well - known recording artists Jonathan "Sunshine" Edwards and the late Nicolette "It's Gonna Take A lot of love" Larson, the show was a rousing success.

After moving to NASHVILLE Henry signed a publishing deal in 1987 with "Pic A Lic Music", a company owned by legendary songwriters Roger Cook and Ralph Murphy. Through Murphy's efforts a record deal with Sonet Records, based in Sweden and England, soon followed and two albums, 1987's "I Keep on Rocking", and 1989's "She's My Baby", were released in Europe and Japan.

In 1992, keeping up with the changing landscape of the music business, he released a well received CD of twenty-two songs, called "Nothing But Dreams", on his own label, ZELDA RECORDS, about which his motto remains, "Not only am I the president, I'm a client as well."

In 1995 he and longtime friend Henry Paul, of Blackhawk and Outlaws fame, co- wrote Blackhawk's top fifteen Country hit, "Big Guitar."

In 2001 Henry continued his recording career producing the Zelda Records CD "I'm Hearing Things" featuring guest appearances by many of Nashville's finest musicians, including his dear friends Garry Tallent, bassist for the E Street Band and Mike Chapman, bassist on nearly all of Garth Brooks' recordings as well as countless Country hits.

In 1996 Varese Sarabande Records released a compilation of Henry's 1970's singles titled "The Best Of Henry Gross."

In 2001 Henry met John Mclane, a kindred spirit, who would become his recording engineer, co- producer and music collaborator to this day. With John's help more Zelda Records CD's soon followed:

In 2006 he released the studio soundtrack CD of music from his self penned one man theatrical production "One Hit Wanderer," the trailer for which can be seen on You Tube. The show is directed by Ed Greenberg, with whom Henry continues to collaborate on numerous projects including a musical comedy they hope will someday see the lights of Broadway.

"One Hit Wanderer" tells Henry's story, from a child in Brooklyn to the present day, highlighting moments of joy, happiness, success and failure in a way that allows audience members to experience the ups and downs of their own lives. Through themes of lightheartedness and perseverance the show is part adventure, comedy, self discovery and reflection while constantly remaining optimistic. Standing ovations have followed every performance.

In 2007 Henry released "Foreverland", another CD of self penned songs on his Zelda Records label.

In 2011 Henry released two double CD's, "Right As Rain" and "Rhymes and Misdemeanors", each with 21 new songs. 2011 also saw the release of recordings made in 1992 by Henry and his musical compatriots Jonathan Edwards and Henry Paul. The trio got together in Nashville for a week of singing and joke telling. Delighted by the blend of their voices they recorded 12 songs in Mel Tillis' studio on Music Row.

Never one to live in the past, Henry is continually working hard to write, record and release new music that he believes will continue to find it's way into the hearts of more and more listeners all around the world.

Henry has had his songs recorded by artists as diverse as Blackhawk, The Outlaws, Judy Collins, Mary Travers (Peter Paul & Mary) , Cindy Lauper, Sonny Burgess (Sun Records star), Ronnie Milsap and All The Kings Men to name a few.

Henry, his wife Marilyn, their three dogs and three cats split their time between Nashville and Naples Florida.

## **The Story of "Shannon"**

When I was twenty-one years old a wonderful girl came into my life by the name of Kathy Reinmann. As if having her in my life as a friend, a wife and a friend again for the next twenty three years, until she died of lung cancer in 1995, was not enough, she brought along with her a two year old Irish Setter named Shannon. She was an uncannily human dog whose ability to manipulate her human counterparts cannot be understated.

I was touring around the country quite a lot in 1975 promoting an album called HENRY GROSS, the one with the yellow cover on A&M Records. I had the pleasure of doing long strings of dates with The Beach Boys, a group whose music always inspired me, Carl Wilson, lead singer on God Only Knows and Good Vibrations, was warm and welcoming from the very first show I played with them. Carl invited me to his house in Los Angeles to spend a day talking guitars, cars and rock & roll. While he was preparing lunch his two Alaskan husky dogs reached up on the counter and inhaled our food. Carl was no nice he couldn't stop apologizing but I told him, while admiring the military perfection of the raid executed by his huskies, that I had an Irish Setter at home named Shannon and had seen this act many times before! He was quite moved as he told me that he had an Irish Setter named Shannon that had been killed only recently when hit by a car. We spent the rest of the day jamming and driving around Carl's world, which as a friend and to be honest, a Beach Boy's fanatic, was quite a thrill.