

Discogs Biography

Friday Brown - Ask Any Woman

April 21, 2016

Marian Stockley, better known as Friday Browne/Friday Brown, was born in Manchester on February 18, 1947.

She was 15, and had started studying to become an art teacher at Bolton art college, when she fell in love with a fellow student and guitarist, Wilf Lewis, who was three years ahead of her. He asked her to join his group, The Mike Taylor Combo, based in Darwen, Lancashire. They entered the Lancashire and Cheshire beat contest in Liverpool in 1962-63, and Marian won the 'best vocalist' award and a contract with Peter Sullivan at Decca.

Her loyalty to the group pulled singer Mike Taylor along, but not the group. They formed a duo called Marianne And Mike and had two singles released on the Decca subsidiary label Vocalion Pop in 1964, Marian's boyfriend Wilf Lewis wrote the songs for them.

The year after, in 1965, Marian and Wilf became founder members of a new Salford-based group called Wynder K. Frog, along with Mick Weaver and sax player Alex Kirby. However, Marian didn't stay long enough to do any recordings with the group.

She was discovered by Kennedy Street Enterprises and they got her a recording deal as a solo act with Parlophone/EMI. They also came up with a new stage name for her - Friday Browne (as the family name, but with an extra 'e'). Her first UK single, Parlophone R5396, 'Getting Nowhere' (Gouldman)/'(And) To Me He Meant Everything' (Stockleigh-Stockleigh), was released in 1966.

Songwriter Graham Gouldman got in Friday Brown to sing on many of his demos at the time. 1966 also saw her team up with High Society, a studio group with Peter Cowap, Christine Ebbrell and Keith Lawless (ex-Ivans Meads bassist) who recorded two tracks

with Graham Gouldman behind the controls. 'People Passing By', was written by Gouldman while Cowap had originated the flip.

The blend of voices and Seekers-style arrangement was perfect for the Gouldman song. It was released in the UK on Fontana in November 1966. A Stateside release was secured on Cameo Parkway Records, but sales were low on both sides of the Atlantic.

Graham Gouldman was then commissioned to produce Friday Brown's new solo single 'Ask Any Woman'/'The Outdoor Seminar' in 1967. Again a great ballad written by Stewart/Langley, it's one of Friday Brown's most compelling performances on record. Credited as musical director was John Paul Jones (later of Led Zeppelin). The 'A' side was composed by Stewart/Langley, the flip by Stockley. Both were produced by Graham Gouldman with John Paul Jones as Musical Director.

(by smile-lab, 2016 and edited by Ray White, 2019)