

WHO'S WHO IN A&R AT EMERALD CITY RECORDS

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Charlie Green grew up in the Bronx and attended Brooklyn Technical Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences where he left after two years and decided to go into business as a press agent. Brian Stone was a junior accountant at the time. They decided they'd make a good team and in about 1959-60 they set up Greene/Stone Assocs. In Charlie's words; "We got a little penthouse on East End Avenue. We were about 18 years old...and of course we went out of business because we made an awful lot of money and spent twice as much". Charlie recalls the rest of the story; "In 1960 we hitchhiked to California. We left New York with \$8 and ended up in L.A. with about 8¢. We got out there on a Sunday and decided to take a look at the studios. So we hitched around and saw Universal Studios and liked it. We sort of snuck in and took over a dressing room where we slept for the evening. In the morning I called the head of security and told him our offices were there and to leave permanent passes for myself, my partner, and our entire staff..We stayed there for about six months representing Bob Fuller, Audie Murphy, Doug McClure, and most of the young actors on the TV series 'Whispering Smith' and 'Laramie'." When asked how he was able to pick up their clients Charlie explained; "We would hang around with them. We would drink with them. We'd have lunch with them... and they'd say 'what do you do' and we'd say we were press agents and were on the lot and they'd say 'Oh great...how much!'" Charlie continues the story; "We then made a presentation to handle all of Review Studios, which was Universal's TV wing, for about 1/2 a million dollars a year...and they were considering it. Finally Allen Miller, who was the president of Review at the time, called us into his office and said 'where are your offices' and we said Dressing Room 116 and he said 'What!'"

Shortly thereafter Green and Stone opened offices on Sunset Strip and continued doing press. They also moved into the music business with the establishment of a nightclub called the Hootenanny Club in Canoga Park. It opened in November 1963 and closed in March 1964. The club included recording facilities, and even though it was not overly successful, Greene and Stone became intrigued in that end of the business.

Their first record was with duo called Ceasar and Cleo whose name they changed to Sonny and Cher. That resulted in a Gold record and with Sonny and Cher, Brian and Charlie learned the inside of the music business including road work, management, publishing, and recording techniques. They then found another group that did not as yet have a name but was rehearsing in a place that happened to have a tractor nearby. It was a Buffalo-Springfield tractor and that was the name they gave the group. Both acts went to Atlantic and it was the beginning of what was to become a long and mutually rewarding relationship.

After the Buffalo-Springfield, they found the Iron Butterfly whose "Inna-Gadda-Da-Vida" has to date sold over 14 million albums. They also managed an artist named Bob Lind with a hit called "The Elusive Butterfly". They brought Lind to England to record and there discovered a group called The Troggs. With The Troggs Charlie remembers, "We cut a record called 'Wild Thing' which nobody wanted but Atlantic put out... it was number one in three weeks." All told Greene and Stone produced records for Atlantic that earned in excess of a quarter of a billion dollars in gross sales world wide.

In 1969 Greene and Stone began to feel that they had had enough of the music business and many of the people surrounding them and decided to call it quits. They parted to pursue separate careers outside of the music industry. Then in 1978 they met again in New York purely by accident and began talking about old times. As a result of that chance meeting, Emerald City Records was established. In Charlie's words, "We set up a label, with no distribution, just a label, and began looking at acts.....Nothing was knocking us out and the ones that knocked us out we couldn't afford.....We were never in the business of buying an act. We would discover them and work from the ground up....In the case of Leon Redbone we happened to see him on television and absolutely freaked. We went after him and found that he was just getting out of his Warner Brothers contract so we offered him an arrangement which he accepted. As you know, he's the first album that we've released and he's now new on the charts."

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It's interesting to note that Emerald City had not even finalized their first recording contract when they worked out a major distribution agreement with Atlantic Records primarily on the basis of their phenomenal past track record as well as their personal relationship with the principals at Atlantic.

When asked about their most recent signing, a group called Apache, Charlie is reluctant to classify them...."First of all, I don't like to put labels on a group...if you put a label on it like 'Punk' or 'Disco' and in two years it disappears.... so does your act... so they play music....that's the best label".

In discussing the label's direction, Charlie explains, "We're looking to create new acts as well as to give artists that are already in existence a shot at a company where they don't have to go through a board of 72 A&R men....The only people they have to deal with here are Charlie Greene and Brian Stone." When asked about the eventual size of the roster Charlie indicates that he would not want more than five acts on the label. At present the label has Leon Redbone, Apache and is working with a group called The Kids, who are in the studio now. As far as actual day-to-day operations, Charlie works out of a small office at 75 Rockefeller Plaza in New York City and Brian, out of his home in Palm Beach. As Charlie explains it, "He flies up here about once a month, we're on the phone at least 20 times a day...it's a great relationship....it's like being married and not having to see your wife all the time... it lasts longer that way".

In the area of music publishing Emerald City owns the publishing on all its acts, other than Leon who does a considerable amount of public domain material. The publishing company called the Greene/Stone Music Group presently has subpublishing agreements in U.K., France and Australia but is available for the rest of the world. It is also important to point out here that Atlantic has guaranteed Emerald City distribution worldwide with guaranteed releases in France, Germany, Japan, Australia and the U.K. Charlie also commented that they are now interviewing various individuals to develop a "full out publishing wing... a working publishing company."

To sum up, Charlie notes that "Prior to working out our arrangement with Atlantic, we had discussed a label deal with other companies as well and discovered that, aside from being old friends with the people here, they are probably the most workable label we could have gone with....they take care of business...and I've seen it...I mean after a hiatus of nine years the first thing we've put out with them is on the charts."
