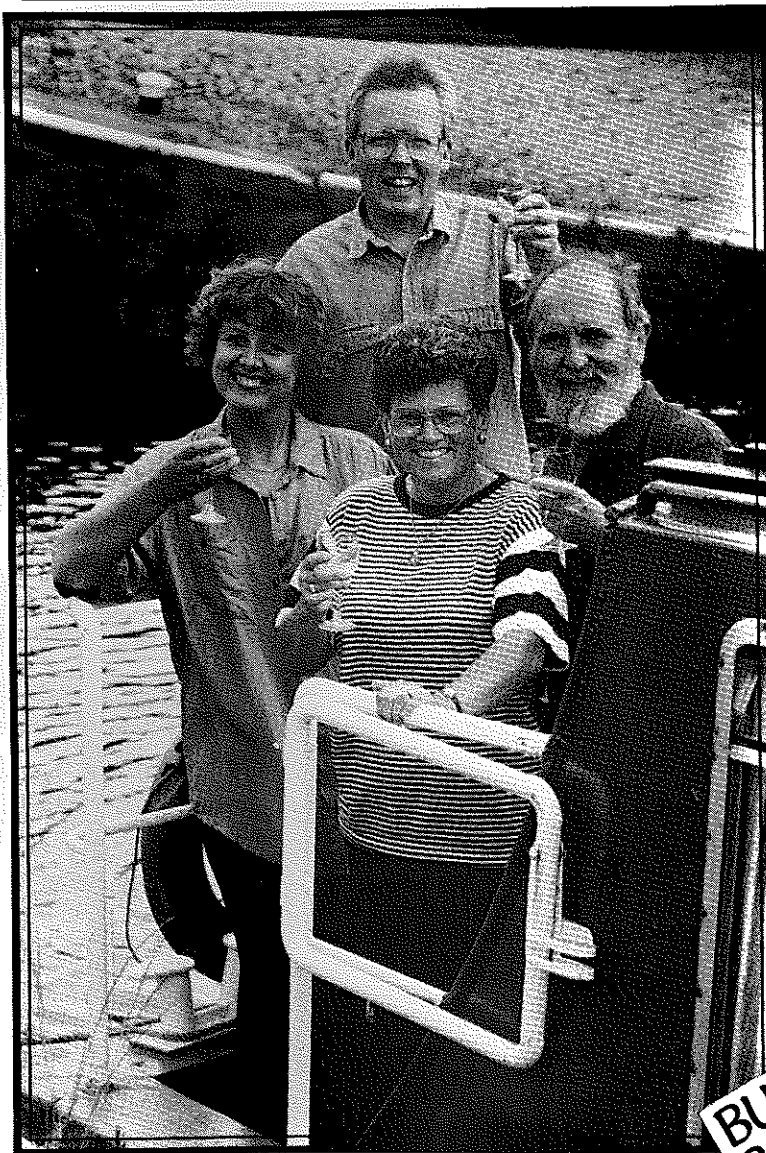


FOLK *North West*

Spring 1997

80p



Local group QUARTZ,
appearing at Four Fools, Fylde

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NewsReel

Festival Previews

Youthful
Perspective

Letters Page

Record Reviews: *Seven
pages of all the very
latest folk releases*

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plus:

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MORE**

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ISSUE!**



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

David Wright, Lancaster Tourism, Lancaster City Council, 29 Castle Hill,
Lancaster, LA1 1YN.

Tel: 01524 582394
Fax: 01524 847472

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the Press
Gang!**



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Editorial Address:

118, Bolton Road,
Aspull,
WIGAN
WN2 1XF

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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 a bumper 36-page issue of Folk North-West!

I hope you will be reading this in the early part of March, rather than almost a month later as happened last time. We can only apologise, and hope to do our very best to ensure it will never happen again.

This is the first issue in a very long time which seems to be all good news for the folk clubs. There are three new folk clubs (Four if you count Wigan meeting on two nights a week), and there are no closures at all to report. Perhaps we are at last at the end of the decline and starting to expand our audiences! What do YOU think? Write and tell us; we'll publish as many letters as we can fit in.

This issue is rather stronger on reviews than it is on features, but we hope to correct that in next issue. Perhaps this mixture is what you prefer to read; why not write in and tell us what you want to see - after all it is YOUR magazine!

I'll let the contents speak for itself this time, and we'll see you again at the end of May!

Nigel Firth

Newsletter Editor

**OUR NEXT ISSUE COVERS
JUNE to AUGUST 1997
THE CLOSING DATE FOR ALL
SUBMISSIONS IS APRIL 20th,
NOTHING WILL BE ACCEPTED
AFTER THIS DATE**

Editorial Address:

**118, Bolton Road,
Aspull,
Wigan
WN2 1XF**

Telephone : 01942 833293

Warwick Folk Festival

25-27 July 97

RORY McLEOD

JACKIE McAULEY'S "POORMOUTH"

ERIC BOGLE • ROY BAILEY • ANAM

JOHN KIRKPATRICK • COSMOTHEKA

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KEITH DONNELLY • TANGLEFOOT • STEAMCHICKEN

HUGH RIPPON • JEFF DENNISON AND BENNY GRAHAM

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HENWEN • SHOW THE LADY • BELFAST BUSKERS

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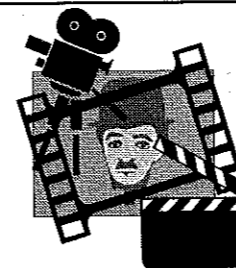
£29 before June 1st £33 after June 1st

INFORMATION

**Dick Dixon
Warwick Folk Festival
PO Box 429
Coventry CV5 6ZS
01203 678738**

BOX OFFICE

**Post to:
Warwick Folk Festival
Northgate
Warwick CV34 4JL
01926 496277**



NewsReel

**Latest News from around the
region and further afield**

(Includes previews of most local folk festivals)
Here we go with yet another NewsReel. Not too much to go at this time, but never-the-less some events that are well worth noting in your diary. I've even made an attempt to put them into date order!

Almost everyone will find **Lancaster Tourism's Ninth Easter Maritime Festival** a worthwhile and interesting event. The annual celebration of the days of sail, when Lancaster was one of the country's foremost ports, will as usual, run over the four days of Easter, Good Friday to Easter Monday (28th to 31st March 1997).

At the heart of the Festival will be performances by the country's largest gathering of sea-songsters and shantymen and a wide range of maritime-themed entertainments and events complete the bill. Included are: daily singarounds (featuring the renowned Salty Sealadies session for songs by or about women); storytelling; illustrated talks and guided walks: nautical dramas; traditional seaside puppet shows; ships-in-bottles and knot tying demonstrations and performances of the seasonal Lancaster Pace Egg Play.

Amongst the artists appearing this year are Sid Kipper, Johnny Collins, Hughie Jones, Cyril Tawney and Damien Barber. All the information you need can be had by speaking to the **Lancaster Tourism Office on (01524) 582394**.

Saturday, 26th of April will see **'A Day for St George'** taking place in Horwich. Lots of North West Morris teams, lots of dance, lots of colour, plenty of opportunity for a few beers and a good long procession through the streets of the town. The day is hosted by Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men, begins and ends at the Toll Bar Inn and Bob Bradley, (01204) 840949, will give you all the additional information you may need. I'm told that Bob is also the man to speak to should you want to learn more about the Morris or indeed if you fancy having a go yourself. What more could you ask? Be there.

Chester Folk Weekend takes place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend (May 23-26) at the Morris Dancer, Kelsall, Near Chester. The line-up includes John Kirkpatrick Band, Andy M. Stewart & Paddy O'Beirne, Alastair Anderson, Pete Coe, Chris Sherburn & Denny Bartley; this being just a selection. *More details from 01244 340424.*

The **Clitheroe Great Days of Folk** are set to take place on the 6th, 7th and 8th of June 1997. There will be concerts, singarounds, workshops, ceilidhs, sessions, dance displays and young people's events. Guests include Lindisfarne, All Blacked Up, Bernard Wrigley, Garva, various Morris teams and street entertainers. *For information telephone Phil on (01254) 397623.*

The **Alison Arms** are staging their very first folk festival which is to be held on 20, 21 & 22 June 1997 at the Alison Arms (on the A49 between Chorley and Standish. An impressive line-up of guests include The Oldham Tinkers, Risky Business, Dave Burland, Kings Ransom, Marie Little, Hands in Pockets and many local artists. Tickets are just £16.50 before 20th May (£18 after). *More details from Bob Gilbert on 01772 338718 or Hilda Foy on 01942 792246.*

The **fifth Folk and Food, Drink and Dance Festival** will take place from the 3rd to the 13th of July 1997 in the District of South Kesteven in South West Lincolnshire.

The main focus for the festival will be the International Dance Festival in the grounds of Grimsthorpe Castle. In addition to a full programme of International Dance performances from Poland, Russia, India, Spain and, not forgetting our own folk traditions, there will be workshops, street theatre, ceilidhs and a whole host of attractions and food outlets. The International Dance Festival runs from 4th to 6th July - day, evening and weekend tickets are available. *Contact: Iona Sadler on (01476) 593341.*

If you are the kind of sad (sorry, interesting) individual who likes to spend their evenings 'surfing the Net' you may be interested to learn that **Veteran** now have a web site. The site includes the current newsletter, full mail order catalogues of traditional English, Irish and Scottish songs and music, 'Katie's Quartet' and 'Maggie Murphy' pages and a regularly updated 'Hot News' page.

Veteran's address is?..<http://ourworld.com-puserve.com/homepages/VETERAN>.

If, like me, however, you rely on pen, paper and the GPO in order to make contact with the outside world then Veteran are contactable at 44 Old St, Haughley, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 3NX.

Whitby Folk Week Hiring Fair enables aspiring

acts on the folk scene to place themselves before a discerning audience in a professional setting. It will take place on Sunday, 17th of August 1997, but times and venue have still to be decided. If you want to know more contact Mike Soar on (01757) 701915.

Dave Swarbrick and Alistair Hulett have three tour dates in our area over the coming months. March 11th - The Folk and Blues Club, Carlisle; May 10th - Bury Met; June 1st - Liverpool Folk Club. I have no other details but I am sure the Atrax Agency will be more than willing to provide more information if you contact them on (01544) 340679.

Four Fools Folk Festival is now well re-established in this area, and takes place on 22-24 August. Selecting just a few of their impressive guest line-up I note Graham & Eileen Pratt, John Kirkpatrick, Peta Webb & Ken Hall, Martin Carthy, Tom McConville, Frankie Armstrong. Weekend tickets are £25 before 30th June (£29 after). More information from Angie & Ken Bladen 01527 450482 or Pete & Judith on 01744 7323117.

Finally don't forget **Fyde Folk Festival** (29-31 August) in Fleetwood. More details next issue, but there is an advert elsewhere with more information.

Perhaps a little early, but no doubt someone will be keen to place the following in their diary. Saturday, 22nd September 1997 sees **Sully's Banjo Festival** taking place from 12noon to 7.00pm at the Bollington Arts Centre, Wellington Road, Macclesfield. It is billed as a gathering of banjo devotees, with sessions, exhibitions and collections. Admission is a mere £2.00 and you can find out more by phoning (01625) 610849.

The Trades Club in Hebden Bridge, while not exactly a Folk Club, has an intriguing selection of guests, some of which may be of interest to you. I've picked out just a couple of treats:

Monday 17th March:
St. Patrick's Day with Shenanigan & guests

Saturday 22nd March:
Sally Barker (& her band)

Saturday 5th April:
Joe Stead

For more details ring them on 01422 845265

The Alan Bell Band are set to release a new CD and cassette entitled 'There was a Day'. If the last release 'With Bread and Fishes' is anything to go by, the new recording should be a stonker. No doubt a review will be appearing in these pages very soon.

That about it, hope you found something to tickle your fancy.

Stephen 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 - 9.00pm

BBC Radio Merseyside

FM 95.8/ MW 1485kHz

FOLKSCENE presented by Stan Ambrose and Geoff Speed Thursdays 8.00 - 9.00pm

(Note the new time & day - exactly the same as Lancashire Drift!)

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

(also broadcasts via the ASTRA Satellite)

Monday & Thursday:

9.15 - 10.00pm Sounds Traditional - Folk songs and Music

Saturday:

6.37 - 7.25am Mora Dibh - Folk Music and Song

9.15 - 10.00pm Ceilidh House - Dance Music

Sunday:

8.10 - 8.55am Mo Cheol Thu - Folk Music, song and verse and other field recordings from the eminent collector Ciaran MacMathuna.

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 I understand is still on Radio Cumbria on Sundays 8.30-10.00pm, there are no other Folk programmes that we know of. Let us know if we are wrong!

DIARY CHAT

Please note that all correspondence concerning Diary Chat, Club Diary dates and Club Residents should be sent to Chris McIlveen at:

51 Moorfield
Turton
Bolton
BL7 0DH
Phone/Fax: 01204 852627

General Club News

Welcome to New Clubs

We bid a very warm welcome to the following new clubs who have recently joined The Federation:-

The **Oswaldtwistle Folk Club** meets on the first Saturday of each month at The Acoustic/Folk Club, St Mary's Parish Centre, Lock Street, Oswaldtwistle, commencing at 8:30 pm. Admission is free, and singers and floor spots are most welcome. There is a bar with good cheap beer, and further details are available from the organiser, Dylan Owen, on 01254 390391.

Dylan Owen is also the organiser of **Blakey's Acoustic Club**, held on the first Thursday of each month at King George's Hall, Blackburn. The aim of this new initiative is to promote original song writing and folk music in the Blackburn/North West area, at a quality venue with a professional sound system, lighting and a receptive audience. It is also intended that established guest artists will be booked on alternate months.

Wigan Folk Club is with us once again, this time in two different locations! The club meets on Tuesday evenings at The Working Mens Club on Upper Morris Street, at 8:30 pm, and on Thursday evenings at the Seven Stars Hotel, Seven Stars Bridge, Wallgate at 9:00 pm. Further details are available from Joan Blackburn on 01942 321223.

Changes of Organiser, Venue etc.

There are no changes of either organiser or venue since last issue! I can only assume this is because someone has forgotten to tell us about it. I can't actually remember the last issue when such an event actually occurred. (neither can I - ED)

Club Closures

None at all (that we know of anyway).

More Club News:

Bury I'm pleased to say survived its threatened closure (for now at least), and has a strong line-up of guests over the next 2/3 months.

Guests include:

March 8th - Betty & Norman MacDonald

April 12th - Phil Hare & Penni McLaren-Walker

April 29th - Jane Threlfell & Carl Hodgson

They meet alternate Saturdays at the The Napier, Bolton Street, Bury. Go along and give them your support, they'll be pleased to see you! More details on the club and how to get there from Alan Seymour 0161 761 1544.

8:45 at The Lane Ends

News of two forthcoming events from Ann Green. On 31st May, at the Kirkham Community Centre, there will be a concert by the "Tilston and Boyle String Thing", comprising Steve Tilston, Maggie Boyle, Richard Cullan and Tony Hinnigan. Then on 5th July at the same venue, Eric Bogle is appearing.

Both these events are part of a national tour by the artists concerned and both events will be ticket only, so book your tickets from Ann on 01772 683027.

ACCESS FOR DISABLED:

8.45 at the Lane Ends

Levellers

Llandudno

Mechanics

Swinton

Alison Arms

Chorley

Triton

Brewery Arts Centre

EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm especially pleased to see the disabled access list seems to lengthen each issue. Have we missed you off? - please let Chris McIlveen know in time for next issue

NON SMOKING CLUBS:

Cockermouth

Maghull (Following a vote, this is now every week!)

7 Potteries



Extra Dates

Covering June 1997 and beyond:

SN = Singers Night

8:45 at Lane Ends -

June 4 - Jon Brindley

June 11 - Vin Garbutt

June 18 - SN

June 25 - Thistle

July 5 - Eric Bogle

Gateway -

June 5 - Roy Bailey

Poynton -

June 14 - Plain Brown Wrapper Band

June 28 - High Jinks

July 12 - Village Band

July 26 - Melandra

Railway -

June 14 - Vin Garbutt

Westhoughton -

Friday August 1 8:00 pm - Westhoughton Folk Club presents Eric Bogle at The Masonic Hall, Peel Street, Westhoughton

Sept 19th - Club reopens after Summer break

PLEASE NOTE:

All dates, club news
etc. to:

Chris McIlveen
51, Moorfield
Turton
BOLTON
BL7 0DH

Tel: 01204 852627

CLUB RESIDENTS:

ARNSIDE - Steve Black, John Harper, John & Angela Cowell, Frank Lewis, John Storer, Dave Summers, Roy Wilcock and Bridget Guest

ASPULL - Paul Wordsworth, John Dawson, Les Rolf
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

BRIDGE - Peter Hood, Phil and Claire Allen

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

BURY - Dave Wetherall, Shelia Harty, Alan & Jean Seymour, Chris Nash, Ian Fell, Colin Clayton

CASTLE - Wild Rover

CHORLEY - Frank Wilson, Wolfman Jack, George Harvey, Steve Nelson

COCKERMOUTH - Terry Haworth, Linda Lockney

FLEETWOOD - Spitting on a Roast

GATEWAY - Pauline Jones, Lynda Edwards, Maggie Billington, Tony Mannion, Pete Hood, Dave Walmisley, Mary & Kieran Hartley, Tom Travis, Anna Bearnew

GREGSON LANE - Lammergeier

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

LLANDUDNO - Highly Strung (Gill Williams & John Les)

MAGHULL - Tony Gibbons, Sue Howard, Loctup Together, Bob Tyrer, Clover, Paul Robinson, George and Joan Galimore

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

OSBALDESTON - Trouble At Mill

PORKIES - Sad Pig Band, Dave Walmisley

POYNTON - The Timekeepers, The Real Time Bandits, Pete Shirley, Pete Hood, Phil & Clare Allen, Steve Finn, Geoff Higginbottom

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

RAILWAY - Sylvia and Graham Sowerby, Heather and Don Davies, Trevor Morton and Geoff Smith

TILSTON - Geoff Edwin-Scott

URMSTON ACOUSTICS - Keith Northover

WESTHOUGHTON - Auld Triangle

WOODEN HORSE - Quartz, Whole Hog, Andy Anderson, Loctup Together

More Club News!

The Wooden Horse Folk Club

The Junction, Rainford

There are some nasty rumours going around the folk scene that at the above mentioned folk club in Rainford, on a Sunday evening, people can be found, actually enjoying themselves!!! Stories are rife about people joining in the choruses, laughing and generally having a good time.

It is even said that, in order to combat all this merriment, it was decided to have an evening of decidedly miserable songs; and what happened? As the songs, each in turn, churned out reams of misery and gore, the jollier the whole evening became. In fact, Pete Gleave even smiled. (Only once mind!)

Now all this may have something to do with the fact that the Junction has the most wonderful range of guest beer (for let's be truthful here, music, merriment and the amber nectar are definitely the most compatible of bed-fellows). It may even be due to the fact that Jim Coan is quite likely to condemn anyone found not enjoying themselves into buying the next round for the whole room.

Whatever the reason for all this gaiety, the rumours do seem to have more than a grain of truth. The only way to find out for certain however is to go and investigate for yourself. The club runs from 8.30pm (allegedly!) each Sunday, mostly singers nights but with top line guests once a month. On March 16th Garva will be appearing, fronted by Quartz and April 20th brings a rare appearance in this country of Tom Lewis from Canada, fronted by Loctup Together.

Why don't you give it a try one Sunday; because the more people there are in the room the less chance Mary will have of winning the b..... raffle!!

Chris Lock

Folk at The Railway

with His Worship and The Pig

Years ago the Mayor of a little village near Stoke-on-Trent was trying to raise money to build a hospital. The local innkeeper offered him a pig provided the Mayor himself drove it through the streets to market. The Mayor duly did so and collected the cash, an event notorious enough to be celebrated in a poem. Dave Boulton and Jeff Parton read the poem, and hoped to turn it into a song but after they realised it was rubbish they decided to keep the best bit and finished up with one of the most unusual names in Folk!

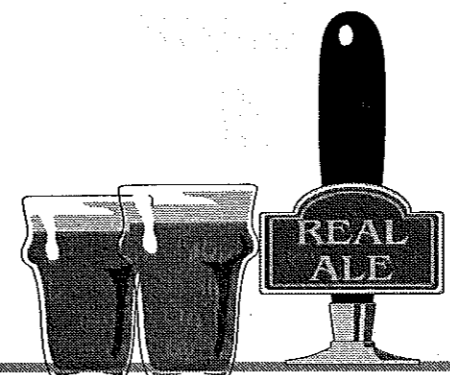
As you can imagine an unusual name can be a burden or a blessing. In this case it is the latter in that Jeff and Dave certainly have a talent as unique as their name. Apart from being "just two Folkasauruses, who love to sing the choruses" to the odd traditional folk song or two, they don't believe in singing other people's songs "because they don't sing their's". To make up for this they have written a considerable repertoire of their own material, some of which is extremely sensitive, like "Hanging on Here" but most of which is incredibly funny like "You're Only As Old - As the Woman You Feel" and "It's Aardvark being an Aardvark".

Dave and Jeff were spotted at the Middlewich Folk Festival by a couple of the organisers from the Railway Club in Heatley and it soon became clear that they would be well received back at the Club. Indeed a full house greeted them and His Worship and The Pig more than rose to the occasion, or was it the challenge, and young and old there were more giggles and belly laughs per person than we've heard in a long while.

Very popular around the Potteries, Jeff and Dave certainly travel well and would add variety to any Folk Club programme, and not just as light entertainment. Everyone left the Railway still chuckling at "The Hypochondriac" and "If You Had A Brain - You'd Be Dangerous" but also uplifted by the hilarious but at the same time thought-provoking lines in their songs.

His Worship and The Pig would also be a good bet at Christmas because two years ago they wrote a song called "The Christmas Tail", a story of marital unrest in Greenland in which Santa's wife Mary Christmas runs off with a bloke from "Toys are Us". Need I say more?

Don Davies



Even More Club News!

Greetings from Dave and Helen Howard

Greetings from Dave and Helen, now happily settled in Southern Ireland, at the following address:-

Kilcullen
Thomastown
County Kilkenny
Republic of Ireland

Tel/Fax 00353 56 54165

We hope to keep in touch with the North West folk scene via your excellent magazine, as well as listening to "Folk on 2" on the satellite.

We would like to take this opportunity of wishing all our friends in Lancs/Cheshire a good season and we hope to be back from time to time to keep in touch and share your excellent music.

We'll keep you posted with news of Dave's new studio here - when we've built it! In the meantime B&B is available for anyone who fancies coming over for the Craic!

Cheers from Dave and Helen.

Future Deadlines for Diary Dates/ Diary Chat/Club News

It would help Chris McIlveen considerably if Club Organisers could ensure that all input for future issues is sent to me, in writing, no later than the following dates:-

Summer 1997 (June, July, August)

Deadline - 30th April 97

Autumn 1997 (September, October, November)

Deadline - 31st July 97

Winter 1997/98 (Dec 97, Jan & Feb 98)

Deadline - 31st October 97

It is sometimes a bit of a struggle keeping up with changes out there. Please let Chris McIlveen know of any changes to organisers or locations that you know about.

Contributing Articles to the Magazine:

If you would like to write an article for the magazine, it would be helpful if you follow the following guidelines:

Not more than 500 words, and if a record review not more than 300 please (unless by prior arrangement). If by computer, please also supply a hard copy; we can accept most formats for example MS Word, Works, Wordperfect 5.0/5.1 etc. under either DOS or Windows 3.1. 3.5" disks preferred. If you are on the internet, I can give you an address to E-mail an article to us.

If it is not done by word processor or typewriter, please write clearly; if it turns out wrongly, and you have not written clearly, don't blame us!

We also need some good black & white photos of our local artists. Did you know we have no photos of most of our resident groups or well-known people like Strawhead, Raphael Callaghan & Christine Purnell, or indeed most of the vast wealth of talent local to our area.

PLEASE NOTE:

All dates, club news
etc. to:

Chris McIlveen
51, Moorfield
Turton
BOLTON
BL7 0DH

Tel: 01204 852627

ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE singer / songwriter

11th Mar **HOWCROFT FOLK CLUB** at Howcroft Inn, Bolton
(contact Pete Ryder 01204 847190)

18th Mar **SANDBACH FOLK CLUB** at Crown Hotel, Sandbach
(contact Winston Baldwin 01270 762161)

19th Mar **THE STAR FOLK CLUB**
at The Satr, Back Hope Street, Salford
(contact Martin Gittins 0161 205
3680)

13th Apr **TOMMY DUCK'S ACOUSTIC**
11th May at Tommy Duck's, 111 Newton St, Manchester
(contact Bob & Sue 0161 237 3299)

17th April **TOPIC FOLK CLUB** at Melborn Hotel, White Abbey
Rd, Bradford, (contact Philomena 01274 883412)

20th April **OPEN DOOR FOLK CLUB** at Bricklayers Arms,
Hardman La, Fallsworth
(Janet/George 0161 681 4043)

25th April **CHURCH INN FOLK CLUB**
at Church Inn, Huddersfield Rd,
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Hayward 01457 833784)

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Gwen Bash & Andrea Ferguson, Maureen Sutton,
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Band of the RISING SUN
Kate RUSBY
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Keith SUMMERS
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REDDITCH '97

A Youthful Perspective

by Jenny Shottliff

I visited the Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow for the first time recently. The Scots seem to be doing a much better job of supporting, presenting and promoting their folk music than we do - actually they were doing a better job of presenting our folk music than we do as well. For the 3rd year running over two and half weeks you could have seen a tremendous number of bands, duos and individuals from Scotland, Ireland, England, Wales, Brittany, Spain, Cape Breton, Quebec.... and I don't think you could go, even for a day, without discovering someone now.



and coming acts get given time and space as do a number of the older traditional performers. The loveliest thing I heard over the three days I was there was the singing of Iain Mackay from Lewis, accompanied by Malcolm Jones of

Runrig. I have to confess it wouldn't have occurred to me to go and see a traditional Scots singer but I'd go to see him again so I've learnt from their mix 'n' match policy too!

The scale of the festival means there are events you won't see anywhere else such as Phil Cunningham's

Highlands & Islands Suite with orchestra, fiddle orchestra, choir and soloists and Blas, "a showcase of "Gaelic talent" put together as a one off, mixing members of Runrig with singers of the standing of Ishbel MacAskill and Flora MacNeil".

The big draws like Capercaillie and Wolfstone featured prominently but their support acts were bands like La Bottine Souriante and Open House.

There must be a growing number of people from outside the folk world losing their prejudices as a di-



rect result of this subtle programming. The mix of young and old, and traditional and mainstream featured here is as interesting as the fact that folk concerts on such a large scale can work commercially at all. It's not just big bands the festival supports either - a lot of young up

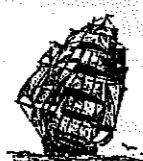
Glasgow's a long way to travel but it was worth it to appreciate the scale of quality of the event. It's a shame there's nothing as big in Manchester or Birmingham.

Jenny Shottliff

The pictures on this page show:
Capercaillie (top)
Some of the participants in the recent youth concert as part of Maghull '96 (bottom)

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5 December
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The Great Days of Folk Ceilidhs

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to the EDITOR

A Thanks to all ...

Can I take the opportunity to use your letters page to thank all those people who made the Maghull Day of Music such a wonderful success. Apart from our own people at Maghull, the support of our friends from other local clubs was nothing short of fantastic, as indeed it is every year. To say we appreciate your support and friendship, particularly in such a traumatic and unhappy year following the passing away of our leader and inspiration - Dave Day - is an understatement. The feedback we have had suggests that everyone enjoyed themselves thoroughly - Here's to the next one on November 8th this year. We look forward to your support once again.

Speaking of Maghull we still run a thriving club every Tuesday at the "Hare & Hounds", as we have for the past 15 years. We're now a non-smoking club - even people like me have to conform the democracy!! We have an impressive guest list in the next few months - The great Kieran Halpin (March 18th) - Irish band "Shannagh" (March 25th) - Legendary singer, musician & raconteur Tim Lyons (April 22nd) - "The Britannia Bluegrass Boys" (April 15th) and Canadian duo Newark & Bell in the near future. Most nights however are singers & residents nights. Visitors are always welcome - the more the merrier. We are also still very keen on club swaps anywhere - Give us a ring if you fancy the idea. Once again, thanks for your continued support.

Tony Gibbons

Musical Traditions revived....

Lovers of the rare and the eclectic will doubtless recall that there was once a small circulation magazine called Musical Traditions. It wasn't a folk mag as such, but it dealt with folk music, and much, much more, on a world wide scale. Irish piping, Bampton Morris, American Country Music, Ukrainian fiddle playing, Greek Rembetica, all were grist to the editorial mill. To one such as me, whose tastes are every bit as esoteric as the magazine's policy, it was a vital publication indeed.

Alas, problems continually beset the editor, so that it was always an irregular journal, and it finally went to the wall a couple of years ago. That appeared to be the end of the matter, the thing had died the death and, after a decent period of mourning, its readership would learn to cope without it's existence. Recently however, the publication climbed out of the coffin and once more began to walk the earth, not this time in the mortal garb of print and paper, but in the intangible ethereal wraithlike medium of the Internet.

Anyone wishing to make contact with this phenomenon doesn't have to use a Ouija board. The keyboard of a computer will do fine to type in its home address:

<http://members.aol.com/mustrad/>

All in lower case and always assuming your technology is advanced enough to access the Internet. Alas, mine isn't and for the foreseeable future, I am not going to be able to afford anything better. Breathes there anywhere out there a fellow human being, with soul so generous, that he or she would be prepared to make occasional downloads for me, either onto hard copy or machine readable floppy disk? I would naturally pay whatever costs, phone bills, paper, etc, were involved, to say nothing of the price of a pint as occasional as the downloads.

Your Spiritual Confreere

Fred McCormick

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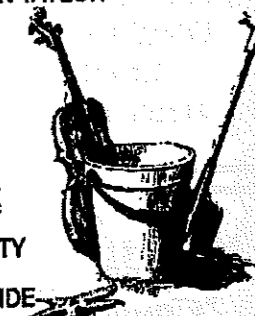
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For Information call;

Bob Gilbert on (01772) 338718 or
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MARCH DATES

SUNDAY	02 March	09 March	16 March	23 March
ARNSIDE	Singers Night		Singers Night	
BOTHY	Tail Stories	Singers Night	David Campbell	Singers Night
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
POTTERIES				
WOODEN HORSE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Garva	Singers Night
MONDAY	03 March	10 March	17 March	24 March
*ASPULL			St Pats Night Party	
BRIDGE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
CONWY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TRITON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	04 March	11 March	18 March	25 March
CHORLEY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
DALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
MAGHULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Kieran Halpin	Shannagh
OSBALDESTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TILSTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
URMSTON ACOUSTICS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WIGAN (WMC)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	05 March	12 March	19 March	26 March
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Kevin Dempsey	Singers Night	New Bushbury Mountain Daredevils	Kellie White
ALISON ARMS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BURNLEY	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
CASTLE	Singers Night	Closed	Singers Night	Singers Night
LEVELLERS	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily Closed
THURSDAY	06 March	13 March	20 March	27 March
BLAKEY'S	Singers Night			
COCKERMOUTH	Bernard Wrigley	Singers Night	Brian Peters	Singers Night
FLEETWOOD	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
GATEWAY	15th Birthday Party with Artisan	David Campbell	BigJig	Brass Monkey
GREGSON LANE				
RAILWAY	Jon Kirkpatrick	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WIGAN (7 STARS)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
FRIDAY	07 March	14 March	21 March	28 March
NORTHWICH	Singers Night	Singers Night	Garva	Singers Night
PORKIES				
PRESTON	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session
RHYL				
WALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WESTHOUGHTON	Keith Hancock	Kieran halpin	Davy Arthur & Co.	Closed
SATURDAY	01 March	08 March	15 March	22 March
BREWERY ARTS				
BURY		Betty & Norman McDonald		Singers Night
OSWALDTWISTLE	Singers Night			
POYNTON		Ceilidh with Jack at A Pinch		Ceilidh with Five Barred Gate
*RAILWAY		Kathryn Tickell	18	

APRIL DATES

SUNDAY	30 March	06 April	13 April	20 April	27 April
ARNSIDE		Singers Night		Singers Night	
BOTHY	Easter Social Evening	Chris Foster	Singers Night	Graham & Eileen Pratt	Singers Night
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
POTTERIES					
WOODEN HORSE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Tom Lewis	Singers Night
MONDAY	31 March	07 April	14 April	21 April	28 April
BRIDGE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
CONWY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TRITON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	01 April	08 April	15 April	22 April	29 April
CHORLEY	Singers Night	Phil Hare	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
DALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
MAGHULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Britannia Bluegrass Boys	Tim Lyons	15th Birthday Night
OSBALDESTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TILSTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
URMSTON ACOUSTICS	Singers Night	Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WIGAN (WMC)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	02 April	09 April	16 April	23 April	30 April
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Stanley Accrington	Huw & Tony Williams	Alan Bell Band	Singers Night	Tom Lewis
ALISON ARMS	Closed	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
BURNLEY	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
CASTLE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Raphael Callaghan & Christine Purnell	Singers Night	Singers Night
LEVELLERS	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed
THURSDAY	03 April	10 April	17 April	24 April	
BLAKEY'S	Singers Night				
COCKERMOUTH	Phil Hare	Singers Night	Slidewells	Singers Night	
FLEETWOOD	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
GATEWAY	Tom McConville & Pauline Cato	Singers Night	Risky Business	Local Showcase	
GREGSON LANE					
RAILWAY	Singers Night	Tom McConville & Pauline Cato	Singers Night	Phil Hare & Penni McLaren-Walker	
WIGAN (7 STARS)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
FRIDAY	04 April	11 April	18 April	25 April	
*BOTHY				*Ceilidh with All Blacked Up	
NORTHWICH	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
PORKIES					
PRESTON	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	
RHYL					
WALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
WESTHOUGHTON	Bernard Wrigley	Huw & Tony Williams	The Doonan Family band	Graham Cooper	
SATURDAY	05 April	12 April	19 April	26 April	
BREWERY ARTS					
BURY		Phil Hare & Penni McLaren-Walker		Jane Threlfall & Carl Hogsden	
OSWALDTWISTLE	Singers Night				
POYNTON		Kamikaze Ceilidh Band	19	Ceilidh with Bilbo Baggins	

MAY DATES

SUNDAY	04 May	11 May	18 May	25 May	
ARNSIDE	Singers Night		Singers Night		
BOTHY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
LLANDUDNO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
POTTERIES					
WOODEN HORSE	Closed	Singers Night	Singers Night	Closed	
MONDAY	05 May	12 May	19 May	26 May	
BRIDGE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
CONWY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
SWINTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
TRITON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
TUESDAY	06 May	13 May	20 May	27 May	
CHORLEY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
DALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
LIVERPOOL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
MAGHULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
OSBALDESTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
TILSTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
URMSTON ACOUSTICS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
WIGAN (WMC)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
WEDNESDAY	07 May	14 May	21 May	28 May	
8:45 at LANE ENDS	Gordon Tyrrell	Martin Carthy	Singers Night	Roy Bailey	
ALISON ARMS	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
ASPULL	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
BLACKBURN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
BURNLEY	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
CASTLE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
LEVELLERS	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	Temporarily closed	
THURSDAY	01 May	08 May	15 May	22 May	29 May
BLAKEY'S	Singers Night				
COCKERMOUTH	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
FLEETWOOD	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
GATEWAY	Tom Lewis	The Flowers of Manchester	Clive Gregson	Guest tbc	Kristina Olsen
GREGSON LANE					
RAILWAY	Singers Night	Steve Tilston & Maggie Boyle	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WIGAN (7 STARS)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
FRIDAY	02 May	09 May	16 May	23 May	30 May
NORTHWICH	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
PORKIES					
PRESTON	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session	Music/Song Session
RHYL					
WALTON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WESTHOUGHTON	The Albion Band	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
SATURDAY	03 May	10 May	17 May	24 May	31 May
*8:45 AT LANE ENDS					Tilston & Boyle String Thing - Kirkham Comm Centre
*ARNSIDE	Tim Laycock				
BREWERY ARTS					
BURY					
OSWALDTWISTLE	Singers Night				
POYNTON		Ceillidh with Twisted Flax		Ceillidh with Old School Band	
*RAILWAY				Alan Taylor & Mike Silva	
Notes:	* If Club name has "*" in front, it's not the usual club night.				
	* If entry has "*" in front, it's being held at a different venue (unless venue is named)				

OFFICER	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Chairman	Kath Holden	7, Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan	01942 258459
Treasurer	Nigel Firth	118, Bolton Road, Aspull, Wigan	01942 833293
Editor	Paul Holden	7, Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan	01942 258459
Advertising	Tony Gibbons	2a, Moss Lane, Maghull, Liverpool	0151 526 6522
Club reviewer	Contact	Treasurer (see Above)	
Membership Secretary	Jenny Shottliff	75, Churchland Drive, Standish	01257 473515
Federation Secretary	Chris McIveen	51, Moorfield, Turton, Bolton	01204 852627
Youth Activities	Pete Gleave	34, Hamilton Grove, St. Helens	01744 732117
Club Dates	Frank Wilson	21a, Jackson Street, Chorley	01257 230047
Proof Reader			
Publicity			

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	08:30 pm	The Bulls Head, Milnthorpe	Steve Black	01524 761823
BOTHY	08:00 pm	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton Rd, Birkdale	Clive Pownceby	0151 924 5078
LLANDUDNO	08:30 pm	The Old Victoria Pub, Church Walks, Llandudno	John Les	01492 580454
POTTERIES	08:00 pm	The Old Swan Inn, Hartshill Rd, Stoke	Jason Hill	01782 813401
WOODEN HORSE	08:30 pm	The Junction, Rainford	Jim Coan	01772 452782
MONDAY				
BRIDGE	08:30 pm	Bridge Inn, Georges Road, Stockport	Peter Hood	0161 432 4142
CONWY	08:30 pm	Orlop Bar, Conwy Frigate, The Quay, Conwy	Denis Bennett	01492 877324
SWINTON	08:30 pm	White Lion, 242 Manchester Rd, Swinton	Ged Todd	01942 811527
TRITON	08:30 pm	St John Hall, Malleson Road, Liverpool	Doreen Rickart	0151 256 6180
TUESDAY				
CHORLEY	08:30 pm	The Prince of Wales, Cowling Brow, Chorley	Frank Wilson	01257 230047
DALTON	08:30 pm	The Brown Cow, Goose Green, Dalton-in-Furness	Andy Frame	01229 835601
LIVERPOOL	08:30 pm	The Ship & Mitre, Dale St, Liverpool	Helen Hebden	0151 727 0088
MAGHULL	08:30 pm	Hare & Hounds, Maghull	Chris Lock	0151 526 4379
OSBALDESTON	08:30 pm	Bay Horse Inn, Longsight Rd, Osbaldeston, Blackburn	Bernadette Dixon	01254 853929
TILSTON	08:30 pm	The Carden Arms, Tilston, Cheshire	Alison Parkes	01829 250484
URMSTON ACOUSTICS	08:30 pm	The Nag's Head, Davyhulme Circle, Urmston	Martin Kavanagh	0161 748 5497
WIGAN (WMC)	08:30 pm	Working Mens Club, Upper Morris St, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223
WEDNESDAY				
8:45 AT LANE ENDS	08:45 pm	Lane Ends Hotel, Weeton Rd, Wesham	Ann Green	01772 683027
ALISON ARMS	08:30 pm	The Alison Arms, Preston Rd, Coppull Moor, Nr Chorley	Hilda Foy	01257 792246
ASPULL	08:30 pm	Moorgate Inn, Scot Lane, Aspull, Wigan	Paul Wordsworth	0161 790 7153
BLACKBURN	08:30 pm	Veteran Hotel, Eanam, Blackburn	Brian Kirkham	01254 826661
BURNLEY	08:30 pm	Waggon & Horses Inn, Colne Rd, Brierfield	Phyl Watson	01282 774077
CASTLE	08:30 pm	Castle Hotel, Halton Village, Runcorn	Bob O'Callaghan	0151 424 5367
LEVELLERS	08:00 pm	The Irish Centre, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool	Christina Roberts	0151 284 5458
THURSDAY				
BLAKEY'S	08:30 pm	Blakey's Acoustic Club, King George's Hall, Blackburn	Dylan Owen	01254 390391
COCKERMOUTH	08:30 pm	Tithe Barn Hotel, Station St, Cockermouth	Jack King	01900 828226
FLEETWOOD	08:30 pm	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood	Dave Ryan	01253 876351
GATEWAY	08:30 pm	The Gateway Hotel, 882 Wilmslow Rd, East Didsbury	Annie Morris	0161 881 8294
GREGSON LANE	08:30 pm	St. Joseph's Social Centre, Gregson Lane, Hoghton	Graham Dixon	01254 853929
RAILWAY	08:30 pm	Railway Hotel, Heatley, Lymm	Graham Sowerby	01925 265503
WIGAN (7 STARS)	09:00 pm	Seven Stars Hotel, Seven Stars Bridge, Walgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223
FRIDAY				
NORTHWICH	08:30 pm	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich	Sarah Sherwood	01606 48577
PORKIES	08:30 pm	Ladybrook Hotel, Fir Road, Bramhall, Cheshire	Judy Alcock	01260 252633
PRESTON	08:30 pm	Moorbrook Inn, North Road, Preston	Rob Malaney	01257 231463
RHYL	08:30 pm	Bee & Station Hotel, Bodfor St, Rhyl	Jeff Blythin	01745 336052
WALTON	08:30 pm	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Sue Howard	0151 526 9927
WESTHOUGHTON	08:15 pm	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton	Pat Batty	01942 812301
SATURDAY				
BREWERY ARTS	08:30 pm	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a Highgate, Kendal	Box Office	01539 725133
BURY	08:00 pm	The Napier, Bolton St, Bury	Alan Seymour	0161 761 1544
MECHANICS	08:30 pm	Burnley Mechanics, Manchester Rd, Burnley	Ian Wells	01282 30005
OSWALDTWISTLE	08:30 pm	St Mary's Parish Centre, Lock Street, Oswaldtwistle	Dylan Owen	01254 390391
POYNTON	08:30 pm	Poynton Folk Centre, Park Lane, Poynton	Sue James	01270 766975
SOUTHPORT ARTS	08:30 pm	Southport Arts Centre, Lord St, Southport	Lesley Wilson	01704 540004

No Smoking club

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Access for the Disabled

LIVE REVIEWS:

Maghull Day Of Music, Songmakers Concert

MAGHULL DAY OF MUSIC (16TH NOVEMBER 1996)

I have just come upon a programme for this event and it's reminded me of how cracking a time we had

- my lady wife and me - and as no-one else has put pen to paper I feel obliged to write down a few jottings that result from the combination of the programme and my feeble mind.

The day actually started the previous evening because the committee had decided to have a ceilidh, with Garva doing the honours on the Friday night. Not being into the terpsichory (dancing to you) I don't know how well they played but everyone was smiling all through the intermeshing of Six Set Couples, long sets of eight and Circassian circles. Well done Garva and even weller done Terry who has added "calling" to his other undoubted talents as fiddler, whistler, flautist and all round good-egg.

The Day of Music opened at noon on the Saturday with the Youthquake session - which went on until 5.00pm. What a splendid idea this was - a chance for young musicians to see and hear for a full hour, some of the weird and wonderful instruments used in our tradition. Fiddles, Wooden Flutes, Pipes and Banjo were all available, nor was the human voice excluded.

Following the "Show and Tell" session Jenny Shotliff and Tom Napper, who were the mentors for the hundreds (or so it seemed) of avid young musicians, had set up a group workshop to help the youngsters learn to play a tune by ear. (I musn't forget to add that other artists booked and unbooked got involved in helping Jenny and Tom during the afternoon).

Afterwards came a two hour concert performed by local schools and music groups who demonstrated not only their amazing talent but showed us "wrinklies" that the future of our music is in safe hands.

In the meantime the less young members of the public (alright - the lazy ones!) were being enter-

tained upstairs with a splendid concert featuring Brass Tacks, Risky Business, Chris While and Julie Matthews, Stormalong John and a presentation of "River Mersey - the life flow" by Maghull Folk Club. By all accounts this was a remarkable tour-de-force from the stalwarts of the organising club.

Folk clubs from throughout the region combined to produce a Rolling Folk Club from just after noon until 9.30pm - and it wasn't just local clubs, John Taylor had brought a group down from the Cutty Wren in Redcar, which I suppose proves the point that our music is international!!! In addition Stormalong John ran a Shanty Workshop almost lifting the roof of the Coffee Bar up into the Mayor's Parlour and Jez Lowe had a "Chance to Meet!" which of course filled the room.

The evening session saw two concerts being run simultaneously - each with basically the same artistes, so no one needed to give up their seats to see the acts of their choice. And what a choice. In addition to those already mentioned LocTup Together, Chris Newman and Maire ni Chatasaigh and Maxie and Mitch appeared spreading

warmth, talent, general genius and mayhem (in the case of M and M) through the assembled throng.

This event was a fine tribute to the memory of a man who gave so much to music in the North-west and it was appropriate that Jane was there to present the Dave Day Music Festival Award to Chris Coutts

All in all this was a splendid day with tremendous performances by all concerned not least the organisers. Special plaudits must go to Jenny Shotliff and Tom Napper for the work they put into Youthquake.

My top acts were, not surprisingly, Julie & Chris and Maxie and Mitch - but then I'm predicable. Thanks Maghull, we're looking forward to the next one.

Pete Gleave.

Photographs on this page show:

Top : Terry Coyne, Jenny Shotliff, Tom Napper

Bottom : Maxie & Mitch



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LIVE REVIEWS (continued)

Songmakers Concert, Burnley Mechanics Theatre, November 24th

This was one of the ten concerts taking place throughout the country during November and December organised by Folkworks as "a national celebration of songwriting...featuring a multitude of top contemporary songwriters", each one headlined by Richard Thompson. Songwriting workshops were also held at all the venues, each run by one of the songwriters performing at that particular venue, Pete Coe fulfilling this role at Burnley.



□ Richard Thompson

A full house of 450 people greeted Pete onto the stage as the opening act and he kicked off the concert with "Just Another Pilgrim on the Pennine Way". He varied the instrumentation, playing banjo, dulcimer and melodeon and his relaxed manner between songs contrasted well with their impassioned delivery.

Pete was followed by Gary Binks, the first of three North West songwriters whose songs have been published in The Songmakers Song Book produced by Folkworks and on sale at the concerts.

(Anyone wishing to purchase copies of The Songmakers Song Book should contact Folkworks, 69 Westgate Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 1SG Tel 0191 222 1717).

Gary has a similar phrasing style to Richard Thompson, whom he acknowledges as one of his main influences and "Emeline" was a good example of the fine attention to detail contained in his lyrics. Next under the spotlight was yours truly, followed by Dylan Owen of Moorland Folk. Dylan has a special gift for writing humorous songs and this was demon-

strated to good effect in the song "Caravanning". The first half of the concert was brought to a close when we all came back on stage for a combined rendition of Pete's song "It's a Mean Old Scene".

The second half opened with Steve Tilson who I had not seen live before. The dexterity of his guitar playing was particularly impressive and his songs generally came across as well crafted, both in terms of arrangement and lyrical content. Steve concluded his set with probably his most well known song, the somewhat misleadingly titled "Slip Jigs and Reels", "a six minute Western in the key of E".

The only time I have seen Richard Thompson before was in a band format at Cropredy Festival. What struck me most this time was how much his dynamic guitar playing and style of delivery contribute to the overall impact of the songs. Requests for

old favourites were occasionally shouted out from the audience but

Richard concentrated on songs from his recent album "You? Me? Us?" such as "Razor Dance", "Cold Kisses" and "The Ghost of You Walks".

He also played a brand new song, saying it was for a project he was working on with Danny Thompson called "Land of the Lottery" and this turned out to be my favourite.

After the concert all the performers went back up to the dressing rooms well pleased

with the success of the concert

and as we were saying our farewells Richard concluded that of all the Songmakers Concerts so far staged, this one had been the best.

Mark Atherton



□ Pete Coe

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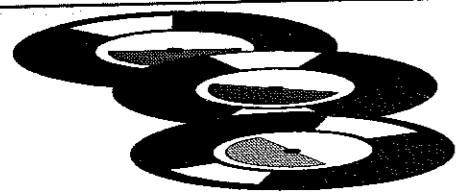
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RECORD REVIEWS

Peeping Tom - "Looking Good"

FSCD40/FSMC40 (CD & Cassette)

This album is fun. Following on from two highly successful dance CD's, Peeping Tom have this time produced a more concert based collection. There are still some sets of dance tunes (for which technical details re tune length are given on the insert), but most of the tracks have been arranged more for listening to. There is also a much more acoustic feel to the music. Why do I think it's fun? Well, intentionally or not, Peeping Tom have set us a puzzle:- how many musical references to major English dance bands of the last twenty years can you spot? There are tunes that set off in the styles of the early Cock and Bull Band, Tiger Moth and even Home Service; a guitar break that comes straight out of the Jon Moore school of playing and even a good imitation of the fairground organ that plays to the campers at Bromyard Folk Festival! Of course, the inimitable Peeping Tom sound is still there, underlying the flights of fancy. Although there are a few traditional tunes, most have as usual been written by Ben Woodward and Ian Wilson. According to the sleeve notes Pete Smale makes his debut as a tunesmith; they even give a key of 3*'s to show which tune is his. Unfortunately, none of the tunes have 3*'s next to them! However, since there isn't a bad one on the whole CD, I think we can safely say that he's made a good start. A success all round.

Peter Bearon

STEELEYE SPAN - "A Stack of Steeleye Span"

EMPORIO - EMPCD 668

My early musical influences were, on the whole, rock-based; bands like Deep Purple, Ten Years After and the Mothers of Invention. Although I went to folk clubs at that time, the sound of someone singing a traditional folk song usually sent me to the bar. Then along came Steeleye Span! Traditional music with drums, electric instruments; it was a whole new world.

listening to them opened my eyes (and ears) to a whole wealth of material and performers.

Despite the personnel changes, Steeleye Span have always produced imaginative, well recorded songs and tunes. Whether it's traditional material or written by the band, the singing and playing are a joy. Yes this is another compilation. Don't let that put you off. It's great to hear some of these older tracks again without clicks and crackles. All the selections are from the 19773 - 1975 period. Unfortunately the CD sleeve has the bare minimum of information. Classics like "Blackleg Miner" and "Lowlands of Holland", just leave on repeat mode.

Definitely worth a listen, 16 tracks and not a crackle to be heard. (My favourite SS album is "Parcel of Rogues", what's

yours?) (p.s. It's only £3.99)
Ken Howard



Peeping Tom

English and Scottish Folk Ballads - Various Performers

TSCD 480

One look at the cover of this Topic re-release from 1964 and anyone who has even the remotest interest in the traditional song will want it in their collection. The names on the cover - AL(Bert) Lloyd, Ewan MacColl, Anne Briggs, Louis Killen, Mike Waterson and Norman Kennedy - are motivation enough.

It's a long time since I heard Anne Briggs. Her recent, short foray back into the folk club scene caused quite a stir, both positive and negative. This however is the original sound of her clear, tonally beautiful voice which, incidentally, remind me very much of the singing style of Anni Fentiman. MacColl, Kennedy and Killen are stylish and authentically celtic, though their accents never get in the way of the story-line, and Al Lloyd is "Bert" - older folk followers will know what I mean! - and Waterson sounds young (has was then!) his nasal tones unmistakable.

Most of the songs are unaccompanied but, mostly on Bert Lloyd's tracks, Alf Edward on concertina, Dave

Swarbrick on fiddle and Johnny Moynihan on bouzouki give sensitive accompaniments.

There are 18 songs altogether, an increase, thanks largely to modern technology, on the original vinyl release. There are also copious notes from the "master" (Bert) taken from the original recording and for anyone who is too young to have experienced the "revival" first hand, this CD is a "catching up" exercise.

I'm sure those who had the original vinyl recording will welcome the opportunity to update!

In case anyone thinks I'm overstating the case, I'll let Bert have the last word:

"The folk Ballad is a folk tale put into verse and set to music. Among British ballads are some of the oldest as well as greatest folk songs we have." AL Lloyd

Nuff said!

Derek Gifford

BAND OF THE RISING SUN - "Setting it Right"

FSCD37/FSMC37 (CD & Cassette)

Unlike some areas of the country, the music of the North West of England did not survive in the tradition. However, there is a wealth of regional manuscripts which Jamie Knowles and other members of the band have painstakingly researched over the years. It is from these manuscripts that most of the tunes on this album are taken. Most of the rest have been penned by contemporary local musicians.

Through this CD, The Band of the Rising Sun are giving back to the North West its musical heritage.

Included are three sets of the old style hornpipes for which Lancashire was famous. Unfortunately no-one now knows what steps were originally danced to this style of music, but the tunes do make fascinating listening for anyone brought up on the usual fare of jigs, reels and polkas. Fiddle and hammer dulcimer give the band a distinctive sound, with concertina, guitar and percussion being used to create some lovely arrangements. Linda Cullen plays the only English style Bass Dulcimer in the country and this is used to good effect.

Two songs have been included. The first, Hard Times, is a dialect poem set to music by Harry Boardman. The second, Oldham White Hare, is sung by Brian Peters, and will be familiar to many of his

fans. Best known as one of the area's finest box players, with this band he shows that he is also a very able accompanist on guitar. The arrangements are well worked out and the overall result is very pleasing to the ear. Any musicians in the area should be buying this CD, getting inspired by the idea of playing the wonderful tunes in the North West repertoire, and spreading them further afield. Jamie Knowles has been beaver away publishing and playing North West tunes for many years and with this album that work has reached maturity. On a final note, the album finishes with a tune entitled 'Go George I Can't Endure You'. One wonders what course of events took place for a musician to write a tune with such a title!

Peter Bearon

SALLY BARKER "Favourite Dish"

HYCD296165

After just sixteen bars of the opening number my mind drifted back over twenty years to the unmistakable voice of Joni Mitchell and that I think is the biggest complement I can pay to a singer who held me spellbound for ten outstanding tracks. In her first number she calls for guidance from Moses, but this



Sally Barker

lady certainly sounds as if she knows exactly where she's going. Her use of an array of instruments clearly shows off her instinct to get to the very heart of a song and the saxophone on the title track commands that you sit up and take notice.

The plaintive Blue Moon, brings out the artist's vocal clarity whilst The Honeymoon is Over is as

haunting as it is beautiful.

Pedal steel guitar, double bass, keyboards and a harp certainly hold the attention, if indeed you need to be persuaded to stay until the end. Another track that hits you squarely between the eyes is Hold On, which brings bright solutions to dark dreams while you can lull your cares away with the aptly titled Sleepy Eyes.

Sally Barker is one of those rare talents whose performance compels you to listen with the promise that the next track will be just as enjoyable as the previous one. This particular dish has become a favourite of mine and one that I know I can repeat often without fear of indigestion. Just to make my listening pleasure complete it also features congas, wind chimes and percussive eggs. (poached not fried).

David Jones

The Bird in the Bush - Erotic Folk Songs

TOPIC TSCD 49

The Topic Records re-release of this 1966 classic collection of "Traditional Songs of Love and Lust" is a welcome chance to obtain those fine examples of songs which permeated the folk scene of that era. The songs are performed by Anne Briggs, Louis Killen, A L Lloyd, Frankie Armstrong and Norman Kennedy and accompanied by Dave Swarbrick on fiddle, Alf Edwards on concertina and Louis Killen on concertina. Some extra tracks are included as a bonus on the CD.

Whilst all the songs concern sexual circumstances, they are not bawdy, but mostly delicate in their candour besides being loving and joyous. These are the songs of the great clean truth of desire and fulfilment, love and fruitfulness, of fondness and honesty.

All are performed as one would expect of that era, with relaxed but absolute attention to the aural tradition, uncluttered by intrusive harmonies or musical embellishments. Many of the songs are well known and are to be heard in the traditional clubs and song sessions and what is most pleasing, by young singers some two generations since the first release of the material.

I particularly enjoyed Frankie Armstrong's rendition of the Maid on the Shore sung with unexpected humour or most likely tongue in cheek, waiting for the last verse where the maid, rather than as she says "willingly lie with all the ships crew", she sings them to sleep and runs off with their money.

Overall a joy to hear and a must for any serious song collector.

Eddie Green

24TH MARCH 1996 - SHOW OF HANDS

LIVE AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

HMCD01

If there is anyone out there who hasn't had the opportunity to see, in my opinion, two of the most talented musicians and musical arrangers on the current folk scene and beyond, then I would recommend this CD as an excellent representation of "Show of Hands" - The gig at the Royal Albert Hall was well publicised and the CD had to live up to great expectations - and it certainly does.

All but three of the tracks were written either by Steve Knightley or jointly with Phil Beer - The lyrics and the melodies are superb. The arrangements make full use not only of the musicianship of Phil and Steve and their guests, but also the impressive sound techniques of their talented "sound man" Gerard O'Farrell.

Guests on the CD were used sparingly but to good effect. They are Matt Clifford, keyboards and vocals,

Vladimir Vega, pan pipes and vocals, Bidy Blithe, flute and whistle and Nick Scott, pipes. There are 16 tracks and not a bad one among them. Titles include "Columbus", "Santiago", "The Blind Fiddler", "Day has come", "The Galway Farmer" and one of my favourites (and obviously the audience's) "The Blue Cockade".

I cannot recommend this CD highly enough. I can guarantee you'll play it as the final track suggests "Time after Time".

Available from:-

"Hands on Music", 16 Lower Farm, Halton Village, Bucks. HP22 5NS.

Tel 01296 623501

PHIL BROWN "Whistling for the Moon"

Folksound Records FSCD 34 FSMC 34

I must before I start this review, declare an interest. I am a closet fan of Phil Brown.

I have known Phil some twenty years or more, shared a stage with him a number of times, had more than a few beers with him, swapped a good few tales, and enjoyed a lot of laughs.

He is a man of many parts; by profession a teacher, a good one I am told by "them as knows", and by choice a semi-professional musician, though these roles could have been reversed had he so wished.

Phil is a master of many instruments, melodeon, anglo concertina, cornet and whistle, to name but a few. He is also an accomplished vocalist and a chatty front man.

He has played in several Brass Bands, did a five year stretch with the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, as well as appearing on the Folk Club and Festival scene with Toonerville Trolley, Loose Chip-pings, Downham & Nudger and Shake a Leg.

He usually has two or three projects on the go at any one time. "Whistling for the Moon" is his latest offering. It took six months to complete, hard work to most folks, a labour of love to Mr Brown.

Phil started playing the whistle at the age of 15 and has had a love affair with the instrument ever since.

No matter, be it a slow air, jig, reel, hornpipe or one of his own compositions, the man is a master of the whistle, he stands among the best. His playing is clean, sympathetic and not over embellished.

On this concept album Phil has called upon 15 fellow musicians, using 10 instruments to assist him. He has chosen well, they are all highly competent and subtle in their contributions, as are the sound engineers and co-producers at the four studios he used.

Of the 15 tracks my favourites are: "Down by the Sally Gardens". This is the only track with vocals, provided subliminally by John Sheils, with the multi-talented Bernard Wrigley on fretless bass, Tony Kelly on guitar and Phil on whistle and short cornet. Also

"The Lonesome Boatman", the haunting masterpiece

10th Cleckheaton Folk Festival 4th - 6th July 1997

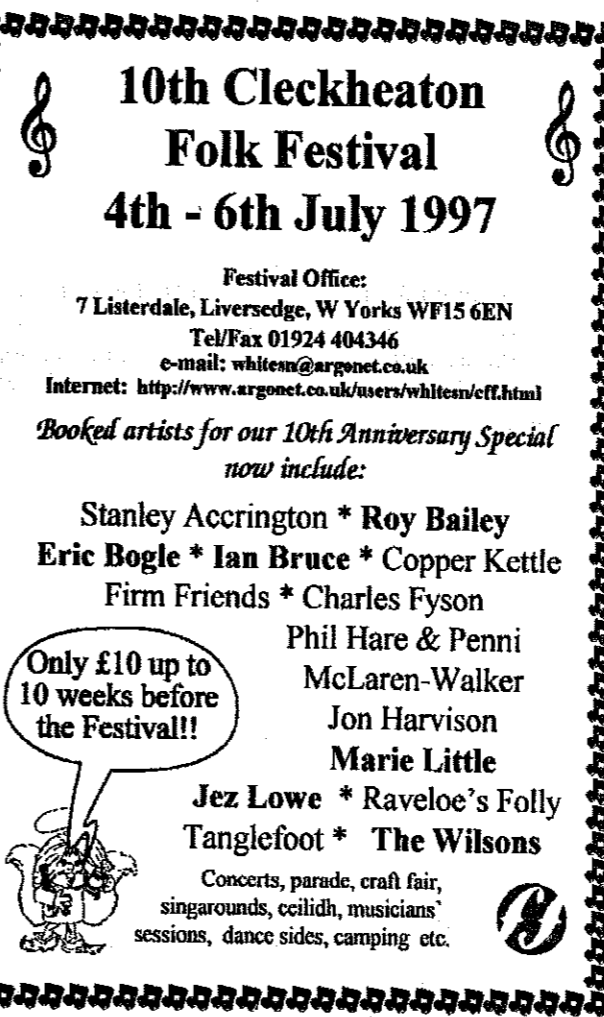
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by The Prince of Pipers Finbar Furey, this time Phil plays Long Cornet and whistle, with Steve Carter on keyboards and Neville Nudger (I don't believe that name) on Piano Accordion.

My only criticism of this fine CD is of the arrangement on "Danny Boy". I would have liked the pure simplicity of the first half of the tune to have continued to the end.

The good news is that Phil Brown is taking "Whistling for the Moon" on the road to a few festivals this summer, so watch this space for details. As they say in football circles "The local lad done good".

Brian Preston

MICHAEL McGOLDRICK "Morning Rory"

AUGHRIM RECORDS - AUGH 01 (CD)

Be honest - How many of you "Coronation Street" addicts sat and watched the Irish Session in the "Rovers" just before Christmas and realised you were witnessing an extraordinarily talented young man. Yes - Michael McGoldrick, stalwart of "Toss the Feathers" and "Flook", has the kind of talent that the rest of us can only dream about. Equally adept on Uilleann Pipes, Flute, High and Low Whistles, Drums, Guitar, Bodhran (he's also a mean Tenor Banjo player, though it's not featured on this album), this is the perfect vehicle to display his skills - not only as a musician but also as a composer and arranger.



□ Michael McGoldrick

I was looking forward so much to this - his debut album - and boy, has he come up with the goods! From the opening 2 reels - "Jenny Picking Cocksles/The Earl's Chair" - superbly played on the pipes - to the last track, this is a roller coaster of emotions and moods, full of poise and texture. Every piece of music is played with such care and obvious love of the music. The arrangements reflect this, in fact, each time I played the CD, I listened to a different aspect - the melody playing, the accompaniment and the arrangement. It's almost like three different albums in one!

The choice of material is first class - a mixture of traditional tunes, Michael's own compositions and a couple by other well known musicians - Tony (Sully) O'Sullivan and - to my delight - a glorious rendition of Andy Cutting's "The History Man"; a long time favourite of mine. My 3 favourite tunes, however,

are written by Michael - "Trip to Herve's", "Baby Rory's Slip Jig" (for his baby son, whom the album is named after) and "The Dub Reel" - a storming tune to finish with.

Mention must be made of the other musicians - The mercurial Ed Boyd (guitar), Manus Lunny (guitars, bouzouki, bodhran - he also produced and engineered), Jim Kravietski (fretless bass), Donald Shaw (keyboards), Phil Cunningham (keyboards), Alan Kelly (Accordion) and Paul Callick (guitar). The playing is tight and sympathetic, I can only surmise they were all totally "as one" for this. Most importantly though, nothing overshadows the "main act". It's Michael's album, and that shines out all the way through. No songs, just 11 glorious tracks of music that even those who are not over-enamoured with Irish and Celtic music would appreciate for it's sound and the care that went into it. I shall play it and play it on all those long motorway journeys to Manchester, queueing up for a walk on part in Corrie!

An absolute stunner - can't wait to hear what he's going to come up with next.

Tony Gibbons

THE OPEN ROAD

JUST FOR THE RECORD - JUST MC2

This is a new group to me, so it was with apathetic anticipation that I played this. But what a surprise - what an excellent and talented group. They are: Anita Toth, lead and harmony vocals, tambourine, afuche/cabasa; Peter Dunhill, lead and harmony vocals, 6 & 12 string guitar; Rick Christian, lead and harmony vocals with

perfect instrument accompaniments. There are some outstanding tracks of which "Black Water", "The Roseville Fair" and "The Sun is Burning" are without doubt the best arrangements I have heard of these songs. If I have any criticism to make, it would be that the whole cassette seems to be a tad short with only 10 tracks: I found myself waiting for more. This is well worth buying and if this group are as good live as they are in the studio they will be good to watch and for clubs to book.

Available from:- The Open Road, 45 Leighton Ave, Leigh On Sea, Essex, SS9 1QB

Ginny Feeney

DAVE WHETSTONE & others - "The Resolution"

MKRC410

It was a real pleasure to receive this CD through the post. After many years playing in the Cock and Bull band, Dave Whetstone stepped out of the limelight. A great shame, as he has written some of the best dance tunes in the world and is an excellent melodeon and anglo-concertina player. Well, after several years of playing guitar in various bands, at last he's back with his boxes on this CD which showcases a fine and varied selection of his own tunes. He must have been storing them up. There are 15 tracks and he plays either melodeon or concertina on all of them. He is ably backed by some top line instrumentalists; Maartin Allcock, Simon Nicol (both of Fairport Convention) Dave Lockwood (brother of Pete of Cock & Bull fame), and Pete Zorn (regular sideman to Richard Thompson amongst others). I was slightly worried on the opening track that the other instruments would overpower Dave Whetstone's delicate playing, but I needn't have worried. On all the other tracks the arrangements compliment the tunes and the playing beautifully.

I could listen to his playing all night. He puts little twists into the tunes where you don't expect them, and there are not many who can handle runs on a push-pull box so evenly. All in all an absolute must for anyone interested in English style box playing and superb new tunes.

Peter Bearon

RICK CHRISTIAN "These Things Happen"

JUST FOR THE RECORD - JUST CD3/ JUST MC3

Since Rick's last album was released in 1990, he has been very active on the folk circuit so this new album is long overdue.

There are 13 tracks of the most enjoyable songs. The backing vocals are excellent and all the additional instrumentation arrangements are sensitive and moving. All the songs except "Main Street" were written by Rick and there are additional lyrics by Peter Dunhill on "Looking for Gold".

It is very hard to single out any of the tracks as they all have special merit, but if I have to mention any in

particular, they would have to be "You and Me Again", "The Shirt off my Back" and "Main Street".

This CD is one of those which you can listen to time and time again without pressing the skip button. Congratulations Rick and don't leave it so long next time.

Available from: Just for the Record, 18 Coopers Ave, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex, CM9 4YY

Martin Whittell

PAUL EGGLESTONE & AIR FAMILY - "Please"

Available from Andys Records - Preston



□ Dave Whetstone

All the songs on this concept CD are written and sung by Paul Egglestone of Preston, who is backed by Air Family, group of ten musicians who describe themselves as "a community of shared musical interest". Due to the band members being scattered across the country, rehearsals were eased by using the internet and information technology.

All a bit remote one would think, but the resulting CD recorded at the University of Central Lancashire's media tech-

nology centre is far from remote! Paul's lyrics are strong, in the tradition

of Cohen, Thompson and Costello and the music draws on Celtic and contemporary influences. The musicians are Ian Aspin on Hammond C3, Richard Curren violin and mandolin, Andy Dickson electric bass and penny whistle, Keith Harrison drums, Fran Leighton and Tim Parkinson backing vocals, Rob Rainford double bass, Paul Smith piano and Tom Walsh, Uilleann Pipes. An impressive band and entirely impressive music, from the solo guitar on "Upwards and On", the gentle "Tonight", the drum and pipe opening of "Pothmoor" and the electric sound of "Cry".

I particularly liked "Love at Speed" with the full vocal harmonies and "Angel" with an attractive refrain.

All in all 13 tracks of some of the best self penned songs and tunes I've heard in a long time, and musical arrangements which are open, inventive and extremely attractive. One would also go a long way to find a recording of this quality.

Highly recommended.

Eddie Green

TANGLEFOOT - "Edge of the Land"

Tanglefoot are a 4 piece band who sing, play flutes, guitar, cello and bodhran. There are twelve tracks all of which are written by the band apart from the traditional "She Moves Through the Fair". Most of the self penned tracks are written by Rupe. The CD has a smart booklet that contains all the lyrics. The band are Rupam Barthakar, Alan Harvey, Chris Gibbs and Bobby Haggan but unfortunately the CD has no identification number or company. Most of the songs are in a rock style with an acoustic backing.

It's difficult to describe the bands style; it's sort of a cross between early Strawbs with snatches of Jethro Tull (there are some typical Ian Anderson flute parts) Sadly, I'm not sure if this style really works. With so few instruments on each track, it's a very bare, empty sound. To compound this, the guitar seems a long way back in the mix, making the whole sound lack bass-end. If you are going for this bare, honest sound the vocals have to be really strong. Some of the harmonies are a little "unusual". I'm sure some of the songs would sound a lot better with more backing to fill them out.

The band need to think a lot about their backing and maybe listen to artists with a similar style to see how they make it work, for example The Indigo Girls or Kieran Halpin.

Ken Howard

HELEN AKITT WITH MIKE RUFF "Smoke in the Valley"

NELSCD01

The North East of England has provided folk music with some of its most accomplished and best loved artists. But every singer needs role models to help them evolve their own style. Take a helping of the Corries, a pinch of the Clancys together with a portion of both Mary O'Hara and Alex Glasgow and you have the sound that will surely send Newcastle's Helen Akitt's reputation soaring.

After more than twenty years singing through a whole range of songs (both her parents participated in the folk revival of the 50s and 60s) this, surprisingly, is her first recording.

Her North East roots are there for all to hear in no less than four mining songs, Pit Brow Lassies from the pen of Jimmy Jones from Tyldesley (Nr Manchester) to the memory of the Diglake Colliery disaster in Staffordshire whilst Helen gives a super rendition of the ubiquitous Jean Ritchie's West Virginia Mining Song. Finally the loss of life through mining is echoed in the strains of the Gippstand Schoolhouse ballad from South Australia.

Without doubt, for me, Dominic Behan's powerfully written Patriot Game is one of the outstanding highlights. But the influence on Helen's career has also been fashioned by some of the most respected writers of recent times. This is shown in the

Fisherman's Song from Andy M. Stewart of Silly Wizard and I Still Wait from Steve Knightly of Show of Hands.

Stolen Child is a poem by W.B. Yeats set to a Canadian tune and tells of a child stolen by the fairies, whilst Young Waters is a Child ballad from the 18th century.

Helen's love of Irish songs comes through in Boulavogue and in McGuinness of the County Tyrone an Irish traditional song about adultery (did such things go on in Ireland all those years ago ???)

There are also self penned songs in Lady, an anti-war song, the title inspired by Mrs Thatcher, with Helen's 1995 visit to China sparking the title track, Smoke in the Valley and What Have They Now, written in the aftermath of an earthquake centred on the town of Lijiang.

My only criticism was the choice of the Irish style version of the much sung ballad of Barbara Allen.

Altogether this is a very varied album to listen to and certainly keeps the attention focused as it runs the whole gamut of emotions, which is helped enormously by the musicianship and harmonies of Mike Ruff.

David Jones

SULLIVAN - "Celtic Credentials"

Halshaw Music HM601

The tenor banjo over the years has drifted from its roots in Dixieland jazz to being now regarded as the prime Irish Folk instrument alongside the Irish Pipes and the bodhran. Tony Sullivan (Sully) started playing the Irish Style tenor banjo at the age of 15 in 1965. By 1976 he had won the All Ireland and All England banjo championships. He toured USA in 1980/81, opened Halshaw music in 1983, has published numerous banjo tutors and tune books and began making his own instruments in 1989.

That's the background to the name "Sully", now lets consider the CD, 14 tracks of banjo tunes. Apart from 3 tracks of traditional tunes, including Peter Street/Jenny's Chicks and Frahers Jig all the rest are composed by Sully and what a variety. From being firmly in the Irish Tradition but with a unique syncopated bounce, to the ethereal Banjosphere and modern jazz pieces such as Rhyming Twang Reel, Dixieland pieces such as Mersey River, there is an absolute feast of variety. Played with attack and freedom, great tunes and great arrangements, being backed on the CD by John Chandler, guitar, Quince, guitar on The Star of Munster, Suzie Sullivan on Bodhran and Sully playing whistle, tambourine, bodhran and vocals on two tracks. Overall well produced, with a full dynamic range of sounds, my only comment is that the "Rap" introduction to Rhyming Twang does not fit in with the rest of the CD, but overall a must for all tenor banjo fans.

Eddie Green



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EDDIE MURPHY AND JOHN MORRIS - "Consonance"

REALISATIONS RECORDING

No folk gathering of any sort in the Midlands is complete without Eddie and John - their powerful and distinctive voices have graced hundreds of song sessions over the years and, hopefully, will grace many more to come. This, their second collection gives us all a chance to sing along in the privacy of our cars or living rooms with two "grand chaps" (as Giff might say!).

The songs have been recorded for their singability, true of all the songs that this duo perform, but this doesn't mean that the songs are hackneyed, by no means! Some of the songs will be a revelation; for instance "Through the Groves" a variant of the Yorkshire standard "Pratty Flowers" - Eddie got this song from a harmony workshop with Bread and Roses, and another surprise John's "Silver Wheat" which is a working of the Welsh song "Watching the Wheat".

The shanties are here of course - two good halyard shanties, "Across the Western Ocean" and "Essequibo River" along with "Bully in the Alley", "Shenanadoah" and "Across the Plains of Mexico".

There are 14 songs on this tape all splendidly sung with diction that allows you to hear the words - well done lads! If you want a tape to sing along to this is for you.

Don't forget Eddie and John will be appearing at Lowton at the Four Fools Folk Festival - see advert!
Pete Gleave

CHRISTY O'LEARY "The Northern Bridge"

OBMCD09

Take one man, add his own inimitable brand of music and you have a sound that would soothe the most savage breast.

But not just any man, this is Christy O'Leary of De Dannan and Boys of the Lough fame and it's certainly not just any music, but a blend of Irish, Scottish and Scandinavian sounds that represent the three countries where this talented musician divides his time.

Christy's playing of the Uilleann pipes is legendary and you can almost see the bride tripping down the aisle, with his rendition of the Norwegian Wedding March. His older brother, Tim, joins him for a fiddle duet on O'Keefe's /I'd rather be married than be left alone /Bill the Weaver.

But don't get the impression that "The Northern Bridge" is just about instrumentals, for Christy has a fine voice which he shows off to good effect on Delia

Murphy's "The Trip Over the Mountain whilst The Banks of Sullane is given the slow ballad treatment. Add to that the unaccompanied strains of the Paddy Tunny classic Moorlough Mary and you have the full captivating range of this very talented performer.

Summer Waltz and Bellmans Polska again provide a vehicle for the beautiful sound of the Uilleann pipes and leave your ears begging for more.

I suppose if you were born in Ireland and now divided your time between Scotland and Sweden (Christy's wife Lisa originates from Scandinavia) your musical tastes are bound to be somewhat Celtic and this offering is everything you would expect and more from a musician with such a pedigree.

I can't believe this is Christy's first solo album but on this evidence surely the first of many.

David Jones

WILL DUKE & DAN QUINN "Wild Boys"

HEBECD001

Don't get me wrong I've nothing against the concertina or melodeon, but put them together for fourteen tracks and it starts to take on quite a monotonous feel. In fact at one point I found myself caught somewhere between the sound of the Yetties and Mike Harding !!!!

The county of Sussex has provided the inspiration for a number of tracks and two in particular from the late great Scan Tester set the tone for this offering. Monkey Hornpipe / Stepdance transport you back in time to a night in the pub in the 1950s while The Lakes of Coalflin also brings back memories of the past.

Another of the county's families, the Welch's from Bosham give an intimate insight into southern life and how it affected the community with Stone Steps Hornpipe / Mikey Callaghan's and The New Moon / French Dance.

Gloucestershire is represented with Wiggy Smith's sensitive Hares of the Old Planation whilst Steve Gardham's "An East Riding Songster" gives us The Maiden's Prayer.

Mary on the Wild Moor provides for me one of the few highlights of this album with a particularly perceptive feel. Whilst another Irish influence is that of Mary Delany's, Green Grow the Laurels.

Don't misunderstand me it is a well produced tour through some of this country's delightful counties and the choice of tunes and songs is spot-on for the undoubted talents of these two young musicians. I just felt that I ran short of staying power as track after track started to take its toll on my ears.

David Jones

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