

## Canned Heat - Living The Blues (1968)

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Disc1:

01. *Pony Blues*
02. *My Mistake*
03. *Sandy's Blues*
04. *Going Up the Country*
05. *Walking by Myself*
06. *Boogie Music*
07. *One Kind Favor*
08. *Parthenogenesis*

Disc2:

01. *Refried Boogie (Part I)*
02. *Refried Boogie (Part II)*

Personnel    Bob Hite – vocals    Alan Wilson – Slide Guitar, vocals, Harmonica    Henry Vestine– Lead guitar    Larry Taylor – Electric Bass    Fito de la Parra – drums +    Dr. John Creaux - Horn Arrangements, Piano (Boogie Music)    Miles Grayson - Horn Arrangements (Sandy's Blues)    Jim Horn - Flute (Going Up the Country)    Joe Sample - Piano (Sandy's Blues)

Canned Heat's third collection, *Living the Blues* (1968), was likewise their first double-LP, heralding the rural hippie anthem "Going Up the Country" as well as the nearly three-quarter-hour "Refried Boogie." However, rather than distracting their audience, it became one of rock & roll's first two-LP sets to make a substantial showing on the charts, reaching the Top 20. Not surprising as the rest of the album -- essentially all of disc one -- is as solid (if not arguably more so) than their previous long player *Boogie With Canned Heat* (1968). Featured is the "classic" Heat lineup of Alan "Blind Owl" Wilson (guitar/harmonica/vocals), Larry "The Mole" Taylor (bass), Henry "Sunflower" Vestine (guitar), Adolfo "Fido" de la Parra (drums), and Bob "The Bear" Hite (vocals), who unleash another batch of strong originals and engaging overhauls of a few blues staples -- including the solid cover of Charley Patton's "Pony Blues" that commences the effort. Right out of the gate, the formidable team of Wilson and Vestine explore

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their musical passions with a focused drive that would significantly diminish in the years and on the records to follow. One of the primary factors in the package's commercial success was their update of Henry Thomas' "Going Down South," which they turned into the breezy "Goin' Up the Country." The song not only became one of their biggest hits, it was also used in the Woodstock (1970) documentary and a live version -- from the actual concert -- was presented on the soundtrack. Canned Heat are joined by one of their contemporaries as Brit bluesman John Mayall contributes to the compact reading of Jimmy Rogers' "Walking By Myself," not on guitar, but rather piano. He also tosses around the '88s during the "Bear Wires" movement of the side-long "Parthenogenesis" suite. While on the subject of guest keyboardists, Mac Rebennack (aka Dr. John) joins in on the groovy ode to "Boogie Music." "One Kind Favour" (aka "See That My Grave Is Kept Clean") drives hard with Hite belting out behind the ensemble's propelling rhythms. Aside from the slightly indulgent "Refried Boogie," Living the Blues (1968) stands as a testament to Canned Heat's prowess as modernizers of the blues and recommended as one of the most cohesive works from this incarnation. ---Lindsay Planer, allmusic.com

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