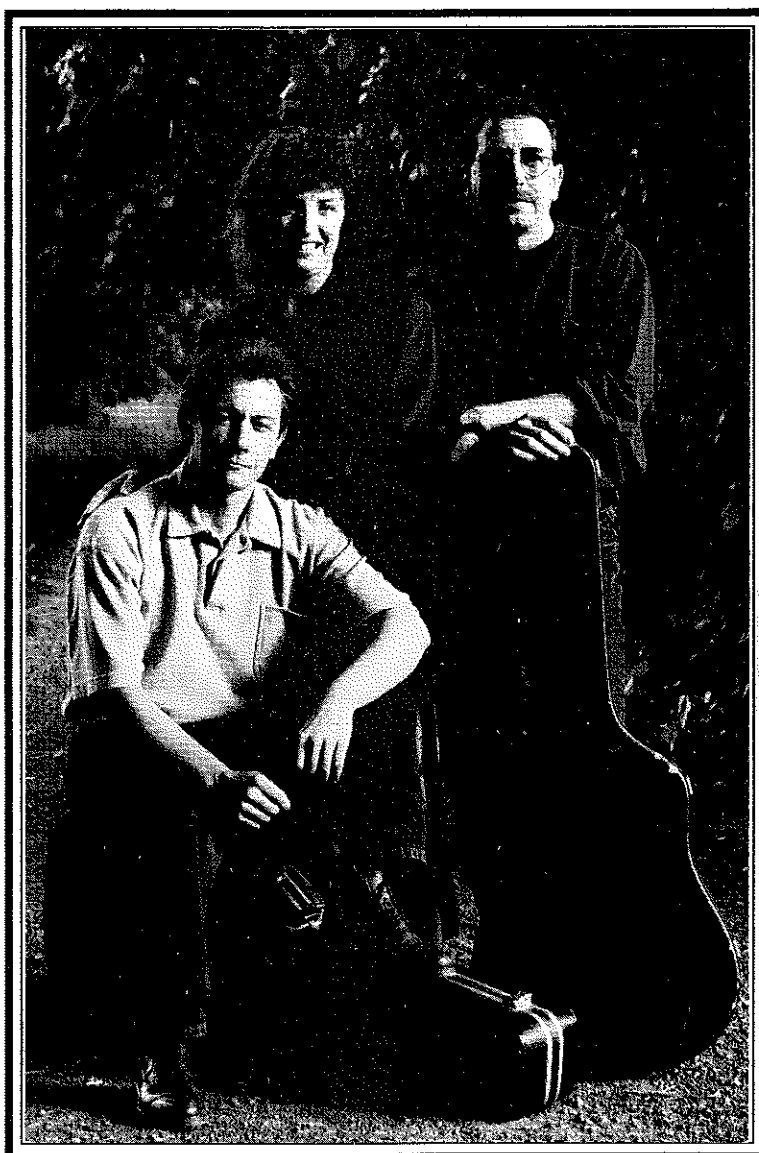


FOLK *North West*

Spring 1995

75p



**New Group RISKY BUSINESS:
Interview by BERNARD WRIGLEY**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NewsReel

Youthful Perspective

Record Reviews: *Harvey Andrews reviews*

LIVE REVIEWS:

Bogtrotters

FESTIVAL REVIEWS:

Maghull, Swinton

OUT & ABOUT:

Nat Clare's back!

plus:

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The Harry Brown Shantymen

Dick Miles

Roy Harris

John Conolly

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The Shanty Crew

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For further information, or to be placed on the Festival Newsletter mailing list, contact:

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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of either the Editor or of The Federation

The Editor accepts no responsibility for contributions claimed to be original or for any inaccuracies therein

EDITORIAL

WELCOME to yet another FOLK NORTH WEST!

In a packed issue, we have once again some guest contributors this issue. Harvey Andrews turns his attention to some new CD releases on page 26 & 27, whilst our cover artists Risky Business are interviewed by Bernard Wrigley.

You will find our usual Youthful Perspective on page 10, this time contributed by Sam Pirt, which I hope you read whether you are a "Youth" or not. Our new format and much extended Diary Chat can be found on page 7, which I hope you find more interesting and informative.

As always, there is mixed news of clubs, with the Travellers Rest closing, while the Triton is currently without a venue. At the same time, Northwich is celebrating 18 years and the White Swan 13. Can anyone explain why some appear to do so well and others not? I could understand all the clubs doing badly or all the clubs doing well, but not the present situation.

Don't forget to write and tell us what you think of the magazine - do you want more interviews, fewer record reviews, other different features? We don't know if you don't tell us!

All for now and we'll see again in early Summer!

Nigel Firth
EDITOR

OUR NEXT ISSUE COVERS

JUNE TO AUGUST 1995 .

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR ALL
SUBMISSIONS IS APRIL 25th,
NOTHING WILL BE ACCEPTED
AFTER THIS DATE**

Editorial Address:

118, Bolton Road,

Aspull,

Wigan

WN2 1XF

Telephone : 0942 833293

Chairman's Ramblings

AAHH!! Spring is on its way - The daffodils are out (Does that affect us? said the militant!).

In the last edition I was grinding on about the young performers trying to make their way in the folk world. In January we booked the "Hall Brothers" from Skipton. They are 19 and 20 year olds who gave us an excellent night with well thought out acoustic sets.

For February we have Kate Rusby and Kathryn Roberts (The current Young Tradition award winner from Radio 2). They are wonderful - if you haven't seen them seek them out and give yourself a treat. Also in February we have the annual youth concert. Jenny Shotliff has assembled a great line-up as usual with Kerensa Wragg, Timothy Van Eyken, Kellie While and a host of others. Hope you were lucky enough to be there!

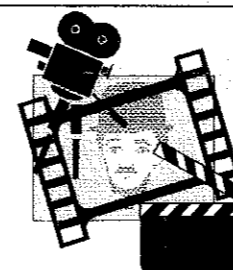
Have you been "Garva-ised" yet? we had them on in Melling in January and had such a demand for tickets that we re-booked them for March. This was announced in the interval of the January concert and was sold out an hour later!! If you haven't seen them you have really missed out.

I can't remember when the standard of the music was better. The great thing about folk music is that there's still room at the bottom for the likes of me!!

Anyone know if there's to be a Wigan Festival this year? It's one of my favourite weekends and I would hate not to be able to make my annual pilgrimage.

Maghull has joined the Association of Festival Organisers. The conference is at Warwick - next time I'll tell you what it was like!

Dave Day



NewsReel

*Latest News from around the
region and further afield*

Once again, welcome to NewsReel. A number of items to get through this time, but before I kick off let me issue my usual invitation. If you have anything at all that you would like included in NewsReel, then send in the details. Whatever it might be, club event, concert, ceilidh, Morris weekend or ferret breeders convention, I'd love to know about it. Even if your not looking for a free plug, but would just like to pass on information to fellow enthusiasts, the same applies. On to the serious stuff.....

From the 17th to 19th March it's 'Ragin' Cajun' at the Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal. Dance and music workshops, music sessions and cookery demonstrations are part of the attraction, as well as dance nights with Joe Le Taxi and the Zydeco Specials and The Cajun Aces. Weekend tickets are £18.00 and single session tickets are available. Dialing (01539) 725133 will get you all the information you need.

If you are a fan of Ralph McTell then you will be pleased to know that he is appearing in concert at Sandbach School on Tuesday, 28th March. Tickets are £7.50 and £6.00. Details on (01270) 662633. If, however, you aren't a fan of Ralph McTell, then I don't suppose you give a sod either way.

Kristina Olsen is a very talented multi-instrumentalist singer/songwriter from the United States. She will be performing in concert in Liverpool on Friday, 24th March. Tickets are £5.00 and £4.00 and more information can be had from the Bluecoat Arts Centre box office on (0151) 709 5279.

Long established ceilidh band Cogglers Brew has joined forces with dance caller Chris Whiting and jazz bassist/pianist Duncan Light to form a new dance band 'Sack the Juggler'. Duncan's jazz pedigree complements the band's strong Morris influence (it says here!) with bass and piano underpinning various combinations of melodeon, hurdy-gurdy, drums, accordion, keyboards and harmonicas. Sack the Juggler are now taking bookings, so contact Tim Brewster on (01744) 451790.

Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men will be hosting 'A Day for St George' on Saturday, 22nd April. A celebration of North West Morris, the day will begin and end at the Toll Bar Inn with a tour of Horwich in-between. Morris sides from all over the North West will be taking part and no doubt the odd half of shandy will be imbibed. For more details speak to Bob Bradley on (01204) 840949.

Chester Folk Weekend takes place on the 28th and 29th May at The Morris Dancer in Kelsall. As usual, lots of top line artists, as well as dances, singarounds

and workshops. I am told there is free camping for Weekend ticket holders. Enquiries: (01244) 320424.

A couple of items regarding folk on radio have come my way over the past few weeks:-

The first one from Frank Lewis of Camforth advises that the Manx Radio folk programme broadcast at 6.00pm on Sundays is no longer being transmitted on FM. Looks like it's medium wave only from now on.

Ralph Rigg of Dalton-in-Furness informs me that a very short (15 minutes) folk/roots programme is broadcast on the BBC World Service at 4.45am each Friday. Ralph points out that this information is probably only of interest to night workers and insomniacs and I've got to agree with him. At least Folk on 2 goes out at a sensible hour!

The Matlock Footloose Festival 95 is all set to take place over the weekend of 7th-9th April. Billed as 'Music, Song and Dance from both sides of the water', the festival promises the usual high energy mix of concerts, dances and workshops. The Doonan Family Band, Jennifer & Hazel Wrigley, Jim Lloyd (USA), Feet First and Bearcat Cajun Playboys are just a few of the attractions. Weekend tickets are £22.00 before 26th March, £25.00 after. Telephone (01629) 734517 for more information.

The West Midlands Folk Federation is celebrating it's 30th birthday by inviting all it's members to a FREE family weekend of music and dance in Warwick on 22nd-23rd April. Music/song sessions, Morris sides, street entertainment, lots to keep the kids happy and a grand ceilidh with Peeping Tom and Hugh Rippon should make for a great couple of days. If you want to know more about the weekend, or Federation membership you should speak to Amanda Collicut on (01789) 450250.

Speaking of Warwick, did you know that the town has one of the foremost medieval castles in Europe and one of the longest town histories in England? No, neither did I until I read the press release for 'A Walled Town and a Ragged Staff', a show which will celebrate the 450th anniversary of Warwick's first town charter by telling it's story in words and song. Researched and written by Strawhead, the show's first live performance will take place on 21st April at the the Guy Nelson Hall, Warwick School. Further details from Dick or Frances Dixon on (01023) 678738.

I know I've mentioned this one before and I make no apologies for giving it just a little more space..... Some very good and very friendly ceilidhs are being

run by Jean Seymour on the first Friday of each month at Ramsbottom Liberal Club. Live music, excellent callers, real ale and a folk dance club atmosphere. What more do you want? Advance tickets are a mere £2.50 and Jean can be contacted on (0161) 761 1544. I'm sure she would love to be inundated with reservations for the next dance!

The Easter weekend sees the 7th Annual Lancaster Maritime Festival, a salty celebration of sea songs, shanties and numerous nautical niceties. Lots and lots of goodies at this one - Roy Harris, Johnny Collins, Damien Barber, Hughie Jones and 'international megostar' Sid Kipper. Talks, walks, story telling, ships in bottles, singarounds and the Lancaster Pace Egg play should provide for a weekend of excellent entertainment. More details of Lancaster's sea-faring celebrations are given in the Festival Newsletter available free from the Lancaster Tourist Information Centre, Tel: (01524) 32878 or 582394. But beware! Details of the movements of Cumpsty the Smuggler, quayside doxies and the Kings Press Gang are not included.

The Camping and Caravanning Club Folk Section's giant meet is also at Easter, this year at Wellsway School, Keynsham, Bristol. The usual blend of dances, workshops, sessions, singarounds, concerts and crafts ensure a superb weekend if you can stick the pace. Relaxing it's not! Details from Mrs J. Phillips, 2 Riversdale Road, Bournemouth, BH6 4LH. As far as I'm aware it's members only, but I mention it just in case there is someone out there who's a club member but unaware of the activities of the folk section.

Whitby Folk Week Hiring Fair is an opportunity for aspiring artists to place themselves before an audience in a professional setting. It takes place on Sunday, 20th August and Mike Soar on (01757) 701915 will give you details. First launched in 1982, the Hiring Fair comes entirely free of charge and is part of a packed week of activities organised by Whitby Folk Week. All aspects of folk music, dance and song are covered and it runs from the 19th to the 25th August.

And that's about it. The next NewsReel will hopefully contain details of some of the summer's festival goodies as well as all the usual odds 'n' sods. Please bear in mind my opening invitation, if you have information you want passed on - do it through NewsReel.

See you in the summer!

Steve Morris

FOLK MUSIC PROGRAMMES ON LOCAL RADIO

BBC Radio Lancashire FM 95.5/103.9/104.5

LANCASHIRE DRIFT presented by NIC DOW Thursday 8.00 -10.00pm

BBC Radio Merseyside FM 95.8/ MW 1485kHz

FOLKSCENE presented by Stan Ambrose and Geoff Speed Tuesdays 6.00-7.00pm

MANX RADIO FM 89/97.2/103.7 - MW 1368kHz

MANX FOLK presented by John Kaneen, Sunday 6.00-7.30pm.

BBC Radio Stoke FM 94.6/MW 1503kHz

Richard Walker's Folk Show, Thursdays 7.00-8.00pm

Radio Telifis Eirann Radio 1 MW 567kHz

Both Sides Now, Thursdays 9.15-10.45pm (Irish music & song)

BBC Radio 2 FM 88.0-90.2

Folk on Two presented by Jim Lloyd, Wednesdays 7.00-8.00pm

(Usually followed by an hour of programmes with a strong folk music flavour)

Apart from Folk on the Night Network which is still on Radio Cumbria on Sundays 8.30-10.00pm, there are no other Folk programmes that we know of. Write & let us know if we are wrong!

DIARY CHAT

Please Note: All future correspondence concerning Diary Chat, Club Residents and Diary Dates should be addressed to Chris McIlveen on 01204 852627.

GENERAL NEWS:

☐ Closed and Disposed clubs...

It is with great regret that we learn of the unforeseen closure of several clubs recently. The **Travellers' Rest Folk Club** in St Helens and **Haskayne Folk Club** in Ormskirk have been forced to close due to dwindling attendances.

The **Triton Folk Club** in Liverpool is currently out of operation due to the lack of a venue, although the organisers are hopeful that an alternative venue may be found.

☐ Clubs on the move....

The **Open Door Folk Club** has a new organiser and a new venue. Mike Riley can be contacted on 0161 366 7326, and the club now meets at The Star Inn, Church Street, Failsworth (half a mile into Failsworth village from the Medlock Tavern).

Singers nights take place every Sunday evening, and the policy of the club is very much aimed at encouraging singers and players of any standard to 'get up and have a go'. Those who do will be treated to a free drink! The club will also have a range of records, tapes and CDs available for loan and has all the local folk magazines for sale.

News of a couple more clubs on the move. The **Potteries Folk Club** which used to meet on 2nd and 4th Fridays at The Albion Hotel, has a new temporary venue at The Biddulph Arms Hotel, Congleton Road, Biddulph. The organiser, Jason Hill, expects a new and more permanent venue to be found in April.

☐ The Pavilion is dead - long live the Ex-Pavilion!

The Pavilion Folk Club is on the move, and is temporarily known as **The Ex-Pavilion**. Jim and Pauline Coan have this report....

After a long and successful period at the Pavilion, the club organisers and resident artists have decided to quit the venue. The previous-landlords, Allan and Karen, had supported the club both financially (free entry on singers and guest nights) and morally (with their stand against the yob culture). Four years of their tenure had seen the rise of a popular and successful folk club - no mean feat in these difficult times, as club organisers will know.

The change of landlords brought a change of atmosphere to the club and not for the better! Our loyal and valued members and friends were treated with discourtesy and contempt by staff and customers alike. Folkies being folkies smiled and put up with it, but the organisers had different ideas, and the search for a new venue was on. We only had limited support from Billinge residents and so took a survey of regular club members home addresses and decided a move away from our present location would not inconvenience the majority of members. We received a number of relocation offers, which is a credit to the club and its membership. We finally decided upon the Stanley Arms on Catchdale Moss Lane, Eccleston, near St Helens. A quiet country pub with a large car park and bright spacious restaurant room just crying out for a folk club. It has a good selection of cask ales and food will be available once more. The landlord is pleased to have us as his guests and I hope that over a period of time our club atmosphere will return to the happy norm. The first club night at the new venue took place on 5th Feb and the published programme will continue.

The club name will change - but we have not yet come up with an acceptable offer! All offers will be considered - with a free entry on a guest night to the person submitting the winning entry!

Directions to the new location - Catchdale Moss Lane is off the East Lancs Road on the Liverpool side of the A570 junction. From the A570 junction with the A580, carry on along the East Lancs Road towards Liverpool. Catchdale Moss Lane is the second small turning on the left. If you pass the Game Bird pub, you have missed the turning! The Stanley can be found on the left hand side of the road, with the car park just before the pub. We hope to see you there!

□ Aspull still making Rafter's Roar!

A message from Paul Wordsworth, organiser of **Aspull Folk Club (The Rafter's Roar)** at the Moorgate Inn, Aspull:-

My! How the last year at the Moorgate Inn has flown by. October 94 saw our first birthday party, and what a night it was. Many thanks to all our regular singers, supporters and visiting friends, without you it wouldn't be at all possible.

Christmas and New Year saw two marvellous parties, with 'All You Can Eat' Buffets, courtesy of Ann, which were gratefully appreciated. On both nights we all played and sang to packed houses, everybody but everybody turned up, they must have heard about Ann's food! 'Play it Again, Ann!'

So, don't forget, Shemates and Shipmates, if you're ever cruising down by Wigan Pier on any Wednesday evening, plot a course for the Rafter's Roar and splice the mainbrace with us. We will give you a hearty welcome.

ACCESS FOR DISABLED:

8.45 at the Lane Ends

Levellers

Mechanics

Open Door

Swinton

Wigan



NON SMOKING CLUBS:

Cockermouth

Formby

Llandudno

Maghull (First Tuesday - Non smoking night)



PLEASE NOTE:

All dates, club news etc to:

Chris McIlveen
51, Moorfield
Turton
BOLTON

CLUB RESIDENTS:

ARNSIDE - Steve Black, John Harper, John & Angela Cowell, Frank Lewis, John Storer, Dave Summers

ASPULL - Paul Wordsworth, John Dawson, Geoff Hilton

8.45 at the LANE ENDS - Scold's Bridle, Rebecca Green

BLACKBURN - Flatbroke

BOTHY - Clive Pownceby, Pete Rimmer, Ray Rooney, Bev Sanders, Neville Grundy, Bill Hackney

BURNLEY - Brillig, Steve Cook, Roy Kelly, Liz Brown

BURY - Malcolm Bowden, Shelia Carruthers, Alan & Jean Seymour, Charles Fyson, Chris Nash, Dave Weatherall

CASTLE - Wild Rover

COCKERMOUTH - Terry Haworth, Linda Lockney

FLEETWOOD - Spitting on a Roast

GREGSON'S LANE - Lammergeier

LEIGH - Theresa Tooley, Mike Dermody, Steve Andrews, Jim Moden etc.

LEVELLERS - George Strattan, Ken Roberts, Graham Casey, Mike Cunningham

LLANDUDNO - Highly Strung

MAGHULL - Dave Day, Tony Gibbons, Steve Higham, Peter Egerton, Chris Lock, Phil Boardman, Sue Howard, etc.

NORTHWICH - Sarah & Ian Sherwood, Sue Swan, Jamie Anderson, Alan Carpenter, Sean Boyle, John Moncor, Sue Coles, Brenda Yates

EX-PAVILION - Quartz, Whole Hog, Andy Anderson, Bernie Forkin, Hilary Hornby

PORKIES - Dave & Helen Howard, Dave Walmisley

POYNTON - Geoff Higginbottom, Holly Burton, Steve Finn, Pete Hughes, One Two Many, Andy Kinnerton, The Timekeepers

PRESTON - Jane Trefall & Carl Hogsden, Rob Malaney, John MacAlister, Simon Booth, Ian Brownwood

TILSTON - Geoff Edwin-Scott

TRITON - Sue Howard, Bob Davies, Len Nolan, Demure, Colin Wilson, Bob Tyrer

WESTHOUGHTON - Auld Triangle

WIGAN - Joan Blackburn

WHITE SWAN - Maggie Billington, Patrick Gallagher, Carl & Jane, Maureen Hothan, Dave & Helen Howard, Anna Beare

More Diary Chat!

Dates for June & beyond

EXTRA DATES:

SN = Singers Night, (T) = Ticket only

8:45 at Lane Ends - June 7 Guest tbc, June 14 Fiona Simpson, June 21 Phil Campbell & Tom McFarland, July 5 Full House, July 12 Roy Bailey

Arnside - June 18 SN, July 16 SN, Aug 20 SN, Sept 17 SN, Oct 15 SN, Nov 19 SN, Dec 17 SN

Bury - June 3 Graham & Eileen Pratt, June 10 Sara Grey, June 17 Jerry Epstein, June 24 Summer Ceilidh with The Old School Band, July 1 SN, Sept 9 SN, Sept 16 Dave Goulder, Sept 23 Brian Peters, Sept 30 Gordon Tyrrell

Dalton - June 6 Club Night, June 20 Brian Peters

Fleetwood - June 1 Geoff Higginbottom

Northwich - June 2 SN, June 9 Ian MacKintosh, June 16 SN, June 23 Sara Grey, June 30 SN

Poynton - June 3 Isaac Guillory, June 10 Ceilidh with Five Bard Gate, June 18 Iron Horse, June 24 Ceilidh with Olio

Preston - June 12 Pete Coe

Railway - June 11 Sara Grey & Joan Spring

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A Youthful Perspective

written by Sam Pirt

THE WHITBY FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

I attended my very first Whitby Festival when I was 2 months old and I have never missed one yet! 1995 will be my sixteenth year - and they seem to be getting better and better! I used to go for candyfloss and sand castles, but nowadays it's the music and dance and the lovely friendly feeling that seems to be everywhere. There are lots of opportunities to get involved with the festival, no matter what your interests are. So far mine are percussive dance and playing the accordion, bodhran, flute, penny whistle and African drum.

The variety of activities for young dancers, singers and musicians is really good and improving each year, particularly last year with the introduction of Youthquake. It helps to meet other young musicians with similar interests, Whitby Festival is much more enjoyable when you know lots of people yourself rather than relying on your parents - it certainly opens up the festival.

A Typical Day For Me:

Get up as early as you can manage (hope you are not feeling too rough from the night before). Eat a big cooked breakfast - if you're lucky and have the time - study the programme again and rush off to the first workshop.

After this it is the first "session" of the day, calling at the flat to collect my bodhran. Last year there were new youth sessions. These were great, I found them easier to go to on my own and they helped me to get to know people. In the sessions everyone had a turn, letting all standards of musician play. Then it is another dash, this time to Botham's for lunch - usually their beautiful sandwiches and lemon buns. Sometime during the day if I manage to time it right. I also fit in a visit to the craft fair at the Spa to spend more money on CD's - a great range to choose from -

and to drool over all the musical instruments.

The afternoon workshop choice is usually very difficult as there is so much going on - and concerts too - I often feel I want to be in 6 places at once! By the end of the week my programme is in tatters through constantly working out the best way to see everyone!

Teatime sees me dragging my accordion behind me (thank goodness for the trolley - we don't have hills in Goole!) and it's straight to the Pizza Shop, where you often meet other tired friends in the queue.

The round of evening events now begins, this is when you really need your energy to keep going! Hopefully it will not be on foot to the Rugby Club, then back to the Rowing Club to catch the performers I'm desperate to see!

The evening finishes when everyone descends on the Spa. There are often bands like Peeping Tom, Gas Mark 5 playing for Ceilidhs, guest spots from people like Luke Daniels, Tom McConville and Damien Barber and also displays from dance teams. In the bar there are often more good sessions - small ones in corners or big ones taking in

the whole of the bar area. Great if you've got the stamina - this comes with practice I think!

At the finish you start thinking of your bed (thank goodness our flat is near the Spa!) and planning the next day - out comes the programme yet again!

Roll on Whitby 1995 - See you there?

Sam Pirt

The photo on this page shows:
Youthquake workshop at Whitby with Sam Pirt on accordion and Jenny Shotliff on fiddle



MID WALES MAY FESTIVAL

Kevin Burke's Open House
June Tabor
Andy Cutting & Chris Wood
Sisters Unlimited
Kitchen Girls
Chainsaw Sisters
Rock, Salt & Nails
Les Barker
Waltzer
Sian James
Tweed & Carr
Kicking Alice
Beselka
Punjab Bhangra
MadCaps Progress
Julie Murphy
Plethyn
Saffron Summerfield
Tony Hall
Debbie McClatchy
Mal Brown
and(as ever)more!

Friday

Roots Night

Late Night with June Tabor (inc Andy Cutting)

Chainsaw Sisters

Folk Club

Sessions

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Club Tent with Bar & Real Ale
Town Centre Site - Free Festival Minibus
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Weekend Tickets £20.00
before April 1st

Saturday

Accordion Workshops - Andy Cutting, Karen Tweed with Tony Hall, Huw Warren, Rees Wesson
Tea Time Stomp with Kitchen Girls
Evening Ceilidh with Token Women
Late Night Bop with Rock Salt & Nails
Pub Sessions - Singarounds - Concerts
plus many more dance and instrument workshops

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Sunday

Fiddle Workshops - with Kevin Burke, Chris Wood, the Kitchen Girls and others
Afternoon Dance with Waltzer and Dave Roberts
Final Theatre Concert featuring Open House and Ian Carr and Karen Tweed - optional extra for £5.00 concert alone £8.50

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The North-West Federation of Folk Clubs
Invite YOU to an

Open Meeting

on
Wednesday, April 19th
from 8.00pm

at The Owl, Upholland

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More Information from

Kath Holden 01942 258459

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		Advance ticket prices
Friday	A winning combination to celebrate our fourth birthday	£4.50
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Friday	A Ceilidh in memory of Peter Reeve	£3.50
April 7th	(1st Friday) The band will include Phil Batty Martin Ellison and Carol Entwistle All profits to The Samaritans	
Friday	After two years we were suffering from withdrawal symptoms from	£3.50
May 12th	THE RIOT BAND Caller: Jean Seymour	
Friday	Book early for	£4.50
June 9th	JUNCTION 24 Caller: Geoff Hughes	
Friday	This year's Wakes Week Special is being presented by	£3.50
July 14th	YOUTHQUAKE Youthquake runs workshops for under 25's.	

Advance notice for the 1995 Dance Writing Competition. First Prize £75.00. Closing date for entries September 30th 1995. Ring for details.

N.B. Book in advance and save money. Concessions available. Tickets/details from Peter or Alison on 0942 816569

LIVE REVIEWS

THE BOGTROTTERS ST PHILIPS RADCLIFFE 30 DECEMBER 1994

Being the last show for the 1994 calendar the choice of The Bogtrotters by the organiser, Annie Watson, provided the perfect ending to 1994 as well as an indication of the quality of artists to appear at the club in 1995.

Formed some 18 short months ago, The Bogtrotters are:-

- ♦ Martin Hall - Accordion and Vocals.
- ♦ Tim Flaherty- Lead Vocal, rhythm guitar, whistle.
- ♦ Jim Hand - Electric bass guitar.
- ♦ Alan Taylor - Mandolin, fiddle.
- ♦ Lenny Whitehead - Electric lead guitar.
- ♦ Neil Edwards - Keyboards.
- ♦ Jodie Lee - Drummer.

(On the 30 December, due to the unavailability of Jodie Lee, the replacement drummer was the more than able Mark Sykes.)

Some of you will recognise familiar names such as ex-Jolly Jack members, Martin Hall and Alan Taylor as well as ex-Poacher Tim Flaherty. In the comparatively short time the group have been together they have generated an enviable reputation for their ability as musicians and quality of performance.

These days there are few clubs able to boast of having a full house but on the 30th December it was standing room only.

Their music is a mixture of Irish Folk, Country (ish), pop songs and instrumentals. The Bogtrotters would hardly please the acoustic/traditionalist ear with their line up of electrified instruments but I defy even the most stalwart traditionalist to say that they were unimpressed by the quality of the music.

Tim Flaherty has a powerful voice which easily rises above the sound of the instruments, seemingly without effort. Part of the zest of the band comes from Tim's obvious love for his work combined with his infectious showmanship.

Between songs there is very little by way of chat to deflect the audience from the superb performance. As a performer it is easy to sit in the audience and be critical of other performers. This time I was also acting as compere and can tell you honestly that I found nothing to criticise and I had to make a conscious effort to steer clear of a list of superlatives when introducing the band for the second half.

I cannot recall the last time I saw a group with such vitality combined with undoubted musical ability. It would be unfair to pick any one member of the group as an example. There was no faulting any of the solo performances.

Their performance is most certainly loud. I think it was Alan Taylor who said that whilst having breakfast the morning after a gig the children commented on the fact that they could hear music and Alan said that it was the music from the night before still ringing in his ears!

Although there were one or two people in the hall who would have preferred them to be a littler quieter, I think that the PA enhancement of their performance was part of the excitement which pervaded the audience.

Ordinarily in a review it is useful for the reviewer to refer to songs or music played by the group. I regret to say that I became so involved in their performance I completely forgot to take notes, but I do recall their opening number, the Bob Dylan song "Down Into My Easy Chair" and later the performance of the Paul Simon song "African Skies".

Most of their music consists of cover versions. I don't recall any mention of home written songs. This was a criticism expressed to me by a member of the audience but having said that, the very same person, at the end of the night, said that the group were "excellent" and "one to look out for".

The Bogtrotters are not what could be called a folk group. I think of them more as folk style entertainers. The sheer size of the outfit will undoubtedly exclude them from a number of the smaller clubs but that is not to say that organisers should not contact the group.

At the present time I know that they have an enviable list of dates for 1995 and on the 9 January 1995 embark on a 14 night tour of Germany, including Dusseldorf and Bonn. In March they commence an American tour appearing at such places as New York and Miami and I understand that there is talk of the possibility of a television series as well as the release of a "single".

I would strongly recommend The Bogtrotters to any festival or club organiser.

Don't be put off by their admittedly busy schedule, this is a group that enjoys playing so why not contact Martin Hall on 0161 796 7802 for more information. You'll regret it if you don't.

The group has a CD available at gigs. It's called "Born To Trot" and is selling extremely well.

John Cartain

BERNARD WRIGLEY Talks to new group RISKY BUSINESS ...

Interview recorded at the Pavilion, Billinge, January 1995

Bernard: How long have you been singing together?

Ken: Well our first gig was March 1994.

Bernard: Was that the first time the three of you had sung as Risky Business? you hadn't sung together under a different name?

Ken: Well Dave and I had previously been together in Plan B in the early 1980's

Bernard: Weren't there three in Plan B?

Ken: Yes and I thought I must get out of this they're rubbish!! As I mentioned earlier I've been in some of the best mediocre bands around!! (Laughter). But I used to play guitar for Di before she met Dave and we called ourselves "South Parade", that was before I went to Canada and I only joined them briefly when I came back from there.

But then I teamed up with Christine Collister, just before she went on her first tour with Richard Thompson and that was great! After that I started playing guitar for an American girl, Holly Burton and we went out as Ken Powell and Holly Burton. That was just before I met this lot.

Bernard: What about you Dave?

Dave: When I first arrived in England from Zimbabwe in 1977, I started a group called "Stoneground Band" with a guy called John Howarth and that went on for a few years and I started Plan B with Ken, Di and a flute player called Mike Green it was very successful.

Bernard: And of course you were with Portland Chambers Ruth, how long were they going?

Ruth: A good few years, from around 1973 to 1985 and after that I was in a duo with one of the ex Portland Chamber lads and we went under the name of "Word of Mouth".

Bernard: So what was the idea behind Risky Business?

Ken: I was doing the sound for Tom Paxton at Poynton one night and who should be sitting in the audience but Ruth.

Bernard: That's a good name drop! not Ruth, I mean Tom Paxton!

Ken: She asked me what I was doing and I said nothing much and suggested we might get together and do something. I told her I knew this other guitarist Dave Walmisley who was in the same boat and of course this was the start of the group.

Bernard: Where does your material come from, did you start off with things you all knew?

Ken: In the early days yes but we now have arranged a number of Dave's songs which is really coming on and we pick up songs from modern writers which we like and which the audiences seem to like too and it seems to be a good formula.

Bernard: If someone said to you what sort of style do you sing, what would you say?

Ken: It's acoustic music which could be categorised as modern folk, or still the old tag, "contemporary". It's very American sounding I think because we were brought up on that kind of music. I suppose it's acoustic music that goes well in a folk environment.

Ruth: We do songs from Shawn Colvin who's written recently, to Irish writers. We like listening to Christy Moore, Mary Black, Nancy Griffiths, James Taylor and also traditional music. To be honest we do anything as long as we like the music.

Ken: Local songwriters, Chris While, we like to listen to Chris, she's great.

Ruth: She can bring tears to your eyes.

Bernard: She's not that bad is she? When you play two guitars do you have one strumming and one picking?

Ken: No, both picking.

Bernard: And do you play different inversions?

Dave: It depends, lot of the time we have to capos in different frets to give the highs and lows. Sometimes we play the same tunings and positions but use different styles.

Bernard: A lot of people don't really take much notice of that do they? and they ought to.

Ruth: Karen Tweed from the Poozies was impressed with the guitar work and was very complimentary when she saw us.

Bernard: Well that's praise from Caesar, because she's won the all Ireland... whatever... hasn't she?

Dave: Half our set is original material now which we all have had a hand in arranging. It's not just a question of one of us dictating the way we should perform them. We all have an input here which I think shows in our performance. People comment on how much we look as though we're enjoying ourselves and that's important, that and playing good music.

Ken: We've still got to release our full potential and one of the things that helps with that, is getting your name known. We've got a few festivals we're playing at already this year, the biggest so far is Fylde, then we're also on at Cleckheaton and Droylsden, which is a good start. We're also hoping that Swinton will book

us there again on the strength of our last appearance there but we haven't heard anything yet.

Bernard: And what do you actually play between you?

Ken: I play guitar, Dave plays guitar and mandolin.

Ruth: I play percussion and do the main vocals, Dave and Ken sing backing vocals and Dave sings lead vocals on a couple of his songs. But the three voices work so well together, which is great after me being in Portland Chambers which was a close harmony group anyway. And now that we've got Ken to sing as well after catching him out a while ago it's made all the difference.

Bernard: Yes because three voices just work well together don't they? Are you aiming it just at the folk level?

Ken: Yes, we're hoping to get more festival work, but we're not really interested in doing working men's clubs and venues which compete with loud juke boxes and indifferent punters. We'd rather play for audiences that want to listen.

Ruth: The other thing is that we all have day jobs and we don't make a living at this, so it means we can be a little more discerning about where we want to play.

Bernard: What about publicity, you're doing your own publicity I take it, posters and such?

Dave: Yes, we're trying to get as much publicity as we can at this stage, because we haven't been around that long. But we've produced posters, flyers and we try and get people interested by advertising in local folk mags.

Bernard: In the old days you used to go along to the Manchester Sports Guild near Victoria Station on a Monday night? Anyway, loads of club organisers went and if they liked you they'd come up with their diary's and book you but there isn't a melting pot like that any more. With the recession and everything the folk world's really gone quite narrow hasn't it? both in attitude and physically, don't you think?

Ken: Well it seems to me that audiences now are not inclined to go out and see the same old big names at the folk clubs any more, and even less likely to go out and see someone new, because they've never seen them before!

Bernard: Are there any plans for recording?

Ken: We are hoping to have a CD and tape out in the Spring, as long as we can get things going soon enough.

Ruth: We've already got a mailing list for CD's and people waiting for copies.

Bernard: Better give them a contact number to phone if anyone else is interested. I better go, I haven't tuned up yet!

To contact Risky Business, phone

Dave Tel: 061-445-8869

Ruth Tel: 0457-865597

Ken Tel: 061-998-6100

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| | 13 | Chris Coe |
| | 20 | Stravaig |
| | 27 | Singers |
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March Dates

SUNDAY	5-Mar	12-Mar	19-Mar	26-Mar	
ARNSIDE			Singers Night		
BOTHY	Anna Ryder	Singers Night	Red Ciel	Janet Russell & Christine Kidd	
LEIGH	Singers Night	Mal Brown	Singers Night	Singers Night	
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
OPEN DOOR	Singers Night	Singers Night	Nightshift	Singers Night	
EX-PAVILION	Singers Night	Singers Night	GARVA	Singers Night	
MONDAY	6-Mar	13-Mar	20-Mar	27-Mar	
POTTERIES (Old Swan)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
PRESTON	Session Night	Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle	Session Night	Bram Taylor	
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
TUESDAY	7-Mar	14-Mar	21-Mar	28-Mar	
BLACKPOOL	Charles Fyson	Singaround	Anne Gregson	Singaround	
DALTON		Tom McConville		Club Night	
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
MAGHULL	Seldorn Heard	Clover & Harvey Andrews	Steve Higham	Sue Howard & Bob Davies	
TILSTON	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
WIGAN	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
WEDNESDAY	1-Mar	8-Mar	15-Mar	22-Mar	29-Mar
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	St Pat's Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Keith Donnelly	Scolds Bridle	Thistle	Steve Jinski	The New Bushbury Dare Devil Mountain
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BURNLEY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
CASTLE	Guest - tbc	Singers Night	Jez Lowe	Singers Night	Betty & Norman McDonald
NEW SEVEN STARS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	2-Mar	9-Mar	16-Mar	23-Mar	30-Mar
COCKERMOUTH	Keith Hancock & Lee Collinson	Singers Night	Kristina Olsen	Pete Morton	Stephen Quigg
FLEETWOOD	Rough Mix	Michael Raven & Joan Mills	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
GREGSON LANE		Singers Night		Singers Night	
LEVELLERS		Singers Night		Raphael Callaghan & Christine Purnell	
RAILWAY	Singers Night	Dave Webber & Anni Fentiman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WHITE SWAN	13th Birthday Party with Sean Cannon	Singers Night	Pete Morton	Singers Night	Singers Night
FRIDAY	3-Mar	10-Mar	17-Mar	24-Mar	31-Mar
NORTHWICH	Singaround - Oddfellows, Davenham	18th Birthday Party with Maxie & Mitch	Aleen Vance	Singers Night	Singers Night
PORKIES	Keith Donnelly		Kristina Olsen		Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts
POTTERIES (Biddulph)	Closed	Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle	Closed	Rythm Rascals	Closed
RHYL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WESTHOUGHTON	The Doonan Family	Huw & Tony Williams	The Albion Band	Johnny Silvo	Stephen Quigg
SATURDAY	4-Mar	11-Mar	18-Mar	25-Mar	1-Apr
BURY	Derek Gifford	Eddie Upton	Dick Miles	Singers Night	Brillig
FORMBY	Th'Antique Roadshow	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
*MAGHULL				Melling Tithebarn - GARVA with Carolina Shout & Marie Little £	
MECHANICS (Padiham Town Hall)		Joe Le Taxi & The Zydeco Specials			
POYNTON	Mike Silver & Geoff Higginbottom	Ceilidh with Bilbo Baggins	Johnny Silvo	Ceilidh with Olio	

April Dates

SUNDAY	2-Apr	9-Apr	16-Apr	23-Apr	30-Apr
ARNSIDE			Singers Night		
BOTHY	Coope, Boyes & Simpson	Singers Night	Keith Hendrick	30th Birthday Party	Youthquake
LEIGH	Ken Pearson	Singers Night	Guest TBA	Singers Night	Guest TBA
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
OPEN DOOR	Singers Night	KikaTinCan	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
EX-PAVILION	Singers & Session	Guest - tbc	Closed	Singers Night	Singers & Session
MONDAY	3-Apr	10-Apr	17-Apr	24-Apr	
POTTERIES (Old Swan)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
PRESTON	Robin Laing	Session Night	Session Night	Session Night	
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
TUESDAY	4-Apr	11-Apr	18-Apr	25-Apr	
BLACKPOOL	Robin Laing	Andy Craven	Singaround	Singaround	
DALTON		Club Night		Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle	
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
MAGHULL	Harry Forsythe & Derek Brimstone	Bob Tyrer	Tony Gibbons	13th Birthday Party with Old Bones	
TILSTON	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
WIGAN	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
WEDNESDAY	5-Apr	12-Apr	19-Apr	26-Apr	
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Derek Brimstone	Marilyn Middleton Pollock	Keith Hancock	Ben & Joe Broughton	
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
BURNLEY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
CASTLE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
NEW SEVEN STARS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
THURSDAY	6-Apr	13-Apr	20-Apr	27-Apr	
COCKERMOUTH	Singers Night	Brian Peters	Huw & Tony Williams	Phil Hare	
FLEETWOOD	Phil Hare	Maggie Holland	Singers Night	Singers Night	
GREGSON LANE	Singers Night		Singers Night		
LEVELLERS	Singers Night		Singers Night		
RAILWAY	Quartz	Singers Night	Singers Night	Les Barker	
WHITE SWAN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
FRIDAY	7-Apr	14-Apr	21-Apr	28-Apr	
*BOTHY				Birthday Week Ceilidh with La Toque Bleu - St John's Hall, Southport	
NORTHWICH	Singers Night - Harlequins	not	Singers Night - Harlequins	not	Huw & Tony Williams
PORKIES	Vin Garbutt			Sara Howard & Kellie White	
POTTERIES (Biddulph)					
RHYL					
WESTHOUGHTON	Mad Jocks & Englishmen	Closed	Marie Little	Bernard Wrigley	
SATURDAY	8-Apr	15-Apr	22-Apr	29-Apr	
BURY	Carl & Jane	Easter Ceilidh at the Met - Haywain	Tim Laycock	Singers Night	
FORMBY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
MECHANICS (Padiham Town Hall)	Bearcat Cajun Playboys				
POYNTON	Ceilidh with Five Bard Gait	Folk Day - Mini Festival	Ceilidh with Plain Brown Wrapper Band		

May Dates

SUNDAY	7-May	14-May	21-May	28-May	
ARNSIDE			Singers Night		
BOTHY					
LEIGH	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Ian Bruce	Singers Night	Singers Night	
OPEN DOOR	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
EX-PAVILION	Closed	Bram Taylor	Singers Night	Closed	
MONDAY	1-May	8-May	15-May	22-May	29-May
OPEN DOOR		Open Concert - Various Guests			
POTTERIES (Old Swan)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
PRESTON	Session Night	Penny McLaren-Walker & Mal Brown	Tanya Opland & Mike Freeman	Session Night	Session Night
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	2-May	9-May	16-May	23-May	30-May
BLACKPOOL	Traditional Edge	John Cartain	Guest - tbc	Anthony James Clarke	Guest - tbc
DALTON		Club Night		Club Night	
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
MAGHULL	Beryl Gillybrand	Seldom Heard	George & Joan Gallimore	Andy Anderson	Maria Forsythe & Harry Hayes
TILSTON	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
WIGAN	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
WEDNESDAY	3-May	10-May	17-May	24-May	31-May
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Kate Rusby & Kathryn Roberts	Michael Chapman	Artisan	Guest - tbc	Rob Johnson
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BURNLEY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
CASTLE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
NEW SEVEN STARS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	4-May	11-May	18-May	25-May	
COCKERMOUTH	Kathy Winter	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
FLEETWOOD	Guest - tbc	Singers Night	Penny MacLaren-Walker	Singers Night	
GREGSON LANE	Singers Night		Singers Night		
LEVELLERS	Singers Night		Singers Night		
RAILWAY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Dave & Helen Howard	
WHITE SWAN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
FRIDAY	5-May	12-May	19-May	26-May	
NORTHWICH	Roy Harris	Singers Night	Singers Night - Harlequins	Guest - tbc	
PORKIES					
POTTERIES (Biddulph)					
RHYL					
WESTHOUGHTON	Closing Night - Allan Taylor £				
SATURDAY	6-May	13-May	20-May	27-May	
BURY	Joe Kerrins	Chris Coe	Stravaig	Singers Night	
FORMBY	Roy Harris	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
MECHANICS (Padiham Town Hall)		Hackney Ramblers			
POYNTON	Albion Band with Geoff Higginbottom	Ceilidh with Olio	Penny MacLaren - Walker	Ceilidh with Jack At A Pinch & Bernard Wrigley	
Notes:	* If Club name has "" in front, it's not the usual club night.			£= tickets only	
	* If entry has "" in front, it's being held at a different venue (unless venue is named)				

OFFICER	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Chairman	Dave Day	170; Liverpool Road South, Maghull, Liverpool	051 526 6661
Treasurer	Kath Holden	7, Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan	0942 58459
Editor	Nigel Firth	118, Bolton Road, Aspall, Wigan	0942 833293
Proof Reader	Steve Morris	85, Sydney Ave., Leigh	0942 675848
Publicity		Position Vacant	
Advertising	Paul Holden	7, Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan	0942 58459
Club reviewer	Tony Gibbons	2a, Moss Lane, Maghull, Liverpool	051 526 6522
Membership Secretary	Contact	Treasurer (see Above)	
Federation Secretary	Linda Wright	266, Todmorden Rd., Sharneyford, Bacup	0706 877090
Youth Activities	Jenny Shottliff	1, Bardsey Close, Upholland, Lancs	0695 623641
Club Dates	Chris McIlveen	51, Moorfield, Turton, Bolton	0204 852627

THE AIMS OF THE FEDERATION SHALL BE

- ✓ The promotion of Folk Music in the North-West by:-
- ✓ 1. The 'block booking of artists for tours.
- ✓ 2. Joint publicity of the Member Clubs
- ✓ 3. The general support of the Member Clubs
- ✓ 4. Joint organisation of Concerts & Ceilidhs in the area.
- ✓ 5. The support of Festival Organisers in the area.
- ✓ 6. The organisation of events to attract the 'under 18s'.

DAY/CLUB	TIME	CLUB ADDRESS	ORGANISER	PHONE
SUNDAY				
ARNSIDE	8:30 pm	Fighting Cocks Hotel, Promenade, Arnside	Steve Black	01524 761823
BOTHY	8:00 pm	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton Rd, Birkdale	Clive Pownceby	0151 924 5078
EX-PAVILION	8:30 pm	Stanley Arms, Catchdale Moss Lane, Eccleston	Jim Coan	01772 452782
LEIGH	8:00 pm	St. Joseph's Sdality Club, Chapel, Street, Leigh	Theresa Tooley	01942 892226
LLANDUDNO	8:30 pm	The Clarence Hotel, Gladdaeth Ave, Llandudno	John Les	01492 580454
OPEN DOOR	8:30 pm	Star Inn, Church Street, Failsworth	Mike Riley	0161 366 7326
MONDAY				
POTTERIES (OLD SWAN)	8:00 pm	The Old Swan Inn, Hartshill Rd, Stoke	Jason Hill	01782 813401
PRESTON	8:30 pm	The Unicorn, North Rd, Preston	Hugh O'Donnell	01772 745498
SWINTON	8:30 pm	White Lion, 242 Manchester Rd, Swinton	Ged Todd	01942 811527
TRITON	8:30 pm	Temporarily disposed	Doreen Rickart	0151 256 6180
TUESDAY				
BLACKPOOL	8:30 pm	George Social Club, 75 George St, Blackpool	Ken Adams	01253 397622
DALTON	8:30 pm	Cavendish Arms, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria	Graham Atkinson	01229 832354
LIVERPOOL	8:30 pm	Pig & Whistle, Chapel St, Liverpool	Helen Hebden	0151 727 0088
MAGHULL	8:30 pm	Hare & Hounds, Maghull	Dave Day	0151 526 6661
TILSTON	8:30 pm	The Carden Arms, Tilston, Cheshire	Penny Hughes	01829 271436
WIGAN	8:30 pm	Upper Morris Street Club, Greenough St, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223
WEDNESDAY				
8:45 AT LANE ENDS	8:45 pm	Lane Ends Hotel, Weeton Rd, Wesham	Ann Green	01772 683027
ASPULL	8:30 pm	Moorgate Inn, Scot Lane, Aspall, Wigan	Paul Wordsworth	0161 790 7153
BLACKBURN	8:30 pm	Veteran Hotel, Eanam, Blackburn	Brian Kirkham	01254 773086
BURNLEY	8:30 pm	Waggon & Horses Inn, Colne Rd, Brierfield	Phyl Watson	01282 774077
CASTLE	8:30 pm	Castle Hotel, Halton Village, Runcorn	Bob O'Callaghan	0151 424 5367
NEW SEVEN STARS	8:30 pm	New Seven Stars, Preston Rd, Standish	Hilda Foy	01257 792246
THURSDAY				
COCKERMOUTH	8:45 pm	Tithe Barn Hotel, Station St, Cockermouth	Terry Haworth	01900 604765
FLEETWOOD	8:30 pm	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood	Dave Ryan	01253 876351
GREGSON LANE	8:30 pm	St. Joseph's Social Centre, Gregson Lane, Hoghton	Graham Dixon	01254 853929
LEVELLERS	8:00 pm	The Flying Picket, 24 Hardman St, Liverpool	Christine Roberts	0151 933 2749
RAILWAY	8:30 pm	Railway Hotel, Heatley, Lymm	Ann Clancy	01925 267667
WHITE SWAN	8:00 pm	White Swan, Green St, Fallowfield	Annie Morris	0161 881 8294
FRIDAY				
NORTHWICH	8:30 pm	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich	Sarah Sherwood	0161 775 4612
PORKIES	8:30 pm	Ladybrook Hotel, Fir Road, Bramhall, Cheshire	Helen Howard	0161 789 1395
POTTERIES (BIDDULPH)	8:00 pm	Biddulph Arms Hotel, Congleton Road, Biddulph	Jason Hill	01782 813401
RHYL	8:30 pm	Bee & Station Hotel, Bodfor St, Rhyl	Jeff Blythin	01745 336052
WESTHOUGHTON	8:15 pm	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton	Pat Batty	01942 812301
SATURDAY				
BREWERY ARTS	8:30 pm	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a Highgate, Kendal	John Smyth	01539 725133
BURY	8:00 pm	The Napier, Bolton St, Bury	Dave Wetherall	0161 761 7708
FORMBY	8:30 pm	The Royal, Liverpool Rd, Formby	Janet Kemp	01704 876745
MECHANICS	8:30 pm	Burnley Mechanics, Manchester Rd, Burnley	Ian Wells	01282 30005
POYNTON	8:30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	Lynda Boyle	01663 743310
SOUTHPORT ARTS	8:30 pm	Southport Arts Centre, Lord St, Southport	John Taylor	01704 40004

New dialling codes quoted here must be used after 16th April (& can be used before)



No Smoking club



Access for the Disabled



to the EDITOR

Compliments returned

Just a quick letter to say how much I appreciate the work that your magazine and the Federation are doing - especially with youth. Dave Day's 'Chairmans Ramblings' interested me somewhat regarding the reluctance of clubs to book 'new' names and audiences to turn out for them.

As a club organiser myself and given to booking lesser known names occasionally I must say that I have never booked a guest without having seen them live. Are the 'new' names busting a gut to win audiences or are they content with sending out a mail shot and Demo tape (I hate that term)?

It's a hard old grind to convince club organisers that you can entertain their members for an evening (as I know only too well, being a performer myself). The competition for stage space is fierce and most club organisers (who are busting a gut to keep their clubs viable) are not liable to risk their reputations and cash by booking any act who is not prepared to give 100% effort with well performed new and traditional material.

To any 'new' acts reading this letter - get out there and earn that audience you feel you may deserve, take the knocks and the very best of luck. A SUNDIAL IS NO GOOD IN THE SHADE.

Reading Harvey Andrew's review of Richard Zyca's recording I must agree with him that there is a tremendous amount of excellent material being written in the New Country field. I must, however make a plea for those who write in the English tradition and sing with their own accents. To make any sort of commercial headway it does seem that to write in the 'American' style does work and we are exporting artists to America who do just that.

Our cultural heritage has of late been coloured with music (both authentic and pseudo) of other cultures. I have no gripe with this as it exposes us to a wider range of music. Having said that the English culture does struggle to make any headway at times due partly to the fact that it is not commercially packaged and that, rather strange habit we have of kicking who we are. What about exporting some English culture to America?

Enough for now as I have several songs to work on, the tenth monologue book to complete, construct advertising material for my forthcoming tour and scour the folk club listings for singers nights where I can display my skills in the hope of a future booking.

I will be seeing some of you during the tour at Bromborough (8 Feb), Wrexham (16 Feb), Rhyl (24 Feb), Leigh (12 March) and Preston (8 May)

Best Regards Mal Brown

Maramures et Cetera

I write in response to reviews of our album 'Maramures et Cetera' which have been appearing in magazines recently. It is not a reply to any one review but an explanation to ease the bewilderment which reviewers in general seem to feel and may be passing on to innocent readers. Also some of the reviews contain fundamental errors and misunderstandings which I feel duty bound to correct, both to prevent misrepresentation of POPELUC and of my homeland, Romania (as it is now spelled, rather than Rumania as some insist on calling it) of which so little is known over here. Interestingly our live audiences have no such problems. They accept the music on face value and enjoy it.

Firstly may I introduce myself: Ioan Pop, from Maramures. I was born and brought up in a peasant family in the countryside of Maramures in northern Romania. I had no formal musical training but learned in the traditional way through imitation and by joining in with what is still a living tradition. By the age of 14 I was being booked to play at weddings and village festivities. Later I played for 10 years with a professional ensemble 'Maramuresul' with whom I toured many parts of the world. Not being satisfied with the approach of that band - I felt that it was not authentic enough, not close enough to the real living tradition as found in the villages - I formed my own band 'Iza', much smaller and consisting of genuine peasants who learned their skills in the countryside, not townfolk who had been trained to dance or sing. Iza has toured Britain three times and is one of only five groups in Romania who are recognised by the most well respected folklorists as being an authentic traditional band working within promoting the tradition. That is my background.

Just over a year ago a new development took place in my work. Whilst on tour in England with Iza I met a young student called Lucy Castle who was studying the music of my country. I heard her perform and was impressed with her grasp of the character of our music, although she still had a long way to go! She joined me in Romania and studied with me and soon we were playing together at events all over the country as well as on national TV and radio. By the end of the 10 months Lucy spent with me everybody was amazed at the progress she had made, her style was now genuinely 'Maramures' and amongst the best at that... and that was the opinion of the most respected folklorists and also the real experts, the peasants of Maramures whose weddings and festivals we played at.

Because we saw eye to eye on so many aspects of folklore research and performance I decided to return to England with Lucy and to work with her and her father, Pete, as a trio called POPELUC. I had heard Pete on cassette and instantly loved his voice and guitar style. POPELUC was an opportunity not only to play genuine Maramures folk music to English audiences but also to play English music to Romanian audiences and to explore the relationships between the two which are very interesting. When it is presented in a truly authentic style folk music has universal characteristics which appeal to folk music lovers everywhere, even if some specific aspects are unfamiliar - but then this can be an attraction.

Our live audiences have generally appreciated and felt the authenticity of what we do although in some cases ignorance, and a fear of trusting their own judgement leads people to think that they would rather hear the music played by an all-Romanian band. Unfortunately the world is changing and you are more likely to hear the true voice of Maramures from this English girl than from many Romanian musicians who find that some Transylvanian folk bands are adding 'Roll Over Beethoven' and 'Roll Out the Barrel' to their repertoires to please the tourists!

Some specific points which have occurred, most of which seem to worry more about our traditional Transylvanian costumes than the music!:-

1 Pete is not 'less at home' in the costume. Perhaps reviewers feel uneasy at seeing a well known face in a strange garb?

2 That 'Folk Costume' is genuine and made by friends and family of mine. You can't get much more authentic than that! They are valuable items, worn widely in the very recent past but now becoming increasingly rare.

3 The 'very British looking straw hat' as one reviewer said is a Maramures made one. (A corn dolly maker might notice the difference in the plait!).

4 The names of the instruments are given in Romanian not out of pretentiousness - 'Ideal for A-Level Scrabble' - but because they are Romanian instruments and there are no English names for them.

5 Surely after all these years of 'World Music' most folkies are now used to voices which are 'decidedly strange' or songs which are 'in foreign'?

6 Far from being 'a tad esoteric' Transylvanian music is based solidly in everyday life. It is not 'an East European version of and Irish session tune' (which could perhaps be thus described) but is part of every celebration and festival. It is music with a purpose.

7 The 'town of Maramure' does not exist. Maramures is the equivalent of a 'county' and a folkloric region. The sleeve notes make this clear.

I am very proud of the work I have done with POPELUC and feel that it is important for traditional music in general. I would not involve myself in any musical activity which I did not consider authentic and

hope that your readers get the chance to see us when we tour again in 1995. (Provisional dates May/June and/or Oct/Nov.)

Multi sanatate, fercire bucurie sava aduca anul care vive.

Ioan Pop and POPELUC

The Editor replies:

I am somewhat puzzled by this letter, as on re-reading Jenny's review in the last issue, I can find none of the misrepresentations that Ioan Pop complains about in that review. I have nevertheless published this letter for those who read the less well-informed journals.

The Editor Writes:

Do you agree or disagree strongly with an opinion offered in this magazine? Would you like to see more of a particular kind of article or fewer record reviews, for example?

Then write in and tell us what you think, after all, it is YOUR magazine. If you don't tell us, we don't know if we are producing the kind of magazine you want.

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FESTIVAL REVIEWS:

Maghull & Swinton Days of Folk

MAGICAL MAGHULL

The relentless rain, coming down like stair-rods did nothing to deter the crowds from converging on Maghull Town Hall for the second of Maghull's Annual Day of Folk.

The fact that I arrived at 12 noon and did not leave until Midnight bears testimony to the high standard, wonderful atmosphere and efficient organisation of the day's events which was more than enough to retain my undivided attention for the duration.

With all-day sessions in the Coffee Bar, Youthquake in the Activities Room, a continuous concert in the Sudell Suite and Folk Club sessions in the Council Chamber, (and that was just the afternoon programme), I could have done with splitting myself into four as I know there was much quality music I didn't get to hear.

The concept of Youthquake has been well documented already in this magazine, but suffice it to say that it goes from strength to strength, Song, dance and instrumental showcases were well presented by a section of local schools and individuals.

The "Jam Session" at the end of the afternoons programme was an inspirational musical treat. It is hard to believe that John Brindley still qualifies for his Youthquake membership, he seems to have been around for so long. The quality and standard of his singing and playing is absolutely impeccable and at times quite breath-taking. If you haven't heard him, get him booked right away, I promise you that you won't be disappointed.

Of the professional "turns" I particularly enjoyed Chris While who sang both in her own right and as a member of the "Albion Band". Her version of Nic Jones' "Flandyke Shore" had the hairs tingling on the back of my neck. I was disappointed not to have heard more from Simon Nicol who was reduced to the position of journeyman guitarist.

"Carolina Shout" in the form of Eddie Walker and

John James not doubt had erstwhile guitarist scurrying off home either to practice or to make small bonfires of their instruments. Their deft picking and under-stated verbal and musical humour was made to look all too deceptively easy.

Bob Greenwood appeared without his Rhythm Rascal partner and played an interesting set of rag-time and blues pieces. He also played some entertaining lap guitar in the Hawaiian style.

"The Old Rope String Band" were side-achingly funny in a set which involved enormous musical talent and impeccable timing. Their finale in which the accordion player ends up playing whilst suspended upside down in a fish tank of water was a comedy classic.

"Garva" were the best I have ever heard them, whether it was because they were on home ground or because they had the added benefit of microphones and a balanced sound, I don't know, maybe it was just the atmosphere of the concert hall. For me, they could do no wrong.

Keith Donnelly, The Hall Brothers and Cuckoo Oak all helped to provide a

balanced and pleasurable concert.

Praise must go not only to Dave Day who once again spearheaded the event, but to all of the members of the Committee who must have worked hard and long with the organisation.

Yet, if any one thing could sum up the even and its aims, for me, it was when LocTup Together, (can't they think of a better name than that?), invited three young musicians from Youthquake onto the stage to join them in their last song.

This is the essence of the Festival and is surely where the future for the advancement of Folk Music lies in the encouragement and coaching of the younger generation.

Well done Maghull, other Clubs could learn much from you.

Here's to next year.

Jack Froggatt



SWINTON FOLK FESTIVAL Saturday 29 October 1994

The day had apparently been quite busy though by the time we arrived for the evening numbers had surprisingly started to thin. I say surprisingly as it was a pleasant well thought out line up which I found very enjoyable and deserved more support.

We got there just in time for Risky Business who were a wonderful new discovery for me. The three piece used combinations of guitar, mandolin and percussion and vocals which weren't just good but also entertaining. The material, some of it self-penned was well sung, well arranged and well chosen - the audience was with them from the start. The three work well together providing an accomplished and consistently strong set topped off by powerful vocals from their main singer who I believe was called Ruth. Well worth seeing should they cross your path!

They were followed by Pete Ryder, a singer/guitarist who was again very good, the Wilsons who seemed to go down well and Roy Bailey who is always wonderful. He seemed more relaxed than usual bringing out more of his storytelling talents that are normally evident and closed the concert with 'Rolling Home'...joined by most of the audience.

I had a look in on the ceilidh which again was not as full as it could have been but this did leave a comfortable space for dancing. There were no music sessions, the overall impression is of a singers festival.

There was quite a nice singaround going in the bar all night and it was lovely to see Roy Bailey and some of the Wilsons joining in. Unfortunately it was spoiled by being over-zealously run but at least this ensures some fairness in the running order. That said we sat there for about an hour and neither of us, or anyone else the "leaders" didn't know was asked if they wanted to take a turn. It's little wonder that folk music has a cliquey image. The shining light in this was a singer called Jon Fitzgerald who had been on earlier in the day and had a wonderful gravelly voice accompanied by a nice guitar style.

Finally this is one of the few festivals where I have seen questionnaires asking for the audience reactions and ideas. Overall this is a local day which can offer entertainment to a large number of us and it would be nice to see more people there.

Jenny Shotliff

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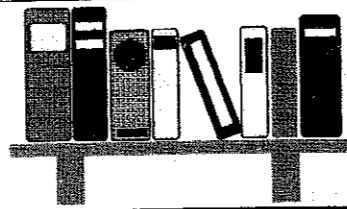
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Hannah Hutton,
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BOOKSHELF

Latest Folk Books



ALL TIME TOP 1000 ALBUMS -

Colin Larkin

Guinness Publishing - Paperback - £14.99

What first attracted me to this was the fact that it offered a folk section. To be honest, I couldn't wait to get my hands on the book in order to review it, sadly I was disappointed. It's not that the book is boring, it's just not very interesting. Most space is devoted to Rock and Soul and Punk and Indie and most other forms of music that I really don't care about. The folkie bit covers just fifty albums, and warrants no more than half an hour of anyone's time.

The introduction to the folk section contains the remark that 'this is not a list for finger in the ear derry-derry-down-o's, it is as wide as the genre has become'. And that should give you an idea of what Colin Larkin's top 50 folk albums are like. Bob Dylan is in there, so is John Prine, John Martyn, Nick Drake, Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Bob Dylan, The Strawbs, Bob Dylan, Donovan and, of course, Bob Dylan. To be fair, some 'proper' folk artists are in Larkin's list too: June Tabor, Fairport, Martin Carthy, The Albion Band, Nic Jones and quite a few more, but, as with any list of this kind, the simple fact remains that it is extremely subjective. It's a personal view of what's good and what's not and as such is pretty worthless.

As I browsed through the folk section of the book I couldn't help wondering why the lists compiled by Colin Larkin and his numerous contributors are considered more valid than ones compiled by my mate Norman, or Michael Portillo, or me, or any bugger else for that matter. I quickly realised that validity doesn't enter into the argument, it's just that Larkin and his chums have got the nouse to get their lists published and then flog them for fifteen quid a throw.

If you're into folk and very little else, this is a book to avoid. Instead, just send me five pounds and I'll supply you with a list of my top fifty folk albums!

Steve Morris

CEILIS, JIGS AND BALLADS - IRISH MUSIC IN LIVERPOOL

KEVIN McMANUS

PUBLISHED BY: INSTITUTE OF POPULAR MUSIC

This little gem of a book is part of the "Liverpool Sounds" series - The others available are "Nashville of the North - country music in Liverpool" and "Harmonious Relations - Popular music in family life on Merseyside" There are others in the pipeline which should be available soon.

For anyone, like myself, who has been involved in Irish Music in Liverpool - 22 Years in my case - This book not only brings back a lot of fond memories but also brings to light one or two things that I was glad to be able to sit and read about - The references to the influx of the Irish into Liverpool, The Importance of organisations like The Gaelic League, The History of the Famed "Liverpool Ceilidh Band", The dance halls where people gathered not only to enjoy fine music and dance but also to socialise. I was a little bit jealous reading interviews with people like Sean McNamara (of the Liverpool Ceilidh Band) Reminiscing about "The Old Days" - I wish sometimes his memories were my memories.

The book takes us through the 40's and the 50's to the 60's and 70's when the folk boom and the session went hand in hand - A lot of the musicians and singers were involved in both performing at their local folk club and on other nights and weekends could be found belting out a tune or song in one of the many sessions that seemed to abound in the city. Places like "Ye Cracke", "The Belvedere", "Oily Joes" are all given a mention - other I remember but not mentioned in the book were "The Cottage", "The B & I Club", "The Baltic Fleet" and the one I served my apprenticeship at (some say I'm still serving it!) - The Sunday session at the Irish Centre. In the mid 70's it wasn't unusual for 40 musicians or more to be packed into the lounge at the centre. Happily this is still the case there every Monday night - Musicians, singers, plus a dancing class for beginners. This is acknowledged in the book, with some good photos to illustrate the fact.

The reader is then brought up to date with the latest phenomenon - The Irish Pub! Since "Flanagans Apple" opened in 1984, the city has seen other similar venues open - "Rosie O'Grady's", "Guinan's", "Kitty O'Shea's", "The Slaughterhouse" others have come and gone but the popularity of these venues has now spread to practically every town and city in

the North of England and beyond. The author makes an excellent job of explaining why these venues are so popular, through interviews with some of the groups involved, the "Mins Hosts", and the clientele, It becomes clear through reading this section that the music is on the up and up. However, I know from experience that this kind of Irish music and the way it's presented is not to everyone's taste. There seems to be a bit of conflict between the "pure" session, where people gather just for the enjoyment of it all, and the "pub scene" which is purely performer/ audience based.

My only slight grouse over the book is that it doesn't give any real mention of the singers who have graced many a session over the years - people like Bruce Scott, (Scottie), Florrie Brennan and Son Davey, Christy McHale, Mick and Elaine Johnson, Mary McAndrew, etc. This is only a small criticism, but I feel they should be acknowledged somehow, now when I sang with Mary Black in the New Court Bar..... Oh well, that's another story!

All in all, a terrific informative little book for the bargain price of £3.95. It can be bought from "The Liverpool Shop" in the courtyard of the Bluecoat Chamber, School Lane, Liverpool City Centre or write to: Institute of Popular Music, University of Liverpool, P.O. Box 147, Liverpool, L69 3BX

Tony Gibbons

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- Maguires, Bradford - 22 April
- Castle Donnington Community
College - 28 April
- Upton-on-Severn Folk festival - 6/7 May
- Porkies folk Club, Stockport - 19 May

- Chester Folk Club - 27/28 May
- Maguires, Bradford - 10 June
- Redcar Folk Festival - 15 June

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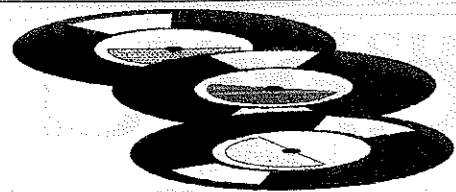
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RECORD REVIEWS

JIM COUZA

"Out of the Shadowlands"

FOLKSOUND CD 14

Despite the over the top introduction in the booklet (this is an album about endings and love and rest and peace...about finding healing and peace and rest after a great struggle... it is my hope that this recording may create a mood which transcends the distractions of life and brings harmony and peace.) I found this album disarmingly innocent.

I smiled a lot and tapped my toes, and lo! I transcended the distractions of life.

The hammered dulcimer is a fine instrument and Jim Couza is an acknowledged expert player. Here, Jim, with fellow dulcimer player Jessica Burri, give us Pachelbel's Canon, Corelli's concerto no 1 and Xmas concerto no 8 and a fine gallop through the William Tell Overture.

Aided by Pete Stanley's banjo, Brian Golbey's fiddle, Dave Hatfield's double bass and Di Whitehead's cello, Jim then gives us some fine tunes: "Falls of Richmond", "Kitchen Girl" etc and there I was tapping and transcending!

But the undoubted riches here are three songs Couza plays and sings himself.

Now, over the years I have come to hate the sort of sloppy, badly written, heart on my sleeve, it's enough to say "Save the Whale" what d'you mean make it rhyme and tell a story, songs that are all too often performed by earnest, budding songwriters in floor spots. I saw "Song of the Whale" and my heart sank...then I listened and my heart rose.

Here, a song that could topple over in lesser hands is heroically performed with sensitivity and skill. Couza uses his instrument at the outer limits and embroiders Claudia Schmidt's song brilliantly. A tour de force!

"Wish I could fall in Love" by Cheryl Wheeler and "Forever" by Si Khan will also be played many times in the Andrew's house as would the other Schmidt song "Hard Love" where it not for a totally extraneous and very distracting electric bass. My only other criticism is of the last two tracks "St Francis Prayer"

and "Seek Ye First" where the evangelist in Couza gets a bit out of hand.

However there are 14 excellent tracks before these, and my regular listeners to Radio Stoke can look forward to hearing many of them over the summer period. Nice One James!

Harvey Andrews

MIKE SILVER THE 11TH ALBUM

"Dedication"

SRO194

Road Dog/Walk Away/Dedication/Sitting on Top of the World/Strong Love/Heaven/Love's Sweet Flame/Good Travelling/Goodbye Dreams/Raining Money in Berlin/Reaching Out For Love.

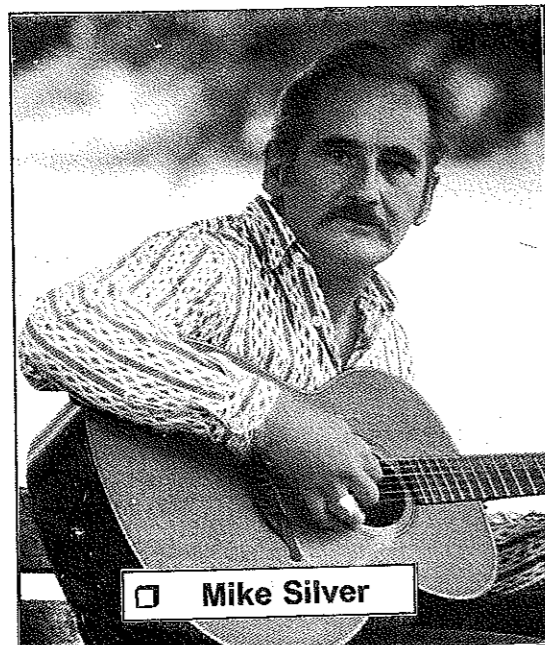
Mike Silver has been one of my favourite performers for many years and here he is joined by Jo Partridge, who plays great guitar including some fine "slide" work; by Dave Quinn on bass, Derek Boak on backing vocals, plus Al Hodge, Ian Eaglestone, Vince Martin, Steve Knightly, Phil Beer and unfortunately for me Steve Jackson on drums.

The album is beautifully produced but, for me, those drums are too much to the fore, and intrude into the music instead of supporting it.

Having made that criticism, there are some fine tracks including a superb version of "Sitting On Top Of The World" that I've only heard better by Doc Watson and "Good Travelling". Least favourite "Raining Money in Berlin" where the tune didn't seem to do justice to some thought provoking lyrics.

If you are into severely traditional folk music this is probably not for you. If you are one who is willing to listen to good music without needing to have a label on it, then it's likely you'll enjoy Mike's latest effort, because that's always been his approach. So far I've played it four times and it will be spinning again.

Dave Day



□ Mike Silver

FIRST PRINCIPLES

"Dreams to Sell"

Cock Robin CRM 6203MC (tape)

A second release from the melodic and harmonic outfit based in Lancs/Cheshire and one which consolidates the promise evidenced by its fore-runner a year of two back. Since then Chris Harvey, Alison Younger and Mal Waite have successfully built a laudable reputation of being respected musicians in this band as well as their other solo and group projects. With arrangements that largely consist of Chris' chromatic accordion and (only these days occasional) keyboards blended with spot-on vocal harmonies, First Principles could easily have whisked

away at a single recipe with all the determination of a programmed Moulinex! It's to their joint credit that the choice of material, from Scots Trad. to Mary Chapin-Carpenter, taking in Rob Malaney (Chorley) and James Keelaghan (Canada) along the way is as diverse as the textures and tempos that leap from the cassette shell.

This is an exercise in justifiable self-confidence.

The songs are strong, the playing precise and the harmonies heavenly. There are graphic pictures here of simpler but harder times ("Hillcrest Mine", "Cotton Mill Girls") remorse and distress ("Annan Water", "Last Watch") unraveling relationships ("He Thinks He'll Keep Her") love requited and un-so (most of the rest!).

Then we have the simply sublime "Dream Angus" - a lullaby that literally makes me shed tears in much the same way that "Land of The Leal" always does. Sentimental moi? hmn, maybe but if a song touches base it's a thin line between feeling and reason. Analyse and discuss!

First principles have plenty of club and festival work lined up this year and whilst this is an excellent representation of their live work, they're at their best in front of an audience. 'Til you can catch 'em at it though, this is marvellous stuff. 'Phone Chris for a copy on 0772 601060.

Clive Pownceby

THE WHISKY PRIESTS

"The First Few Drops"

Having been brought up on the manic talents of The Pogues and The Saw Doctors I was delighted to discover another group who are able to impart in their music that special thing - the ability to make me feel exhausted when it is over. If you are ever in need of motivation and drive then these North Eastern lads will deliver.

However if you like your tunes to be vocally perfect and predictable, then the tones of lead singer Gary Miller will upset you greatly. Despite several listenings I am still left thinking that it is 'Rigsby' up their belting out the words. But that is

the beauty of this CD - it's individuality. Who can honestly say that they have ever heard other voices like Shane McGowan or Davey Carton? Likewise Gary Miller is now able to join that select band of frontmen who transform average into excellence.

The underlying theme throughout this CD is

the misery and hardship that was, and is still suffered down the Geordie-Land pits. The way the tracks are presented though, lifts you up and out of any threatening doom and gloom into great enjoyment.

Following the recession of The Pogues back into mainstream normality, lapsed fans of their culture surely must be taken over by this offering with tracks such as 'The Hard Men', 'Wise Man' and the incomparable 'No Chance'. It could be time to start jumping around again !!

Such obvious talent and enjoyment deserves the success that it will almost certainly achieve, although I am still not convinced 'Rigsby' is not involved in there somewhere.

Martin Holden



□ The Whisky Priests

IAIN ARCHER

"Wishing"

GUM CD 29

Iain Archer is a 23 year old singer/songwriter from Bangor in County Down who has recently been appearing as support with such as Bert Jansch, and Stephen Fearing.

This four track CD is a tester for his first album "Playing Dead" GUM CD 26 and it reveals a young man with real talent. Going for him are his melodic sense, his more than useful guitar technique and his excellent singing. Against him are his marshmallow lyrics and his excellent singing!

You see there's something unnervingly Cliff Richard about his vocals in their timbre and vibrato. This makes for good listening in a background sense, but somehow detracts from seriousness. I doubt there is anything he can do about it except write lyrics of a more mentally engaging sort.

Of course I haven't been listening to singer/songwriters for many years and it is many years ago that I enjoyed my "bedsitter" song period. No doubt Iain will have much more appeal for those younger listeners who are less jaded than I and he will reward their attention.

He has a talent, but exactly where it can be exploited I am not sure. He may well be an artist who will carve his own niche as Clifford T Ward did in the 70's

"Wishing" is a very good commercial song, as is "The Breeze", and what do we find as the fourth track? - "May You Never", the top up the pension song of John Martyn earning him yet more royalties.

So there you have it; - Cliff Ward out of Cliff Richard out of John Martyn. I expect to hear more of this man Archer and will listen with interest.

Harvey Andrews

PENNI MCLAREN WALKER

"Out Of Order" -

This is the debut cassette of a lady with a voice just perfect for traditional material. In fact she won the traditional singing competition at the 1994 Shrewsbury festival. But then again she also won the 1994 Folkwrite/BBC Shropshire song-writing competition with her song "Write what you know" which is one of the seven self penned songs on this cassette. The remaining five are traditional, with singaround favourites like "Green Laurel" and "Banks of Green Willow".

Although Penni is a relative newcomer to the folk scene her interpretation of the tradition belies this. Her own material is quite impressive. The opening song "Ballad of Mary Fuller" is a strong start with a folk/rock feel. Two of the others are based on poems by Longfellow and the Irish poet Thomas Moore both given good and apt tunes. Penni plays six and twelve string guitars and also accordion although the latter is not highly prominent on this album. She is very ably supported by the talented Jon Adams who not only produced, engineered and mixed, but also provided musical accompaniment on mandolin, electric guitar, fretless bass, recorder, keyboards and drum sequencing. This is tastefully and sympathetically done leaving Penni's voice to shine through.

She has a true tuneful voice but I found it a little expressionless in places. No doubt there are many who would disagree. Penni is touring the North West - see ad. elsewhere in this publication - so you will have the chance to hear her live and obtain the cassette for yourself. I am sure she'll be featuring a fair selection from the tape.

Her next production will be a C.D. soon to be released by 101 Records, Heswall. The backing musicians on this are a bunch of very talented "locals" Joe Broughton, Mike Scott, Chris Lee, Phil Hare and Alan Rhys Jones (one or two mean songwriters there too!).

Kath Holden



□ Penni McClaren-Walker

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PATRICK RYAN * KEITH DONNELLY
MARTYN WYNDHAM-READ
LOOSE CHIPPINGS * CUCKOO OAK
ENDA KENNY (Australia) * MAL BROWN
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OUT & ABOUT

with Nat Clare

Sorry I wasn't with you last issue but I was lying lazily by a sun-drenched swimming pool in Tenerife.

SWINTON SWINGS ...er.. like a beerbelly do?

What Swinton lacks in size; it makes up for in enthusiasm and sheer hard work; so "good on yer" those who brought us Swinton's mini-festival last year. I enjoyed it immensely and spent an absolute packet purchasing rare vinyl at the folk record stall. What the early concert lacked in atmosphere (rather like going to the pictures in the afternoon) was more than compensated for by the impressive line-up of singers and musicians taking part. Also, well done Mr Higginbottom and friend who tirelessly entertained the kids in the library and helped get them hooked on folk as an antidote to "Take That". I'll be back for more next year - but don't let that put you off!

HOKEY POKINGS

Whilst you're waiting for "Richard Thompson sings the songs of Nat Clare" to be released or pressed or squashed or whatever it is they do with CD's these days, you could do worse than to beat the bootleggers at their own game and buy the new limited edition Richard Thompson with Danny Thompson CD recorded live at the Crawley Jazz Festival in 1993 available at £12.50 from "Voiceprint Mail Order, P.O. Box 5, Derwentside, Co. Durham DH9 7HR. This record will not be available in the shops.

ANOTHER DOOR OPENS

Sadly, one of my favourite clubs, the "Open Door Folk Club" at the Medlock Tavern has closed due to unforeseen circumstances. The good news is, however, that Mike Riley, powerfully-voiced performer and experienced club organiser, has stepped in to resurrect the club while the corpse was still warm, as it were, and the club will continue at an alternative venue a mere quarter of a mile away with the same friendly "anything goes" policy and, more importantly, free admission. I've been already and it was packed! Still, I missed Andy and Sharon and the infamous gardening gloves! More details next time....

NEW AGE PENSIONERS

I secretly admire the nerve of energetic new agers who inhabit fragile-looking tree houses to protest at the modernisation of "Blue Peter's" theme tune or at "Scalextrix's" satanic plan to add a new bypass, but, alas my own age and physical state prevents me from joining with them, except in spirit. Similarly, I

sympathise with the plight of the whales but I'll be blown (pardon the pun) if I'm going to tie myself to one's back! So why not let it all hang out at this hippy mecca, the "Trades Club" in Hebden Bridge. The music is impressive and often acoustic, the people friendly, colourful and cool, and one or two are even older than me. Meanwhile, if you see a lone new-age pensioner wearing a tie-dyed "Save the Whales", T-shirt, stranded on the top of a half-dead Rhododendron bush asking for a ladder; you'll know who it is!

FRIENDLY FOLK AT THE NEW INN

Ramblin' Frank Wilson keeps me regularly posted about the goings-on at the New Inn Folk Club on Ratcliffe Road, Aspull, held on 2nd Wednesday of every month and when I'm "between gigs" (every Wednesday of every month!) I try to pop down there to see what's happening. Last time, I had the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with Jon Fitzgerald, who was the guest for the evening.

I've seen Southsea-based Jon capably carrying the audience in singarounds before and it was a pleasure to see him this time centre stage and weaving his unique folk visions in this more formal guest session. Jon has a genuinely relaxed approach and makes his audience at ease; to him we are all old friends, not merely anonymous faces in the crowd. He is such a master of the laid back approach as to perform almost prostrate and his rapport with the audience reflects the intimacy of his material. I particularly enjoyed Jon's version of Pete Ryder's "Last Chance Saloon"; with its thoughtful guitar accompaniment and vocals that sound like he meant them. He is back in the northwest towards the end of June so bookings around that time would be warmly welcomed.

HANGING JOHNNY

This isn't the name of the rather sad and unstable condom machine in my local hostelry but rather a lively sea-shanty lustily rendered one interesting afternoon at the "Hull Shanty Festival" that took place since last we spoke at Hull's impressive Marina. The event was free and provided a fascinating insight into the lives and traditions of those who spent the lives at sea. Personally, I get sick on the River Caves at Blackpool but I recommend this event and its great family atmosphere (apart from no children being allowed in the pub for the Sunday afternoon sing-around) for insertion in your diaries. I'll be the one with the green face and a packet of "Sea-legs" but that was more the fault of the Guinness than the motion of the rolling waves!

See Ya Soon Nat Clare.

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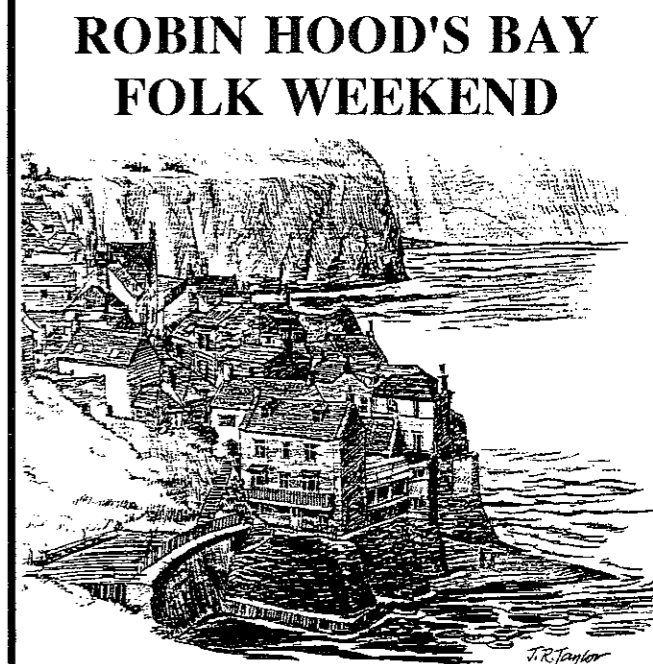
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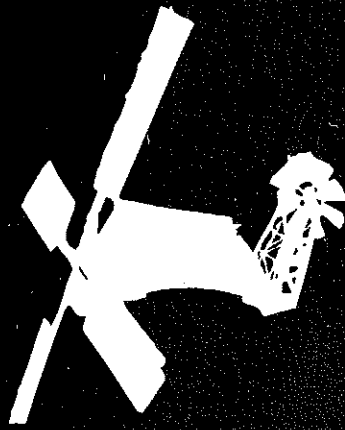
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