



Venerable band known for a string of hit love songs will bring show to Mendel

By **JEREMY D. BONFIGLIO**
HP Features Writer

BENTON HARBOR — Graham Russell remembers meeting Russell Hitchcock on May 12, 1975.

The duo, better known as Air Supply, had been cast in an Australian touring production of the musical “Jesus Christ Superstar,” and instantly bonded over a common name, the fact that they were born in the same month, and that they both saw The Beatles play in 1964.

“We both got jobs as apostles and we kind of gravitated towards each other,” Russell says by telephone from his home in Park City, Utah, where he has lived the past 24 years. “Then I heard Russell sing in the chorus, and his voice was so striking. We just became great friends and started to sing together between shows.”

The effortless harmonies and distinctive vocal blend first caught the attention of other cast members. After the curtain fell at 10:30 p.m., Russell and Hitchcock would head off to play in whatever coffee shop or night club they could find. A year later, the duo formed Air Supply and began releasing albums in Australia.

“I’d been writing songs since I was 11 years old, so I already had several hundred songs when we met,” Russell says. “But it wasn’t until I played Russell some of my early songs and he started to sing them that the penny dropped. I’m not a lead

Photo provided

Air Supply, featuring Graham Russell, left, and Russell Hitchcock performs Saturday at the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center Mainstage Theatre in Benton Harbor. The duo celebrates 40 years together in May 2015.

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