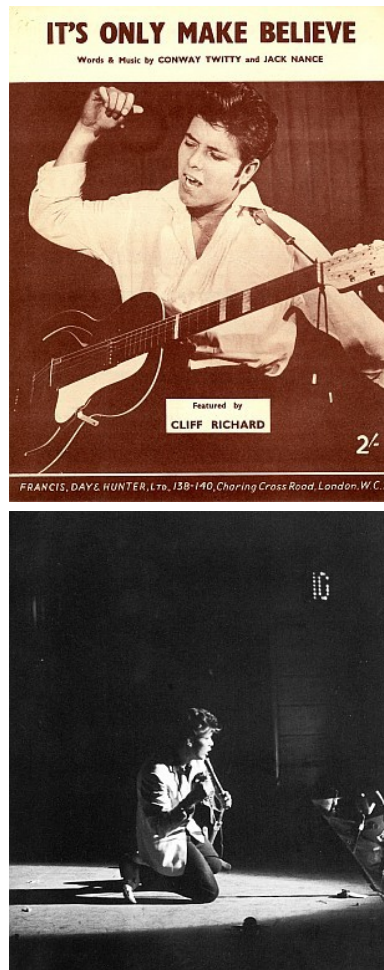


**#24: IT'S ONLY MAKE BELIEVE**  
**(Conway Twitty/ Jack Nance)**  
**1960**



**Cliff singing *It's Only Make Believe*, early 1959**

It's a shame Cliff's cover of this ballad is not better quality as it was a song he featured frequently on his earliest live shows and on ABC TV's 'Oh Boy!' series in the latter part of 1958. No other recording of it can be traced; it sounds rather muffled with too much bass and the volume levels are rather low.

*It's Only Make Believe* was a tortured ballad that Cliff enjoyed singing in his earliest concerts. He sang it at his variety debut at the Metropolitan Theatre in Edgeware Road, London, for three weeks commencing on Monday 17 November 1958 along with *Baby I Don't Care*, *Summertime Blues*, *I Got A Feeling*, *Don't Bug Me Baby* and *King Creole*. He allowed the tempo to slow down only once during his spot – to give his anguished version of *It's Only Make Believe* complete with his stage tricks of grabbing his arm as if in pain and going down on one knee for the build-up in the final verse of the song. Cliff would then leave the stage with the audience screaming for more before returning for his show-stopping finale of *Move It!* and the new hit single *High Class Baby*.

This 1958 Conway Twitty hit also featured in Cliff's set for his first live album *Cliff* recorded on 9 and 10 February 1959 at EMI's Abbey Road Studios. But for some reason this track, along with *Kisses Sweeter Than Wine*, never made the final album and both recordings have subsequently been lost. A search was made in 1997 of EMI's vaults as it was hoped to include it on the *Rock 'n' Roll Years 4* CD box set. Official paperwork had indicated that the song was recorded but sadly nothing could be found. A live version of Cliff singing Elvis' *One Night* was discovered however, which was

something of a surprise as nothing in the session's recording notes indicated that it was ever performed.

MC: admirers of Cliff's early ballad style will no doubt lap this one up, but the assured vocal delivery at the start falters somewhat as the song progresses and collapses towards the close: not one of the top-notchers by any means.