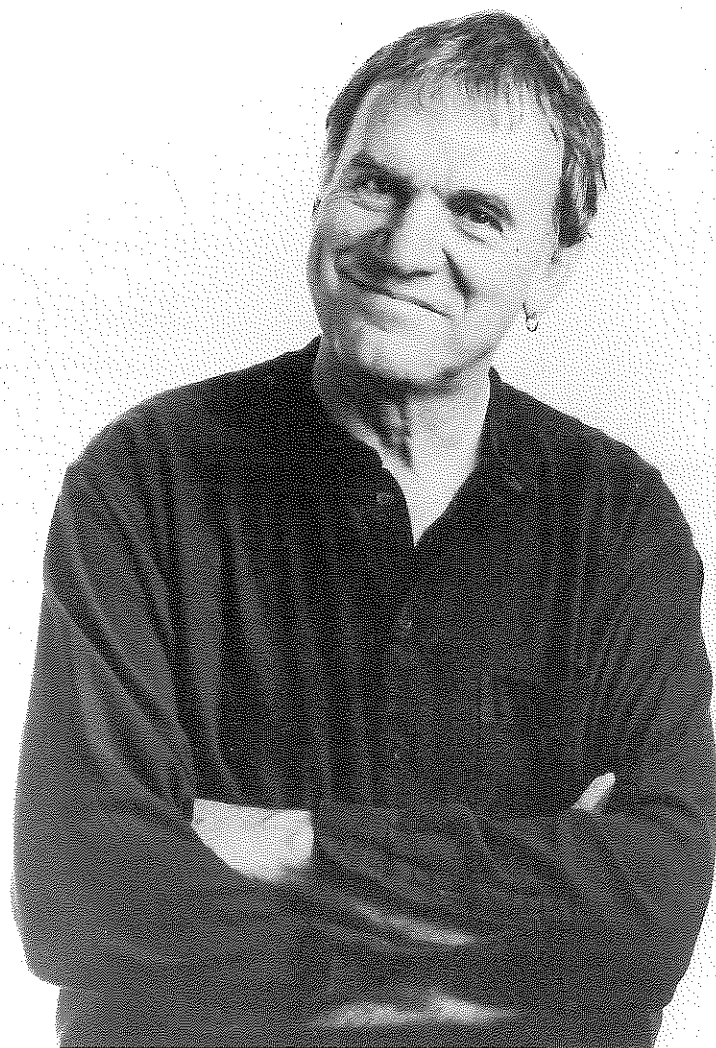


FOLK *North West*

SPRING 2002 (MARCH, APRIL & MAY) £1.50

Ralph McTell



IN THIS ISSUE

LOCAL RADIO LISTINGS LIVE, CD & FESTIVAL REVIEWS
LETTERS ARTICLES CLUB DATES DIARY CHAT

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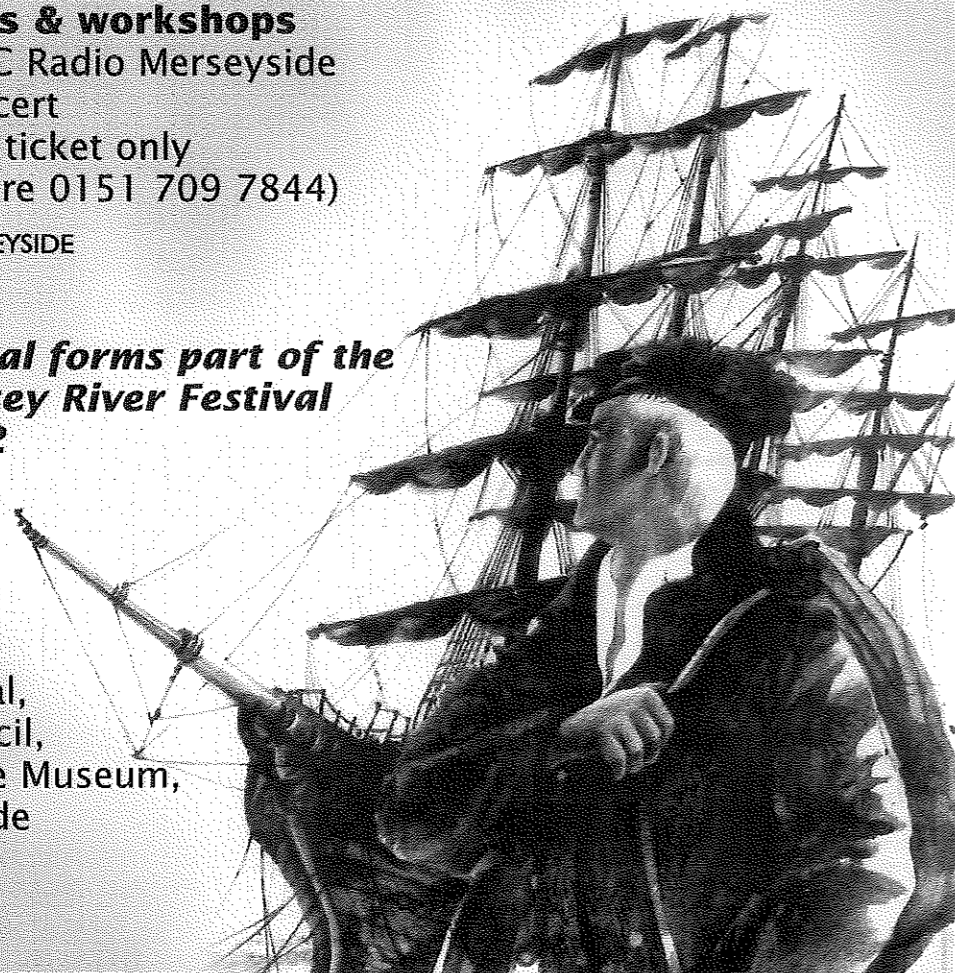
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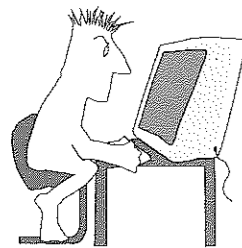
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Spring 2002

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EDITORIAL

Ken Bladen
36, The Oaks, Eaves Green
Chorley, Lancs, PR 7 3QU
Tel. No. 01257 263 678
e.mail: four.fools@virgin.net

The AGM of the North West Federation of Folk Clubs was held on Sunday 18th November at The Old Dog, Alma Hill, Upholland. As usual the attendance was poor. Sadly Chris McIlveen, whose contribution to the magazine as Diary Dates Co-ordinator has been invaluable and much appreciated by yours truly and the rest of the committee has had to tender his resignation due to a combination of work and domestic circumstances. John Owen was elected as Diary Dates Co-ordinator with Bob Anderton as his assistant (a measure of how much work is involved, have a well earned rest Chris). Mark Dowding was commended on an excellent job as Federation Webmaster, a position which we aim to make official by updating the constitution.

We have received funds from The now disbanded Liverpool Folk and Arts Group with the stipulation that it be used to promote folk music involvement by young people. Watch this space for forthcoming details.

Make a special effort to go to 'The Century's People' (see advert on Page 17). This show presents the stories of Fleetwood, Blackpool, and Fylde people over the last one hundred years told in words, music and songs. Alan Bell and his team, sponsored by the Local heritage Institute, have put together what promises to be an evening and an event to remember.

Talking of which, the next issue of the magazine is **Vol 25 Issue 1** which of course means that we will be celebrating our **Silver Anniversary** in the Year of the Golden Jubilee. We have a number of special articles lined up for this special issue together with a front cover in colour. We would very much like to hear from you about your memories of Folk North West and the past 25 years of Folk Music in the North West. So you've got until April 10th to find a pen, dig out all your old diaries and carefully archived copies of Folk North West and send off your article/joke/comment/photograph/special memories. We feel sure that you will want to make a special effort to contribute to this important milestone in the history of the magazine and folk music in the North West. So don't delay start writing today.

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THE AIMS OF THE FEDERATION SHALL BE

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- 2] The general support of the Member Clubs
- 3] Joint organisation of Concerts & Ceilidhs in the area
- 4] The support of Festival Organisers in the area
- 5] The organisation of events to attract the 'under 18s'

Folk North West Contact Information



Who do I send information to ?

Club Dates, information on forthcoming events,
changes of venue or organiser to

John Owen
2 Redford Close
Greasby
Wirral
CH49 2QQ
Tel 0151 678 9902
e mail: JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com

Articles for possible inclusion, letters, complaints,
suggestions for improvement to the magazines, ideas
for inclusion, compliments (if any) and if in doubt to

Ken Bladen
36, The Oaks
Eaves Green
Chorley
Lancs
PR7 3QU
Tel. No. 01257 263 678
e.mail: four.fools@virgin.net

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Hindley
Wigan
Lancs
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Tel. No. 01942 258 459
e.mail: kath.holden@btinternet.com

CDs or tapes for review to

David Jones
4, Kingfisher Close
Swallowfields
Pleckgat
Blackburn
Lancs
BB1 8NS
Tel. No. 01254 54877

Please note that the copy date for the
next issue is April 10th 2002.

We would be very grateful to receive your comments,
suggestions, criticisms, items for inclusion, letters,
corrections, omissions and any other information you
believe that we should know about. Please send
information to the above or if in doubt to the editor,
(who is also usually in doubt so you'll be amongst
friends rather than fiends).

You can also e-mail us via our editor on
four.fools@virgin.net

CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS



I thought I'd take this opportunity to thank the clubs who are part of the Federation for their continued support in supplying the information contained within these pages and helping to distribute the magazine. But as you've probably guessed by now, I'm also a little concerned that a small minority of the member clubs are letting the rest down with their lack of awareness when it comes to paying their diary date subscriptions and magazine sales monies, as well as those for adverts purchased, on time and on a regular basis.

As an organisation we have to and indeed do meet our considerable printing costs on time each quarter, a juggling act which our treasurer, Kath Holden, continues to manage with great panache. The difficult part in all this is having to constantly chase up that small band of offenders, who, for one reason or another think that tomorrow will do when it comes to settling their outstanding amounts.

Sadly, we have had to drop one or two of our member clubs out of the magazine listings in this issue for that very reason. It disappoints and saddens all the Federation officers for this to happen, but after much cajoling it seems to be the only way to bring the matter into sharp focus. If by reading this missive you feel sufficiently chided and want your club to re-appear in these pages, the solution is to ring Kath on 01942 258459 and sort the matter out. Kath doesn't bite and won't make you feel guilty and at least your club won't then suffer through lack of publicity.

Cheers for now

David Jones



FEDERATION OFFICERS

Chairman & Review	David Jones, 4 Kingfisher Close,
Co-ordinator	Swallowfields, Pleckgate, Blackburn. BB1 8NS Tel 01254 54877
Treasurer	Kath Holden, 7 Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs WN2 2RE Tel 01942 258 459
Editor	Ken Bladen, 36 The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley, Lancs PR7 3QU. Tel 01257 263 678
Deputy Editor	Lewis Jones, 28 Haywood Crescent Waters Edge, Norton, Runcorn Cheshire, WA7 6NB Tel 01928 716 389
Advertising	Paul Holden, 7 Sunleigh Road, Hindley, Wigan, Lancs WN2 2RE Tel 01942 258 459
Membership Sec - contact Treasurer (see above)	
Federation Sec	John Owen, 2 Redford Close, Greasby Wirral, CH49 2QQ Tel 0151 678 9902 e mail: JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com
Youth Activities	Jenni Hyde, 13 Alresford Road, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1WU Tel 0161 654 6197
Club Dates	John Owen, 2 Redford Close, Greasby Wirral, CH49 2QQ Tel 0151 678 9902 e mail: JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com

FOLK MUSIC PROGRAMMES ON LOCAL RADIO

compiled by Rob Dunford



SUNDAY

BBC Radio Merseyside FM 95.8 MW 1485
FOLKSCENE presented by STAN AMBROSE & GEOFF SPEED Sunday 7.00-8.00pm
E MAIL:- radio.merseyside@bbc.co.uk

MANX Radio FM 89/97.2/103.7 MW 1368kHz
MANX FOLK presented by JOHN KANEEN
Sunday 5.30-6.30pm
E MAIL:- johnkaneen@manxradio.com

BBC Radio Shropshire FM 96.0 MW 1584
GENEVIEVE TUDOR'S FOLK SHOW Sunday 8.00-10.00pm
E MAIL:- genevieve.tudor@bbc.co.uk
also on BBC Radio Stoke FM 94.6/104.1 MW 1503kHz and
BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester FM 94.7/104/104.6 MW 738

BBC Radio Cumbria FM 95.6 (north/west), 95.2 (Kendal), 96.1 (south), 104.1 (Whitehaven), 104.2 (Windermere), MW 756 (north), 837 (south), 1458 (west)
NORTHERN FOLK presented by ALISTAIR ANDERSON
Sunday 9.00-10.00pm
E MAIL:- radio.cumbria@bbc.co.uk or direct to
alistair.anderson@folkworks.co.uk

MONDAY

BBC GMR 95.1 (104.6 Saddleworth)
THE PARLOUR presented by ALAN KEEGAN
Monday 7.00-9.00pm E MAIL: gmr@bbc.co.uk

BBC Radio Derby FM 95.3/104.5 MW 1116
FOLKWAVES presented by MICK PEAT & LESTER SIMPSON
Monday 7.00-9.00pm E MAIL:- radio.derby@bbc.co.uk

Radio Maldwyn MW 756
THE FOLK PROGRAMME presented by YVONNE & JOHN HART
Monday 8.00-10.00pm
E MAIL:- radio.maldwyn@ukonline.co.uk

WEDNESDAY

BBC Radio 2 FM 88-90.2
FOLK, ROOTS & ACOUSTIC MUSIC presented by MIKE HARDING
Wednesday 8.00-9.00pm
E Mail:- see www.bbc.co.uk/talk

THURSDAY

BBC Radio Lancashire FM 95.5/103.9/104.5 MW 855/1557
LANCASHIRE DRIFT presented by NICK DOW
Thursday 8.00-9.00pm
E MAIL:- radio.lancashire@bbc.co.uk

BBC Radio Shropshire FM 96.0 MW 1584
FRETWORK presented by NONNY JAMES
Thursday 7.00-8.00pm
E MAIL:- nonny.james@bbc.co.uk
also on BBC Radio Stoke FM 94.6/104.1 MW 1503kHz and
BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester FM 94.7/104/104.6 MW 738

BBC Radio Leeds FM 92.4 MW 774
REAL MUSIC SHOW presented by HENRY AYRTON
Thursday 7.00-10.00pm (Mainly Folk 9.00 -10.00pm)
E MAIL:- henry.ayrton@bbc.co.uk

SATURDAY

BBC Radio Wales FM 94.8 (N.Wales Coast) 95.4 (Wrexham) MW 882, 657 (Clwyd)
CELTIC HEARTBEAT presented by FRANK HENNESSY
Saturday 10.00pm-12.00am
E MAIL: frank.hennessy@bbc.co.uk

FOLK MUSIC PROGRAMMES ON INTERNATIONAL RADIO

compiled by Rob Dunford



BBC RADIO SCOTLAND FM 92.4-94.7 MW 810

Monday to Friday 2.00-4.00pm
IAIN ANDERSON'S FINE TUNES
Tuesday 7.00-9.00pm
CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
Thursday 7.00-9.00pm
TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
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TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
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TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
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PIPELINE presented by IAN MACINNES
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TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD

BBC RADIO ULSTER FM 92.4-95.4 MW 873/1341

Friday 7.00-7.30pm
TRADITIONAL MUSIC presented by KAREN NA HAOINE
E MAIL:- karen.nahaoine@bbc.co.uk
Saturday 10.05pm-12.00am
FOLK CLUB presented by TONY McAULEY and COLM SANDS
E MAIL:- tony.mcauley@bbc.co.uk
colum.sands@bbc.co.uk

RADIO TELIFIS EIRANN (RTE) Radio 1 MW 567 and via ASTRA SATELLITE

Friday 10.00-11.00pm
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DOWNTOWN RADIO MW 1026

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FOLKALPOINT presented by MAURICE LEYDEN

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RADIO TIMES LISTINGS

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LIVE REVIEWS



ARTISAN at The Wooden Horse FC, 14 October 2001.

Understandably, Artisan's reputation travels ahead of them, so this evening at The Wooden Horse had been looked forward to for some weeks by an audience with an appreciation of good music and an appetite for singing.

The evening began with a set from club residents and festival favourites Loctup Together. The 'Sound of Singing' was an appropriate opener for this club, so Ian and Chris were not short of company when it came to the chorus. Ian Tupling has written some excellent songs; but none better than the one in which they finished the set. 'Death of a King' is about the demise of the steel industry in his home town in Yorkshire, seen through the eyes of his father who was a foundry man. A strong opening set with an element of 'follow that' in it. Well when you are supporting someone of Artisan's calibre it would tend to put you on your mettle.

'Dancing with words' was Artisan's first song, and this provided a perfect motif for their performance. Brian Bedford certainly dances with words; leastways he choreographs with words, and Jacey and Hilary - and himself of course - perform the dance.

Dancing in the literal, and the Brian Bedford, sense sometimes requires a pause for breath, which is something, according to Hilary and Jacey, Brian does not 'do'. This was well illustrated in the songs 'Mabel', and 'Up the ladder and down the snake'. I love the image of 'Up the ladder' to express the futility of the rat race. Brian's songs on this theme are so good and ring so true because they have about them the stamp of having been there and done that. I believe writers are at their best when they write about what they know.

Mind you, Artisan's songs are not just on one subject, they cover the whole spectrum of human experience. 'You saw another me' (I think that is the title) is absolutely superb, and reveals a telling insight into human behaviour, both in the writing, and in the sensitive and moving performance of it.

The wry humour of 'Anywhere but my back yard' finds its target with those of us who will admit that we won't be bothered by anything which inconveniences us, no matter how well intentioned it is.

A complete change of mood brought 'Haven of rest'. I understand that this song was written at Broadstairs when Brian was commissioned to write a song cycle for the festival. It is a lovely song that conveys the peace and tranquillity of the southern English countryside and coast.

As well as the fine songs and superb singing, which we tend to take for granted, you get even more from Artisan. They don't just 'perform' they share the evening with you. They enjoy what they do, and they believe in what they are doing, so consequently their relationship to their audience is exceptional. Well that's the way it was on this night at The Wooden Horse. You do feel that you are with friends when they discuss with you the delights of dripping sandwiches they had at Otley festival the previous week!

I liked the way that Artisan sat in the audience and listened

courteously and attentively as club residents Loctup Together did their support. Not all observe that courtesy you know! Loctup did particularly well opening the second half and included in their set Ann Lister's 'Teach me how to stand still'; and finished with Ian Tupling's own composition, 'Come the days', which is getting to be a popular 'singer inner'.

The second half of the evening flew by with Artisan in great form. We were treated to old favourites like 'Wings' and the very poignant 'Breathing space'. Their singing was superb; harmonies, pacing, phrasing, and diction were perfect, but then it always is. They finished off their program with 'I ain't going down'.

It was a most enjoyable night at The Wooden Horse with an almost full house who responded to the warmth of the guests by singing along, creating a rapport that carried the whole occasion along splendidly. Thank you Artisan for sharing your music with us, you are welcome at The Wooden Horse anytime.

Norman Wilson

KATE HOWDEN, PAUL JONES and TONY TAFFINDER at The Travellers Rest, St Helens, 15 October 2001.

I had seen Kate and Paul on previous occasions at Maghull and The Wooden Horse folk clubs and liked what I had seen and heard. As you can't have too much of a good thing, I decided to go and catch their gig at the Travs. I was not disappointed as I spent a pleasant evening in excellent company listening to good music.

It's a great pity that there were not more people there when Peter Cheetham had gone to the trouble of booking two talented artistes, who are fairly new to the folk scene. I say two, but since I last saw them, they have added a third member, in the form of multi-instrumentalist Tony Taffinder, who plays six-string and bass guitars, and bouzouki.

Kate and Paul's songs are all written by themselves, and in addition to the male/female perspectives that are present on their work; the songs cover a wide variety of subjects and themes. Some songs are responses to personal experience, such as Kate's 'Silver Waters'. This is a song about Morecambe Bay, which is close to where they live in Lancaster. I like the atmosphere of a wide-open natural space that this song creates. Another piece in this vein is a tune of Paul's, which he has called 'Clitheroe', a response to frequent trips through the Trough of Bowland - some lovely nifty guitar work on this one.

As well as being songwriters of quality, they also perform their own work extremely well. There is a close musical bond between them and they take turns at singing the melody/harmony effortlessly. Sometimes there is a sameness about songs from two performers on two guitars, but this is not the case here. Their individual styles contrast well and there are a wide variety of rhythms, so no two songs sound anywhere the same. I liked all their material, but some of the songs took my fancy more than others. 'Mistletoe', with which they opened their first set, is about a character of a parasitic nature - clever lyrics, with Kate singing melody and Paul on harmony. The one they call the 'M62' song is compelling; a dark song of drug abused alienated young people. I just love the line 'you don't see the trap, all you see is the cheese'. Song lines don't come much better than that. I also like 'Ne'er do wells' and 'Pretty fair maid'.

With the exception of when the bouzouki was used, and slightly altered texture of the accompaniment, I really don't see that Paul and Kate's music has anything to gain from the addition of a third member to the group. Their own guitar work is more than adequate and in my opinion, the bass guitar adds nothing. It

may well detract from the delicacy of some of their work. Anyway, that's my opinion for what its worth.

Well, as you can tell, I enjoy the music of Kate Howden and Paul Jones, and if you like well structured tunes, thoughtful and perceptive lyrics, along with unfussy and unpretentious presentation, then I am sure you may well enjoy them too. Many of the songs I have mentioned are on their album 'Silver Waters', which has had favourable reviews. I have a copy myself and can recommend it. May they prosper!

Norman Wilson

RALPH McTELL - Live at Accrington Town Hall - Friday 19th October 2001.

For those of us, 'of a certain age', Ralph McTell represents the embodiment of British folk music. During a career that has so far spanned thirty seven years - and is still going strong - his songs and music have been responsible for many a burgeoning career on the folk scene and beyond. In excess of two hundred and fifty people turned up for a concert that promised much and exceeded those expectations. He elected to do one two hour set and during that time brought out many emotions, both in himself and the audience.

'Up', was the title of the opening song, which Ralph sang for, as he put it, 'someone he loves very much'. Dylan Thomas, the Welsh bard, was the subject of a project in which he created an identity for himself as an American sailor, when meeting a particular girl for the first time- the title, 'Summer Girls'. Ralph remembered with fondness a gig he once did back in 1964 at the Accrington Stanley supporters club, with a bluegrass band called the Hickory Nuts!!

When Ralph was between sixteen and seventeen years old, he went through dozens of jobs. 'Barges', reminds him of a workmate called Reg and the rhythm of those days. 'Slipshod Taproom Dance', followed, before giving way to, 'The Ferryman', a song inspired by the 1971 book, 'Sidd Harta', by Herman Hesse

Moving on to his latest album, 'Red Sky', Ralph played 'Now This Has Started'. He admitted he learned guitar listening to records, he doesn't really know chords, but knows what sounds right. He's also written a book called, 'Angel Laughter', looking back over his early memories when he was totally in love.

Ralph is a complete guitar nut; he plays a Yamaha on stage, but loves Gibson's. He recently moved house and found twenty-four guitars. Amongst them was his much prized 1937 National O model metal guitar which has a new neck and he played some amazing blues riffs on 'Truckin' Little Baby' by Blind Roy Fuller. Another Fuller composition followed with, 'Weepin' Willow', first heard by Ralph from the playing of Wizz Jones, it's a number far more cultured than the normal twelve bar blues. One of the greatest blues guitarists of all time, Blind Arthur Blake, popularised 'In the Jailhouse Now' by Jimmy Rogers, featured in the film, 'O Brother, Where Art Thou'.

Next, from Ralph's book came, 'Old Puggy Means', a skipping rhyme about an old coal merchant. The audience were lapping it up; with such diversity you couldn't fail to admire man and guitar. John Steinbeck once said, 'to play a guitar is a noble thing', a sentiment that led into 'Easter Lilies', the name used for daffodils in Norway. Next was 'Lost Boys', a song thinking about the follies of youth, drinking too much, driving too fast etc. again from the, 'Red Sky', album.

His anthem to the homeless of the capital, 'Streets of London', is no less potent today than when it was first written and continues

to bring a lump to the throat of all those who truly believe, 'there but for the grace of God, go I'. With the evening drawing to a close, the penultimate song, 'Michael in the Garden', came from the 1970 album, 'My Side Of Your Window'; Michael had a special mind for a very special boy.

Ralph had a Romany great grandmother. The Romany's originally came from India and are credited with bringing Flamenco to Spain. 'Gypsy', a song from '1973 re-visited', rung down the curtain on an unforgettable night of songs and stories. Back again to the, 'My Side Of Your Window', album for a song Ralph by his own admission had neglected for many years, 'The Clown', providing a most fitting of encores. Ralph McTell may now be fifty-six years old, but age has by no means dimmed his voice, musicianship, or charisma. He remains very much a man and artist of his time.

David Jones

ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE - Launch of the 'An Acquaintance of Mine' album at St Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Standish, 20 October 2001.

When I saw the preview of Anthony John Clarke's 'An Acquaintance of Mine' in Folk North West, I thought pity the person who writes the review as it's all been said. Oh dear, here I am! So, what better way to get out of this tricky spot than by telling you about the album launch itself and make some surreptitious mention of the album as we go along.

Well, things have moved along some since the last album was launched. Anthony has moved from club venues to the bigger stages of festivals and the like. Personally gathered evidence at Brampton and Fylde Festivals tells me that he's conquered the big stage whilst maintaining old friends in the clubs. So, the interesting points for the career observer is to see how 'An Acquaintance of Mine' shows changes to his writing and recorded works....but more of that later.

The last album launch found the 'Tuesday Night Is Always Karaoke' roadshow hitting the Frog and Bucket in Manchester. This time the venue was The Parish Centre of St Wilfrid's in Standish. Possibly, a place where Anthony John's penchant for nuns in the lyrics could come unstuck! Felicity Dawn and Steve Fletcher, taking us through a selection of standards from a variety of musical territories, opened the evening. 'She Moved Through The Fair', Eric Clapton's 'Tears In Heaven', 'Drifting Blues', because Steve said that he 'doesn't know any folk', Nanci Griffith's 'Love At The Five & Dime' and Eva Cassidy's reading of 'Over The Rainbow'. A fair mixture that would have tickled the audience's fancy at some point if not all the time. Mind you, it would be churlish of me to criticise the content of their set as the evening was intended to be a showcase for Anthony John. So, sensible enough of them to select a set of 'hit' tunes. Indeed, these allowed Felicity to show off her sweet voice and get our ears tuned in for the main act to come.

As usual, from the moment Anthony John hit the stage, he was oozing Irish charm with a tongue in cheek flavour. He asked if anyone amongst the collection of family, friends, and fans had not seen him before. Congratulations to Barry who was brave enough to own up to this and wave a red (should that be green?) rag to the Irish bull. Anthony John immediately advised him that he'd be checking through the evening that he was 'bonding' properly with Barry. Poor chap!

We were advised that the evening would not be a tedious 'this is my new album tracks 1, 2, etc' but a mix of old and new. So, 'The Marching Season' and 'Seven In Ireland' were despatched with an assured manner early in the set. Then, the first song

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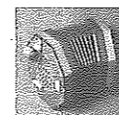
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from the new album arrived with a harmony provided by Elizabeth Van De Waal who had done the same job to good effect on the studio recording. Anthony John told us that this partnership was being tested as a semi-permanent fixture for live performance. It worked well for 'Smooth Old Talk', which considers the various reasons why the audience might be in attendance. Was it on purpose or were you just taking the dog out for a walk? Elizabeth also contributed keyboards to the next song, 'The Only Life Gloria Knows', his look at sleeping on the streets.

I have to say that if Anthony John is considering a partner to take the songs to another level on stage, it probably needs more than harmony vocals and keyboards which sit too far in the background to make an audience sit up and listen. That's not meant to be rude to Elizabeth but an observation of how the songs are arranged. Her contribution was of a good standard throughout the set with more harmonies for new songs, 'That's Alcohol For Ya!', a tale of the downside of alcohol, and 'That's Life', about being told to 'chill out', as my daughters would say. With the latter, Anthony John wanted us to note the harmony key change or there'd be no beef sandwiches at the break. A bead of sweat broke out on the forehead of our host, Dave Jones. While Dave worried, we were treated to 'The Wrong Way Around', which is Anthony's tale of the return of Jesus to modern day Belfast. It's a rich picture to paint and a song that is likely to attract plenty of attention. 'Old Lovers' closed the set, giving the audience a chance to show their finger clicking skills whilst Anthony John slipped off stage giving the green light to the beef sandwiches. Cue sigh of relief from Dave Jones.

The second set started with an established AJC favourite, 'Blame It On Dolores' before moving on to the new 'Johnny Bought Himself A Brand New Guitar - It Was Red!'. He continued with a song that I first heard sung by Lucy Kaplansky, 'Broken Things' by Julie Miller. It's an example of a fine song that has not been covered by all and sundry, a field that I feel Anthony John can plough to good advantage as his own songs can tend to follow similar melodic paths - his strength if you like that, a weakness, if you don't. For that reason, unlike the previous reviewer of his album, I have no problem with his inclusion of 'Killaloo' on the new record though, in performance, he did have to apologise to a real Sister Bernadette in the audience for some of the saucier aspects. You can't keep away from nuns when you're on a night out with Anthony John Clarke!

A further cover version from the new record arrived with 'Another Evening In', featuring the writer himself, and Pete Abbott, on guitar: a good song supplying another opportunity to provide some variation in style. Then, we were into old favourites, like 'You Never Know What You've Got 'Til It's Gone', 'Irish Eyes', 'Tuesday Night Is Always Karaoke', before Anthony John slipped in the title track of the new record, 'An Acquaintance of Mine'. This song is already proving to be a stage favourite for good reason. As we headed towards the end, 'But Then I'm Irish' was made into a medley with 'Where Have All The Flowers Gone'. Nice move, especially given its topical anti-war sentiment. He encored with 'No Excuses', which is a new song about infidelity, not that we need to worry ourselves about reliability with Anthony John Clarke who provided another pleasant evening. That reliability forms a double-edged sword with predictability, but the choice is yours. After all, Barry seemed happy enough.

Steve Henderson

TROUBLE at' MILL with SUSAN FAULKNER & JIM ATHERTON at Darwen Library Theatre, 2 November 2001.

I recently heard an interview with Colin Blunstone. During the interview he talked about some gigs he'd been doing with Rod Argent - his first live work for twenty-three years! It's hard to

comprehend that someone blessed with a voice such as Blunstone's, should confine his appearances to the inner sanctums of recording studios. I recalled this interview as I sat in the ninth row of Darwen's Library Theatre, waiting for the appearance of a folk group whose philosophy, regarding live appearances, is the exact opposite of C.Bs. I'd be hard pushed to think of anyone who can match the total hours of 'live stage work' put in, over recent years, by Trouble at' Mill. 'Keep Music Live' is Graham's mantra.

This was the first time I'd seen Graham, Bernadette and Denis on a theatre stage and I knew from experience that this is a very different proposition to the 'freewheeling atmosphere' of pubs and clubs. From my earliest days in Skiffle and Rock and Roll, I've always preferred a 'mobile' audience (preferably dancing). I always find static audiences a real challenge. Graham Dixon and Co. have no such problems. Once on stage, they launched into the same act and routines that they use in the clubs, and it fitted the theatre stage perfectly.

I believe that the reason for this is an interesting one. Since the 'folk revival', the folk movement, in general, has expanded and developed in various ways that are both celebrated and frowned upon. In one of these areas, the ground that Trouble at' Mill now occupy, both traditional and contemporary songs are used, together with anecdotes and comedy routines, to form the basis of an act that fits comfortably into a theatre format. Good front men, like Graham, can build a rapport with the audience, which is akin to that of Music Hall.

The aforementioned love of live music, and hundreds (probably thousands) of hours put in on stage, enabled them to both entertain and involve the audience. They cruised effortlessly through 'Bright Lights', 'A Sailors Life', 'Sylveste', 'Female Drummer', and the well thought out 'Uncle Joes Medley' (a great favourite with the audience). Bernadette's voice ringing out 'clear as a bell', with support from Graham (usually in unison rather than harmony), and Denis's Fender Jazz Bass laying down that 'solid foundation' that we all know and love. This ensured a successful workmanlike performance that pleased this particular audience. They even applauded when Graham walked on stage to plough in Susan Faulkner's guitar.

I've always liked Susan Faulkner's voice. It falls nicely between the 'Gentle rural' folk style and the 'Hard edged' urban sound. It enables her to present a wonderfully varied choice of material, driven along by her fluid guitar picking style. She's equally at home with gentler pieces, including 'Christmas 1914', 'Streets of London', or 'From a Distance' (which she regrettably left out of this performance) and, in contrast, Paul Simons 'The Boxer', and Joni Mitchell's 'Big Yellow Taxi'. However, the song that most intrigued me tonight - one I hadn't heard her perform before - was her opening number 'Freight Train'. Most of us would associate this song with the Skiffle movement but the way Susan performed it, could (should she ever choose to do so) open up a whole new area for her. It took the song right back to its roots and its composer Elizabeth Cotten (A blues/folk guitarist - who played the instrument upside down and left handed - like Hendrix). It made me realise that the 'Girl singer/guitarists' working in this rural blues/early southern folk area are mighty thin on the ground. So, if you're female, and just setting out to 'learn the licks', choosing which particular furrow to plough, choose the one described above. Then, as the festival bookings start to roll in, send a letter of thanks, not to me, but to Susan Faulkner.

Dialect poetry is another rarity, especially at 'Singers Nights'. I realise that you recite rather than sing and, although with the number of books now available it can never be lost or forgotten, the performers again (as with all 'Live' performers) are the

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lifeblood of the genre. They invariably extend the range of material, since most of them write their own pieces, and Jim Atherton is one of that number. His Lancashire accent placed him firmly in the east of the county and, having travelled from West Lancs., one or two of Jim's phrases were outside my knowledge. The vast majority were not and I thoroughly enjoyed his sometimes poignant, sometimes hilarious, mostly local tales, which made up this varied (ever so slightly over-long) performance.

Darwen Library Theatre is a great little theatre with the same sort of 'feel' about it as; Grizedale's 'Theatre in the Forests' or Leyland's 'Worden Arts Centre'. Pay it a visit sometime.

Harold Dearden

**NIAMH PARSONS at the Bluecoat Chamber, Liverpool,
3 November 2001.**

This was my first visit to a Bluecoat concert and the artist was the charming Irish traditional singer Niamh (pronounced Neave) Parsons. The concert style setting was just perfect in one of Liverpool's most beautiful traditional structures. In recent years, Niamh has branched out on her own from the band Arcady. Her accompanist for the last two and a half years is the accomplished guitarist, Graham Dunne. They favour mainly Celtic traditional music.



Niamh Parsons

Their first set was opened with an Andy M. Stewart song "Where are you now?" followed by the County Armagh song "Clohinnie Winds". Graham followed with an excellent set of jigs. I found it difficult to keep my eyes of the fret board. His fingers moved around with supreme dexterity. Niamh dedicated Gerry Reilly's "I'm done with Bonaparte" (written by Mark Confer) to Terry Coyne and Tony Gibbons ("Garva"), who were seated behind me in the audience. The words 'Save my soul from evil, Lord, and heal the soldier's heart' seemed particularly poignant at this time, in view of current world affairs. Christy Moore's "Black is the Colour" took the audience to more familiar surroundings before Graham again took centre stage with a couple of reels. The 50 or so audience were now warming to the pair and Niamh appeared more relaxed as she reminisced over her formative years in Dublin, when she sang with 'Dad' and sister 'Ann' in three part harmony. The anti-war song "Bonnie Woodhall" was then delivered acapella style.

To the delight of the audience, Niamh then invited Tony G. and Terry C. to join her on stage. The four provided a wonderful

rendition of the Tom Waites song, "The Briar and the Rose", with harmonies in abundance from T and T. Similarly, "The Water is Wide" was presented in their own style, with Terry this time accompanying on woodwind. Graham then again went solo and excelled with a set of hornpipes. The man is a marvel on guitar and so unassuming as well.

The memorable "Flower of Magherally O" which appears on Niamh's CD "Blackbirds and Thrushes" (1999), was another highlight for me as was Christy Moore's "Boys of Barr Na Sraide" which tells of the old Irish custom of hunting for the wren ('dreolin'). The concert concluded with all four artists performing the very apt parting song "So here's to you", by Alan Bell. "Here's to you and our time together, I will share with you a parting glass, I'll bid you adieu with some smiles and a laugh, Our times apart will be short and past."

Previous reviews of this singer describe Niamh as "a voice that makes you sit up and take notice", "a voice like hers comes along once or twice in a generation" (per Archie Fisher), "she is Ireland's best kept secret (1999)". I concur. If you enjoy Dolores Keane, June Tabor and co., you will delight in hearing Niamh Parsons.

Some of Niamh's other CDs are "In my Prime" (2000)(Green Linnet), which proves that Niamh is one of Ireland's most profound interpreters and sensitive practitioners of traditional song. "Loosen Up" (1997)(Green Linnet), and "Loosely Connected" (1992) (Green Linnet) & (1995 Green Linnet). This was an excellent concert in an equally excellent setting. Look out for further information on 'The Bluecoat'. It is hoped that their publicity schedule will be a regular part of this magazine in due course.

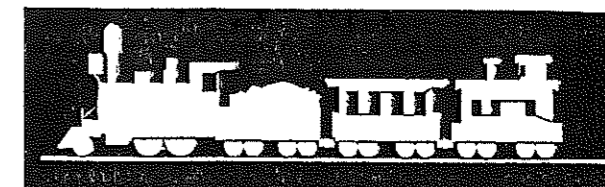
John Owen

**The Christmas Truce, Kerstbestand
Coope Boyes and Simpson, Ray Hearne and the Roses and
Thorns Choir
Keighley, Burnley and Raise Your Banners Festival, Sheffield
10/15/18 November 2001**

The Passendale Peace Concerts were founded by Piet Chielens to promote understanding between nations. In the First World War, the troops on both sides agreed an informal Christmas Truce in 1914. To commemorate this moment of hope Piet Chielens has written a script, drawing on the repertoire of the Belgian world choir Wak Maar Propre and commissioning new songs and arrangements from Coope Boyes and Simpson. The first performance was in Ieper/Ypres Cathedral at Christmas 1998 as conflict once again raged in Europe, this time in Kosovo. To accompany three concerts in Northern England, Coope Boyes and Simpson required a 70 piece choir! Janet Russell was able to provide the nucleus from the choirs she teaches in Burnley and Silsden, and with many willing extras they attended two weekend workshops near Keighley. With unfailing patience Barry Coope led the choir through eleven pieces, a mixture of traditional Christmas carols and sympathetic contemporary songs. Janet and the more experienced singers practised another three pieces, while Lester rehearsed a sketch where the opposing troops mingled together.

It was not until the performance in Keighley that we learned how all the pieces fitted together. Ray Hearne was the assured narrator, his readings of letters and diaries from the First World War coming in-between the songs. Coope Boyes and Simpson sang five songs which perfectly captured the moment. Lester and Barry each had a solo piece and Janet brought the best out of the choir. The concert was a very moving experience, especially since war had now broken out in Afghanistan. As the

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performance was in a church, the audience were not sure whether to applaud or not and it was not until the end that we could be sure of their approval. With great confidence, Barry had prepared us with an encore which we were more than happy to sing.

The performances in Burnley and the Raise Your Banners Festival in Sheffield were equally well received. The whole choir was exhilarated - it had been a privilege to take part in such a rewarding exercise. The choir has asked, well demanded really, to repeat the concerts again this year. We will let you know.

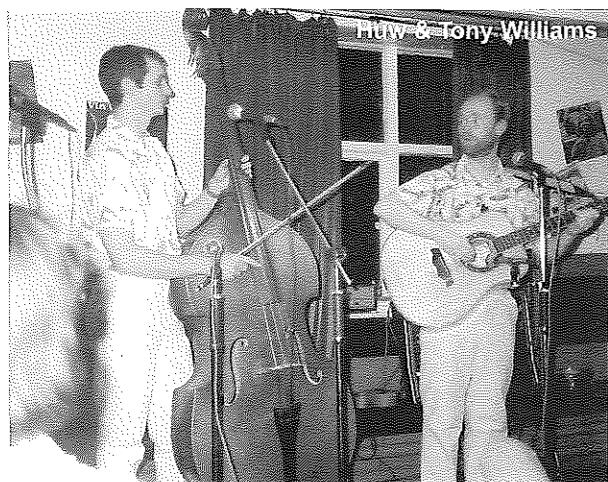
Henry Peacock

For details of the Christmas Truce CD see www.coopeboyesandsimpson.co.uk.

To contact Burnley Clarion Revellers Choir ring Burnley 01282 425289.

HUW & TONY WILLIAMS at Westhoughton Folk Club, 16 November 2001.

This gig formed part of the farewell tour by two Welshmen who, for the past seventeen years, have brought their own unique brand of music to audiences all over the U.K. They first appeared at Westhoughton, back in 1984, when the club was held at the Red Lion and have been regular visitors and a favourite of audiences ever since. Their self-penned songs can have you laughing one minute and then turn you into thoughtful mode the next. Couple that with their often 'inane observations' and zany humour and you have an evening of total pleasure.



The age of steam is brought to life in 'Right Side of the Footplate', before a change of tempo in 'Geordie Will Dance the Jig'. Two more numbers of great contrast followed - 'Last Man Standing' and 'The Colours Of Cézanne'. They can turn their musical hands to almost anything, as two songs on the ukulele proved, 'We Know It Just the Same' and the evergreen 'Baby Face', ably demonstrated with a choreographed dance routine. Music hall lives on!!!

The duo's powerful song of homelessness, 'Some People Cry', completely changed the mood to one of quiet contemplation, whilst in a similar vein, 'Take Me Home' followed. 'Lenny Next Door', a song of love, peace, and flower power, brought us to the interval. The first half had been a diverse trip around a repertoire that has enthralled their many fans for so long. 'Glimpse Of Glory Johnson' sees the boys dabble with religion, with a song that compels you to join in the refrain.

workers is well documented; 'Iron Town', focuses on the subject. 'Making Choices' in life is never easy; man continues to push out the boundaries, while millions continue to starve in our so-called 'civilised world'.

'The Score' gave way to 'This Place, This Town', a song telling of the changing face of the South Wales valleys. Scenery may change but attitudes never do. Another song of change is 'Summer Before the War'; the war referred to in the title is not relevant; the message within the words most certainly is. My particular request was granted in the form of, 'Blaina Boys 1930', a bouncy tune for a song that tells of a search for life outside the accepted boundaries.

Huw's daughter, Bethan Rhiannon, was the inspiration for the ever-popular 'We Stayed Awake', written during a sleepless night for both father and daughter. Many of us have expectations and ambitions, which we pursue single-mindedly; 'Struck It Right This Time' attempts to explain the logic. A celebrated Australian book about one child's battle against polio inspired 'I Can Jump Puddles', a song which has brought a tear to many an eye. 'Black & White' brought the evening towards its climax, which came with the encore, as Huw and Tony sang 'Rosemary's Sister', a song that so many have copied but never bettered.

These two remarkable musicians have added so much to the folk scene over their seventeen years together, but their songs will live on as a testimony to their beliefs. Huw will continue to ply his trade in the Welsh band, 'Crasdant', whilst Tony returns to his first love, music production. Whatever the future holds for these two popular individuals, their place in folk history is assured.

David Jones

KEN NICOL at the University of Central Lancashire Arts Centre, Preston, 17 November 2001

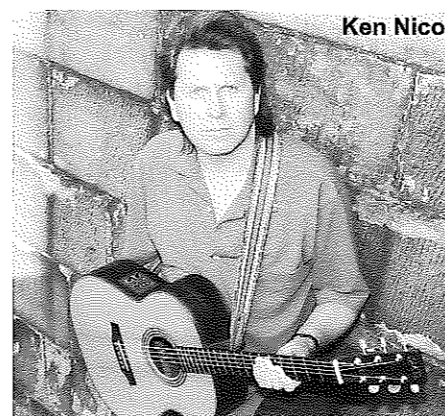
The setting was superb - the one time St Peter's Church located in the centre of Preston. M.V.S. Sound and Unstoppable Music hosted this concert, which was sponsored by Fylde Guitars. This special evening was part of a tour dedicated to the launch of Ken's new CD, 'The Bridge.' Peter Abbott, an excellent guitarist and singer, kicked off the night with one of Ken Nicol's songs off his 'Clean Feet No Shoes' album; a Tom Waits song, 'Shiver Me Timbers', provided support. Kieran Halpin's 'All The Answers', on Peter's own CD - 'Pete', was followed by an instrumental 'Chamois Leather Rag' - very well done, I must say. A self-penned ballad 'Georgie's Song', dedicated to Peter's daughter, was sung with great skill and highlighted many of the thoughts and feelings a father has for his daughter. I was disappointed that Peter's set was not longer. He was however to get involved later in the second half.

Kate Howden, Paul Jones and Tony Taffinder were next. This multi-instrumental group is a new trio to me. Paul and Kate are Lancaster based, while Tony hales from Huddersfield. Their set was made up of mainly contemporary tunes and songs, the highlights of which were 'Your Daddy's Gone' and 'Clitheroe', which demonstrated Paul's creativity in writing.

'St George's Quay', a song about Lancaster pubs, was a good song with a lively refrain, 'Come away with me to St George's Quay where the River Lune meets the estuary'. I felt at times that the group struggled to communicate comfortably with the audience. Nevertheless, they are harmonious singers and very skilled instrumentally. My supportive comment is - include some songs that are known to your audience. It should help with audience contact.

Following the interval, the main attraction, Ken Nicol, (recently

turned solo after leaving the Albion Band), commenced his set. He began with 'Midsummer Night Dreams', which was co-written with Ashley Hutchings. Although Preston born, Ken now lives in Ingol and he dedicated his next song, the bluesy - 'I Feel Good' - to his present place of residence. It was at this point that an over-enthusiastic drunk commenced to gyrate wildly immediately beneath Ken's nose. Unabashed, and as professional as ever, Ken completed the song despite the drunk colliding with, and dislodging, a speaker. The unwelcome guest, obviously not a true folkie, was immediately ushered into the night time air to the relief of artist and audience alike, who I am sure now, - 'felt good'.



A very accomplished musician Andrew Keeling, playing flute, then joined Ken on stage with a song, entitled 'Down on the Island', from his 'Living in a Spanish Town' album. The mix of flute and guitar was just superb. Ken then had the audience rolling with laughter as he coaxed them into imitating bass runs to his finger picking ragtime style. This preceded the ragtime medley of 'Cocaine all around my brain', 'Charleston', and 'Black Bottom', played with such dexterity and speed. It was wonderful.

Two songs from the new CD then followed. 'Dangerous' reminded us of just how dangerous the world is at times and a ballad, 'If ever I return this way', which implored one to 'do things which are important while you can'.

'Jigs and Reels' was announced in the introduction as 'Ken's Hornpipes'. After that Ken told the story about a punter once pointing out to him that 'there's not really any jigs or reels in that tune'. It certainly made me listen more closely and, yes Ken, I think the hornpipes have it. It was brilliantly done anyway. So what the ...!!?

The music style then changed when Steve Conway, playing knitting machine, oh sorry, it was actually a pedal steel guitar, joined Ken in a rendition of another love ballad, 'It's you that I'm missing'. The mood changed when Andrew Keeling featured on the instrumental, 'Wailing at the summer wall'. This was the first public airing of the tune and, once again, Ken's dexterity on guitar, with Andrew's flute, produced the most excellent wistful and haunting oriental sounds. It was blues time next and as a prelude to JT's 'Steamroller Blues', Ken showed off a little with a variety of BB King and Clapton licks, plus his own of course.

Peter Abbott then returned and exhibited his acting ability as a 'close harmony angler'. Yes, dressed as a fisherman, which added visual quality and humour to a chorus song about fishing. 'Go fishing everyday, Casting out your trouble watch it float away, Put off till tomorrow what you'd do today, All he wants to do is go fishing'. We all managed the last line by the end of the song. It was great fun.

All too soon, the night was brought to an end with the title piece

of the new CD - 'The Bridge', a tune, which Ken featured many times on The Albion Band's previous Christmas Tour. Any guitarists wishing to develop themselves with finger picking at speed would do well to listen to this tune.

The obligatory encore saw all the artists on stage performing the first song off the album, 'Nowhere fast on the road', with Ken playing mandolin. Life on the road as a band of musicians was the theme of this song. I wonder which band? Finally, Ken reverted to blues again, playing the title song of his 1995 album 'Two frets from the blues', which concluded this excellent concert".

We returned home to Wirral full of wonderful music and eagerly awaiting the next chance see this master class guitarist and singer in action. I would say to anyone who has not seen him solo, do so. He is wonderful and a Lancastrian as well.

John Owen

TAMARACK at the Wrea Green Institute, 18 November 2001.

The popular Canadian trio, Tamarack, returned to England for a short tour that saw them renew old acquaintances, as well as making new friends, especially amongst children when they took part in a couple of days of education in schools linked to their native music. Molly Kurvink, Shelley Coopersmith, and Alex Sinclair are the members of the band, who got the concert underway with Ian Tamblin's popular song, 'Campfire Light'.

Healy Lake was once a place people flocked to for its sheer beauty but the twenty-first century closed in, diminishing its charms; 'Maynard's Big Front Porch' tells the story and is a particular favourite of mine. Shelley led on mandolin and vocals on one of Alex's many compositions, 'Water Run Over the Stone', about a particular area of Ontario - but a walk in Aberfeldy, Scotland inspired the song. Songs of complaint are apparently common in Canada! 'The Old Rigadoo' is a traditional song from Newfoundland.

Another song with a Scottish influence is 'Oh Donald'. Can you imagine being uprooted from your home and banished overseas? 'Up on the Verandah' tells of life in an idyllic time of cruising on a lake to the strains of an orchestra whilst sipping drinks in the moonlight.



In 1942, the American military were worried about attacks from the Japanese in Alaska. 'The Alcan Highway' was built through British Columbia to the Yukon to negate just such a threat. A set of Shelley's fiddle tunes, 'The Hi-Lo Reel', brought us to the interval number, 'Les Raftsmen', a traditional song sung partly in French; Gallic in every way.

We started the second half as we had the first, with an Ian

Tamblin song, 'Days of Sun and Wind', set in the land of the silver birch. 'Maple Syrup' is undoubtedly the ambrosia of Canada and Alex performs this song with real conviction. Molly sang the lovely 'Steady On', written by Alex on the weekend of Lal Waterson's untimely death while Tamarack were playing in Al's home town, Robin Hood's Bay. For the old pioneers of Manitoba living rough in the dry, arid climate was no picnic. The hardships they endured are chronicled in, 'The Old Wood Stove'.

During the heyday of the Canadian fur trade, the founder of the first ever trading company was a Scotsman, who was maintaining both a wife and mistress. Molly gave a powerful rendition of 'Magdalene McGillivray'. Up-tempo fiddle brought us another Alex classic, 'Loyal She Remains', about the early days of Ontario. The title of the song is also Ontario's motto.

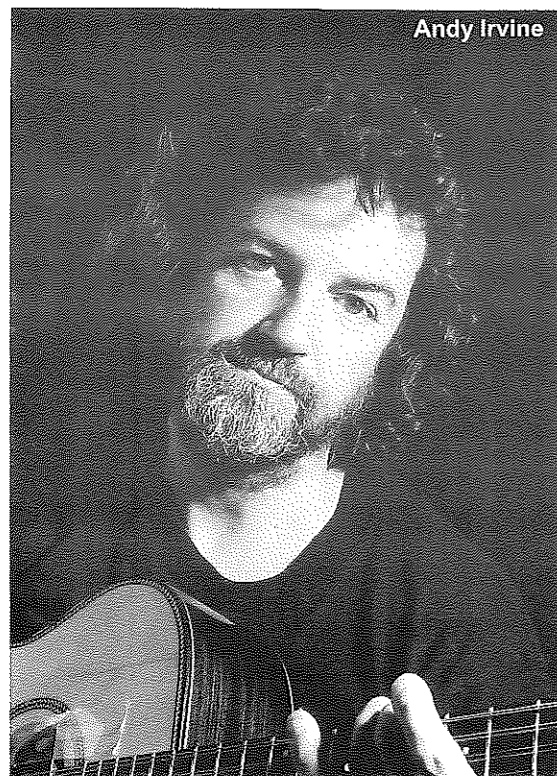
Molly's great grandmother left Aberdeen and settled in Dakota, U.S.A. 'Elizabeth Would Walk' tells her story. Michigan born, Tim Joseph, penned 'When the Boys Went Through', a song all about the use of resources. For me, there is no finer sound than three-part accapella harmony, as demonstrated in the singing of 'Frobisher Bay', that tells of whaling in the Arctic Ocean. This number sends a shiver down your spine, and is a legacy from former band member, James Gordon.

The encore saw Alex lead on 'Red River Carts' that chronicles the decimation of the Manitoba prairies following the demise of the buffalo. Tamarack continue to evolve as they write and seek out new material that demonstrates the history of their proud nation. Long may they continue to visit our shores.

David Jones

ANDY IRVINE at The Hole in One, Lytham, 21 November 2001

Wailing harmonica and intricate mandolin, the hallmarks of Andy Irvine, introduced 'A Prince among Men' with its irresistible



chorus. Andy's singing was as sensitive as usual and his fingers flew between the frets. He followed this with two lyrical Irish songs then changed the mood completely with 'A Close Shave',

a shameless parody of Patrick Street.

Andy then introduced his new affection, a handsome bass bouzouki that gave a dark character to Johnson, and a deep and authentic tone to the dance tunes that he brought back from Bulgaria. He changed to his bouzouki with a guitar shaped body, a 'buziar' as he christened it, and added harmonica for 'Never Tire of the Road', a tribute to his great hero Woody Guthrie. Not many performers would test an audience's concentration with a ten-minute song but there was rapt attention throughout 'The Highwayman', which brought the first half to a dramatic end.

In the second half Andy looked back fondly on his days with Sweeney's Men in 'My Heart's Tonight in Ireland' and once more sang 'The Blacksmith', something he never expected to do after Planxty broke up in 1976. Two songs from Antrim were followed by the hilarious 'Billy Far-Out', an unlikely account of travel in Australia, which he sang unaccompanied. Resonant bass bouzouki accompanied a slow and sorrowful 'Green Grows the Laurel'. Andy returned to the familiar sound of harmonica and mandolin for his final number, 'Gladiators', another anthem to a previously un-sung hero, once again with an inviting chorus.

Time allowed just one encore, the 'Creggan White Hare'. Just like the hare, Andy Irvine is still running, and as well as ever. There are echoes from his illustrious days with Planxty and contributions from his current supergroup Patrick Street. But Andy Irvine has proved to be a strong individual performer too, constantly developing new arrangements and writing new songs. Anne and Eddy Green made him feel at home at The Hole in One and Scold's Bridle set the scene. I hope they do so again before too long!

Henry Peacock

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THE BILL JONES BAND at The Platform, Morecambe, 29 November 2001

Expanding from a solo artist to accompanied solo artist is a well-trodden path and one that Bill Jones is happy to tread faster than most. It seems barely two seconds since she was newly arrived on the Folk scene, but pulling into The Platform in Morecambe was The Bill Jones Band. I can't say that I'm surprised as her recordings have always featured bold arrangements, as well as a cast of thousands – well, quite a few anyway. So, a band format seems the ideal way for her to present the music.

Featured in her band on this night were Keith Angel (current percussionist with John Tams), Miranda Sykes (accompanying Robb Johnson amongst others), and Roger Wilson (collaborator with Martin Carthy, Kate Rusby, Peter Morton, etc.). Without question, this is a bunch of seasoned musicians who proved to be well capable of lifting a load from Bill's shoulders. Indeed, I don't think I've ever seen her so relaxed on stage.

The first half opened with 'The Manchester Angel', a track found on her recent 'Bits & Pieces' EP, performed with Bill on accordion, Roger on fiddle, Miranda on double bass and Keith on African drum. This was an instrumental combination which shuffled throughout the evening, with Bill going to her keyboards, Roger to the guitar, Miranda occasionally picking up an electric bass, as well as providing vocals, and Keith moving between full drum kit and talking drum. As you can tell, this was a full stage with a wide range of instruments to hand for providing arrangements with considerably more width than Bill's usual solo format.

'The Manchester Man' was followed by Carole King's 'Goin' Back', typifying Bill's ability to juxtapose the traditional with the (relatively) contemporary. This track features on her most recent full CD, 'Panchpuran'. Other tracks from that album popped up in the set including the title track, 'The Hexham Lad and The Blackhead Miner', 'The Tale Of Tamlin', 'Silver Whistle and Low Down In The Broom', and 'Rocking The Cradle'. Naturally, compared to a normal solo performance, these tracks benefited from the support of the accompanying musicians. Of particular note was the rhythmic 'Rocking The Cradle', which is already a stage favourite but got a greater lease of life in this format. In addition, there were songs included from the first album such as 'Blood and Gold and The Universal Soldier', 'A Jug Of This' which also got an enhanced treatment, and 'Long John Moore' which was the encore to close the evening. Slipped in along the way were more tracks from the 'Bits and Pieces' EP, a couple of new ones, and even 'Never Be Mine' by Kate Bush, one of Bill's personal heroines. All in all, this was a set of songs that had been skilfully chosen to cover the diversity of her career to date.

So, what does all this tell us? Well, first, it was a great night. Secondly, the band setting for Bill's music adds a lot and brings out the genuine feel of the records. Thirdly, Bill Jones is developing very quickly as an artist, arranger, and performer confirming that she is here to stay and not a passing 'next big thing'.

Steve Henderson

ST. AGNES FOUNTAIN at St. Bede's Club, Whittle-le-woods, 2 December 2001; and 'St. Agnes Fountain' [tfcc2005].

During December 2001, Chris White, Julie Matthews, Chris Leslie, and David Hughes, joined forces for an eighteen date tour to celebrate the festive season in song and verse. The concert commenced in traditional style with Chris and Julie leading on the popular, 'I Saw Three Ships' and Chris Leslie and David providing shadow vocals; with the quiet start building

to a crescendo, some great fiddle riffs from Chris completed a highly effective opening number. 'Deck the Halls' gave David Hughes a chance to demonstrate his deep, mellow vocals.

Chris and Julie have been performing 'In the Bleak Midwinter' successfully for years. This time it led into 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring', a duet for guitar and mandolin by David and Chris. A tune medley by Chris, Julie, and Chris followed; led on the fiddle, it brought us 'O Love 'Tis A Cold' and 'Frosty Night/The Parson In His Boots/Merry Christmas/A Christmas Clog'.



The ever popular 'In Dulci Jubilo' gave way to Chris Leslie reading Benjamin Zephaniah, 'Talkin' Turkey's', from his daughter Imogen's poetry book. His recitation proved a great hit with the audience. Julie led on another seasonal favourite, 'Once in Royal David's City', played to an entirely different beat! David was next to expound in verse. The inspiration came from one of the most widely read authors in the British language, with shades of romance and adventure; 'Stuffing the Turkey' came courtesy of...Delia Smith!!!! This was linked to 'Christmas Day', a tale of family photographs of Christmas in the 1950's. Nostalgia just isn't what it used to be.

Julie gave her own inimitable treatment to Joni Mitchell's contemporary ballad, 'River'. Piano, mandolin, guitar and bodhran combined on, 'Masters in the Hall', learned by Chris during her schooldays.

A superb contemporary Christmas number opened the second half. Julie wrote 'Follow That Star' as she travelled back from Whitehaven one night during November 2001; it truly is a song for the 21st century. Another instrumental of a favourite carol to a different beat brought us, 'The Holly and the Ivy'. Chris Leslie's voice of great clarity led on, 'Sweet Bells', whilst an African beat-rhythm was very much in evidence on 'God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen'.

One of the highlights of the night was Julie narrating 'A Ghost Story', by Dylan Thomas, over suitable backing sounds. Along with Chris White, they then led a traditional rendition of, 'Good King Wenceslas'.

A medley of fiddle tunes, with titles that represent the impossible world of the fiddle players mind, had been conjured up by Chris - 'A Fig for a Kiss/Christmas Comes But Once a Year/The Christmassy Jig/The Frost and Snow'. Chris White and David Hughes duetted on a song that is the very epitome of the season, 'Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas', with piano and fiddle accompaniment. All four voices were in perfect harmony on an up tempo version of the much loved children's favourite, 'Away in a Manger'. That brought the evening to its conclusion.

The first encore was an instrumental of great dexterity and warmth, Sergei Prokofiev's. 'Sleigh Ride' and, to top it all off, Julie led on a song that seems to have been around since time

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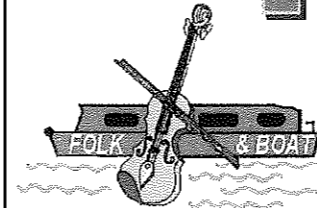
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Bothy	8:00 PM	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton Road, Birkdale, Southport	Clive Pownceby	0151 924 5078
Brewery Arts Centre	8:30 PM	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a Highgate, Kendal	Box Office	01539 725133
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Buffet Bar	9:00 PM	Platform 1, Stalybridge Rail Station, Stalybridge	Jim Schofield	01457 833897
Burnley	8:30 PM	Waggon & Horses Inn, Colne Rd, Brierfield	Phyl Watson	01282 774077
Carlisle Folk & Blues	8:00 PM	The Coach House, Heads Nook, Carlisle	Ken & Sue Bradburn	01228 670580
Citadel Arts Centre	8:30 PM	Waterloo Street, St Helens, WA10 1PX	Box Office	01744 735 436
Cockermouth Folk	8:15 PM	The Kirkgate Centre, Kirkgate, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 9PJ	Terry Haworth	01900 604765
Conwy	8:30 PM	The Malt Loaf, Rosehill Street, Conwy	Denis Bennett	01492 877324
Cross Keys	9:00 PM	Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Near Oldham	Jim Schofield	01457 833897
Deeside	8:45 PM	Hotel Victoria, 45 Gayton Road, Lower Heswall, Wirral	Alison Parker	0151 648 4444
Falcon	9:00 PM	The Falcon Hotel, Hardhorn Way, Poulton-le-Fyde	Pete Skinner	01253 301483
Farmers Arms	8:30 PM	Hillbark Road, Frankby, Wirral	Alison Parker	0151 648 4444
Fleetwood	8:30 PM	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood	Dave Ryan	01253 876351
Folk at the Manor	8:30 PM	The Manor Club, Withens Lane, Wallasey	Roger Parker	0151 638 1987
Furness	8:30 PM	The Cavendish Arms, Market Street, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria	George Birkby	01229 463284
Gregson Lane	8:30 PM	Gregson Lane Sports & Social Club, Gregson Lane, Hoghton	Graham Dixon	01254 853929
Hale & Hearty	8:30 PM	The Kings Arms, Hale, Cumbria	Frank Lewis	01524 734440
Hazel Pear	8:30 PM	Hazel Pear Inn, Hill Top Road, Acton Bridge, Near Northwich	Nick Tamblin	01606 852006
Hole In One	8:30 PM	Hole In One, Forest Drive, South Park, Lytham FY8 4QF	Ann Green	01772 683027
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Swinton	8:30 PM	The White Lion, 242 Manchester Road, Swinton	Ged Todd	01942 811527
Triton	8:30 PM	Aigburth Peoples Hall, Aigburth Vale, Liverpool	Barry Meyer	0151 733 4159
Urmston Acoustics	8:30 PM	The Fox & Hounds, Woodsend Road, Flixton	Martin Kavanagh	0161-748-5497
Verse & Worse	8:30 PM	Silverwell, Darlington Street East, Wigan	Sheila Mellor-Barnes	01942 741220
Walton (Friday & Sunday)	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Lilian French	0151 474 0979
Westhoughton	8:15 PM	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton	Pat Batty	01257-230508
Wigan (7 Stars)	9:00 PM	Seven Stars Hotel, Seven Stars Bridge, Walgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223

MARCH DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

	3rd March	10th March	17th March	24th March
SUNDAY				
Accrington Town Hall			Battlefield Band	
"Blidulph - " @ Daneside	Blue Tapestry			
Theatre, Congleton	Chris White, Julie Matthews, Maartin A Teak, Pete Zom, Neil Marshall, Sing Jont Mitchell & Carole King			Howden, Jones & Taminder
Bothy	Allstar Hulet	Singers Night	Maggie Boyle	Singers and Musicians
Farmers Arms (new club) - @ Hillbark Road, Frankby, Wirral	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers Night
Folk at the Manor (new club) @ Manor Club, Wlithens Lane, Wallasey	Singers Night	Singers Night	Fiddleston	Singaround
Open Door (new club) - @ Bull's Head, Falsworth	Singaround	Singaround	Anthony John Clarke	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	Brian Preston & Dave Grimshaw	Singers Night
MONDAY				
Conwy	11th March	11th March	18th March	25th March
Mr Kite Benefits - @ St Michaels C of E School, Chorley	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Prospect	Blue Tapestry (details above)			
Red Bull	Kenny Spiers & Stewart Hardy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Back	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Triton	Donald McGuire	Singers Night	Lynn and Barrie Hardman	Singers Night
Verse & Worse	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
TUESDAY				
Furness	5th March	12th March	19th March	26th March
Howcroft Inn	Singers Night	Joe Stead	Paul Wrigley	Howden, Jones & Taminder
Jacqui's Folk Club	Singers Night	Singers Night		
Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night		
Maghull	Singers Night	Gary & Vera Aspey		
Ring O'Bells	Singers Night	Singers Night		
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Rob Ryder & Dal Thomas		
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night		
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night		
WEDNESDAY				
Alison Arms	6th March	13th March	20th March	27th March
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Brewery Arts Centre	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Broken Token	Singers Night	Andrew Cronshaw		
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers Night	Singers Night	Les Barker
Cross Keys (new club) - @ Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Oldham	Martin Simson	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Deeside	Lindsay Hunt & Tony Howard	James Gordon and Sandy Home	Geoff Higginbottom	Ian Bruce
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Note: * = Not the usual club night				
Note: ** = Different venue				

MARCH DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

	6th March	13th March	20th March	27th March
WEDNESDAY (cont'd)				
Hole in One	Singers Night	Phil Beal and Paul Downes	Derek Gifford	Alan Taylor
Kings Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Music Session - English			
THURSDAY				
Blidulph	7th March	14th March	21st March	28th March
Cockermouth	Sad Pig	closed	Jan Bruce	Christine Cellister
Fleetwood	Simon Haworth	closed	Tim Cope	Eddie Walker
Gregson Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Ray Clinging
Parkgate	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Tom Topping Band
Railway	Singers Night	Singers Night	Jane and Amanda Threlfall	Singers Night
Ruthin Acoustic Music	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wrexham	Jeremy Taylor			
FRIDAY				
Brewery Arts Centre	1st March	15th March	22nd March	29th March (Good Friday)
Carlisle Folk and Blues	James Gordon and Sandy Home	Battlefield Band	Ruthin Roberts & Sean Lakeman	closed
Citadel Arts Centre	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	closed
Hale & Hartley	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	closed
Northwich	with Cine Leaux, James Reynolds	Phil's Les Barker		
Platform	Haughton Weavers			
Porkies	Platform			
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Poynton Folk Festival - 3 days
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers and Musicians
SAFRA Night - @ (new venue) Wagon Inn, High Street, Uppermill	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	30th Anniversary Singers Night
Second Friday	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Westhoughton	Phil Beal and Paul Downes	Colin Sands	Garva	closed
SATURDAY				
Buffet Bar (new club) - @ Staybridge Rail Station - Singers Night	9th March	16th March	23rd March	30th March
Brewery Arts Centre	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Citadel Arts Centre				Boat Band (Cumbrian Roots Day)
Hazel Pear	Ray Clinging			
Northwich	Singers - Birnaby Gals Night			
Oswaldtwistle	Singers Night			
Platform	Kate Rusby Band			
"Railway - Saturday Special	John Wright Band			
Standish				
Note: * = Not the usual club night				
Note: ** = Different venue				

APRIL (into May) DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

SUNDAY	31st March (Easter Day)	7th April	14th April	21st April	28th April
Bathy	Easter Party - Music Quiz Night	Maryn Myndham-Read	Singers Night	John McCormack	Singers Night
Brewery Arts Centre			Jan Matthews & Aid Manderover		
Farmers Arms	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Folk at the Manor	Bill and Co.	Singers Night	Singers Night	Celtic Henderson	Singers Night
Open Door	Singaround	Kieran Halpin and Maarath Aliseby	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	closed	Singers Night	Harvey Andrews	Singers Night	Singers Night
MONDAY	1st April (Bank Holiday)	8th April	15th April	22nd April	29th April
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits - @ Worden Arts Centre, Leyland			Show of Hands		
Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	Tom and Barbara Brown	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Back	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Stanley Astington	Singers Night	Phil Hare	Singers Night	Singers Night
Triton	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Verse & Worse					Poets and Singers Night
TUESDAY	2nd April	9th April	16th April	23rd April	30th April
Furness	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Howcroft Inn		Sean Furlong		Tony Stark	
Jacqui's Folk Club		Singers Night			
Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Risky Business	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ring O'Bells	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Cath Mundy & Jay Turner	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night	John McCormack	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	3rd April	10th April	17th April	24th April	1st May
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Broken Token	Singers Night	Maryn Myndham-Read	Singers Night	Singers Night	Eileen McGann
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Cross Keys	Valerie Vaughan (USA)	tbc	Phil Hare	Tony Ross	Marth Young
Deeside	All Fools Cello			Finding Time	Graham Holland
Note: * = Not the usual club night					
Note: ** = Different venue					

APRIL (into May) DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	3rd April	10th April	17th April	24th April	1st May
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic. - PA provided	Singers Night
Hole in One	Singers Night	Last Night's Fun	Ricky Mountain Plaughboys	Benard Carney	Kenny Spiers and Joe Wright
Kings Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Music Session - English				Music Session - English
THURSDAY	4th April	11th April	18th April	25th April	2nd May
Biddulph	Brian Wroughton and Cath Clegg	closed	Mike Silver	Show of Hands	Colin Sands
Cockermouth	Singers Night	Maryn Myndham-Read	Robin Long	Benard Carney	Singers & Musicians Night
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregon Lane	Lynn & Darrie Haldiman		Singers Night		Geoff Higginbottom
Parkgate				Max & Mich	
Railway	Les Barker	Singers Night	Anthony John Clarke	Singers Night	Cath Mundy and Jay Turner
Ruthin Acoustic Music	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Kieran Halpin
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham	Gary and Vera Appy		Singers Night		Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman
FRIDAY	5th April	12th April	19th April	26th April	3rd May
Accrington Town Hall		tbc	Pebbles	tbc	
Carlisle Folk & Blues	**@ Priory Club, Leyland			Drabble at Mill	Singaround
Hale & Hearty	Singaround				Tom Russell
Mr Kite Benefits - @ St. Bedes Club, Clayton-Le-Woods, Chorley					Pete Meaton
Northwich	Singers Night - **@ Davenhams	Jimi Couza	Singers Night	Celtic	
Platform	Players Theatre, Northwich		Gordon Sinnar		
Porkies	Paul Matins				Johnny Silver and Diz Dingley
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Ray Clinging	Singers Night	Phil Harbath
SAFRA Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Show of Hands	
Second Friday		Bagpipers			
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Westoughton	Kieran Halpin and Martin Alcock	Dave Wallitt	Alban Band (ticket only)	Benard Carney	close season commences
SATURDAY	6th April	13th April	20th April	27th April	4th May
*Broken Token BIG SING 12.00-23.00				Will Duke and Ben Quinn	
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Hazel Pear		tbc			Singers Night
Oswaldtwistle	Singers Night				Singers Night
Platform	Ann Breen	Blige Heises			
Playhouse 2				Jim Gabbart	
Standish					
Note: * = Not the usual club night					
Note: ** = Different venue					

MAY (into June) DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

SUNDAY	5th May	12th May	19th May (Whit Sunday)	26th May	2nd June
Accrington Town Hall			Bernard Carney, Vin Garbutt @ Lancashire Clog & Folk Festival		
Botby	Singers Night	Dick Gaughan	Club Slop @ Wooden Horse		Closed
Farmers Arms	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Roy Clinging	Singers Night	Singers Night
Open Door	Colin and Karen Thompson	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Extravaganza 2
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Closed	Singers Night	Residents Night	Wooden Horse & Bofny Night	Closed
MONDAY	6th May (Bank Holiday)	13th May	20th May	27th May	3rd June (Bank Holiday)
Conwy	Phil Hare	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Prospect	Singers Night	Emily Stada	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Back	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Pat Ryan	Singers Night	Joe Stead	Singers Night	Allstar Russell
Triton	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Verse & Verse				Poets and Singers Night	
TUESDAY	7th May	14th May	21st May	28th May	4th June (Bank Holiday)
Furness	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Howcroft Inn		Geoff Higginbottom		Nick Bold	
Jacqui's Folk Club		Singers Night			
Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	Kieran Harpin	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ring O' Bells	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	8th May	15th May	22nd May	29th May	5th June
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Broken Taken	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Cross Keys	Colin and Karen Thompson	Roam	Paul Tierman	Dan Robinson	Ken Parfitt in USA
Deeside				Singers Night	Hands in Pockets
Note: * = Not the usual club night					
Note: ** = Different venue					

MAY (into June) DATES

(NB: Always check with the club organisers before travelling)

WEDNESDAY(cont'd)	8th May	15th May	22nd May	29th May	5th June
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic - PA provided	Singers Night
Hole in One	Colin Sands	Clive Gregson	Singers Night	Robert McCann and David Knutson	Cross O' the Hands
Kings Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull					Music Session - English
THURSDAY	9th May	16th May	23rd May	30th May	6th June
Biddulph	Closed	Closed	Wid Akroyd Band	Closed	Closed
Cockermouth	Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies	Tim Van Eykan and Robert Harbron	Brian Taylor	Singers & Musicians Night	
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregson Lane					
Parkgate					
Railway	Singers Night	John Wright Band			
Ruthin Acoustic Music	Singers Night	John Kuckpatrick	Singers Night	Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies	Singers Night
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singers Night	Singers Night	Risky Business	Singers Night
Wrexham		Singaround	Singaround	Paul Tierman	Singers Night
FRIDAY	10th May	17th May	24th May	31st May	7th June
Accrington Town Hall		Oyster Band			tbc
Carlisle Folk & Blues	tbc		tbc		Kate Rusby
Hale & Hearty	Singers Night	Singers Night	Residents Night tbc		tbc
Northwich					Singaround
Platform		Barachois			Singers Night
Porkies	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians		Mad Jacks and Englishmen
Preston	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers and Musicians
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night		Tala
SAFRA Night	Singers Night	Singers Night			
Second Friday	Bushhouse				
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night		
Westhoughton	Closed	Closed	Closed		
SATURDAY	11th May	18th May	25th May	1st June	8th June
Biddulph - @ Daneside					
Theatre, Congleton					
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Territorial Warriors		
Hazel Pear	tbc		Singers Night		Singers Night
*Open Door - @ Bull's Head					
Failsworth					
Oswaldtwistle	Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies				
*Railway - Saturday Special	Bushbuds				
Standish					
Note: * = Not the usual club night					
Note: ** = Different venue					

ADVANCE DATES

FOR JUNE 2002 AND BEYOND

Accrington
June 15 – Fairport Convention

Biddulph
July 11 – Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies (tbc)
Sept 5 – Jez Lowe

Bothy
June 9 – Jez Lowe June 16 – Singers Night
June 23 – Singers Night
June 30 – Peta Webb & Ken Hall

Brewery Arts Centre
June 12 – Fairport Convention

Broken Token
June 17 – Solan

Cross Keys
June 12 – Bram Taylor June 19 – Solan
June 26 – Robb Johnson July 3 – Joe Stead
July 10 – Steve Tilston

Deeside
June 26 – Singers Night July 3 – Singers Night
August 7 – Singers Night August 28 – Singers Night

Hole in One
June 12 – Alan Bell Band June 19 – Singers Night
June 26 – Dangerous Curves July 3 – Tanglefoot
Closed until Sept 11

Howcroft
June 11 – Bandersnatch

Maghull
June 18 – Tanglefoot

Open Door
June 9 – Singaround June 16 – Singaround
June 23 – Singaround June 30 – Dave Gibb
July 7 – Singaround July 14 – Red Duster
July 21 – Singaround July 28 – Singaround
August – Singarounds every Sunday
Sept 1 – Singaround Sept 8 – Singaround
Sept 15 – Geoff Higginbottom Sept 22 – Singaround
Sept 29 – Singaround Oct 6 – Singaround
Oct 13 – Singaround

Extravaganza 3
Oct 19 – Willoughby & Craig, Bill Caddick, Pete Coe
Oct 20 – Buz Collins, Roam, Martin Carthy

Parkgate
Sept 26 – Robin Laing Nov 28 – McAlmans

Porkies
July 5 – Kieran Halpin Aug 2 – Flossie
Sept 6 – Bernard Wrigley

Prospect
June 10 – Lynn and Barrie Hardman

Railway
June 13 – Kelly White and Kwame Yeboah
June 20 – Singers Night June 27 – Singers Night
June 29 – Railway Culture Special - Lancashire Neet
Best of t' Bunch plus Appalachian Dancers

July 1 – Festival Poetry Evening
July 2 – Festival Band Night
July 4 – Festival Singers Night
July 11 to Sept 5 – Summer Singers Nights

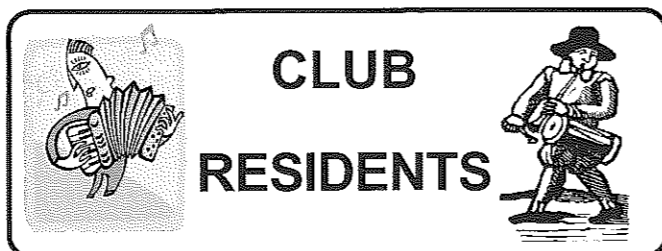
Rhyl
June 28 – Bernard Wrigley

Second Friday
June 14 – Bernard Wrigley

Standish
June 29 – Tanglefoot November 9 – Maurice Dickson

Swinton
June 17 – Geoff Higginbottom
July 1 – Gary and Vera Aspey

Wooden Horse
Sept 29 – Hilary Spencer



BLACKBURN - Flatbroke

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

BROKEN TOKEN – Gill Coyne, Mark Dowding, Tom & Ann, Angie Bladen

BURNLEY - Brillig, Korrgan

COCKERMOUTH – The Occasional Three, David Camlin

DEESIDE - Ficklefinger (Alison Parker, Jim Gallacher, Jon Oxley, John Hopkins, Paul Bonnet & Liz McIlwain)

FALCON - John Bond, Clansfolk

FARMERS ARMS - Fickle Finger

FLEETWOOD - Spitting on a Roast

FOLK AT THE MANOR - Gill & George Peckham, Roger Parker, Bill & Co., Marje Ferrier

GREGSON LANE - Trouble at' Mill, Celtic Fringe

HALE & HEARTY - Frank & Sheila Lewis, Steve Black, Dave Summers, Roy Wilcock & Bridget Guest, Paul & Jan Ramsey, John Hodgson, Bob Hellon, Gill Turner, Ken Lawson, David Littlewood, Roy Adams, David Hall

HAZEL PEAR - Pigeon English

HOLE IN ONE - Scold's Bridle, Rebecca Green

HOWCROFT INN - Ron Callow, Mick Unsworth (Micron)

JACQUI'S FOLK CLUB - Jacqui McDonald & Friends

MAGHULL - Tony Gibbons, Loctup Together, Bob Tyrer, Clover, Paul Robinson, Joan Gallimore, Joe Ryan, Back in Business, Jane Day

NORTHWICH - Jamie Anderson, Brenda Yates, John & Ailsa Booth, John Moncur, Iain Bowley & Tom Francis

OSWALDTWISTLE - Dylan Owen, Slopstones

PARKGATE - Eddie Morris, Brass Tacks

PORKIES - Sad Pig Band, Dave Walmsley

PRESTON - Rob Malaney, Hugh O'Donnell, Tom Walsh, Dave Peters, Len Deevey, Nick Caffrey

PROSPECT - Roger Hanslip, Chris Hanslip, Carol & John Coxon, Cheryl & Dave

RAILWAY - Heather and Don Davies, Trevor Morton and Geoff Smith

RED BULL - Peter Hood, Phil & Claire Allen

SECOND FRIDAY - Redmayne

TRITON - Bob Tyrer

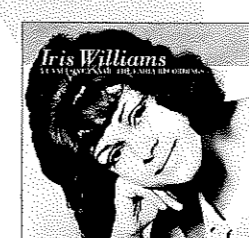
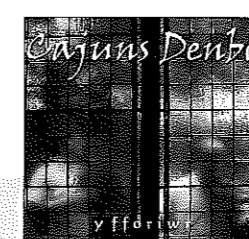
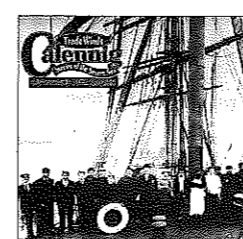
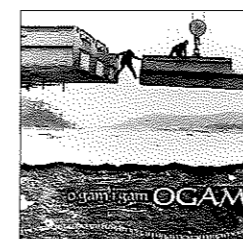
URMSTON ACOUSTICS - Keith Northover, Them Lot, Martin & Mandy Kavanagh

WESTHOUGHTON - Auld Triangle

WOODEN HORSE - Quartz, Rob Peacock, Back in Business, LocTup Together

WREXHAM - Offa (Goff Jones & Ian Chesterman), Yardarm

Please update this column by ringing JOHN OWEN on 0151-678-9902 or by e.mail to:- JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com



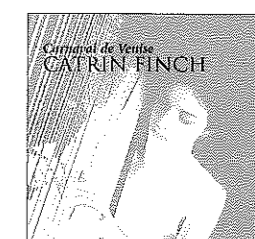
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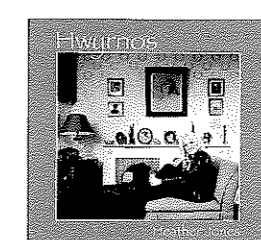
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began, 'Auld Lang Syne', which was hugely complemented by Chris While's soaring harmonies and an uplifting final instrumental version.

All in all a collaboration that proved a huge success, but I wouldn't have expected anything else from four such celebrated and outstanding musicians. I just hope it wasn't a 'one off' and that many more people are given the opportunity to see the festive season in, with such style and warmth, in the not too distant future.

David Jones

TOM TOPPING BAND at the Folk at the Manor, Withens Lane, Wallasey, 9 December 2001

For *The Albion*, now read *Folk at the Manor*. Same residents, same atmosphere, same warm welcome, same gentleman organiser - Roger Parker. The other main reason for my visit to this excellent club was because Tom Topping, singer and comedian extraordinaire, with his band, was 'coming out of hibernation again'. They are an all too rare commodity in the folk seen today - excellent musicians and singers who do not take folk tradition too seriously. The evening was reminiscent of the days when they used to pack out the Black Horse folk club every week. The band is six strong now, and Tom, Colin Henderson, and Brian Jones have the comfort of Tom's son, Joe, and Brian's offspring, Andrew and Laura, to add youthful musical talent, 'and good looks', to the line up. The residents, Bill & Co., provided support and, after a nervous start, had the patrons warmed up in no time.

TTB opened up with the first of a number of songs of the sea, "Alabama," followed by Allan Taylor's "It's good to see you". Joe had recently returned from the USA and whilst there, had penned a lovely ballad, "Fair thee well my love," which he had dedicated to a llama farmer he had befriended. He wasn't wearing a woolly jumper though?? His rendition had the ladies sighing with admiration at its conclusion.

The benefits of being such a large band were evident as the role of lead singer was passed around. Colin diversified into "San Francisco Bay Blues" and Laura took centre stage with Sting's, "Fields of Gold." The recent death of George Harrison was on everyone's minds and Colin appropriately chose to sing the little known, "Isn't it a pity?" The first half was concluded with another shanty, "Bully in the Alley", and Dylan's, "I'll be your baby tonight".

Laced throughout the set was of course Tom's comic patter, which, like Vin Garbutt and Harvey Andrews, is always as enjoyable as the music. Tom reminded everyone that he is in fact an authority on women - the women don't know - but the authorities in fact do.

To commence a second half, the adage for performers is 'Always have a good opener', and "Geronimo's Cadillac" was just that. It reminded me of the days when big Jack Hudson used to sing it with TTB at the Black Horse. This half carried on in similar style to the first with a mixture of musical styles and infectious comedy. Joe showed his paces on mouth organ with the US railroad song "Workin' on a rail road". Brian excelled with his comic quips during the shanty "Paddy Lay Back", and Tom demonstrated how good a ballad singer he is with Mike Silver's "Old fashioned Saturday Night", and Dave Mallet's "Summer of my Dreams."

This was the club's third night at the new venue and it reached a wonderful climax with Donovan's "Colours", Colin's self-penned, "Cold on the Road" and the gossipy "This little light of mine". The inevitable encore brought the house down with Elvis's

"I can't help falling in love with you" and "The leaving of Liverpool". This song was again very aptly dedicated to one of Liverpool's greatest sons, George Harrison.

To anyone who has not seen TTB there is one five-letter word that immediately springs to mind - 'great'. There are other lengthier words, which equally convey the same sentiments. My advice to you is search high and low in the folk press to catch an opportunity to see them. It will be well worth it. 28 March at Parkgate FC perhaps?

John Owen

DONAL MAGUIRE at the Rhythm Station, Rawtenstall, 12 December 2001; and 'Gilded Chains and Sordid Affluence'.

'Gilded chains and sordid affluence', an interesting title for an album, but Donal Maguire is an interesting person. He is someone that has his musical feet firmly rooted in the soil of his native culture, but who does not allow them to stick in the mud.

Although his native music and influences are much in evidence on this album, he has consciously broadened his perception of how it can be performed and interpreted. Rather than distorting or detracting from the value of the songs, I hear them as enhanced and enriched. He describes the contributions that jazz musicians Iain Dixon and Mike Walker make as 'appropriate', and I cannot disagree at that.

I have seen Donal Maguire in live performance several times at Club and Festival venues, both solo, and as part of a small group and, as I am reasonably familiar with his material in this context, I was particularly interested to hear him on record. Attending the launch was a useful device to help bridge the gap between the live and recorded music. I enjoyed the experience tremendously and it gave me an opportunity of seeing and hearing Iain Dixon and Mike Walker in the flesh, to see how easily they worked with Donal, and to understand why it is he considers their inclusion as appropriate.

There are probably a few traditionalists who would not approve of this cross fertilisation, and perceived dilution of the real thing, but what Iain Dixon and Mike Walker bring from their sphere of music in no way intrudes on the traditional context, and to my ear, sits along side it easily. This is well expressed on track 7; 'Jigs', 'The bells of Boulick', and 'Paddy Taylor's', where John Murphy on pipes is in full flight and Mike Walker on guitar is keeping pace, adding some clever chord work.

John Murphy and Donal Maguire are old friends and collaborators, and they know each other's music well. This shows to perfection on track 9, 'The Lily', where they are joined by soprano sax and guitar, which contribute to a beautifully atmospheric piece. All of this, with Donal's rich strong voice and the vocal backing of Jan Maguire, makes for a memorable track.

The eclectic nature of the album is reflected not only in the choice of musicians but also in the selection of the material and its sources. In addition to songs and tunes in the tradition, Donal has included several other interesting numbers. I had not heard of Brad Roberts before, but the inclusion of the Canadian writer's 'My own sunrise' was an inspired choice. The indolently erotic nature of it is engaging and very funny. Some of the tunes are quite surreal, and Iain Dixon's baritone clarinet adds a rich and sensual tone. A superb track! Track 6, Carol Elizabeth Jones' 'Let me go' has a strong country (as in American country) feel to it. It's a sort of 'Unquiet Grave', but not quite the type of song, which the soprano sax and double tracked vocal support of Julie Thompson enriches greatly.

I have listened to this album with great pleasure and though there is not sufficient space for all of my observations and responses, I will detail some of the highlights in my opinion.

The humour in 'Johnny Doyle' is remarkable; it is as if the writer gave himself the most difficult word to rhyme with on the first line of a couplet; i.e. 'Liffey' and would you believe it, 'Jiffy'. The pathos of 'An druimfhionn donn clolis', 'The sweet brown cow' - an analogy for the exploited Ireland, in which you can almost feel the chill hand of famine and eviction. The social and political comment of 'The wheels of the world', which one could easily substitute the names of some of our current leaders and celebrities.

If I, like the celebrated castaway on Desert Island Discs, was forced to make a choice of my favourite tracks, they would be; track one, 'Little Bridget Flynn' and track five 'My own sunrise'. My words to describe them would not do them justice, so why not buy a copy of the album and listen for yourself.

John Murphy, Iain Dixon, Mike Walker, Jan Maguire, and Julie Thompson all helped to make this a fine album. Rather than the 'Gilded Chain' of the title, I think of the golden thread, which runs through it and ties it all together; and that is Donal Maguire's remarkable voice.

Norman Wilson

MERSEY MORRIS MEN'S BOXING DAY REVELS, Willaston-in-Wirral, 26 December 2001

This Boxing Day, fighting the understandable urge to remain indoors, eating, drinking, listening to my new Cara Dillon CD and even watching the box, I took the family instead to watch the local Morris wonks jumping about on the village green in Willaston. It's not normally my thing, although we enjoy ceilidhs and the like, but I was very taken with the antics of this likeable bunch of disgustingly agile and energetic elderly gentlemen. What I wasn't expecting was the size of the crowd - getting on for 200, we estimated - and we had to jostle for a vantage point, having arrived after the start. As the show's compere joked, we clearly couldn't afford cable or satellite TV or none of us would have turned out to watch Morris dancing on a cold December 26th!

The programme was well paced and varied. It consisted of the usual handkerchief and stick stuff (including a couple of very striking dances apparently composed - tunes and all - by the side's members), a dance item for the children present (with a tasty morsel for each at the end - nice touch) and the same dance repeated for the grown-ups at the finish. Well, we needed a warm-up after spectating for the best part of an hour! The highlights, for me, though, were the performance of a local mummings play and its concluding dance, said in the programme notes (yes, all facilities provided) to be based on a Fenland molly dance. The actors gave a stimulating and genuinely engaging account of the drama and I could see that they and, more importantly, the crowd were really enjoying it. Indeed, the whole show involved the onlookers very closely with a lot of witty interaction between the hard-working members of Mersey Morris Men and the enthusiastic audience. On top of all this (and just before the passing round of the hat, funnily enough), hot mulled wine and Christmas cake were produced and distributed to the spectators. Shame it ran out before reaching our part of the crowd - the wine smelled really good!

All in all, it was great to spend the Boxing Day forenoon watching a live "traditional" performance, and our youngsters - and everyone else, it seemed - clearly enjoyed the excellent music, very accomplished dancing, and the unmistakable buzz of a

delighted and appreciative audience. My only complaint was that it went on just a bit too long, considering the low temperature, and that we didn't get any mulled wine! The pub, however, was very welcoming afterwards...

The Morris Men put on this Boxing Day event every year, so if you're in the area next Christmas, you could do worse than give it a try. But wrap up well and have a hip flask with you, just in case the wine runs out again!

Duncan Neill

FESTIVAL REVIEWS



THE MARKET DRAYTON FOLK FESTIVAL - October 12,13 and 14, 2001

The festival had a very lively session in the Red Lion Hotel, which lasted about seven hours with continuous music and song. Meanwhile in the Festival Hall, a pleasant afternoon concert took place. It was a collection of local, and not so local, artists who entertained the small audience.

Tom Pitts did some excellent guitar work to compliment his very good lyrics. We even had a short set from Genevieve Tudor of Radio Shropshire fame. The two acts who impressed the audience and me most were the duo Taggart and Wright (more of them later) and Tim Weatheral. Tim looks as though he could front a heavy rock band as a Meatloaf look-a-like. He then surprises you by playing the Uilleann pipes and takes your breath away.

A rather hastily organised folk club in the Sutton Court Hotel proved to be the highlight of the festival. This was a free event on the programme, but it was the quality of the acts that filled the room to bursting - and nothing to do with the price.

The stage was shared by Kirby Heath, a very lively trio from Cannock, and Forlorn Hope, a five piece band, who specialise in medieval tunes on various combinations of three Hurdy Gurdies, two fiddles, a tom-tom, and a collection of recorders. It was the interaction of these two totally different bands, and the guest appearance of Anne Taggart and Angie Wright, with their excellent vocals, that had the audience calling out for more until well after midnight. This four hours of entertainment must be one of the best nights out I have had. The music was superb, the vocals sublime, and the jokes came thick and fast.

Anne and Angie started off the evening with three of their unaccompanied songs and then Forlorn Hope took stage, complete in medieval attire, for a short set of tunes, some English, some French, some of dubious origin. Next came Kirby Heath with a mixture of their own material, some sixties classics, and a bit of trad. Then we went round again and again and again. Each time the bands lifted their performance, with great humour between each other and the audience. Every one in the room was participating and the night roared on. Two fiddlers, brothers from Wales, borrowed instruments and gave yet another dimension to the evening. I did not get their names but rumours were rife. They were not your typical floor spot as everyone realised.

Nights like these don't come often but I am certain that wherever

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Noddy

MAGHULL DAY OF MUSIC Saturday 10th NOVEMBER 2001

Hello folks it's me again, Joan Gallimore, yes after quite a long break, Maghull Day of Music!! Wonderful, well at least as far as I am concerned. The day started for me at 1pm with the Wooden Horse singaround in the Rolling Folk Club. All my friends were there, I knew all the songs, joined in all the choruses, really had a good sing. So back upstairs to listen to another favourite Bob Tyrer only his last couple of songs but great. Next on stage was Cuckoo Oak, very good, but I must make a comment re the sound system, not the usual high standard of previous years, but then who am I to judge. But for all that they gave myself and family a lot of pleasure. Their songs and antics were a delight.

From 3pm till 4pm was the Maghull Hour lots of fun and good songs with lots of good singers. We all took the mickey, and had lots of quiet laughs. The Teeth spot was off the cuff but wasn't it a hoot. And so on to Maxi & Mitch, I have seen them many times, even so they fill me with joy and laughter. The off the cuff remarks that they let slip, well well its all out of this world. Trouble is with Maxi and Mitch and Cuckoo Oak one is so full of laughter one misses the next little remark and you are left saying "What did he say". It's all Magic. So off I went for a lovely three quarters of an hour; meeting Harvey Andrews, a lovely man, lovely singing, song after song, Marguerite, Hey Sandy and a topical song about a mobile phone, again Magic.

We, my family and I moved to the downstairs to the "Voices Concert". It was wonderful to hear Eddie and John singing together again. Also my friends Firm Friends and those two; Ian and Chris "bless you both" my head full of songs. Away I went again, yes the bottle cork syndrome off to the Railway singaround, but things went wrong, my daughter-in-law took poorly, she has M.S. awful, so my son took her home. He has since said that what they saw was great, A1. Anyway back I went to the singaround, sang a couple of songs, then upstairs again to Cuckoo Oak, they were still on top form, but my heart wasn't in it. Alan came to me and said "ready for home Joan". Away I went, head full of songs, but also some sorrow. Thank you Maghull for making my family and myself have so many good memories of Maghull Day of Music 2001.

Joan Gallimore

ARTICLES

A BELATED LOOK INTO 2002

I hear that old King Wenceslas has now stopped "gathering winter fuel", having had the latest central heating installed, his Christmas present from a long suffering Queen, fed up with his disappearing after dinner and leaving her and Stephen to do all the washing up. I also hear that those irritating 3 know-alls, the Wise Men, have got it wrong again having followed the famous star and ended up in Afghanistan - it was a cruise missile. Apparently, they are now heading back over the border, much chastened and minus their gold, which they used to bribe native guides. They are believed to be still looking for a stable that hasn't already been flattened by the Americans.

That jolly old bewhiskered gentleman in the red coat has headed back north again with the usual complaints of delivering presents to the wrong houses but, according to the latest stock market gossip, I hear that Richard Branson trading as "Virgin Sleights" will probably take over his operations next year anyway - no improvement there then!

As for partridges, pear trees, herald angels, sock washing shepherds, and those noisy bell ringers, Ding & Dong, they have all been consigned to the fantasy, myth and magic (some would say tragic) face of Christmas past for another year.

So, now is the time I remove my crystal ball from its turkey foil wrapping and look once again into the future. Having breathed on it several times to make it clearer I find that this infernal cold weather makes it mist up even more - such was ever the lot of us crystal ball gazers. Ah well, never mind, here goes anyway.

The year will start on January 1 - I think I am pretty safe there. On January 2, most New Year resolutions, especially the ones about winning the National Lottery and never having to work again, will have been broken. So far, so good, now it gets tricky.

Yardarm Offa of Wrexham Folk Club will release their live CD in March and it will go straight to the top of the Folk album charts and stay there for 6 weeks, beating similar releases from Fairport Convention, The Albion Band, Eliza Carthy, Tom Paxton, Bob Dylan and Richard Thompson. This particular forecast is of course not guaranteed and I think the phrase "wishful thinking" comes into play here!

Leonard Cohen will release his latest CD in spring and the suicide rate will immediately increase by 10%. Mr Cohen is the only artiste I know who has a self-destructive fan base, the more albums he releases the fewer fans there are left to hear them. For those students of economics this is a perfect example of the law of diminishing returns.

Dave Swarbrick, having got fed up with his latest band, "Orchard", formed in autumn 2001, will form yet another called "Phoenix" as the Times run a second obituary on his untimely demise followed by a second swift denial from Swarb.

The club season will grind to a halt as record temperatures see folk festivals throughout the country packed to overflowing, as "flower power" returns, and John Prescott hits a Morris Dancing rival over the head with a double bunch of gladioli, having been beaten into second place in the rapper competition.

The month of August will be reserved solely for the get together of Fairport Convention and all their old line ups, past and present, and all their many friends on the pop, folk, blues, country, Cajun, jazz, and folk rock scenes, and all their many fans world-wide. The county of Oxford will be closed to outside traffic for the month whilst worshippers descend in their millions on Cropredy, subsequently declared a disaster area, and the government will, justifiably, add 1p in the pound on Income Tax to pay for rescue and clear up operations, but nobody will mind. Fairport spokesmen Simon Nichol and Dave Pegg will express their thanks to everyone and, as ageing, humble, and poor folk rockers they will, as usual, promise a better and bigger event next year.

Everyone will now go into hibernation until Christmas, apart from the odd club sing around and - oh no! That last item must have been too much, my crystal ball is steaming, and cracking open, it never did like too much exaggeration. That's what you get for buying one with a conscience. Never mind, there's always next year, so have a good 2002.

Ian "Pinocchio" Chesterman

BBC TREASURE HUNT

As some of you may be aware, over the last twelve months or so, the BBC has been running a treasure hunt for television and radio programmes that, for various reasons, they no longer have a copy of in their archives. They have had various successes over this period of time and indeed some of you may have seen the two episodes of Dad's Army over Christmas that had been languishing in somebody's garden shed after being rescued from a skip. Various radio programmes such as Hancock's Half Hour have also been recovered and this is where you come in.

I recently had a meeting with Mike Harding about preserving some tapes that I had made of performances by Harry Boardman with a view to placing them in an archive. This project is ongoing and I'll be giving more details in a later edition of *Folk North West* magazine and on the website. One question I asked Mike was how much archive material the BBC held of radio programmes like 'Folk on Friday' and the answer was a very disappointing - 'not very much'. Indeed many recordings of programmes have been junked - programmes that held live performances that we are no longer able to listen to.

This has set me thinking - I have the odd copy of a Folk on Two concert somewhere and maybe a couple of recordings of Piccadilly Folkspan with Harry Ogden that I made to get some songs from. It is quite possible that you also have recordings that you have made in the past and forgotten about. What you can do is let us know here at *Folk North West* what you may have in your collection. We don't want a copy of it yet but if you can send us details of what you've got then we can make a database of this information and approach the BBC or whoever to check if they still have a copy in their archives and whether they would be interested in having a copy returned to them.

I have been in contact with the BBC and they have told me the following:

- *There are some gaps in the Archive. We do not hold any complete editions of Folk On Friday but have the vast majority of Folk On Two from 1984 onwards.*
- *We would be interested in details of any recordings of shows that featured live concerts or live sessions from before 1984.*
- *There are some similar programmes that we do not have editions of, and we would be interested to know if anyone has recordings of Folk On One and, in particular, the editions of this show from 1970 that featured Fotheringay and the 1970 & 71 appearances by Fairport Convention*

Please tell us as much as possible about what you have - what the show is, when it was broadcast, who was presenting it and who was performing. The earlier the show was broadcast, the more likely it is that there is no record of it in the archives and it is likely that anything pre 1984 would be worth enquiring further about.

Please send any information in to us either in an email to the website at : archives@folknorthwest.co.uk or by post to me at the following address:

Mark Dowding, 143 Southport Road, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 1LW or telephone me on 01695 576215

Good Hunting! You never know - you may be hanging on to a piece of broadcast history that no longer exists anywhere else!

EWAN MacCOLL PLAQUE UNVEILED

Jimmy Miller was born in the City of Salford in 1915, the son of working class parents who were both active left wing socialists. Later in life Miller adopted the name, Ewan MacColl, and went on to become one of the major forces in Britain's post second world war folk and political theatre revival.

On 23 September 2000 friends, admirers, local dignitaries and his partner, Peggy Seeger, gathered to celebrate the life and memory of arguably Britain's most influential folk writer and performer of the last century. The unveiling ceremony took place at the Working Class Movement Library in Salford. It was followed by performances of MacColl's songs and illustrations from his political plays.

The Workers' Theatre first attracted MacColl, in his late teens, to the importance of the performing arts in developing political awareness. It was in this setting that he discovered and developed his song writing talents and his lifelong love of rambling. This love of the countryside was to inspire a number of significant songs through his lifetime, most notably 'The Manchester Rambler'.

MacColl became more politically active throughout the depression ridden 1930s when work for most became an estranged aspiration rather than a meaningful reality. He joined the Young Communist League, the youth section of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and moved to London where, after meeting Joan Littlewood, they established the Theatre of Action, an experimental workers theatre project.

By the end of the decade, they had moved back to Manchester to form the highly influential Theatre Union. Such was the perceived threat to authority and the British establishment in the year that the Second World War broke out that the police intervened to stop one of their plays in midstream. As well as incurring fines, MacColl and Littlewood were banned from any dramatic performance until 1941.

It was during the war that MacColl adopted his new persona, reputedly as a gesture of solidarity with the national school of Scottish poets. MacColl's mother was Scottish and as well as his Salford connections, MacColl had a kindred affinity with those north of the border. In conjunction with Littlewood, he continued his revolutionary theatre activity during this period. It led to using theatre and song to raise political consciousness by taking music and political drama to working class neighbourhoods.

MacColl published in 1953 a collection of Scottish folk songs and ballads under the title 'Scotland Sings'. According to MacColl the songs ranged from "the great ballads of the past to the simple jingles and catches of the city streets. Some of them are as near perfect as songs can be, others are as rough as a lump of pig iron." Many of the songs collected in this collection have been actively performed and recorded by many contemporary performers in Britain and abroad. These songs reflected his deeply seated philosophy of folk music - we should preserve our folk music heritage and encourage singers and songwriters to build on the experience of British working people at the expense of what he saw as post war Americanisation of British culture.

In 1956, MacColl teamed up with Peggy Seeger to form a personal and professional relationship that endured until his death in 1989. In the late 1950s, MacColl and Charles Parker produced the groundbreaking Radio Ballads that were to have a profound and prolonged influence on subsequent generations of British folk artists and songwriters.

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In an interview with *Folk North West* in 1999, Roy Bailey recalled the influence of the Radio Ballads and the vibrant developments of that period. "He (MacColl) showed me how contemporary song and traditional song could work, and how, in my view, the contemporary song is part of that process of peoples' music. It's just that it's not traditional yet."

"I met Ewan at an organisation called Centre 42, in 1962 when I was student at Leicester University. He came to Leicester with Centre 42, a folk show that went around the country, taking songs on to council estates of the post war 1950s.

"Ewan wrote to me and invited me to go to London to participate in a project he was considering. He'd selected some singers he'd heard around the country. At that time, my career was going to be as an academic. Although I would keep singing, it would just be as an aside, and nothing too serious. So, I declined, thanked him, and said that I wouldn't go. It turned out that he was formed the Critics Group but he hadn't said so explicitly. Ewan and I would meet from time to time over the years. We did similar concerts together during the Miners' Strike. The last time I met him was in about 1984 at a concert in Newcastle."

Certainly, Ewan MacColl has left an enduring legacy to British folk music that stretches beyond the City of Salford and beyond the island of Britain. His greatest gift and talent was a two way process of making folk music relevant and accessible to working people in a way that related to their struggles as a class but also their sensory experiences as human beings. The City of Salford has every right to be proud of his achievements.

The Working Class Movement Library is at 51, The Crescent, Salford, M5 4WX. Tel: 0161 736 3601. For £5 per year (£2 if unwaged) you can become a friend of the WCML. Details available at the phone number above or on the website. www.wcml.org.uk. They also publish a twice-yearly Bulletin (containing about 70 pages of articles). The current edition Number 12 includes an article by Ruth Frow about the plaque ceremony and life of Ewan MacColl, accompanied by pictures.

Lewis Jones

PARODIES

The Staffroom In The Sky

Words by Graham Holland, to the tune of Fiddler's Green (with apologies to John Connolly)

As I walked through the school yard one morning in May
To take some fresh air at the start of the day
I spotted a teacher all sad and bereft
Singing "Take me away, I've not got much time left"

Dress me up in my brown cord'roy jacket
No more at the chalk-face I'll cry
Just tell my old colleagues
Who are now alcoholleagues
That I'll see them in The Staffroom In The Sky.

The Staffroom In The Sky is a place we all know
Where old teachers go when they don't go below
Where out in the playground kids quietly play
And the OFSTED inspection is far, far away

Outside the staffroom the corridor's always clear
And the mid-morning break lasts for most of the year
Since there's no work to do you lie back, have a laugh
While the Head's down the pub buying drinks for the staff

And at the end of the day when the last bell has rung
You can go hit the town like you're twenty years young
While back in the classrooms in cupboards and on shelves
Exams, tests and homework books all mark themselves

I don't want a carriage clock when I retire
For there are higher ideals to which I aspire
School performance league tables? Well it just isn't cricket
So I'll tell the schools minister just where she can stick it.

Graham Holland

HIS WEBMASTER'S VOICE - www.folknorthwest.co.uk

Since the last issue of the magazine, the website has been steadily increasing in size and content. Thanks to everybody who has looked at the site or contributed in one-way or another. I'm always on the lookout for new items to put on the site that would not normally get into the pages of the magazine.

Links are constantly being added to the various categories, either as I come across sites whilst surfing the net, or by people sending them in to me. I'll try and get them on the site within a day or so of anything being sent in.

One thing that brightens up the website is photographs. I'm on the lookout for photographs of artists and one way that you can help is to take a picture or two when you have a guest at your club. When they've come back from the chemist, scan them and email them to me for inclusion on the site in a relevant position. Please ask permission first before you start snapping away like the paparazzi and if possible ask if you can take a posed shot at the end of the evening when everybody's gone home. Tell them what it's in aid of – the *Folk North West* website – and I'm sure they'll be willing to pose for you. I don't want the photograph itself – just a scan of it of at least 150 dpi resolution then I can play around with it for the site. See the Broken Token website page for some of the past guests to give you an idea of what I'm after.

If you have a collection of photos of artists, you may like to email me with details of whom you have for future reference and I can build up a database of photo sources and contact you when necessary.

Remember it's YOUR website. If you want anything about YOUR club putting on it, send me the details and I'll do the rest.

Happy Surfing

Mark Dowding Email: webmaster@folknorthwest.co.uk

HORWICH PRIZE MEDAL MORRIS MEN

Horwich Prize Medal Morris Men are a very long-standing and active team in the North West of England. They are very popular in many towns around Lancashire and are in great demand. They dance at all types of venues and contribute to local charities. They hold Horwich Carnival in high esteem because this was the start of the original Horwich Morris Dancers in 1891. They Dance hard, they Practice hard and they Drink hard and are always keen for new dancers and musicians to join them in this very addictive pastime. (See end of article for further information)

It is very likely that you have seen them somewhere around the North West. Their kit is red britches with gold trim, red schoolboy caps with gold trim, White collarless shirts, gold sash, white socks, and clogs, and usually holding implements, sticks, slings

or ticklers, or even a pint of Beer.

Their roots go back to 1891 when the original "Horwich Morris Dancers" were formed to dance at the Horwich "Rose Festival." In these early days, Morris dancing was competitive and in 1903 Horwich Morris Dancers won their "Prize Medal" in a major event at Crew Hospital Gala. Unfortunately, the team disbanded at the outbreak of war in 1914.

In 1975, several members of the Horwich Folk Club met to revive the team and in 1976, the team danced at St Catherine's Rose Queen.

If you would like to find out more – give our secretary a call on 01204 840949 or contact our Leader 01942 672542 or visit our website at: www.geocities.com/hpmmm/index.html

Brian Leach

DOES LANCASHIRE FOLK MUSIC EXIST?

A few issues ago, someone complained that there wasn't enough Lancashire folk music on Radio Lancashire's *Lancashire Drift*. Lots of music is sung, played, and danced to throughout the county in Folk Clubs, at Festivals, and dances. Much of this is varied - some Lancastrian in content – but is any of it actually Lancashire Folk Music? Almost certainly not.

Have I flipped? No, but if you define Folk Music in the way academics do – of unknown authorship passed down through folk memory – I defy you to find any Lancashire Folk Music at all. The Lancashire tradition was for dialect verse: some of this has been turned, very successfully, into songs during the late twentieth century folk revival. There are also some broadsheet ballads on the mechanisation of weaving that survived in printed versions without tunes, which were revived with more or less relevant tunes, but these had disappeared from the living tradition and had to be reinvented.

Almost anything with a Lancashire theme has been written within living memory, since the start of the folk revival in the second half of the 20th century. It was written by writers and performers from Alan Bell to that unknown person with a guitar you heard last week. (And the guitar isn't a Lancashire traditional instrument.) Much of this is in the specific style I call 'Cabaret Folk' – great fun to sing along with, lots of nostalgia, but not very much depth. There's nothing wrong with Lanky Nights, the Oldham Tinkers, or the Houghton Weavers but let's not kid ourselves it is Lancashire Folk Music. It's descended from Music Hall rather than the folk memory - and all of it is less than fifty years old.

Dance might provide the odd link, but let's not forget that most of the Lancashire Dance style was invented by Sam Sherry when he retired from the halls - and does anyone know what tunes were used by the Burscough Barge tappers? Does this matter? Not at all – let's go on enjoying music and song from a wide range of folk traditions whether live in a pub, on record at home or on the radio, or, best of all, by singing and playing ourselves.

Ian Wells

TROUBLE at' MILL LANCASHIRE FOLK GUIDE www.btinternet.com/~troubleatmill/

The Trouble at' Mill guide to Folk in Lancashire has been updated. By the end of January this year, it had over 18,500 visits. There is now a new format on the Home Page.

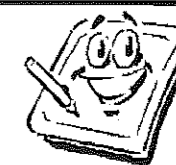
The What's On page still has all the dates for events/singers nights/concerts etc for the North West. However, they are now listed slightly differently. The page itself shows only Gregson Lane FC & Trouble at' Mill details. Use the link to Joan Blackburn's Folkal Point to access a very comprehensive (and updated weekly) guide to what's on around the North West. If you would like anything adding to Folkal Point e-mail Joan with the details.

There are also links to the sites of many other North West (and national) venues & sites, which are updated regularly (hopefully) by the organisers.

If you have any 'Last Minute' additions/cancellations/change of venue, you can add these yourself by using the Forum. Hopefully, this will become a point of reference for interested parties - it's instant and easily accessed.

E-mail address: troubleatmill@btinternet.com

BOOK REVIEWS



"THE WHISPERING YEARS" – BOB HARRIS. Published by BBC, Hardback Edition 2001 (ISBN 0 563 53775 2)

September 21, 2000 marked the Thirtieth Anniversary of the first edition of the BBC2 progressive music flagship, "The Old Grey Whistle Test". The programme reflected many of the musical tastes of an audience fed up with a television and radio diet of mainstream candy pop music. Bob Harris was not the first presenter of the programme, but it was his impact on the direction of the show that has made his name synonymous with the Whistle Test.

Harris's musical boundaries have always been fluid encompassing progressive rock, soul, blues, country, and folk music. He has been particularly keen to bring to the attention of his audience new artists who would otherwise have had little or no media exposure. The first Whistle Test show featured the likes of Family, America, The Who, Cat Stevens, Lindisfarne, and Alice Cooper, with a profile of Muddy Waters thrown in for good measure.

The period of Harris's book traces his rise to prominence as an influential and popular TV and Radio broadcaster, instantly recognisable by his colourful relaxed hippy style approach and a quietly spoken demeanour that earned him the sobriquet "Whispering" Bob Harris - hence the title of the book.

His path in broadcasting and journalism has not been all plain sailing by any means either on a personal or professional level. He has had four relationships (including 3 marriages) that have produced eight children and was close to death following a serious health scare in 1980. Harris recounts his battles with successive programmers, keen to stick to rigid formats to please audience analysts and commercial ratings, rather than cater for diverse musical tastes.

Harris comes across as a singularly determined individual sometimes sacrificing the opportunities for financial, personal, and professional safety in the pop mainstream for his art and craft as a programme builder. This is a constant theme throughout the book. Harris hasn't allowed others to dictate or determine what he plays on air. He takes considerable time and

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HANNAH HUTTON
NIAMH PARSONS
DAVE SUMMERS
ARTISAN (Sat)
TIM LAYCOCK
QUARTZ
DICK MILES
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effort to plan and build programmes with music that sequentially flows. He caters for an audience that wants something different and is prepared to be open minded in listening to new artists and genres.

The book also charts Harris's musical developments. During his time on the Whistle Test, he began undertaking a number of trips to America to record music by, and interview, a number of leading and emerging bands and solo artists. Following his departure from the Whistle Test there was a 20-year gap until he could afford to return to the USA. This time to concentrate on the fringes of the Nashville scene and reveal talents like Mary Chapin Carpenter, Slaid Cleaves and a range of new country performers many of whom have achieved growing reputations in this country thanks to the exposure of their music on Bob's late night and Thursday early evening shows.

That 20-year gap was brought about a change in direction at the BBC television and Radio 1 with the advent of punk. Harris's face and style no longer fitted the younger and brasher image the corporation wanted to portray. His exit from the BBC was preceded by a hysterical media onslaught and physical attacks by the worst elements of the punk fraternity.

Although Harris hasn't changed his style to suit commercial expectations, his tastes have evolved. In between the BBC years at Radio 1 and 2, he has worked with a variety of local radio stations from Bristol to East Anglia, the British Forces Broadcasting Services, and been a music journalist. Like his mentor John Peel and contemporaries like Johnnie Walker, he has taken pride in, and displayed a passion for, his music building up a loyal audience following.

One incident in the book highlights the importance to which Harris attaches to his vast and diverse collection of vinyl and CDs, and illustrates the contrast in style and philosophy between him and the play list DJ, Bruno Brookes. Brookes had lent Harris and his partner a considerable amount of money towards the purchase a flat in London. The pair were then hit by the fall in property prices in the early 1990s. Facing bankruptcy, Harris was taken to court by Bruno Brookes who wanted to recover part of the money in the form of Harris's record collection. Bob argued, successfully, that he required the collection to work as a DJ. His programmes were built from this source rather than using the radio station archives. Brookes contended that all programmes were made up of play lists determined by the producer, not the DJ. Harris won considerable support from colleagues and friends who were aware of, and shared, his philosophy to programme making. They knew how much care and preparation he put into lovingly crafting his shows.

This incident perhaps more than any other in the book helps to explain why broadcasters like Bob Harris, John Peel, Johnnie Walker, and Andy Kershaw, endure. The music they play is more important than their image and they stamp their broad tastes on the programme without being dictated to by media executives. It is this musical integrity that typifies what public service broadcasting should be about. It also proves that audiences relish a change from commercial pap and are willing to embrace folk, country, and non-mainstream music if given the chance. Long may the Whispering Years continue.

Lewis Jones

{Ed:- Not our usual fare perhaps but an important book charting the broadcasting career of an influential presenter who treated a wide range of music with due reverence and respect. Reading this has reminded me not only of many excellent Old Grey Whistle Tests but also of Vin Garbutt's tribute to the programme by entitling one of his LP's "The Young Tin Whistle Pest".}

LETTERS



The Public Entertainment Licence Debate

Dear Ken,

Whilst the question/answer article in the last issue of *Folk North West*, dealing with the PEL problem, was very informative, it did not define the action necessary to obtain a change in the law to rid us this iniquitous, outdated legislation. **Pressure upon Parliament is the only course of action.** Apathy will get us nowhere.

It is doubtful whether the threat is fully understood. We should all be mindful that **every** folk club in England (Scotland is unaffected) can at any time fall foul of this ridiculous "two-in-a-bar" rule resulting in the demise of **your** club.

The club to which I belong being under threat, I wrote directly to the Culture Minister responsible, Dr Kim Howells and I attach the reply which I have just received giving the up-to-date position.

If you place any value on your freedom to sing, perform, or just enjoy the folk scene, then take the small trouble to write a letter of objection to your MP. (I am aware that there is the alternative of forming a private club, but I have no intention of monitoring the door to exclude the public at our club.)

Frank Lewis, Hale & Hearty Folk Club.

Dear Ken,

I wrote to David Borrow about the ridiculous Public Entertainment Licensing Law - He passed it on to Kim Howells (Minister for Tourism, Film & Sport) at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Mr Howell sent him this reply.

By all means publish it but please add a request to all your readers to write to their MPs/Councillors etc.

Regards
Graham Dixon

Thank you for your letter of 19 December enclosing one from Mr Graham Dixon about the law affecting musicians performing in licensed premises I appreciate Mr Dixon's concerns about the current legislation relating to alcohol and entertainment licensing which is outmoded and restrictive. As you may know the Government is proposing to introduce a new streamlined licensing system, details of which can be found in the White Paper "Time For Reform" published in April 2000. This can be read or downloaded from the DCMS website (www.culture.gov.uk/new-responsibilitiesliquor-index.html).

I am committed to introducing a licensing reform Bill as soon as Parliamentary time is available. The new proposals offer a more flexible and simplified system of licensing for alcohol and public entertainment and will promote greater opportunities for musicians and other performers.

The current requirement for separate licences for the sale of alcohol, public entertainment and late night refreshment will be replaced by a single integrated system whereby venues will be required to obtain one premises licence to cover all such activities

from the local council. When considering whether to introduce conditions on the premises licence, the local council would be required to obtain any views from the police, local residents and other interested bodies before coming to a decision. This procedure would allow musicians and other performers to submit comments to the council in support of any plans by venues to provide live entertainment. The new system would allow the operator to put forward plans for entertainment activities which local councils would be obliged to consider favourably, and would only be able to impose conditions on disorder, safety or nuisance factors.

Under this scheme, there would be no place for the "two in a bar" rule mentioned by Mr Dixon, which states that no more than two musicians can perform in premises licensed to sell alcohol without that premises having to obtain a public entertainment licence. It has widely been recognized that one performer with powerful modern amplification can generate greater sound levels than, say, a trio of folk musicians. As a comparison, the new system would be very similar to the one currently operating in Scotland.

I should finally explain that the fees currently charged by local councils for Public Entertainment Licences is by law only required to cover their cost of administering the system locally. It cannot therefore be considered as an additional source of local taxation.
Dr Kim Howells MP

[Ed:- Both Frank and Graham are right that we should write to our MPs to express our disappointment that, while everyone seems to agree that the law is in need of updating, no urgency seems to have been given to making the changes. Lobby them to make sure that it takes place during the 2002-2003 Parliamentary Session as it was originally due to take place in the 2001-2002 Session]

...And the Rest

Dear Editor,

How to improve the magazine? Well, for a start we could have some criticism and not just unadulterated praise. Obviously, most of us go to events to hear people we know and like, but a simple list of songs sung and a rave on how good they were makes for very dull reading. And yes, please praise organisers when things go well – they need all the support they can get. But record reviews in particular need a critical ear, and not just be puffs for friends or favourites – at a live session one duff effort will be forgotten but it hits you afresh every time when recorded.

This could be dangerous – one duo stopped talking to me when I pointed out that the last track on the live side of their double tape was sung flat throughout – but another artist assured me that my negative verdict on one of his songs matched his view that it was the poorest track on the record.

Ian Wells

Dear Mr Bladen,

I attach my attempt at a live review in case you think it up to snuff and of interest to readers.

Excellent magazine, by the way, which I have recently rediscovered, and keeps me well entertained and informed while my club-going activities are somewhat constrained by other commitments. Keep up the very good work.

Duncan Neill

[Ed It was]

Dear Editor

In the latest copy of Folk North West, Joe Stead comments on singers altering/not knowing the correct words. I fully agree with him. If Si Kahn had wanted to write about a 'Belfast Mill' he would have written about a 'Belfast Mill'. I can see no point in altering a writer's words, except of course it is a parody. With traditional song it is of course slightly different. One of the joys of traditional song is its infinite variety.

In the specific example that Joe uses "Paddy lay back" it is obvious that the singers did not understand the specific use of the shanty. You cannot 'heave and haul' at the same time (unless you are using a rotary pump) and by its very obvious chorus content 'Paddy lay back' is a Capstan shanty. If you are singing a song about a specific trade with technical terms, it is vital that the terms are understood. At this point I must take issue with Joe. A capstan bar is/was a capstan bar. A pawl is a shaped metal bar which engaged with the serrated base of the capstan to stop it 'walking back'.

Yours faithfully

Ron Baxter

PRESS RELEASES



EFDSS NEWS

November saw the English Folk Dance and Song Society's (EFSS) Annual General Meeting and National Gathering at Cecil Sharp House. The Annual General Meeting serves a number of purposes besides the usual business one – it is an opportunity for members to have a say in the running of the Society, to meet the National Council, to enjoy the many entertainments which are laid on and to award the Society's highest accolade – the Gold Badge.

It was particularly wonderful to welcome the National Youth Folklore Troupe of England (NYFTE for short) to Cecil Sharp House in their 10th anniversary year, where their exuberant and inspired performance was highly appreciated. One member of National Council commented, "It's good to see all these young people looking as if they own the place – because they do." How very true – no one owns the tradition – they simply hold it in trust for the next generation. We can all be content that NYFTE will take very good care of it, and march it proudly into the future. Congratulations to all the members, past and present, and the organisers who have put so much hard work into making NYFTE the success that it is.

Gold Badges were awarded to Roy Dommett, Trevor Stone and Dennis Smith for their unstinting work in the fields of Morris Dance, Sword Dance and Folk Dance – the hearty rounds of applause showed how just these awards were seen to be by the membership present. Unfortunately, ill health meant that Princess Margaret was unable to attend the AGM, but a letter was received from her office, expressing her regret at not being able to be with us. She also mentioned that she would be more than happy to visit Cecil Sharp House again when she has regained her health. A motion wishing her a speedy recovery was passed by all the members present, and we look forward to seeing our President again when she is feeling better.

The evening entertainment was particularly fine with music provided by the English Country Dance Band and Jane & Amanda Threlfall. Song sessions and talks were also underway during the afternoon.

The AGM and National Gathering was preceded by a wonderful talk by the inimitable Bob Copper, who held his audience spellbound with tales of his days collecting for the BBC. "Songs and Southern Breezes" was full of magnificent field recordings, hilarious stories and characters brought to life by Bob's fabulous story telling. If you couldn't get to the talk, and are hungry for some new Copper material, there is a new CD – "Come Write Me Down," available from Topic Records. This is stocked through EFDSS as well; so if your local supplier cannot source it for you, simply get in touch with us. This CD features early recordings of the Coppers with Bob and Ron as well as some later material with Jim and John as well. At £13.99, this is excellent value for money, particularly as it features two huge CD insert books covering both the history and content of the songs and the family. Sharp House (0207 4852206) for more details.

Until next time...

Annie Walker, Assistant Librarian and Web Person.

FOLKUS

I am pleased to report that Folkus has completed its 2001 programme of presenting workshops and concerts throughout Lancashire. Our brief is to celebrate, support, and build upon the continuing vitality of traditional and contemporary folk music, song and dance within the North West.

Folkus staged workshops throughout the county in Ormskirk, Clitheroe, Poulton le Fylde, Burnley, Leyland, and Oswaldtwistle. In addition, Folkus supported the Lancashire Folk & Clog Festival, Fylde Folk Festival, and Lancaster Clocks Back festival by funding tutors and organising workshops.

Folkus presented the touring band Tamarack (Canada) in two concerts and supported Chorley Borough Council's programme of community events by staging a concert in the Town Hall featuring Black Umfolosi from Zimbabwe.

The organising committee are currently preparing a programme of workshops and concerts for the first six months of 2002. Between February and the end of April workshops will be staged in Todmorden, Preston and Lytham St. Anne's.

From May to the end of June, workshops are being programmed for Colne, Garstang, and the Lancaster/ Morecambe areas. With our policy of supporting as many events as possible, within the limitations of our financial resources, Folkus will be providing tutors for workshops at the Clitheroe Folk Festival, Middlewich Folk & Boat Festival, Lancashire Clog & Folk Festival in Oswaldtwistle.

Folkus is also sponsoring the appearance of Louis Killen at the Lancaster Maritime Festival at Easter and supporting a day of youth workshops being staged by the North West Federation of folk Clubs.

For your information, The Arts Council of England is being reorganised. From the 1st April therefore, Cumbria, which has been within the Northern Arts Region based in Newcastle, will become part of North West Arts.

Many decisions have yet to be made regarding how North West Arts will cope with this change. North West Arts has traditionally channelled huge amounts of money to the major orchestras and

theatres in the North West; Northern Arts on the other hand has supported small community projects. Consequently, there is a possible clash of cultural and financial requirements. I am having regular meetings with the music officer in Manchester who will eventually, I hope, tell us how North West Arts will proceed.

To meet this change Folkus, will be presenting four one-day workshops in Cumbria during the year in addition to the workshops planned in Lancashire. These are likely to be staged in the Furness area, Kendal, Carlisle, and west Cumbria.

Folkus will also try and support the Ulverston and the Maryport Festivals.

All this depends on funding of course. After our pilot year of workshops in 2000, we found ourselves without funds until April 2001 when our second application for grant aid was approved; hence, we did have a delay in our operations. However, we have begun the year 2002 with just enough reserves to present our spring programme of workshops and concerts.

The musical disciplines being offered now include the fiddle and English concertina with a range of experienced tutors being available at any one time.

Folkus is now a member of the National Folk Arts Network and is able to pass on information to any readers, folk club, and festival organisers on national matters relating to folk music, if requested.

We have applied for further grant aid to keep Folkus going until March 2003. From that time, I would dearly like to have Folkus recognised as a division of North West Arts, dedicated to Folk Music.

We shall see.

Alan Bell, Chair Folkus

For further information or to be registered on our mailing list contact: The Secretary, Folkus, 55 The Strand, Fleetwood, Lancs., FY7 8NP; Tel 01253-872317 Fax 01253-878382; Email: alanbell@fylde-folk-fest.demon.co.uk

MIDDLEWICH 2002, 14-16 JUNE The Countdown Has Begun.

Partnerships have now been confirmed with British Waterways (Peak & Potteries Region), and the Commonwealth Games Cultural Programme. Details of events on the website as they develop. www.middlewichfolkandboatfestival.com

Folkus workshops will take place on the Saturday - bodhran, fiddle, guitar, and melodeon. Note to federation club organisers - complimentary tickets to the showcase event are limited- first come, first served- see separate ad.

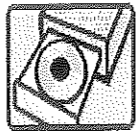
There's free camping for Weekend Ticket Holders. Join Us In June? 'Quality, variety, and good value'? See the ads - then see for yourself. We make just one guarantee at Middlewich- a warm welcome, whatever the weather!

Looking forward to welcoming back old friends, and new.

Dave Thompson, Festival Director.

[Ed:- Welcome back to Middlewich. They have clearly used the enforced layoff well to forge new links and offer us a splendid festival in prospect. Get along to the festival and the showcase]

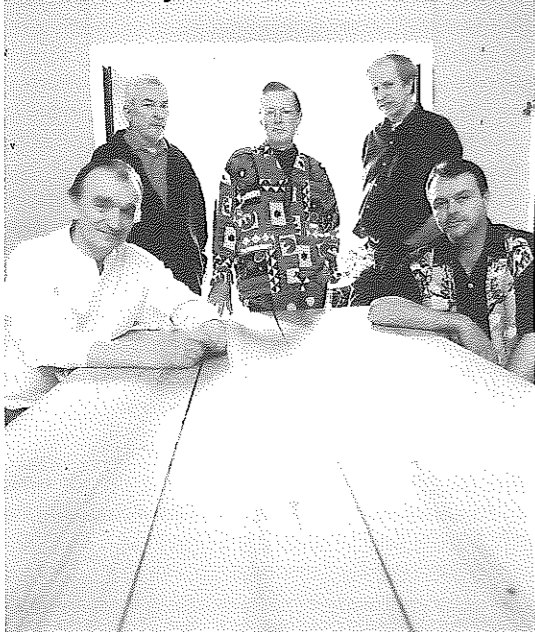
CD REVIEWS



BRASS MONKEY - Going And Staying (Topic Records TSCD531)

I wouldn't like to handle the diaries of some of our Folk heroes. The number of different bands, projects, solo appearances, workshops etc. that are on going gets rather bewildering. As audience members, we have to be careful as to what we are going to see. As a promoter, I have to be clear as to who will be appearing and explaining this to the potential audience. Brass Monkey is the occasional brass driven line up featuring Martin Carthy, John Kirkpatrick, Howard Evans, Richard Cheetham, and Martin Brinsford. A rich mix of folk, orchestra, country-dance, National Theatre and Welsh Guards experience!

Brass Monkey



'Going And Staying' is their fourth record taking on board a break between the second and third releases that was filled by a sort of 'best of' record. It continues the reformation of this project and takes the same approach as its predecessors. It keeps alive the tradition where Folk meets the Brass Band in a country dance - not something that's all that common these days. In some ways, it could be seen as the missing link between the concert and dance settings of Folk music as most see it today. So, it will be no shock for you to find that this album consists of instrumentals which wouldn't be out of place at a ceilidh, alongside songs that you might know, treated far more simply in a concert setting with, say, just a guitar and vocal. On the latter, 'The Doffing Mistress' is most notable with its vocal from Martin Carthy - a song that some of you may know from the work of Anne Briggs or The Silly Sisters. For the dance side, the medley of 'Gathering Peascods/The Rose Tree/Jerusalem' is a classic, whilst the local folk fans will enjoy 'Four Bacup Tunes', performed as a tribute to the Britannia coconut dancers. If all this is some sort of mystery to you, then, think of the opening music to Harry Enfield's programme. If it brings a smile to your face, go out and buy this record because, whether you smiled or not, this is a worthy project.

ROY CLINGING - An Honest Working Man (101RECCD12)

This is a CD that is already attracting some attention in folk circles, including the seal of approval from folk luminaries Roy Palmer and Pete Coe. Chester's Roy Clinging received much critical acclaim for his 1999 debut album, "Cheshire Born" and now follows this up with his 2nd CD, "An Honest Working Man", with 15 tracks of well known and not so well known songs and tunes, including Roy's own composition as the title track. Songs like 'John Barleycorn' and 'Lord Randall' will be familiar to all, but others, like 'Cordial Advice' and 'Davy Lowston', will be less so. There is even a version of 'The Gresford Disaster', the song reputedly collected, but not written, by Ewan MacColl, though some still maintain that MacColl was indeed responsible for its lyrics too. In this instance, Roy tells me that the tune is from a female Scottish traditional singer, and not the one that I, and many of my contemporaries, know. Nonetheless, it is powerful for that.

The album opens with 'The Death of Admiral Benbow', a late 18th Century broadside, about one of our national heroes from nearby Shrewsbury. Abandoned in battle by the Captains of his other ships, he was fatally wounded but managed to have the last laugh seeing two of his Captains, Kirby and Wade, sentenced to death for their cowardice. Roy's fondness for sea songs comes to the fore again with 'Billy Boy' from Stan Hugill's definitive collection, "Shanties of the Seven Seas." The ballad of 'Cruel Barbara Allen' is well known but this version was from Roy Palmer's collection of "Songs from the Wide Midlands." There are also two very well arranged and performed instrumentals, 'The Manchester Hornpipe' and 'The Barber's Pole', both with a surprising jazzy conclusion, courtesy of Phil Hare's inventive guitar work backing Roy's more than competent squeeze box playing. One other pleasant surprise is the inclusion of 2 of Roy's own songs, 'Western Ocean' and 'An Honest Working Man', both written in a traditional style but very distinctive and well worthy of their place in this collection.

The CD benefits enormously from the contributions made by ex Full House member and ace guitarist Phil Hare, fiddle player Gina Le Faux and Roy's wife Mary. That is not to diminish Roy's own vocals and instrumentation, which are always strong, forceful, and listenable. Whilst Roy has perhaps erred more on the better known side of traditional music in his choice of material for this album he has also brought back into the fold, as it were, songs that many had passed over and, after all, it is a New Year and a new generation. The one thing that this album proves is that a good song is always a good song and performed well, as they are here, they will maintain their rightful place as some of the best traditional music you will ever hear. The CD is also attractively packaged, as is Roy's first album, and has an informative and interesting booklet insert. Well-done Roy and long may you continue to research, perform, and preserve this island's traditional musical heritage for the generations still to come. Visit Roy on his web site at www.folkmusic.net/royclinging to order a copy.

Ian Chesterman

THE FRASER SISTERS - Going Around (No Masters NMCD19)

The Fraser Sisters, Jo Freya and Fi Fraser, take on board all sorts of influences, from Tom Waits to French instrumentals. With 'Going Around', they demonstrate a delightful knack of taking on board all sorts of influences and producing a whole that seems remarkably consistent. No doubt, having the engineer of many a Kershaw session, Ralph Jordan, to provide musical support, along with John Tams doing the knob twiddling in the studio, has helped make this the excellent record that it is.

Poynton Folk Festival 2002



29th, 30th & 31st MARCH

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DAY AND EVENING TICKET: (just Sat) £20.00

DAY AND EVENING TICKET: (just Sun) £22.00

Individual Tickets will be on sale subject to availability.

Special Family Rates, Under 10 years free, children 10 - 6 years half price.

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'Cranford'
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For Further Information:
(01625) 874039
(01625) 430149

Within the first five tracks of this twelve track CD, we swing from a Tams influenced opener, 'Going To Leave This Country', to the exquisite Englishness of 'The Watercress Girl', via the French flavour of the 'Sansoulette/Coridino' instrumental medley. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? But, it works like a dream as the CD continues to wander back and forth. It takes in Tom Waits' 'The Briar And The Rose', Cyril Tawney's 'Monday Morning', and 'Yorkshire Romance', a song written for the Jewish seamstresses of New York. There are also some Swedish influences on a tune written by Jo to celebrate the wedding of a friend. There's a tune that comes from Vermont, and a sax featuring on a tune written in honour of a cheeseboard. If this wasn't such a great record, I'd accuse of them of being bonkers or just call them show-offs! Highly recommended.

Steve Henderson

STAN GRAHAM - These Are My Dreams – Own label recording

Stan Graham came to be a full time musician by a curious route. Having spent thirty-six years in the army, he decided to put his singing/songwriting talents to good use, collecting many fans along the way, whilst also being resident at the Black Swan Folk Club in York.

I first came across Stan two years ago at a festival in Scotland and what struck me about him was not only his easy style, but also more over the lyrics and tunes to his many compositions.

'These Are My Dreams', is his debut CD and the songs contained on it are varied in make up, but share those all too forgotten factors on so many recordings, simplicity and singability.

Stan's admiration for Tom Paxton is evident in the opening track, 'Across the Sea', while childhood innocence is the key to, 'Alice', made all the more poignant by the fact that Alice is both deaf and dumb.

We often have to say goodbye to people, whether it be in life or death. Memories remain but the heartache never leaves us.

The beautiful, 'Angels Wings' is dedicated to the late, Eva Cassidy, whose success sadly came too late.

A new song with a familiar title, 'Green Fields of France', we all continue to strive to make our dreams come true, but deep down we know they will remain unfulfilled.

On certain dates in our lives we know just where we were at key moments when time appeared to stand still, 'Paris in the Fall', is one such moment. Stan's wife, Julie, is the love of his life, 'In the Way of the World', is dedicated to her.

We should all regularly celebrate the simple joy of being alive. Our lives are for living to the full and not just to survive like, 'Monuments of Stone'. 'These Are My Dreams', won the Keith Marsden songwriting competition at the Saltburn Festival in 2000, a song that has become very popular in a short space of time. Nobody wants to be alone, but if that should happen, surely we would want it this way, 'Leave Me Gently Please'.

A song borne out of simple human emotions, 'Days Like These', came about with the despair of death and then the joy of birth. Above all, it has a positive message that quickly manifests itself with an audience. A more than appropriate final track is, 'A Soldier's Goodbye', be it a tearful farewell to a loved one or a glance over the shoulder at a career fulfilled.

This album was a real joy to review, thanks to a songwriter who knows how to put over his message. Other artists are already covering a number of the songs and I don't think you can ask for

a better testimonial to your musical skills than that.

For more information ring 01904 758228 or E Mail magpie@telco4u

David Jones

NICK HENNESSEY Pebble & Bone (WFM000729)

Imagine what it would be like to be entertained by a wandering Minstrel, a haunting voice holding you spellbound with a selection of songs and stories (both old and new) interspersed with magical tunes on harp and whistle. This is the impression I have from this CD. I have listened to it, over and over again and I'm sure I will never tire of hearing it.

Nick Hennessey is truly a Minstrel and this CD is a superb collection of some of his songs, stories and tunes.

Thirteen tracks in all here and not a duff one amongst them. We have versions of traditional classics such as 'Jonny of the Brine', 'Black is the Colour', 'Down in Yon Forest' and "Out of the Window" alongside 'Out in the Street' (lyrics by Nick himself) and 'Honest Work' (T Rundgren). There are also a couple of magical tunes and a great story.

On the CD Nick is joined by Stuart Gordon on fiddle on 'Out of the Window' and Phil Beer on guitar and vocals on 'Down in Yon Forest' otherwise the man is on his own (sometimes sensitively accompanied by his harp). Nick has an understated natural singing style with a haunting timbre to his voice which captivates the listener as it weaves its way through the songs.

There are no special effects to distract you on this CD but there again Nick does not need them, the quality of his voice, together with the strength of his selection of songs and musical skill is more than enough.

I would have liked some information as to the sources of the songs which does not appear on the CD cover but this is the only thing I find lacking on this brilliant CD.

This is traditional folk song at its best. Buy the CD and enjoy listening to it over again and then, what is even better, get your club organiser to book Nick Hennessey at your club, you'll be guaranteed a magical evening. I wish there were more like him.

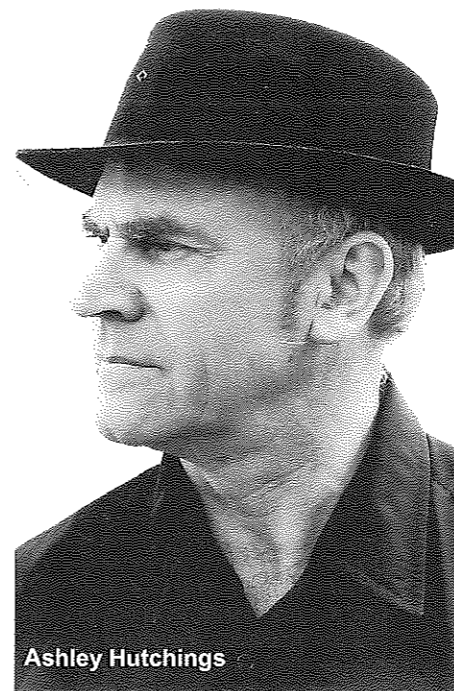
Angie Bladen

ASHLEY HUTCHINGS – Street Cries (Topic Records TSCD535)

Normally working under the guise of the leader of the longstanding Albion Band, Ashley Hutchings has come out from under the covers to provide us with 'Street Cries'. An excellent record that I'm hoping didn't get lost in the Christmas rush for Kylie, Westlife, and any compilation you might imagine. The idea is simple. Take some traditional tunes but give them a modern feel and some modern lyrics that might tempt a younger audience to explore Folk. In fact, after the recent ignorant statements from our political representatives, maybe, educating the older ones ain't such a bad idea, too!

To assist with this exercise, Ashley has brought in a cast that includes June Tabor, Dick Gaughan, Steve Knightley, Vin Garbutt, etc. A tempting prospect for established folk fans alone. In fact, the opening track, 'Doing Time To Fit The Crime' with its vocal from Coope, Boyes and Simpson with their pal, John Tams, is worth the price of the CD alone. Pete Morton comes in next with 'Damn The Day' about the underclass as poor people are

now called. A perfect fit of lyrics to artist. Indeed, this is the pattern through the record. Manchester resident, Helen Watson, is let loose on 'Salford Girls', for example, whilst June Tabor provides the vocal to a stunning 'These Cold Lips' with its simple piano accompaniment and a tale of a lover's death at the hand of a drunken gang.



Ashley Hutchings

The highlights are almost too numerous to mention. Ashley has not only done a tremendous job in matching the songs to the artists but has selected a range of artists from the well known to the lesser known, from the young to the...ahem...older. It really is wonderful stuff. Did I mention 'Three Jolly Burglars' from Vin Garbutt. Well, who else could do that?

BBC Radio 2 listeners recently voted for their all time top 50 folk albums. Ashley Hutchings was involved in five of the top ten. Surprised? Not if you listen to this record. By now, that Christmas record token should be crawling out of your pocket and making its own way to the shops!

Steve Henderson

ANDY IRVINE - Way Out Yonder (Appleseed Recordings APR CD 1049)

Andy Irvine's profile has risen recently with a feature in FRoots arriving amongst the reviews for this album. However, the cognoscenti will be already aware of his talents as songwriter in a classic folk tradition. The new album, 'Way Out Yonder' opens with 'Gladiators', which tells the tale of the battle against Australian efforts to introduce conscription around the time of the First World War. In many ways, a song typical of Andy's desire to raise issues that have ageless principles at their heart. It is followed by a traditional Australian convict ballad called 'Moreton Bay'. These two songs typify Andy's approach ranging, as it does, between strident tunes and ballads, which have the feel of the airs from his Irish homeland.

If the political lyrics are not your cup of tea, you'll find solace in tracks like 'They'll Never Believe It's True/Froggy's Jig'. The former part of this medley with its tale of faeries can be read in a couple of ways and is followed by a delightful jig. If you're unfamiliar with his material, you might be surprised to find that

this is not the only instrumental on the record. The title track itself is a lively number with great contributions on harmonica, fiddle, bouzouki, etc. by his fellow musicians.

In complete contrast, it is followed by nine minutes of epic folk tale in 'The Highwayman' with its black-eyed landlord's daughter, death, love knots, etc. You know the sort of tale. Yes, the length of a track like that and the deep content of some of the lyrics elsewhere means that you'll need to have a good ear for listening if you're going to take on 'Way Out Yonder'. However, an album that shows the maturity of a well travelled and talented singer songwriter will reward you.

Steve Henderson

NORMAN KENNEDY - 'Live' in Scotland (Living Tradition LTCD2002)

This is the newest of the 'Tradition Bearers' series of CDs produced by The Living Tradition magazine team. The CD is compiled from recordings made by Tom Spiers at three live concerts in Aberdeen over two weekends in 1996. Tom has done an excellent job in capturing the atmosphere of the live performances.

So, 'Who is Norman Kennedy' I hear you ask? Well, 35 years ago he was one of Scotland's shining lights of the British folk revival but was whisked (or should that be 'whiskied'?) away by Mike Seeger to sing in America at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. Norman liked America so much that he went to live there permanently from 1966. Thus, he is better known over there for his performances.

Most of his repertoire has been learned orally in true traditional style many of the songs coming from Jeannie Robertson and Ewan MacColl. The songs on this CD, selected from enough material to fill three CDs according to Tom Spiers, are all unaccompanied and sung in the story-telling style, in an accent that is truly Scottish without being impenetrable to us Red Coats! Norman's tonality and phrasing is superb and the music flows easily and simply.

There is a mixture of ballads and working songs; some with refrains to join in with which the audience take up easily and naturally. Classics include 'Nancy Whisky' (AKA 'Carlton Weavers'), 'The Cruel Mother' and an interesting version of 'Rigs Of Rye'. There is one song from Cape Breton called 'Waulkin Song', which is to do with shrinking freshly woven blanketing not taking a constitutional!

That latter song is sung in baffling local Breton dialect (close to Gaelic) but has a delightful rhythmic chorus that makes it accessible.

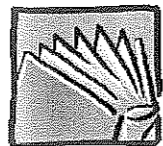
There are only two short but entertaining introductions included, in order to give priority to the 16 songs. Apart from witty introductions, Norman's other talents include weaving, speaking Gaelic and story telling.

This CD is a must for any of you who list Scots songs amongst your 'most wanted' song collections and for those of you who are interested enough to want a first rate introduction to the genre then I can fully recommend this CD as a starter.

For more information about this CD and other recordings in the series you can log on to www.thetraditionbearers.com or phone the distributors Highlander Music Ltd. on 01463 871422.

Derek Gifford

DIARY CHAT



Hello everyone. Just a quick introduction to tell you that I am now the new Diary Date Co-ordinator for what I trust is your favourite magazine.

All future details about your clubs should be sent to me, by the organisers, preferably by email (or phone), to the following location:-

Email — JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com

Telephone — 0151-678-9902

Home — 2 Redford Close, Greasby, Wirral, CH49 2QQ

Unfortunately due to the pressure of his work commitments, Chris McIlveen, my predecessor, has decided to stand down from the role. I would like to say on everyone's behalf — "Thanks Chris for all your efforts slaving over a hot computer to stay ahead of printing deadlines. Your contributions will be sadly missed".

I am glad to say that Bob Anderton has agreed to give me a hand with the task of collating club guest lists etc. That's why those organisers who sit in the top half of the centre page spread sheets have recently had calls from Bob.

If I could kick-off with a plea? It would help both Bob and myself if every club organiser would ensure that they get their quarterly details to me by the copy deadline date which is usually printed in bold on page 5 of the mag.

So what's the news?

New clubs are — Folk at the Manor, which replaces The Albion. After 16 years the Albion Folk Club has changed its name and moved venue to the Old Manor Club, Withens Lane, Wallasey. The same residents George and Gill, Marje, Bill & Co. and Roger, offer a warm welcome, (on Sundays), to friends old and new with weekly singers nights and guests once a month. For more information contact Roger Parker on 0151-638-1987.

Bernard Cromarty has emailed me to inform that he is actively involved in running the Open Door Club, which meets every Sunday at the Bull's Head, Oldham Road, Failsworth at 8-45pm. The set up is singarounds with impressive guests once a month. Look out for their Extravaganza 2 (1st and 2nd June — weekend ticket £18) with numerous guests. No. 3 is scheduled for October. John Price and Pauline Westall are the organisers. Pauline can be contacted on 0161-6813-3618. The club has a website — www.opendoorfolkclub.co.uk.

The Bridge has been replaced by the Red Bull which now meets weekly on Mondays and once a month on a Wednesday.

Alison Parker has moved her club from The Shippons to the Farmers Arms, Hillbark Road, Frankby — same night Monday, from 9-0pm.

Please note also the change of venue for Alison's other club, Deeside. They moved quite a while ago from the Jug and Bottle, Heswall to the Hotel Victoria, Gayton Road, Lower Heswall.

Ali O'Brien (Big Sing) has moved her club to the Wagon Inn, High Street, Uppermill, Saddleworth and renamed it SAFRA

night, (Saddleworth Acoustic Folk Roots). It's still the second Friday with a super extra night in prospect on 26th April when — 'Show of Hands' — are the guests. Book early for this 'acoustic/chance to meet' evening, which will take place at the Conservative Club, Chew Valley Road, Greenfield, near Oldham.

Ali also advises that on Sunday 17th March there will be a Young Musicians' Day at Dobcross School, Dobcross, near Oldham, between 10am and 5pm.

Two new names to the Federation are — Cross Keys and the Buffet Bar, which are both run by Jim Schofield who is no stranger to the folk scene. The Cross Keys is a welcome addition to our diary dates with a very strong line up of weekly guests. The club meets every Wednesday at 9-0pm and has a small capacity of around 50, so be early. The location is — Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Oldham. The Buffet Bar is located — wait for it — (the location that is, not the train), on platform 1, yes platform 1 of Stalybridge rail station and meets every Saturday at 9-0pm. Welcome aboard Jim. May you see many new faces at both venues as a result of joining the Fed.

Pat Batty at Westhoughton has moved house and can now be contacted on — 01257-230508. Please also note that the correct date for Sean Keane is 8th March and not the one printed in the last issue. Two important dates which must be highlighted are March 15th and March 22nd. Both these nights will be held at the Hart Common Golf Club, which is about one mile from the normal club venue. April 26th is the last date before the club closes for the summer golf season.

Jacqui McDonald has also moved and now lives in the South Lakes area. Jacqui's Folk Club continues on the second Tuesday at Sefton Park Cricket Club, Liverpool.

It's worthy of note that Biddulph are using the Daneside Theatre, Congleton for the Blue Tapestry concert on 3rd March and the Tannerhill Weavers on 25th May.

Nigel Green at Accrington Town Hall tells me that after Fairport Convention have appeared on June 15th, there will be no folk artists appearing until September.

A charity concert on 26th April at the Priory Club, Leyland organised by Gregson Lane features 'Trouble at Mill'. The proceeds will be used to support the Motor Neuron's Association.

Northwich are having something of a celebration on March 9th when there will be a Birthday Gala Concert at the Harlequin Theatre.

I'm delighted to say that Judy, Dave and the committee at Porkies have reintroduced the Poynton Folk Festival which will take place on the 29/30 & 31st March at Poynton British Legion club, the clubs usual venue. Have a look for the ad. in this mag. There is a super line-up. Contact numbers are:- 01625-874030 and 01625-430149.

Lastly, regretfully I have to inform you that the following clubs are no longer members of the Federation — Greyhound, Bollington, and Johnson's Acoustic. Folk at the Inn has also closed.

Bye for now. Have a good Spring folk season. See you around.

John Owen

[Ed:- Just a final note to express my thanks to Chris McIlveen for all his hard work for the magazine over the years and to hope that he will keep in touch and in print when time allows]

5th

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SOMERFIELD



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enclosing an A5 size S.A.E (36p) please. www.btinternet.com/~banjo.bill/len.htm

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www.fylde-folk-festival.com

Festival artists booked so far:

Waterson: Carthy (Sat.) Chris While & Julie Matthews. The Poozies (Sun). Dick Gaughan (Sat.) Little Johnny England (Fri.) Chris Newman & Maire Ni Chathasaigh. James Keelaghan (CAN) The John Wright Band. (Sun) Ben & Joe Broughton. Blue Horses.

Debby McClatchy (USA), Artisan, Steve Tilston, Alan Bell Band, Bruce Mathiske (AUS), Strawhead, Anthony John Clarke, Hoover The Dog, Marie Little, Stanley Accrington, Jane & Amanda Threlfall, Louis Killen, Gary & Vera Aspey, Taffy Thomas, Bridget Guest & Roy Wilcock, Captain Coopers Motley Crew, Scolds Bridle, Shake A Leg, Blue C, Thistle, Hot Tamales, Derek Gifford, Cross O'Th'Hands, Trouble At'Mill, Matt Armour, Th'Antique Road Show, Kate Howden & Paul Jones, Brian Osborne, Camellia, Kettle of Fish Band, Rebecca Green, Kinin, Preston & Grimshaw, Beer for Breakfast, Tall Stories, Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Quartz, Paul Wrigley, Tallyman, Ian Gartside Band, Fleetwood Mashers, Festival Ceilidh Band, Tom Walsh, Red Duster, Hugh O'Donnell, Rough Mix, Past Carin', Martin Whittell, Ross Campbell & Richard Hone, Neil Brook, Joe Crane, Martin Ellison, Phil Brown, Frank Lewis, Martin & Fay Nesbitt, Moorland Folk, Katscratch, Spitting On A Roast, Youthwave.

Outdoor Performers: Flipjack Jugglers, Feet First, Fylde Coast Cloggers, Chiltern Hundreds, Stone Monkey Swords, Addison Rapper & Clog, Mossley Rose & Clog, Stockport Morris Men, Stone The Crows Border Morris, Fylde Coast Cloggers.

Comperes: John Bond, Derek Elliott, Dave Jones, Mick Peat, Derek Stanton Clive Pownceby, Jim Smith, Derek Stanton.

Clog Dancers: Pat Tracey, Chas Fraser, Kath Morris, Harry Cowgill, Marguerite & Jennifer Hill, Melanie Barber, Musician Tony Hill

Special Events: A Sea of Ink - Street ballads & the Sailor - Roy Palmer
George Dunn - A Black Country chain maker & his songs - Roy Palmer. Trade Off - Lancaster Trades & Music - Baker Friske & Francis. Cape Famine to Dent - A Trail of Songs - Alan Bell

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**SUNDAY 25TH AUGUST 2002. THE HOUGHTON WEAVERS & FODEN BAND
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**MONDAY 26TH AUGUST 2002. CONCERT ON THE JACINTA TRAWLER,
FLEETWOOD DOCK. 8PM**

**TUESDAY 27TH AUGUST 2002. CAPTAIN COOPERS MOTLEY CREW CONCERT.
NORTH EUSTON HOTEL. 8PM**

**WEDNESDAY 28TH AUGUST 2002. THE GOLDEN JUBILEE CONCERT
MARINE HALL. 7.30PM**

**THURSDAY 29TH AUGUST 2002. THISTLE IN CONCERT
NORTH EUSTON HOTEL. 8PM**