

FOLK NORTHWEST

SUMMER 2002 (JUNE, JULY & AUGUST) £1.50

SILVER ANNIVERSARY EDITION



Fairport Convention - 25 YEARS MEETS XXXV

IN THIS ISSUE

RADIO LISTINGS, LIVE, CD & FESTIVAL REVIEWS

LETTERS, CLUB DATES, DIARY CHAT

PRESS RELEASES, NEWSREEL

REFLECTIONS ON THE PAST 25 YEARS

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26-28 July

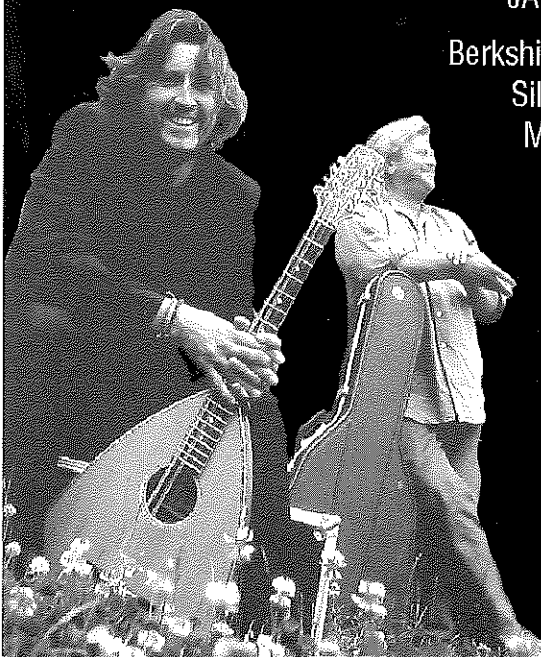
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Folk North West Contact Information



Who do I send information to ?

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

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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

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e.mail: four.fools@virgin.net

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e.mail: kath.holden@btinternet.com

CD's or tapes for review (or reviews of) and live reviews to

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



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EDITORIAL

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Well here we are with Volume 25 and finally in colour on the front cover at least. Elsewhere in this issue you will find some interesting recollections from the birth of the 'magazine' as a 2 page newsletter to a fully fledged magazine ably edited for 20 years by Nigel Firth. Since I am a relative newcomer as editor (one more issue will complete a mere 5 years) the terrible trio of Nigel Firth, Ian Wells and Derek Gifford were press-ganged into action and have awakened distant memories, jogged no doubt by a visit to the archives in the attic. Maybe some of what they have to say will stir half forgotten memories of places, people and events over the past 25 years of folk activities in the North West. Please let us know about the bits that you can remember. If we get enough pieces we maybe able to reconstruct the jigsaw even though we may have lost the box lid.

Our illustrious chairman seems to have stirred a legion of Bram Taylor fans into letter writing action by his review comments. On reflection I must agree that trying to combine a CD Review with a Live Review has not always been a success. From the next issue we will keep the two separate though it may be appropriate to let you know that a CD is available. In addition I would be grateful if more of you were to contribute to the magazine with live reviews and contact David Jones to offer to review CD's so that we may have a greater spread of opinions, styles and names attached to reviews.

CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS



Welcome to this very special edition of the Folk North West magazine, that marks a major milestone in its history. From humble beginnings - a double sided A4 sheet, reproduced elsewhere in this edition - Folk North West is now a well respected and eagerly anticipated read, with a regular and ever growing readership. Much of that is thanks to the hard work of the Federation officers and the many reviewers who give their time and effort freely to ensure the magazine is the best we can produce,

This edition also heralds the use of colour in the magazine for the first time. It may be only the cover initially, but we hope sometime in the not too distant future to extend that to other pages. To reach this significant milestone is a real joy, twenty-five years is a long time to sustain anything of quality and note, a fact that I'm sure gives us all a great deal of satisfaction.

On a personal level I'm delighted that this anniversary has arrived during my tenure in the chair and I would like to thank all my predecessors for the many and varied skills they brought to bear during their time in office. Each contributed to making the magazine stronger and brighter, thus helping to make it what it is today. So it's with great pride that I thank everyone involved, be it writing or reading, because your contribution is vital if this publication is to continue to flourish. I just hope I'm still around when silver turns to gold, as I firmly believe it will.

Cheers for now

David Jones

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



BBC RADIO SCOTLAND FM 92.4-94.7 MW 810

Tuesday to Friday 9.00-10.00pm
IAIN ANDERSON
Tuesday 7.00-9.00pm
CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
Thursday 7.00-9.00pm
TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
Saturday 6.30-8.00pm or 8.00-9.30pm
TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
Saturday 8.00-9.30pm (repeat of Thursday)
TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
Sunday 1.00-3.00pm
THE REEL BLEND presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
Sunday 5.00-6.00pm
PIPELINE presented by IAN MACINNES
Sunday 6.00-7.30pm (repeat of Saturday)
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
LATE SESSION presented by AINE HENSEY
Saturday 9.30-10.15pm
CEILIDH HOUSE presented by KIERAN HANRAHAN
Saturday 10.15-11.00pm
FAILTE ISTEACH presented by DONNCHA O'DULAING
Sunday 8.10-8.55pm
MO CHEOL THU presented by CIARAN MAC MATHUNA

DOWNTOWN RADIO MW 1026

Sunday 10.00-11.00pm
FOLKALPOINT presented by MAURICE LEYDEN

RADIO NA GAELTACHTA FM 93.5/94

Range of Gaelic Music/Language programmes including MORA DIBH. Broadcasts on ASTRA satellite Channel 22 10.00am-12.00pm Saturday and Sunday mornings
Details from www.nag.ie

RADIO TIMES LISTINGS

For Radio's 3 and 4 it is worth close scrutiny for 'one off' programmes/items/short series with folk flavour/reference. Also Radio 3 'Late Junction' Monday-Thursday 10.15pm - midnight (Fiona Talkington, Verity Sharp) include folk at times, as does Andy Kershaw, Radio 3 Friday 10.15-11.30pm. Radio 2's Wednesday evening schedule offers at intervals topic-based series with a folk theme, usually 10.00-10.30pm.

BRIAN OSBORNE

A personal tribute.

Brian Osborne, singer, songwriter and guitarist, died on the 25th March 2002. He was fishing in Scotland when he fell into the sea, but on being rescued was found to have suffered a heart attack.

Brian Osborne was born in Blackpool. After school he became an apprentice electrician with the Blackpool Tower Company. Without fear of heights he was soon working at the top of Blackpool Tower. A workmate told me Brian's favourite prank when working outside the viewing platform was to pretend to slip and fall off to the horror of the visitors. In reality of course, his safety harness swung him back onto the Tower: his prank was soon outlawed by management.

I met Brian when he joined the Fylde Mountaineering Club in the early 1950's and he soon became an integral member of the group of young men who sought freedom and adventure in the mountains at weekends. Brian became a very fit fell walker, and in time became a competent skier and learned to climb.

I recall Brian and I following two very experienced mountaineers up the north face of Heivellyn on a winter ascent. At the summit we were met by a furious club chairman who gave us a severe dressing down for climbing without using proper safety procedures. On looking back down the face we realised how lucky we had been. We never made that mistake again.

Brian had taught himself to play the guitar and in 1956 we formed a skiffle group which we called "The Marauders." Brian played lead guitar and we shared vocals. We only had one gig. I don't think we were very good.

By this time we were singing in the Lakeland pubs at weekends. The repertoire being American folk songs and Woody Guthrie but we were beginning to hear and learn local songs too. To earn extra money, Brian was also playing a few Blackpool Working Men's Clubs with his very fair impersonation of Val Doonican.

In 1960 we heard of an embryonic Folk Club in Blackpool and went along where we met "Big" Pete Rodger and Stuart Robinson. This was a major turning point in our lives as we founded the Blackpool Taverners Folk Group and the club.

In those heady days of the revival, the Taverners were soon performing three and four nights a week and the group settled into a routine. "Big" Pete was the lead singer. Stuart was the lead instrumentalist. I played concertina and Brian became the ballad singer. Brian developed a unique style of playing which suited his voice and choice of songs very well. To a generation of folk fans Brian was the Taverners ballad singer with songs such as "The Queen of Hearts", "Ramble Away" and "The Shearing's not for You."

In the recording studios or on radio or television Brian was always very professional. He always began his songs on cue and played and sang faultlessly. Mind you, Brian did have his moments. He could never remember keys and he used to irritate Stuart no end by asking what key the next group song was in even though we had been playing the songs for years!

In his search for songs from the North West, Brian found a poem written in the 1920's by two brothers, Milton and Alan Lambert who lived in Padiham. Entitled "Old Pendle" (Pendle Hill

dominates the Ribble Valley in Lancashire) Brian added a verse, composed the tune and sang the song. In the 1970's, Brian was very pleased to receive the compliments of the surviving brother Allen Lambert, who enjoyed the song very much. "Old Pendle" is now a folk club standard in Lancashire.

After twenty one years of working together, producing six LP's, appearing in thousands of clubs, in concerts and on radio and television, The Taverners disbanded after an appearance at the Royal Command Performance in May 1981.

Brian continued to co host the Blackpool Folk Club with "Big" Peter Rodger and also began a solo career. He recorded his first solo album "Ae Fond Kiss" which was very well received. When the club closed Brian continued to sing and support local gatherings on the Fylde Coast. Still a member of the Mountaineering Club, Brian walked the hills and skied with a group who holidayed in Italy every January. The local mountain restaurants have guitars and at the end of skiing for the day, Brian sang for the enjoyment of all nationalities.

Brian always sang at the club's annual reunion. At our last meeting in the Lakes, he remarked on how we had come full circle. Forty years on we were back in a Lakeland pub where we had started.

In September last year, Brian was walking on the Isle of Skye when he complained of breathlessness and chest pains. In the autumn he had a triple heart by pass operation which was very successful. He recovered very quickly and was soon walking miles every day.

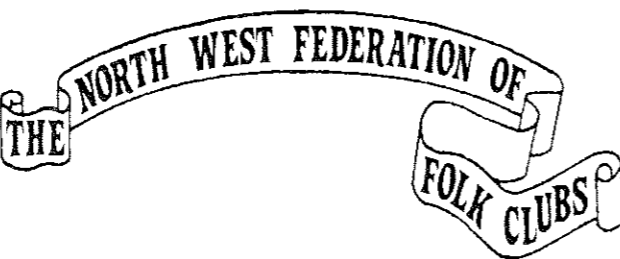
In early March Brian sang at the Ingleton gathering and just two weeks ago we had discussed how big a role he wanted to play at Fylde this year. Brian appeared with the Taverners at the first Fylde festival in 1973 and performed at every one since.

Brian is survived by his widow Jean, and daughters Elaine and Diane and three grandchildren

With the death of Brian Osborne I have lost a life long friend and shall miss him dearly. Our world of folk music has lost a life long supporter and a fine singer of folk songs.

Alan Bell.

Brian Osborne. Born 6th April 1938. Died 25th March 2002. Aged 63.

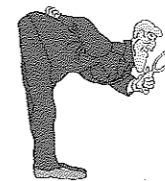


THE AIMS OF THE FEDERATION SHALL BE

The promotion of Folk Music in the North-West by:-

- 1] Joint publicity of the Member Clubs
- 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'

LIVE REVIEWS



JAMES KEELAGHAN at St Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Standish, 2nd February 2002.

Opening the evening's entertainment was Pete Abbott. His last appearance at the venue was contributing to the launch of Anthony John Clarke's latest release. Indeed, Pete's 'Another Evening In' is included on that album. Second number in, he returned that compliment with a version of Anthony John's 'You Never Know What You've Got Till It's Gone'. There were also covers of Kieran Halpin and Steve Earle though he also played a couple of his own songs. I'd like to have heard some more of the latter though his competence on guitar offered some compensation. In the end, I concluded that there's either a butterfly emerging or a moth, I wasn't quite sure.

Sure enough, when James Keelaghan started his set accompanied by Oliver Schroer on fiddle, you knew these guys were in full flight. A couple of songs with excellent singalong choruses, 'Red Winged Blackbird' and 'Hillcrest Mine', won the audience over immediately. Clearly masters of the mood, they took the audience into the eerie territory of 'Wood Smoke And Oranges' with some tasty fiddle creating the tension. 'Message To The Future', a song about those secret messages left in inaccessible places, - intelligent graffiti, if you like - continued the gentler mood.

Then, they moved into traditional territory with a song based on the Van Diemen's Land tales, 'Henry's Downfall', which had been written at the request of James' 84-year-old father. James' foot stomping set the tone throughout. Already, you'll recognise that Keelaghan knows not only a variety of styles but also how to structure an entertaining set.

So it continued, as James stepped out of the limelight for Oliver to show off his fiddle playing talents on 'A Million Stars', a tune complete with pedal effects which took the music somewhere out in the distant night. The set closed with two chorus songs, 'Captain Torres' and 'Mirabeau Bridge', bringing the tempo back up. The former managing to squeeze in an off mic rap and more fiddle gymnastics while the latter featured a non-stop change of a broken string which was pure entertainment in itself. This was an excellent lesson in how to structure your set and not let anything get in the way.

The second set started with old favourite, 'River Run', and, yes, he had to do 'that trick with the guitar string', again. Dave Jones' introductory comment proving that another of his skills is fortune telling. The chat after this song suggested no set list - hard to believe - but true! It should have been a stuttering start after the guitar string mishaps but it didn't stop a confident move into a traditional tale of the Quebecois, 'October 70'. Then, it was time for a chorus with 'Sweet Grass Moon'. Thereafter, it went on with consummate professionalism at every corner. 'Sinatra and I', about a dog, came complete with howls from James and whimpers from Oliver's fiddle. Through memories of a Mexican lover, Oliver's 87-year-old father's favourite rocking chair, a force five storm where wind met fire to disastrous effect, to end with, you guessed it, as fine chorus song in 'Gladys Ridge'. The encore of Oliver's singalong fiddle tune (yes, that's right), 'All The Little Children In The World', was inevitable and genuinely justified. They had the walk off stage to perfection as the audience sang along.

I know the reappearance of James Keelaghan on these shores after 4 or 5 years absence had been keenly anticipated. As I'd never seen them before, my expectations had been set far too high. I'm pleased to tell you that those expectations were met. Don't miss them next time around and let's hope it's not such a long wait.

Steve Henderson

FAIRPORT CONVENTION at Burnley Mechanics, 5th February 2002 and 'Fairport Convention XXXV' [WRCD028].

Folk North West may be twenty-five years old, but Fairport Convention are enjoying thirty-five years of existence, continuing to draw audiences with their unique brand of presentation and enthusiasm. It was standing room only as Simon Nicol, Dave Pegg, Ric Sanders, Chris Leslie, and Gerry Conway launched into their opening number, 'Walk a While', which was a gentle start by Fairport standards.

It was clearly going to be a night of some nostalgia, as they stirred their dedicated followers with some of their famous back catalogue numbers that have kept the band on top of the pile for so many years. A 1970 flashback came in the form of 'Banks of the Sweet Primroses', re-recorded thirty-one years on for the current album. Chris led the singing and performed a duet on mandolin and fiddle with Ric, on a song that is the very lifeblood and the original ethic of Fairport. 'The Happy Man', comes from the village of Adderbury where Chris lives. They have a day of Morris dancing each year in which he participates!!!!

Simon sang, 'The Crow', written by one of the band's favourite performers, Anna Ryder. Great rhythmic togetherness is the key to 'My Love is in America', inspired by Chris's book, 'The Hidden Note', about three generations of an Irish family who left their country to find work.

It was then straight into the opening track of the new CD, with Simon leading on 'Madeline'. Simon's voice continues to be the recognisable feature of the band and he superbly performed solo on 'The Deserter'. As is traditional, an instrumental ended the first half, with Ric's composition, 'Everything but the Skirl', written for and performed by duelling fiddles; it was closely followed by 'Let Their Be Drums', which ended with a piece of Rank stupidity!!

Nigel Stonier wrote the opening number of the second half, 'Talkin' 'bout My Love', which gave way to a completely different mood in 'The Light of Day'; Chris wrote this number which has a medieval feel but is very much a song of today.

'Expletive-Delighted', remains the bands' only fully instrumental recording to date, 1986 in fact; 'Portmerion' is a new interpretation of a number about the home of Patrick McGooan, aka the Prisoner, the mystique of that magical world encapsulated.

Written by Richard Thompson and Dave Swarbrick in 1969, 'Crazy Man Michael' is certainly one of my favourites, Simon's vocals brought it to life. Time for another album title track, this time 'The Wood and the Wire', the vital ingredients of the band's tools of their trade. Chris learned 'The Hexamshire Lass' from the singing of Bob Davenport, which is performed to the memory of the former at the Jug O' Punch folk club in Digbeth, Birmingham. Another stunning blazing fiddles duet on 'John Gaudie', a tune celebrating the life of the legendary Shetland fiddler.

One of the band's most popular songs over many years has been 'Who Knows Where the Time Goes', which they are

currently revisiting. Written by Sandy Denny when she was just seventeen, it takes on a new persona with each passing year. I think Sandy would have thoroughly approved of the band's interpretation. The different rhythms between the verses is a feature of the rendition of the popular traditional song 'Matty Groves', a fact that makes this song for me completely bearable.

In this world they say you can only be assured of two things, death and taxes. Well make that three - a Fairport encore of, 'Meet on the Ledge'. It's an anthem that has stood the test of time; if they had failed to perform it, there would definitely have been life-threatening consequences for five highly skilled musicians.

Fairport remain at the cutting edge of their profession because they know exactly what their audience want and gives it to them in spades. Zimmer frames, walking sticks, and bath chairs might feature heavily in any 50th anniversary celebrations (and I don't just mean on stage!). They have a set of fans whose loyalty and love of good music is the real driving force behind the bands unqualified success.

David Jones

BLUE TAPESTRY at St. Michaels School, Chorley, 4th March 2002.

As the title of the band suggests, this tour was inspired by the music of two women who have had a profound effect on generations, and whose songs continue to cast a spell decades later. Pete Zorn, Maartin Allcock, and Neil Marshall were in the musical engine room for this special evening. For Carole King read Julie Matthews and for Joni Mitchell read Chris While, who provided such outstanding performances that at times I was expecting them to say, Tonight Matthew, I'm going to be...

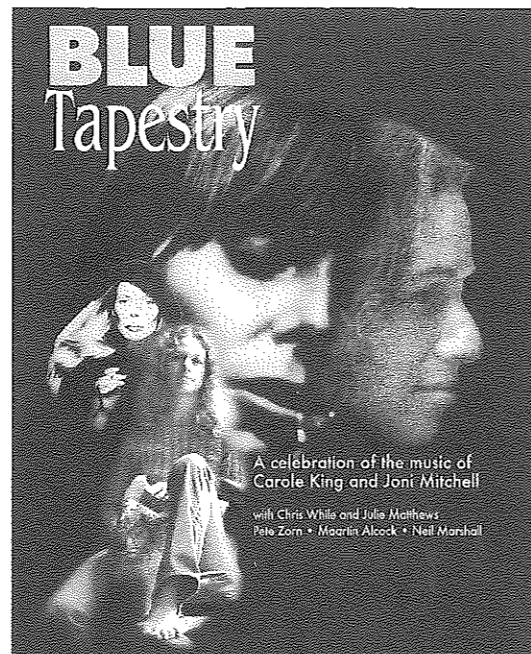
It was straight on and straight in, with Julie singing 'I feel the Earth Move' followed by the contrast of Chris on 'Help Me'. The third number was instantly recognisable, the hugely popular 'It's Too Late'. If their was one criticism of the opening three numbers, it was that the sound needed more clarity, but once that was sorted out we were off and running on a nostalgic roller coaster ride.



'Amelia' and 'Beautiful' gave way to 'Little Green', written by Joni about a child she couldn't keep and remains a classic off her 'Blue' album; as you would expect, it was superbly performed by Chris. Julie sang 'So Far Away' before 'California' gave the audience another flashback to their past.

One of the highlights of the first set for me was Julie's rendition of 'Carey' with great harmony vocals from Chris and Pete. To take us to the break, Chris sang 'In France They Kiss', taken from Joni's 'The Hissing of Summer Lawns' album. The French theme continued after the break with 'Free Man in Paris', beautifully performed with great harmonies from Julie.

It was always going to be a night of memories. Which is your favourite track? Where were you when you first heard...? What does...mean to you? All questions which helped make the atmosphere so electric. The one thing about performing covers is you have to have the right balance between the original and your own interpretation, something that was never in doubt from first note to last.



'It's Gonna Take Some Time', a hit for the Carpenters, was followed by 'Coyote', before Julie sang one of Carole's greatest ever songs 'Will You Love Me Tomorrow'; the songwriter would certainly have approved. Pete Zorn on clarinet provided superb backing for 'Tapestry', whilst on either side Chris provided 'Case Of You' and 'Raised On Robbery'.

As a teenager, Julie became a huge fan of Carole King after watching her perform in Manchester. Indeed Carole herself wrote unbelievably powerful songs from the age of fourteen, including such classics as 'Crying in the Rain' and 'Locomotion'. Chris and Julie were obviously totally immersed in the music as Julie demonstrated on 'Smackwater Jack'. Chris backed by superb saxophone then treated us to the evocative, 'Natural Woman'.

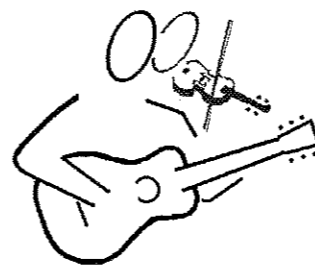
The final song of the evening fell to Julie who shone on 'Where You Lead'. Never have encores been so richly deserved, with the choice proving a real triumph. Chris sang one of my all time favourite Joni tracks, 'Big Yellow Taxi'. You couldn't end a tribute to Carole King's music without her most identifiable song, 'You've Got a Friend', which Julie performed flawlessly.

It was Chris and Julie's second collaboration away from their work as a duo within four months. It proved once more that these two highly talented individuals deserve a bigger stage on which to display their musical dexterity. Joni Mitchell and Carole King may have provided the inspiration, but to replicate two hugely popular and talented artistes takes no little courage and requires real dedication. That's something that sets Chris and Julie apart from their contemporaries.

David Jones

BATTLEFIELD BAND at Accrington Town Hall, 17th March 2002 & 'Happy Daze' [COMD2085].

Since I last saw the Battlefield Band some two years ago there



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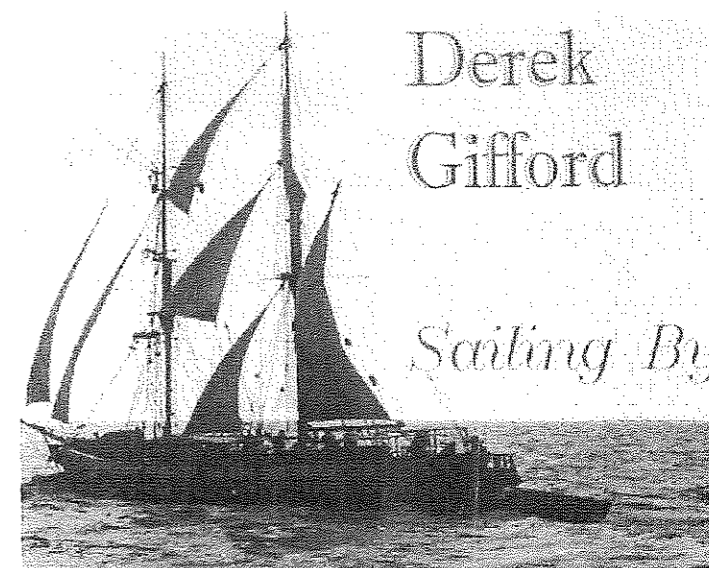
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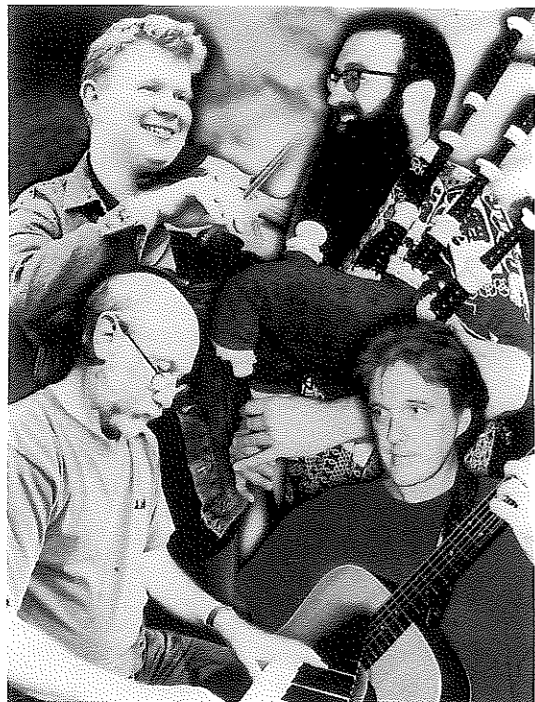
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have been personnel changes. Alan Reid and Mike Katz continue to drive the band on, Alastair White has taken over on fiddle from John McCusker, and Pat Kilbride rejoining the line-up some twenty five years after leaving, taking over from Karine Polwart. It's thirty-three years since they first burst onto the scene; that enthusiasm they initially showed has continued apace, despite various musicians coming and going.

The instrumental number, 'Walking Nightmare', kicked the evening off and it's in this guise that Battlefield excel, with Mike Katz showing off his expertise on the bagpipes. Next, a reworking of the 'Carlton Weaver', with Alan leading the vocals on 'Nancy's Whisky', a subject most Scots know a little about! Fiddle and pipes combined for another instrumental, 'Clan Coco', before Pat led on a song he learned from Martin Carthy during a long wait for a train on Leeds station. A pleasant song about inheritance, incest, blood and guts, they are all there in 'Lord Randall'.



Alan spent his formative years growing up in Kilmarnock and wrote 'The Riccarton Tollman's Daughter', after seeing a photo of men curling on a frozen lake in the 1860's. Another set of tunes, 'D.J. McLeods', led us nicely into the final song of the half; it came from Pat and is about his current place of domicile, 'Camden Town'.

The bagpipes were again much in evidence as the second half got underway with 'The Merry Macs', another tune set superbly executed. Alan wrote 'Jeannie Deans', the story of a paddle steamer that plied her trade on the Firth of Clyde forty to fifty years ago. Memories came flooding back with the song 'Rick Rack', written by Gerry Rafferty and sung with Billy Connolly when they performed as the Humblebums. Alastair returned to his roots with 'Mas Ann Gam Mealladh', which he performed flawlessly.

Written in the early '80's 'The Dear Green Place' was the nickname given by locals to Glasgow. Alan traced the city's history and there was plenty of material; it is now eleven hundred years old. Bagpipes and fiddle then combined on 'Twenty Pounds of Gin' before, by complete contrast Pat performed 'Henry My Son', about London's east end.

The final curtain came in upbeat manner with 'Jesse Ventura's

Reel'; to be precise, he is now governor of Minnesota but would like to be president of the USA! The beat continued into the encore with 'Andy Renwick's Ferret', a set of bagpipe tunes that had the audience clapping and tapping furiously.

A night in the company of the Battlefield Band is a real uplifting experience. Their enthusiasm is contagious, demanding the audience to respond. It's a recipe that never fails to excite. 'Happy Daze', the new CD, continues in that vein with songs and instrumentals in equal measure. But, as with each of the bands' recordings, there is always an edge to the musicianship, and it's that one important feature that keeps the band on top and in demand. Finally, for Pat Kilbride, it couldn't have been an easy night as an Irishman in a Scottish band playing a gig in England on St. Patrick's night!!!!

David Jones

GARVA at Westhoughton Folk Club, 22nd March 2002.

Garva is a band that has graced the folk scene for a number of years. As the name would suggest, their music has a strong Irish flavour, with all three band members, Tony Gibbons, Terry Coyne & Lesley McGough having family ties with the Emerald Isle. All three of them excel on their chosen instruments, cittern, whistles and piano and that combination set the scene for the evening with the opening instrumental, 'Wild Geese'. This particular evening was laced with nostalgia, because it was their final appearance, with Tony and Terry off to link up with the John Wright Band.

A job down the mine for many in the first half of the 20th century was the only option upon leaving school. Many thrived on the life, following in the family tradition. For others, it was a job they feared and saw as life threatening; 'Schooldays Over' paints the reality of it all. Terry led on 'Exploration', a song charting the Irish workers exodus away from their native home to find work, or was it exploration?

Lesley's vocals are used all too rarely in my estimation, but on 'Two by Two' she got the chance to shine and show off her versatility as a singer and keyboard player. To many music lovers, James Taylor is a real hero; his songs have proved an inspiration to many and 'Copperline' is one such number. Another instrumental interlude followed with 'Lord of the Dance/Si Beag Si Mohr', performed flawlessly. To take us to the interval, the mixed metaphors of 'Taglione', which I'm reliably informed is an Irish flat cap.

Two tunes combined 'McGoldrick's/Bucks', to start the second set, and they led into 'My Old Man', a song poignantly sung by Tony. 'Afternoon Delight', was a No.1 hit in the 70's pop charts, but for me the a cappella rendition by Garva is equally, if not more compelling than the original. 'Eagles Feather', is another tune which shows off Terry's skilful whistle playing and then by way of contrast it was into 'Frozen Man', which as the title suggests is a song of discovery of the beautifully preserved body of an explorer. Tony never tires of telling audiences that Mayo is the most fair of all the Irish counties; here he extols its virtues in the 'Green and Red of Mayo'.

American singer/songwriter, Tim O'Brien, introduced 'Into the West', to folk fans everywhere by way of his fine album, 'The Crossing'. The song charts the story of Irish emigrants in the 19th century. With the end of an era now in sight, with great aplomb Tony performed the Beatles classic 'I Will' and was rewarded with the loudest round of applause of the evening.

No Garva concert is ever complete without the classic tune 'Pinch of Snuff', which rounded off a memorable last gig for a trio which

has added much to the folk scene for so long. There was an interesting choice of encore with the Kirsty MacColl/Pogues classic 'Fairytale in New York', followed closely by 'Carolina in my Mind'.

We wish Tony and Terry well in their new venture as members of the John Wright Band, as they spread their musical horizons. Lesley's undoubted talent means she will always be in demand, both as a musician and singer. Garva may now be gone but I guarantee they will never be forgotten.

David Jones

CHRISTINE COLLISTER at Biddulph Folk Club, Staffordshire, 28 March 2002

Biddulph Folk Club has established a reputation of putting on a guest list that can match the best. Such has been the growth in support for the club that a number of guests now have to be accommodated at larger venues away from the upstairs room at their traditional Biddulph Arms home. When the room is full - as it was for one of the best female vocalists to have graced the folk circuit - it illustrates the constraints of this venue. With no stage platform at the front, those seated near the back find it hard to get a clear view of the performers.



Incredibly, it was 16 years ago that Collister first emerged on the folk scene, forming an acclaimed seven-year partnership with Clive Gregson, and a high profile role as part of the Richard Thompson Band. It's now nine years since the musical clean break with Gregson during which time, arguably, neither artist has matched separately the magic of their attainment as a complimentary vocal duo; Collister's voice was a perfect vehicle for his songs. This was Collister's final date of a British tour that trailed her most recent CD release, 'An Equal Love', and previewed several new songs (described as 'guinea pig moments') from her soon to be recorded, eagerly awaited, new album.

Since the split with Gregson, Collister has searched - not always successfully - to find an appropriate direction for her outstanding vocal talent. From starting out as an interpreter of others songs, with the odd self written number thrown in, she is now someone confident enough to have written, or co-written, almost half the songs that appeared on her last album and accompanies herself

on acoustic guitar.

Of her four solo albums to date - and a retrospective that throws in a few rarities - 'An Equal Love' is her most accomplished, bringing to the fore her ability to perform with ease across a range of music categories, from folk and blues to jazz and soul, matched with innovative accompaniment and production values.

Local residents Liz Holland and His Worship And The Pig played the warm up role. The latter have attempted to adopt the mantle of artists like lamented duo, Cosmotheke, without matching the subtlety of the musical hall monologues and double entendres, for which the West Midlands duo was renowned.

When Collister arrived, she made an instant impact with an unaccompanied rendition of the traditional spiritual, 'Motherless Child'. Very early on, we were treated to the title track of her most recent album. The poetic, very personal, and almost iconoclastic, imagery that pervades the song was inspired after falling in love with her current partner. 'Waiting for my prayer', another self-penned song from the last album, continued along the personal and spiritual drift; how to tackle one's own demons and having the confidence to go forward.

The assertively titled, 'Kicking in my stall' (co-written with close friend Helen Watson) preceded a voice-alone rendition of one of Richard Thompson's finest love compositions, 'How will I ever be simple again?' The first half ended on a high with a Marvin Etzioni/David Williams song, 'Can't Cry Hard Enough', which appeared in acoustic format on the 'Songbird' compilation and then reworked, to stunning effect with a full blown production, on "Equal Love."

Collister is comfortable and fluent singing Jazz, Soul, Motown, Ballads or Folk, exemplified by the wonderful Helen Watson song, "Lowish time", the Billie Holiday classic, "God Bless The Child", and "Whole Night Sky" by one of Canada's finest performers and songwriters, Bruce Cockburn. Then came the encores - the rousing and welcome journey into Motown nostalgia with Smokey Robinson's "Tracks of my Tears" and the wonderful Sara MacLachlan song, 'Full of Grace', which brought the evening to a breathtaking conclusion.

This wasn't the best live performance I've seen by Collister but, on this occasion, she had to compete with the irritating and insistent heavy bass vibration of the downstairs jukebox. For a performer relying on an a capella delivery and acoustic guitar, this severely hampers their ability to produce their best and dissipates the enjoyment of the audience. Undoubtedly, her voice is her greatest instrument and it was the acapella arrangements that got the hairs on the back of the neck rising inexorably.

Lewis Jones

GARY & VERA ASPEY at Wrexham Folk Club - 4th April 2002 '... travelled the road' (GBCD 001 2001)

It seems such a long time since I saw or heard Gary & Vera Aspey and therefore it was a double pleasure to actually see them live at our club and listen to their first album to be released for many a long year. I found myself asking two questions - why had I not seen them more often and why had it taken so long to get back into the recording studios, because I know they have never stopped working over the years? The answers may be that, in a way, they outgrew the folk clubs whose narrow confines were not sufficient to provide them with a reasonable living. They went on to play the concert stages of the World and have become involved in drama and workshops.

However, with age has come a kind of nostalgia for their roots

and having, as Gary says, "reinvented" themselves, just like the prodigal son, they are returning for a new generation of folk fans to enjoy their unique brand of entertainment with a purpose.

The CD release has also been a labour of love and is long overdue. It encapsulates what Gary & Vera are all about whilst never quite being able to put across the highly charged and entertaining live performance that I witnessed at our Club in April. The CD opens with Mike Harding's classic "Waiting for me Pay Day", followed by one of my favourite tracks, Gary & Vera's own tribute to another great Lancashire character, Fred Dibnah, "Knock 'em down Dibnah". Written, as Gary says, in a "Cotton Eye Joe" style you can even line dance to it, and just to prove it; Gary did it at our Club! With backing including "Breeze blocks" and the authentic sound track ending on a tumbling chimney, plus a great singable chorus line, it is great fun.

One of two instrumental tracks on the album is the well put together "Archie's Fancy, Lancashire Hornpipe & Dumbarton's Measure", played by Vera on the English Concertina. Did you know by the way that this is the only genuine English instrument - another piece of Gary's historical research passed on to the audience. If you feel like melting down your pooch the resultant "Dog Fat" is supposed to be a cure all for various ailments, but watch out for the RSPCA knocking on your door! After another Gary & Vera composition, "I'm Glad I Was Born Over Here" there follows one of my all time favourites, "Over the Lancashire Hills". I have loved this song ever since I heard Simon Nicol sing it on his solo album. It has great lyrics, a memorable melody, and a strong chorus - the perfect song - and Gary & Vera do it justice with their own interpretation.

The traditional "They Don't Do It Now" must be one of the funniest songs on the folk circuit and it certainly had everyone rolling about at our club, especially with Gary's facial expressions and gestures and extremely funny asides during the song. "Wasting Time" is another G & V song and I guess we've all done it, one way and another. Then comes one of the old Tom Topping Band's favourites, "Song for Bowdoin" or "You're Bound to Go Sailing". This is also a great song that benefits from the backing of Dave Howard on Mandolin/Bass Guitar and Jackie Burke on violin. The second tune on the album "Spinning Jennie" is all Gary & Vera's own work and if you listen carefully the pace picking up during the tune reflects that of the machine that was claimed for his own by Richard Arkwright, which he reputedly stole from Thomas High, a local inventor, in the 18th century. Another interesting piece of historical research here by Gary.

"Man on the Road" is also paced to emulate the slow roll of the caravan's wheel with a traditional style tune and a good chorus proving again that Gary & Vera's songwriting talents are now coming to the fore. "River Run" by James Keelaghan is another folk club favourite telling of a river slowed down by a dam and equating this to our own lives being slowed down over the years. Finally, they visit the past for the last track, "What Was The Price of Coal". This was originally recorded in 1979 on their third topic album and is brought bang-up-to-date by the addition of an extra verse.

The recording was made in County Kilkenny, Eire in May 2001 and praise should also be given to some excellent backing from David Howard on guitar, bass guitar, mandolin and tenor banjo, Jackie Burke on violin and Suzannah Blackwell on keyboard, amongst others. The production too is crisp and well defined and the packaging and notes clear and informative. The album is available at good record shops or from Gary & Vera at www.garyandveraaspey.com or Email info@garyandveraaspey.com.

respected duo whose stage presence has never dimmed over the years as I witnessed when they sang "They Don't Write Them Like That Anymore", followed by the encore of "Icy Acres". This brought to an end one of the most enjoyable, entertaining, and informative evenings that we have ever had at Wrexham Folk Club. Try and catch their live act but also buy their CD because, believe me, Gary & Vera Aspey are back in style though, to my mind, they have never really been away, just biding their time and just like the old days, they left us wanting more.

Ian Chesterman

FESTIVAL & EVENT REVIEWS



ODYSSEY TO AUCKLAND

Our Odyssey began, I suppose, the day I was made redundant.

After thirty years in a drinks group, a new and dynamic Managing Director decided that I was a human resource surplus to his plans for the future. A deal was struck and I took early retirement.

Now Christine and I had decided many years ago that when I eventually did retire, we would take time out to go where we could enjoy our liking for high mountains, wilderness and folk music. So on the 19 January this year, our Odyssey to New Zealand and the Auckland Folk Festival began.

Like Odysseus we had adventures along the way. We became tourists in Los Angeles and the tour bus driver was a black Jamaican out of work actor who had been brought up in Chorlton cum Hardy and knew Blackpool and Fleetwood well. At Santa Monica beach we found thousands of people on the waterfront being entertained by dozens of street singers, musicians and clowns. A group of people were line dancing on roller blades. Nearby an enclave of Hippies sang and played terrific songs; they were locked in time. The men had long grey beards and flowing robes covered with symbols of peace. Their women had long grey hair with 1970's clothes, their nearby Volkswagen van was painted in a fantasy of colour. Sad really. Rebels without remorse; rebels without a cause.

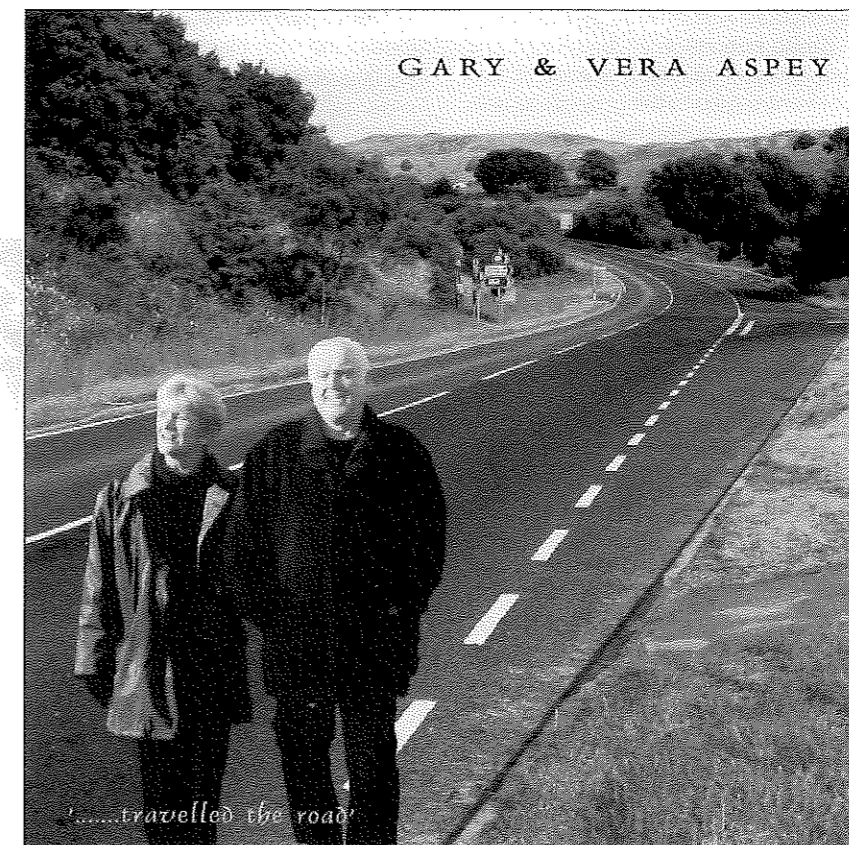
At the Universal studios after a long day of exploration and amusement we found refuge in an Irish bar. In spite of all the various film music being broadcast at deafening levels throughout the huge theme park, the young people in a nearby square only got up to dance to the very catchy song "Soggy Bottom Boys" from the film "Oh Brother Where Art Thou" (If you like the songs of Woody Guthrie and the country music of the 1920's and 30's then this is the film for you).

We said goodbye to Paul, our Jamaican friend, who had ridden himself of his Lancashire accent to speak like a young Richard Burton, and continued our Odyssey to New Zealand.

Eventually, in a newly hired camper van and suffering jet lag, Christine and I arrived at the Auckland Folk Festival on Friday 25 January. There is no AFO in the Southern hemisphere so by

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email we had arranged to pay for our tickets at the entrance. However, the festival committee had discovered that we organise Fylde and invited us to be their guests.

The festival is held on the Kumeu Showground, a forty minute drive North from Auckland. Used for agricultural shows, the campsite was flat and neatly marked and divided by roads that were named, such as Cecil Sharp Avenue, F J Child Road and Alan Lomax Boulevard. The venues included three marquees of various sizes, a community centre next to the ground, all with PA and the Barn – a large shed normally used for storage, but a great place in which to stage "Come all ye's". Except for the community centre, all the venues were without seating so everyone took their own or sat on the grass.

All festival-goers camped or used camper vans. The site had many portaloos and even a portashower unit. There is no accommodation available in the small nearby community of Kumeu, which boasts two small grocers, a butchers shop and a liquor store – a most important outlet, as we discovered the festival was dry. The festival committee and festival-goers had decided years ago not to have bars on site so everyone took their own wine or beer. We quickly followed suit.

We soon found what a friendly festival it was. Within fifteen minutes of our arrival and packing up, we met an expatriate Brit who invited us to join their group for a chat and a beer. We found that many festival-goers grouped together to sit, talk, sing and play. When the campsite was full we could hear different styles of music and song from different areas of the site. Indeed, apart from the major concerts, this is what most festival-goers enjoyed doing. This Auckland Festival is very similar to how festivals were in England in the early 1970's.

The festival president, Roger Giles, compered the opening Friday night session in the Barn with various local singers performing to an enthusiastic audience. At the same time a Ceilidh was taking place in the community centre with music by Twisty Willow.

Our own Pete Coe ran a dance band music workshop on the Saturday morning that was followed by advanced Guitar, Old Time Dance, Bodhran and Recorder workshops, with Sue Coe teaching Appalachian Flatfoot dance steps.

There was a kids' session and the City of Auckland Morris danced happily. Many of the artists were new to us. It was very interesting to listen to singers such as Sonia, passing through on her way home to the USA and also to the a cappella group The Revelators, singers Denny Stanway and Jon Hooker, Roger White. The good Lancashire lad Les Barker, who was on tour before making his way to California, was his usual hilarious self and his concerts were always full. Rua also appeared and there was a concert by the Auckland Bluegrass Club. We ended the day by singing with Lew Black and his Home Brew and Drinking Songs session. Lew supplied the home brew.

A speciality of the festival is the Blind Date Concert. Devised by Jenny Kilpatrick, performers are invited to submit their names which are drawn out of a hat on the Saturday and groups are assigned together. The group then arranges music or songs and rehearses their choice, before performing on the Sunday. The random draw means performers of all styles of music must work together to perform as a group and the results can be very imaginative and very funny. This event has been adopted by many festivals in New Zealand and Australia.

On the Sunday morning Sue Coe ran a very crowded and successful Yorkshire Longsword workshop. Roger White, Pete Coe and Angela Fox appeared in concert and the Maritime Crew

ran a shanty session. The final concert featured local singers together with Les Barker, Pete Coe and Rua. Rua group were founded in Edinburgh but had been based in New Zealand for some time and chose this concert in which to make their final appearance before disbanding.

On Monday 28 the festival wound up with a "Packing my Things" singaround with all the committee and local enthusiasts later meeting at their Folk Club in Davenport in the evening.

Roger Giles and his committee are to be congratulated on running a very friendly, laid back festival full of charm and character and good music.

Our Odyssey continued.

I achieved a lifetime ambition and drank a beer in the bar of the Marlborough Hotel in the old whaling station of Russell in the beautiful Bay of Islands. Russell was once called the "Hell Hole of the Pacific". The Marlborough and Russell and now very genteel.

At Rotorua we attended a Maori concert. The professional troupe danced, told stories in Maori – translated for the audience – and sang. I was intrigued to learn that the Guitar had been introduced to the Polynesian peoples of the Pacific by English missionaries in the 19th Century. The instrument was swiftly absorbed into Polynesian music, cultures and traditions.

We drove through a vast wild area called the Desert where they filmed "Lord of the Rings". A truly terrible place.

I panned for gold by the winding Shotover river in an abandoned gold camp. The atmosphere of the camp and the gold rush time is brilliantly captured by Paul Metzgers in his song "Farewell to the Gold".

We went to Milford Sound. It is truly an awesome Fiord with a mountain called the Mitre rising 5000ft vertically out of the sea. I spent an hour discussing whaling songs with the young skipper of the small cruise ship. He told me Captain Cook had sailed past the Sound and that it was a sealer called John Gunnow from Milford Haven in Wales who became the first European to land and so named the Sound, Milford. John Gunnow also named a local mountain the Lion, because it reminded him of the Lion sign outside his favourite pub back home.

The stuff of heros. The essence of folk song.

We walked to the flakier at the foot of Mount Cook and watched the summit snows change colour in the sunset.

On our last night in Christchurch we found an Irish pub called "The Bog". It was a Tuesday and the night all the local musicians gathered for a session. There were over fifteen in the band and they played the standard Irish repertoire with relish and gusto. Mind you, I don't think Ewan McColl would have liked their version of "Dirty Old Town".

So our Odyssey to New Zealand came to an end.

We came home via Hong Kong. A visit of curiosity for me. Fifty years ago as a conscripted soldier I passed through our ex colony to serve in the Korean war where I met Derek Elliott – but that is another story.

We enjoyed being in New Zealand which is a very beautiful place. We enjoyed the quality of the music and the songs. We enjoyed the almost unbelievable friendliness of the people we met.

With the growing awareness of the need to preserve and perform native Maori music and songs and with the expatriate Brits enthusiastically singing and playing their native songs, Folk Music in New Zealand is thriving.

Alan Bell

Footnote: The Auckland Folk Festival is always at the end of January. The organisers can be contacted at email tricia@aucklandfolkfestival.org or you can visit the website www.aucklandfolkfestival.org

We had a tight budget so we made our own travel arrangements through a ticket agency who also arranged rooms where required.

THE CENTURY'S PEOPLE at Marine Hall Fleetwood, 2nd March 2002

At last, folk music used as a catalyst, themed to embrace the stories of Fleetwood, Blackpool, Wyre, and the Fylde coast over the last one hundred years.

Thornton Cleveleys Brass Band, conducted by Sandy Blair, and Fleetwood Choral Society, conducted by a colourful Stephen Carlson, were a delight to hear. Piano arrangements by John Chadwick, who scored and arranged the songs for "The Century's People," were splendid. David Pearce, a local journalist and historian, penned the narration and he has written a book entitled "The Century's People" He was ably accompanied by Dick Gillingham, another local historian. David Jones is an excellent compere with clever wit and turn of phrase and he ensured that links worked smoothly.

Scolds Bridle [Sue Bousfield and Liz Moore] are two women who have been singing for many years. Their style has endeared them to folk audiences. The Green family has worked hard over the years in the cause of the folk revival. Their approach is always professional. Dad Eddie Green, a competent musician, has passed this on to his son, Andrew, and daughter, Rebecca, a lovely singer.

Then there's the legend himself, Alan Bell, whose idea it was. A lifetime of knowledge and ballad writing is there for all to enjoy. Alan is without doubt the foremost Lancashire ballad writer of our time. He keeps on rolling them out. "Letters from Wilfred" was very poignant. It was a tribute to Wilfred Owen, the war poet killed during the last week of world war one in France. This is Alan at his ballad-writing best. All the songs, music and lyrics, were penned by him and they show the strength and depth of Lancashire's best balladeer.

I thank each and every one of the company for a thoroughly enjoyable evening and recommend it as a classic of our time.

Derek Stanton

LANCASTER MARITIME FESTIVAL, Easter weekend, March 2002

Once again, the festival met the challenge of funding and provided four days filled with maritime material at venues across Lancaster and as far as Morecambe. The spring tides posed another problem on St George's Quay, but the weather proved kind and the River Lune just topped the quay wall and rose no further.

The marquees behind the Maritime Museum presented street theatre and Punch and Judy. It's wonderful to see St George

emerge from the George and Dragon to begin the Pace Egg Play. In the pubs, the shanty groups defeated the background noise, whilst the museum provided two quieter stages. The evening concerts in the Library and Ballroom of the Royal Kings Arms Hotel were as distant as could be from the hardships of a life at sea.

A sense of history ran through the festival this year. Cyril Tawney and Louis Killen recalled the early days of the folk revival, Louis remembering Ewan MacColl making the Radio Ballads. Roy Palmer gave an illustrated talk on Bob Roberts, and the spirit of Cicely Fox Smith was everywhere. It would be easier to say who did not sing one of her knowledgeable verses. Stan Hugill, of course, looked down benevolently on the shanty groups.

Among the special shows, the New Scorpion Band led by Tim Laycock was notable for 'Beside the Seaside'. They also took the award for greatest variety of instruments, stretching from concertina to strings and from pipes to bassoon. Dave Webber and Anni Fentiman and Johnny Collins were at the top of the bill but local performers were plentiful too, including Hughie Jones, Derek Gifford, Geoff Higginbottom, and Th'Antique Roadshow. Scold's Bridle represented the fishing industry with 'We are the Women left on the Shore' and Red Duster covered a different topic in each of their three spots, including Sir John Franklin's tragic search for the North West Passage.

The museum held displays of ropework, knots, and ships in bottles and the talks gave an extra insight to the lives of sailors. Roy Palmer described the press gang and the grisly business of cannibalism at sea. A passage round Cape Horn with Chris Roche of the Shanty Crew was far more appealing.

The highlight was the final concert at the Dukes Theatre. Tom Lewis and Sid Kipper were perhaps strange shipmates but each contributed to a great evening. As ever, Stormalong John brought the festival to a rousing end, inviting all the performers onto the stage for a mighty chorus of the 'Farewell Shanty'.

Henry Peacock

POYNTON FOLK FESTIVAL EASTER WEEKEND

A small group of us decided to revise the Poynton Folk Festival, after it had lain dormant for seven years. It was a tall order and there were many sleepless nights wondering if the folkies would remember and make that return journey. There was no need to worry as they came and supported each event from the children's, circus skills to the main concerts.

Our kick off was Friday night with the Folk Club, hosted by Arthur Wakefield and American guests Ginny Hawker and Tracy Schwarz. Guesting the main concert were Chris While and Julie Matthews, who gave an outstanding performance to the thrill of their fans.

Saturday the sun shone, which brought out the early birds to watch the dance displays performed by Adlington Folk Dancers and Morris Men.

The afternoon concert guests were also mainlining the main concerts in the evening, with a few additions. Can you imagine having to choose between Marie Little and Ken Nicol in one venue and Nebula and Vin Garbutt in the other.

Sunday had the usual singarounds etc and an afternoon concert which were all well received. The evening proved to be a night to remember with Gentlemen Soldier running a folk night to 200 people and the main concert with the two greats Mike Silver and the Albion Band. The latter was electric and one I won't

forget in a hurry.

Tonight we are having our first meeting to decide on next year's event. This one will be a difficult one to follow, but we can only try. Why not book it in your diary for Easter next year.

**Judy
Sad Pig Band**

**MUSIC IN THE CASTLE FESTIVAL at Benmore Centre,
Dunoon, Scotland and MACLEAN's REAL MUSIC BAR,
Dunkeld, Perthshire, Scotland**

This was the third 'Music in the Castle' and was organised by Lorna and Dave Dewar, who run Troon folk club. What an excellent job of organising it they did. The Benmore Centre is situated in Dunoon, a few miles from Holy Loch on the Firth of Forth. The 'castle' isn't in fact a castle but a beautiful old stately home once owned by the Younger family. It sits in the middle of Younger Botanic Gardens, a local beauty spot, amid acres of cultivated gardens where 250 species of rhododendrons and giant redwood trees abound. With daffodils also in season it was a wonderful sight to behold. The venue is also an 'outward bound' centre with kayaking, abseiling and hill/gorge walking available for the more energetic. My group consisted of 'Brass Tacks', (Buddy, Mike and myself), my wife Angela, Rose Mundy (ex-Brass Tacks) and Calan Cross a talented musician from Birmingham.

We arrived at the Centre on Good Friday evening and received a very warm welcome. Suitably lodged in our youth hostel style rooms, once refreshed we made to the real ale bar and common room. The total number of visitors to the festival is generally governed by the available accommodation in the centre - 100, although non-residents can take part in the event also. The intimacy of the festival was immediately obvious as, in no time at all, it seemed everyone knew each other.

The Chairman of our Federation, one David Jones, was present and soon assumed control of an opening singaround of high quality that went on into the early hours despite everyone having had a tiring day of travel. A Ceilidh band - 'Canned Haggis' - and the highly skilled mainly traditional band, 'Cross o' th' Hands', from Derby played a major part. The following morning the full board arrangements gave us all our first taste of communal eating in the dining room. This again helped to foster familiarity among us all. By the way, the standard of catering was excellent.

During Saturday, three workshops took place - fiddle, run by Sarah Mathews from COTH, guitar, and song writing. We attended the latter two and learned some useful skills from Glaswegian, George McGill (guitar), and Stan Graham (song-writing). Our tutors had obviously prepared well for their 'lessons.' A self-generated visit to nearby Pitlochry (and its unique salmon run at the damn) was our next port of call. We didn't see any salmon though - too early in the year.

Back at the Centre, later that evening a Ceilidh was held locally at Uig Hall. Minibus transport was provided from the Centre so there were no problems with the dreaded drink/drive laws. I understand everyone enjoyed themselves although the dancing area was a little tight for space at times. Thereafter we saw Saturday into Sunday with another high quality singaround.

On Sunday most of my party embarked on an extremely pleasant walk up the nearby Puck's Glen. Our guide was a gent from New Brighton, Wirral, would you believe, who had moved to Scotland over thirty years ago. Small world hey? With cobwebs blown away, we paid a quick visit to the local hostelry and later prepared for the Sunday evening concert.

Compered in his usual inimitable style by Dave Jones, the excellent four piece "Cross o' th' Hands" topped the bill. From their performances at the singaround, "Brass Tacks" provided support with a few songs followed by the aforementioned singer/songwriter Stan, (a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the Catering Corps). No jokes about killing his troops with the standard of his food please. Stan is resident at York's Black Swan Folk Club. Incidentally, Vin Garbutt has recorded his excellent song 'Sarajevo'.

The audience was 'in tucks' when Dusty Miller - Scotland's answer to Braveheart Mel Gibson - appeared on stage wearing sunglasses with Scotland's national flag thereon. I think that was the only resemblance, but a lovely man nonetheless. A wonderful night was had by all before another singaround ensued back in the common room. The numbers were considerably lower now. Was tiredness setting in or were some preparing sensibly for their long journeys home the following day?

The final morning saw everyone preparing to depart but not before a doorstep photo call. We then regretfully went our separate ways with new friends made and wonderful memories to cherish. There is no doubt that we have found a gem of a festival here, which, apart from the distance to travel, has no negative points. I commend it to you all. Further information can be obtained from Lorna and Dave on dave@cultural-connections.co.uk or telephone 01292-313205.

With heads full of music, 'my lot' then headed off in a north-easterly direction and a two-hour drive to the lovely town of Dunkeld. The purpose - a two-night stay in Dougie MacLean's pub - 'The Taybank', (Music Pub of the Year 2000). This one-time bank premises opened its doors as a pub in June 1998. It sits immediately opposite the bridge over the River Tay, which has provided Dougie with much of his musical inspiration. Having seen him in concert at Birkenhead's Pacific Arts and Exhibition Centre a few weeks previously, an excellent source advised us that the great man would in fact 'be about' at 'The Taybank' over Easter.

On our first night with fingers crossed, we tentatively started up a session in the corner of the bar. In no time at all the 'place was up'. Imagine then our delight when, suddenly Dougie appeared. Casual as ever, he picked a fiddle from off the wall, sat down with us and along with his wife Jenny on piano, joined us in our revelry. This eventually stung Buddy into camera action. "We now have the evidence to prove it, your worships". Objective achieved.

Dougie's place is a must for a visit. The whole premises are, as one person put it to me, 'rustic but very clean'. So, don't expect central heating and trouser presses in your rooms. The breakfast part of B & B is continental style breakfast with cooked meals available in the bar between midday and 8.30 p.m. Oh yes, and what about the beer? My favourite was 'McEwans 80/-'.

The venue has become Scotland's (if not the world's) specialist 'stovie bar'. Everywhere you go there are MacLean memorabilia and mementoes of Dougie's travels. A feature in the bar is a large selection of antique cine-cameras on display around the walls. The first floor has the 'Music Gallery', which is the focal point of nightly 'learning sessions' on guitar, woodwind, and fiddle. There are even art workshops for the local youth. Mosaic, pottery, charcoal drawing, and jewellery making, also takes place there. On Friday nights, the 'Taybank Acoustic Music Club' meets in the 'Music Gallery'. Martin Carthy and Kieran Halpin have recently appeared there. Live music performances can also be heard from here via the Internet. Tune into www.taybank.com

A few minutes walk from the pub is another MacLean

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establishment, 'MacLean's Art & Music Gallery', in Cathedral Street, near to The Cross. A full range of Dunkeld Record's CDs, cassettes, videos, songbooks, T-shirts and posters etc, complement a very impressive exhibition of original watercolours by Jenny MacLean. I must say that Dougie and Jenny are backed by a very friendly team of staff, who work very hard in the background to ensure that all visitors have a wonderful time. We certainly did. We can now safely say that we have "been there, seen it and have got the T-shirt". It is on our 'must revisit list' already. More information can be obtained by visiting the abovementioned website or if you prefer, telephone 01350-727340.

John Owen



Hello again everyone. So what's happening?

New Clubs

I wish a hearty and warm Federation welcome to four new clubs. They are the "Flying Picket" which can be found at the top of Hardman Street in Liverpool city centre. Jim Peden is the organiser and, on Wednesdays, the club hosts weekly singers and musicians nights starting at 8.30 p.m. Hughie Jones (ex-Spinners) is one of the residents. At the bottom end of Liverpool town centre is the "Bluecoat Arts Centre", which is located in that architectural gem, the 'Bluecoat Chambers' in School Lane. This venue hosts a variety of arts concerts that include the presentation of folk, roots, jazz, and world music. Niamh Parsons and Iain Matthews (ex-Fairport) have recently appeared there. Look out for more details in the autumn edition.

A late addition to our ranks is "Leigh Folk Club" who meet monthly on a Friday at the Conservative Club, Railway Road, Leigh. Pauline Dowsett (01942-604603) has Anthony John Clarke as the guest on 21st June. The club will be closed in July and August but will reopen on 27th September with Nebula as the guests.

An even later addition is - "Jonkers Folk Club" - situated at 9 Chapel Street, Llangollen. John Spicer owns and runs the premises, which is a small but delightful restaurant. A Tuesday night - guests only - venue, its seats a maximum of 45. 'Show of Hands' appeared recently. Jon Harvison and Saskia Tompkins will appear on 11th June and Anthony John Clarke on the 25th. Admission prices include supper at the interval and discount bookings can be obtained by booking in advance. Give John a ring on 01978 861158.

As we gain three new members, unfortunately I have to report that four clubs have cancelled their membership. They are, Hazel Pear, Jacqui's, Verse & Worse, and Cockermouth. It is always very sad to see this happen but thanks to Nick Tamblin, Jacqui MacDonald, Sheila Mellor-Barnes and Terry Haworth for your membership. Perhaps if public support returns you may consider rejoining the Federation?

New venues

"St Anne's Acoustic Roots" have a new venue and continue to meet on Tuesdays at the - Civil Service Sports and Social Club, Shepherd Road, St Anne's-on-Sea.

"The Hole in One" is moving and is soon to become "The Clarence", on 5th June. Meeting on the usual night each week, (Wednesday), Ann Green and Co. will move lock stock and barrel, (including the licensees), to the new venue which can be found on Preston New Road en route to Blackpool. There is some uncertainty about the commencement date as extensive refurbishment is going on at 'The Clarence'. Visitors to the new venue should ring Ann/Eddie first before travelling.

"Ruthin Acoustic" has moved from 'The Castle' to 'The White Horse' at Llanfair DC, near Ruthin.

Guest Cancellation

Alistair Russell was due to guest at "Swinton" on Monday 3rd June. This booking will not now take place but will be re-arranged for the future. A replacement guest is still to be confirmed.

New Club Contact

Joe Ryan (0151-531-9273) has taken over from Tony Gibbons as organiser at "Maghull". As it sold out weeks in advance last year, it is prudent to point out that this year's date for the 'Maghull Day of Music' is Saturday 9th November.

Special Events

"Open Door" is holding their second 'Extravaganza' event on 1st and 2nd June. The principal guests are Dave Burland (1st) and Bernard Wrigley (2nd).

Pat Batty at "Westhoughton" has arranged a special concert, which will feature 'Maddy Prior's Girls' and 'Auld Triangle'. The event takes place on Friday 31st May at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Blackrod, near Bolton; Commencing at 8 p.m., tickets are £12 and can be obtained by ringing 01257-230508.

If you have already read the centre pages, you will have noticed that Julie Matthews is performing solo at the Biddulph Arms on Thursday 6th June. The total proceeds of this event will go towards helping Christine Collister's nephew, (who has cerebral palsy), obtain Dolphin therapy in America. Admission is £8. Are there any other performers/organisers out there who would like to assist this cause? Eric Cox also wishes to remind those attending the Biddulph Town Hall concerts - on 4th and 11th July - to "bring your own food and drink".

Ken Bradburn at "Carlisle" announces that the "Tannahill Weavers" will be appearing at the Stanwick Arts Centre on Saturday 1st June, (box office 01228 534664). On 21st June, at Ken's club, Nicola Reed & Mike France will launch their new CD - 'Westward Turning'. Thereafter, with "Brampton Live" festival taking centre stage on 19th to 21st July, the club will close until 6th September when James Keelaghan guests.

By the way, at "Brampton", "Parkgate" will host one of the four-hour club sessions on the Saturday, during which the main guests will be 'Brass Tacks', 'Elbow Jane', (which features Richard Woods a former Fylde Festival Performer of the Year winner), the comedy group 'The Tanners' and master-class guitarist and singer/songwriter 'Ken Nicol'.

On Friday 21st June, "Trouble at Mill" are appearing at The Lowther Pavilion, Lytham (tel.no.07715-042379), along with the "Brindle Brass Band".

Steve Henderson ("Mr Kite Benefits") has another charity event lined up (still to be confirmed) called 'Music-Go-Round'. It is due to take place at St Michael's School, Chorley on Sunday 28th July. Artists pencilled in are Martin Simpson and Alistair Hulett, plus Lil Fi (Australia) and Eyuphuro (Mozambique). Two more acts are to be added including a major name. Phone the box office on 01257-515599 for more info.

Festivals

As some clubs close for part of the summer season why not visit a festival? A variety of festivals have been brought to my notice.

I am delighted to see that the 'Middlewich Folk & Boat Festival' is again on the calendar after falling foul of foot and mouth restrictions last year. It will take place on 14th to 16th June. If you fancy a pint of real ale, plus music, why not visit the 'Accrington Beer and Music Festival' that runs from 19th to 22nd June at the Town Hall. A festival with its own local ale, Dent Brewery, takes place in the beautiful Dent Dales from 21st to 23rd June where Martin Carthy is the headliner on the Friday evening. Tickets can be obtained from - 01524 582803.

The weeklong 'Lymm Festival' commences on 29th June and runs until 6th July. The 'Four Fools Festival' takes place from Friday 28th to Sunday 30th June. The fantastic Canadian band 'Tanglefoot' are back in the UK and appear on the Sunday. They can also be seen at 'Maghull', 'Northwich', 'Standish', 'Clarence', and 'The Bothy'.

"Biddulph's" 'Folk in the Park' will again take place in the delightful Biddulph Grange Country Park on Saturday 13th July. The guests will be 'Toss the Feathers', 'Z-Funk', and 'The Flatville Aces'. If the weather is good - and it usually is - this event is a must. Don't forget your food hampers and chairs (and perhaps even champagne) as the audience 'picnics in the park' at this excellent amphitheatre-shaped venue. Tickets can be obtained from 01782-514896. Saddleworth Festival takes place on 19th to 21st July and Rhuddlan on 2nd and 3rd August. Fylde Festival weekend is 30th August to 1st September and one for your autumn diary, Swinton Festival will take place on Friday 25th and Saturday 26th October.

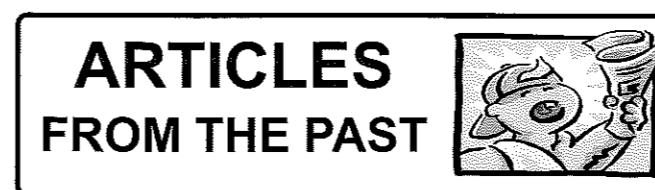
New folk club - venue wanted on Wirral

If anyone has any suggestions for a suitable folk club venue on Wirral please give me a ring on 0151-678-9902. I will pass it on to my enquirer.

That's all for now folks. Have a fantastic summer season.

NB: Please remember - all information regarding club guests, singers nights etc, advanced dates, special events, residents, cancellations and anything at all of interest should be sent to myself, at the following location: -

John Owen, 2 Redford Close, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 2QQ; tel. no. - 0151-678-9902. If engaged try mobile. no: - 077-909-31555; Email - JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com



AN EDITOR'S REFLECTIONS...FROM 1978

I really can't believe that it is more than twenty-four years since the very first magazine, but here it is, Vol.1 No. 1 February-March 1978. I hope the editor has seen fit to include a facsimile of this first edition on another page (p21 top left). You will see that there were just 14 clubs (including two entries for Poynton) and it was a 2-page magazine.

It started life as a duplicated magazine printed by me on an old Gestetner duplicator. Everything in the magazine had at first to

be typed or cut directly onto a wax stencil. Gradually the appearance was improved by the addition of hand drawn headings and other illustrations.

We began eventually to print the magazine with Letraset headings and word-processed text, although no photos were possible. The final improvement came when we invested in a Desktop Publishing package and began to use photographs of artists inside the magazine.

In the early days we tried a number of different date formats for how many issues a year there should be, and when they ought to be published, before settling on a rather unusual arrangement. This gave us two off three-month issues and three off two-month issues per year. This continued for many years, which gave us two unique features - the only magazine with five issues years, and the longest magazine title in the UK (probably). We eventually found a shorter and snappier new title and changed to a more sensible four issues a year.

There have been numerous attempts to elicit some response from readers, as some issues, it seemed, had fallen into a black hole from the complete lack of response we received! The most successful of these have been the unintentional ones. A long time ago we used to print a humorous cartoon about Morrismen that gave rise to little comment, until one issue when a number of people said the cartoon was 'degrading to women', and the resulting correspondence ran for several issues. Conversely, we were given five copies of a triple video of "The Lonesome Dove" - a classic Western series - and we ran a competition to give them away. We had only one entry; all the other published winners were false! The videos made several appearances at Car Boot sales before they were all disposed of.

Over the years until we changed to a photographic cover, we've had a number of cover artists with their own ideas of what should go on the cover. (you can see some of them on page 21 of the magazine) We've had Morris Dancers, Folk Singers, a tableau of the months ("Spring comes in like a Lion & out like a Lamb" was one example of this genre), reinterpretations of classical paintings, and even a series of Tarot cards! My favourite of all time, however, is the one we last used in May to August 1983, which shows a man trading his pinstripe suit, briefcase, and shoes for patched denims, guitar, and sandals to go to a folk festival (p21 top right). Among those who have contributed covers are Ian Sutton and Irene Allen.

Finally, I can't write an article about the Newsletter without thanking those without whom this would never have happened. All the clubs who have stood by us since the early days, (are there any still going of that original 14? *) even when the magazine was late or even occasionally non-existent. The unstinting support of the various chairmen of the Federation, including Derek Gifford, Ian Wells, and the late, and much missed, Dave Day. I must also thank Kath and Paul Holden for taking on a lot of the administration and financial aspects of the magazine, allowing me to just edit & produce the magazine.

I must also thank the new Editor, Ken Bladen, for taking over producing the magazine, which he has made an extremely good job of. And finally... my thanks to all those who have contributed articles over the years and are far too numerous to mention in this brief article.

Nigel Firth (First Editor)

* I notice the current issue lists 57 clubs, but I don't think there is a single survivor from those original 14, unless someone out there knows differently. I wonder then, which of the current clubs has been a member the longest? Perhaps the organisers would like to write in and tell us?

MEMOIRS OF A FORMER FED CHAIR

I was once asked what being chair of the Federation was like: "It's like trying to run an association of anarchists," I answered. Folk Club organisers are stubborn and opinionated by definition. Stubborn, or their club would have folded long ago. Opinionated? Well, they all think their club is the most important of them all, and those who also perform (and a good MC is also a performer, even if they don't sing or play as well) need to have a healthy dose of performer's ego. Meetings were always entertaining – if only in retrospect – and I enjoyed good tempered arguments about what was best for the clubs as a whole.

For much of the time I collected and collated the club dates for the FedMag. This is the worst job of the lot – worse even than being treasurer. At that period, one club organiser (Annie Morris) was booking guest artists over 12 months in advance and one (the late Big Pete) reckoned he'd once booked someone 5 minutes before he went on. Most clubs fell somewhere between these extremes, but many could only give two months information with the third appearing as TBA. (One club organiser swears the new junior reporter on his local paper wrote "and on the 17th the exciting band TBA are appearing at ..."). I see things haven't changed all that much!

Trying to get hold of club organisers to chase up dates was a nightmare - no one then had Email, few even had answer-phones. Most had a day job and then were out most evenings at their own club, supporting other clubs, or indeed performing. Folk minded partners were usually out with them, and partners who weren't folk minded weren't always that helpful ... When you consider how much money some organisers put into their clubs from their own finances, as well as how little time they spent at home, you could hardly blame their spouses for being disgruntled.

I tried to visit the clubs in the Fed but even then, we were far flung: I never made it to Cockerthorpe or round to North Wales. I also never made it to the club that staggered on for years with a good venue, persistent organisers, who were also the residents, and very, very small attendances. Another nearby organiser, who had had lots of venue problems, said "I'd love to have their venue, and would be happy to go in with them, but only if they'd stop singing." Apparently, their regular audience routinely arrived late to avoid their opening set, so they began to start the evening later, and then their canny regulars arrived later still, so they put the start back again ... until eventually sensible people stopped going. They obviously never realised why or, surely, they would have started the evening with others and slid themselves on later. Just occasionally, running a folk club looked suspiciously like an aural version of vanity publishing.

Venues: ah, the joys of cramped back rooms, strange, unsigned staircases, painful chairs, in pubs without car parks surrounded by double yellow lines, the fag smoke yellow décor. The new landlord who hadn't been told about the folk club by his predecessor. (The worst offenders were managers appointed by the breweries who were squeezed so hard on turnover targets that they'd rather keep one drinker in the front bar by leaving the juke box on than please those once a week weirdoes in the back ...). The bar staff who barged in to clear glasses regardless of what was happening.

The audience members: those who sang well and would take away the tempo from the performer if they weren't careful; those who sang badly and didn't know or care; those who had come to listen to that fine booked guitarist, and wouldn't sing at all; those who arrived late with instruments and looked surprised when they couldn't open the second half; those who did open

the second half then left before the booked artist; those who barged in and out to the downstairs bar halfway through a song; those who talked a lot by an in-room bar (sometimes me!); and the hecklers.

We seem to have lost our tradition of heckling: I've lost the little poem I once wrote starting "Whatever happened to hecklers?" which I did live at Blackpool and which got the response "pushing your luck, aren't you!"

This memoir is short on exact places and dates for two reasons: one is to protect both the innocent and the guilty; the second is that visits to good folk clubs were a bit like that phrase about the 60s: if you can remember it, you weren't really there! The good sing-arounds blur into each other, the excellent artists fade into a generalised set, the MC's jokes just fade, and the really bad experiences don't get remembered – unless you were the performer involved.

In many ways, I was a caretaker chair: I tried to keep things going in spite of the changing times and the disinclination of some to co-operate. We tried joint booking (or mini-tours) – little take-up. We tried encouraging people to be more active about publicity and got some response. I enjoyed getting myself onto TV to talk about our music – but the long-term media trend was already set against us. We dabbled in initiatives for younger people but it took Dave Day as my successor to get the youth element really working.

Ian Wells

ARTISTES OF YESTERYEAR WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

When I was asked by our illustrious chairman to write this article I didn't realize just how many artistes there were performing in the North West in the late 70's early 80's. A quick glance through the guest lists of Federation Clubs at the time is quite revealing.

Home Grown

I'll start with our homegrown artistes in no particular order and see how it goes (probably on for ever!). Remember **Rebec**? They were led by Mike Billington who moved into local radio in Manchester and continued to promote the music through the Hindley Folk Club's annual song contest.

How about **Crisis Jug Band**? They were based in St. Helen's complete with what the Aussies call a 'lager-phone' (a stick with bottle tops attached -dreadful noise!). The last I heard of them, many, many years ago, was that they were working off their tax debts - the price of fame and success I suppose!

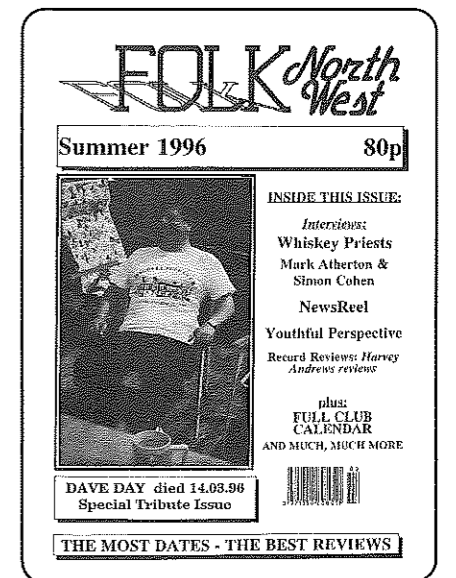
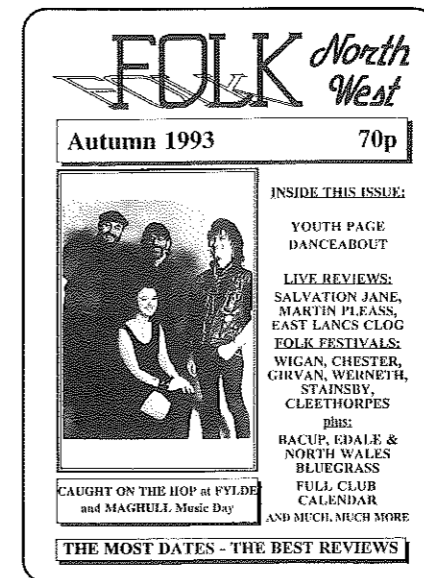
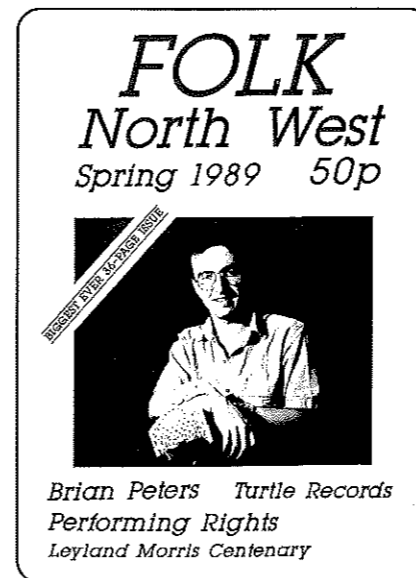
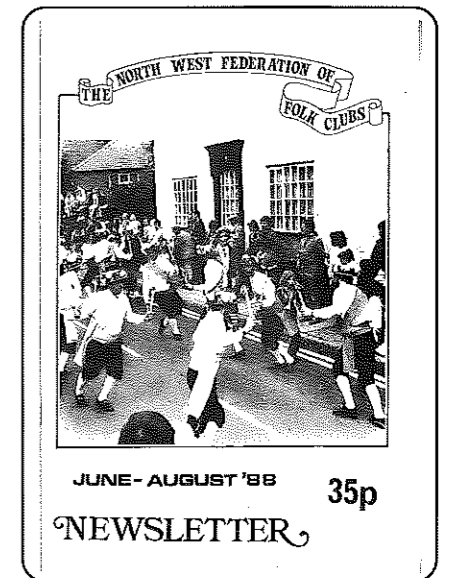
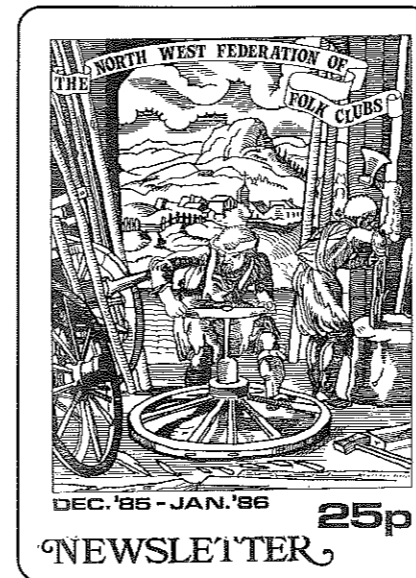
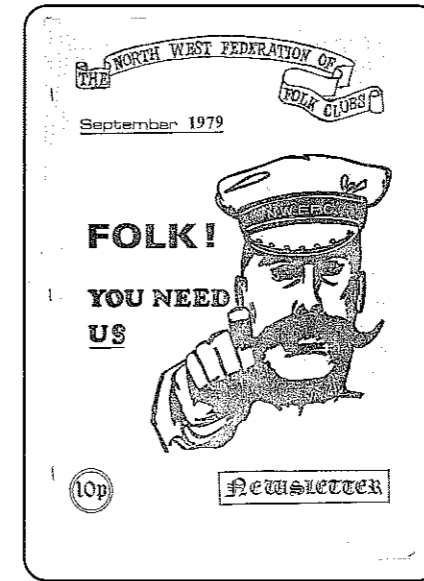
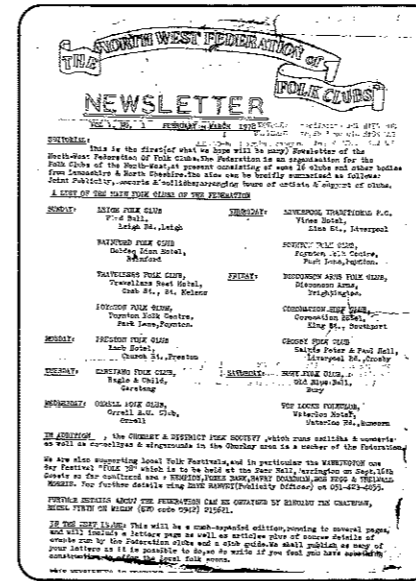
The Crofters? My thanks to Dave Jones for information on this group. They split up in the mid 1970's having been residents at the club 'Ship Landfal' which was an old landing craft moored at the Pier Head, Liverpool. The only member of the group we have information on is Steve who was last heard singing bass in the Liverpool Cathedral Choir!

Dave Walters - ah yes, now he moved to the south and continued to perform as a full time professional for many years. I don't know where he is now though and I certainly haven't come across him on my own tours down there.

Therapy - a very popular duo of those days comprising of Dave Shannon, who moved into broadcasting, like so many others (for example, John Leonard and Alan Beswick) and the lovely Fiona Simpson who still continues to wow audiences, mainly outside the folk scene, with that deliciously jazzy voice!

This leads me nicely on to **Bram Taylor** who is a great mate of Fiona's, having utilised her talents (careful Giff' could be a libel suit following!) on many of his recordings. Bram, as many of you will already know, has recently joined the ranks of the early retired and is continuing to pursue his already blossoming career

A SELECTION OF MAGAZINE COVERS



in the folk world on a full time basis. Good luck mate!

Sam Bracken; now there's a blast from the past. Sam, as far as I know, is still residing in Cumbria but I haven't heard of him for many years. He, of course, performed both solo and with a number of groups over the years. A fine chap and an excellent singer and musician. Where are you now, Sam?

Ian Woods - aha! I know where you are you old beggar! You're living in London and teaching at a school for naughty boys! I always said that you'd end up in a reform home!! Ian, of course, was a resident at Frodsham folk club for many years and ran the Moor Village Folk Days in the mid 80's. He became a full time professional singer both solo and with the legendary Charley Yarwood. I even did some gigs with Ian myself in those early days, great fun but very bad for the liver I seem to remember!!

Talking of doing gigs with other folk, I recently had the pleasure of sharing the Dave Day Memorial Concert with **Auld Triangle** who are still very much a part of the North-west scene and, after over 25 years, continue to be the residents of the award winning (well done Pat Batty!) Westhoughton Folk Club. More on Federation Clubs' residents later in this article.

Remember **Howard Bond**? He was often confused by audiences with **Peter Bond** another contemporary singer-song writer of the time from Stockton-on-Tees who is teaching at a college in Middleton these days. Howard, however was a local and made his way gigging in the North west clubs for quite a while until he moved to Belgium. I saw him many years ago and, if my memory serves me right, he was still singing on the European circuit.

Another successful solo male singer and superb musician was **Steve Turner** who probably did more bookings annually than anyone else of the same style largely due to his willingness to spend a lot of time on the phone chasing work! Last heard of living in Preston as an instrument maker and repairer. Any advance on that news out there?

Pat Ryan must be the only artiste ever to say with regard to an offer of a booking 'Do I have to do it?!' Mind you, it was a booking for the infamous Dicconson Arms folk club renowned for merciless heckling. Gladly, she survived the onslaught and continues to guest at clubs and festivals both solo and with her 'hubby' Ken Howard and Malcolm Gibbons as the very entertaining trio **Tall Stories**.

Mention of Malc' Gibbons... well, you know who's coming up next don't you? Yes, it's **Strawhead** and, yes, they have been around since those early days - they're older than they look y'know! As well as Malc' the other members of the band have branched out over the years with Greg Butler being briefly involved with a group called **Cold Iron**, while Chris Pollington is nowadays also associated with Mrs. **Ackroyd's Band, First Principals** and has even been known to accompany his partner, fine solo singer in her own right, Alison **Younger** at gigs appearing as **Harvey Davidson**! Meanwhile **Strawhead** march on to the tunes of Ye Olde England probably to the end of time, or at least until their pacemakers give out!!

Similarly, the **Houghton Weavers** seem to go on and on as popular as ever with those audiences who enjoy the music possibly without realizing it's folk!! Well done chaps, we need missionary workers in this business! They are, of course, minus one of their original members, Norman Prince, who like so many others I've mentioned has become a full time broadcaster on local (Lancashire naturally!) radio.

A group no more but very popular in similar vein to the weavers was **Blue Water Folk** now defunct as far as I know largely due to the sad death of their leader Ian Grimes a year or two back. Other now defunct groups that have been club guests on the North-west circuit include **Cyder Pie** (who had the aforementioned Sam Bracken as a member at one time) and who's other original members were Derek and Di' Boake. They are both teachers and no doubt are continuing to follow that much underrated profession (well I would say that wouldn't I?!).

Last time I saw Derek he was still gigging with a band outside the mainstream folk movement. **Titanic**, who always went down well (sorry but I had to say it!!!), original members yours truly with John Meadows, our super mandolin player who unfortunately married outside the 'faith' and John McCalister who continues to turn up at various music sessions around the area when not playing for Preston Royal Morris! **The Taverners**, who were the driving force behind Blackpool's now defunct folk club, went into retirement after over twenty years on the road a few years back. Sadly, we recently lost Brian Osborne and some time ago 'big' Pete Rodger who were of course original group members. Alan Bell, we know, is still highly active in the North West folk scene. Long may he continue his work on the Fylde Festival and the North West folk arts group Folkus.

Nearly all of the last mentioned groups were club residents in the North-west and it is a tribute to them that they were all of a sufficiently high quality to be booked not only by the local clubs but also, for some of them, by clubs outside our area.

Other residents in the early days of the Fed', many of whom also became guest material included **Spring Heel Jack** (Ormskirk folk club) led by Ian McArdle with whom I've now lost contact and **Tabby's Nook** (Haskayne Folk Club) who followed the previous residents **Windmill Folk** of which our very own **Dave Jones** was a member. The others deserted him, Tony into local politics and the other Dave Bresnan out of self-preservation! Dave B. is still around and Maghull Folk club is the place you are most likely to see him. The other two members of the group were Dave Gould who moved to Israel and has now sadly, died and John MacKenzie of whom we presently know now!

Pennygate (Hindley Folk Club) also contained present Federation 'officers' in the shape and form of Paul and Kath Holden whom we know continue to occasionally turn up and have a sing at local clubs and festivals as well as continuing their excellent hard work for the magazine. (We have to keep tracks on Kath - she has all the Fed's money!) The other member of their group, Merv' Phillips moved away to Cheshire years ago.

But who were the similarly named **Pennyroyal** who were guests at the Travellers Folk Club St. Helen's in 1978? The residents of that club developed into **Caught on the Hop** to become residents at Billinge Folk Club for many years and who also became nationally known. The last time I saw Bernie Forkin was at a party years ago I think, although we saw Steve Padgett at Martin Mere Wildfowl Trust a couple of years ago (it's amazing how many folkies are into birding) where he told us that 'C.O.T.H.' were hoping to make a 'comeback'. Haven't seen anything of it in the folk scene yet, although, to be fair, they may well be doing the ceilidh band circuit again.

Stoneybroke were residents at various clubs around Chorley in the early 80's. Their members were George and Margaret Critchley and Phil Batty. George is now with **Th'Antiques Road Show** and Phil Batty can turn up anywhere, at any time with his fiddle! I last saw him last year at the Four Fools Folk Festival. Another member of Th'Antiques, of course, is Nick Caffery who was once a resident at Blackburn's Folk Club with the group **The Wassallers**.

Usher's Well, (Steve and Carol Chatterley et. al.) were residents for many years at St. Philip's Folk Club in Radcliffe, Bolton. They are still to be seen although Carol now sings with **Hands in Pockets** and Steve sings with **No Stone Unturned**. Their full combination is called **The Hands and Feet Road Show!** Coppull and Swinton Folk Clubs are the most likely places to catch up with them these days.

Scold's Bridle (Sue and Liz) were originally residents at Fleetwood Folk Club and like so many of our fine N. W. folk club residents went on to become nationally known. They are still gigging regularly (or should that be giggling?!) and can be found most weeks at Ann Green's 'Hole In One Folk Club' at Lytham.

Gentleman Soldier were, I believe, residents at Heaton Moor Folk Club years ago and were advertised recently at Poynton's resurrected Easter Folk Festival and at a memorial concert for George Watson at Radcliffe last March. They don't do many folk clubs these days due to the amount of clobber they need to set up for the four of them. They are doing a number of ceilidhs though under the name of **Quiet Man** (hardly!) **Ceilidh Band**. **Jolly Jack** were residents at the Wagon in Milnrow for a while. Dave Weatherall, Martin Hall and Alan Taylor (no not the Alan Taylor!) were their members. Martin went on to develop a solo career recording an excellent album with Fellside a few years ago and Dave has been very ill with a brain tumour. I have no idea what happened to Alan so perhaps he'll contact the magazine and let us know!

And what of the other resident groups that I remember so little about now? - **Moonshine** (Travellers, St. Helens), **Cobble Lane** (Turnkey, Wigan. One of them I do remember - **Joan Blackburn** who is still very much involved with the local scene in Wigan), **Dry Ice** (Crosby), **Folkstir** (Lancaster), **Kings Ransom** (Chester) and **Buckthorn** (Coronation, Southport). Some of them I'm sure are still around the scene at the moment. Where are you now folks?

Finally, I was surprised to see that **George Faux** (now **Gina Le Faux**) was resident at the Golden Lion Folk Club, Warrington in 1978.

This leads me nicely onto national guests on the circuit at the time.

Fylde Folk

A quick look at the 10th Fylde Folk Festival's (1982) guest list gives a fair indication of the nationally known names of the time. Locals among those not already mentioned included **Gary & Vera Aspey** (still at it today), **Sam Sherry** (alas no longer with us), **Loose Chippings** (**Phil Brown** et al Phil is still whistling away, of course) and **Marie Little** (Still gigging the length and breadth of the nation.).

The headliners were:

Albion Band are still going strong with ever changing personnel! **Martin Carthy** say no more!

The Watsons are sadly, now minus Lal' but still very much around in other guises although Mike has now 'retired' from the scene).

Johnny Silvo and Dave Moses - Johnny regularly makes sorties from his home in Scandinavia to treat us all at clubs and festivals but I'm not sure what happened to Dave.

Yorkshire Relish who were Derek and Dorothy Elliot with daughter Nadine. Derek still comperes at Fylde and Saltburn Festivals, Dorothy spent time promoting concerts in Whitby and Nadine, who married our own local Chris Parkinson, is living and working in Whitby as a jeweller.

Cosmothea - Dave Sealey is still working with other performers after the sad loss of his brother Al' but Cosmo' are, alas, no more.

Nic Jones is still very much alive but of course will never perform again after his dreadful car accident all those years ago.

Cyril Tawney is the longest serving full-time professional folk singer in Britain, now living in Exeter and still to be seen at Maritime Festivals and the like. A real old pro' our Cyril!

Cock and Bull Band again, like the Albions, ever changing but still going strong.

Chris and Joe While were at that time virtually 'locals' from Cumbria. Chris, of course is now a 'mega-star' with partner Julie Matthews.

Dr. Sunshine's Pavement Show was the irrepressible Dave Hunt and Vic ('Wingnut'). Following the death of Vic', Dave has continued to gig mainly as a caller for dances.

Guest Lists

Looking at the guest lists of other festivals and the Federation clubs is a walk down memory lane too. I can only dwell briefly

on some of the artistes that have given us so much enjoyment over the years.

Let's start with the local's I haven't mentioned yet:

Harry Boardman the Lancashire 'Mon' himself. A lovely man who encouraged so many of us to go on to greater things. His untimely death in 1987 left a big gap in the Lancashire scene. **Bernard Wrigley** thankfully still continuing to entertain us all regularly. He is another one of our number who has been snatched up by Radio Lancashire with his 'Wrigley's Ramblings' programme.

Brian Dewhurst who, of course, left our world to make his way on the 'other' club scene as Brian Preston. His gain, our loss. He is, however, starting to appear again as a 'proper' folk singer! Good on yer Brian!

Les Barker. I suppose I have to mention him don't I? One of the local clubs in 1978 had him listed as Les Barker and **Brickbat**. I tackled him on this but he assured me he never performed with any other than his dog Mrs. Ackroyd. Says it all really doesn't it?! Solo or with his Mrs. Ackroyd's Band he continues to make us laugh, cry and fall asleep.

Blasts from the past

Other blasts from the past that are no more but drew my attention were **Roaring Jelly**, (Derek Pearce is now living in the London area and sculpting for a living, Mick Hennessey has finally sold the double bass and Clive Harvey was last seen playing in R.Cajun!).

Joe Beard was originally in a sort of pop band called Purple Gang in the late sixties who had a Skiffle-style hit in the top twenty called 'Granny Takes a Trip'. He appeared at a number of festivals and clubs in the North West during the late 70's but where he is now I have no idea!

The New Victory Band which included **Pete & Chris Coe** (Pete now an international mega-star and Chris working in drama tuition and still singing), **Tony Rose** (following a recent illness has been out of the scene for a while but hopefully he will return), **Roger Watson** (has been working hard with the Folk Arts Network but recently suffered a heart attack so has had to cut back in his efforts), **Helen Watson** (now **Helen Hockenhull** and singing with **Grace Notes**), **John Adams** (now lecturing at Salford University), **Suzie Adams** (I think, has moved into jazz circles).

Packie Byrne & Bonnie Shaljean, Packie has long since retired to his native Ireland but of Bonnie I have no information. Any takers?

Hot Vultures, (**Ian A. Anderson** now editor of fRoots and **Maggie Holland** who I last saw performing in Helmsley, North Yorkshire and now lives in Scotland).,

Hamish Imlach, now deceased but a great entertainer from the Scottish tradition.

Fraser Bruce, brother of **Ian Bruce** (who continues to perform internationally). Last time I saw Ian he told me that Fraser was no longer performing but living in Cheshire? Maybe? Have I got that right?

Telephone Bill and the Smooth Operators (probably the longest 'name' at the time?!) What ever happened to them I wonder?

Bill Price, remember him? A smashing singer from Yorkshire who, like others, died well before his time.

Doug (Dougal) Porter too, left this world recently. I saw him at Fylde Festival only last September. A grand lad he was - from the Derbyshire folk mafia!

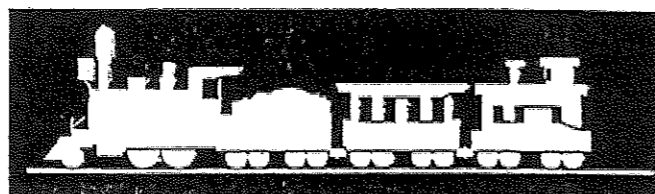
Bernie Parry, still to be seen around from time to time but not performing regularly. You'll hear his wonderful songs still being performed though.

Roy Harris, now finally retired from the scene and living in Cardiff.

Magna Carta was a very popular band of the early years. **George Norris** is the only member of the band that I see from time to time. He lives in Bedfordshire now and can be seen

THE RAILWAY FOLK CLUB

The Railway Hotel
Mill Lane, Heatley
Lymm, Cheshire
Website



Tel 0161 432 4317

<http://railwayfolkclub.co.uk>

6 JUN Singers Night

13 JUN KELLIE WHILE & KWAME YEBOAH

20 JUN Singers Night

27 JUN Singers Night

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and JOE WRIGHT BAND

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NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS

Club Name	Time	Venue	Organiser	Tel.No.
Accrington Town Hall	7:30 PM	Blackburn Road, Accrington	Box Office	01254 380293
Alison Arms	8:30 PM	The Alison Arms, Preston Rd, Coppull Moor, Nr Chorley	Hilda Foy	01257 792246
Biddulph	8:30 PM	The Biddulph Arms, Congleton Road, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent	Eric Cox	01782 514896
Blackburn	8:30 PM	Fleece Inn, Penny Street, Blackburn	Brian Kirkham	01254 720745
Bluecoat Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, L1 3BX	Box Office	0151-707-9393
Bothy	8:00 PM	Blundell Arms, Upper Aughton Road, Birkdale, Southport, PR85AD	Clive Pownceby	0151-924-6078
Brewery Arts Centre	8:30 PM	Brewery Arts Centre, 122a Highgate, Kendal	Box Office	01539 725133
Broken Token	8:15 PM	The Globe Inn, High Street, Standish	Ken & Angie Bladen	01257 263578
Buffet Bar	9:00 PM	Platform 1, Stalybridge Rail Station, Stalybridge	Jim Schofield	01457 633897
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
Clarence (Hale in One)	8:30 PM	The Clarence, Preston New Road, Blackpool	Ann Green	01772 683027
Conwy	8:30 PM	The Malt Loaf, Rosehill Street, Conwy	Daris Bennett	01492 877324
Cross Keys	9:00 PM	Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Near Oldham	Jim Schofield	01457 633897
Deeside	8:45 PM	Hotel Victoria, 45 Gayton Road, Lower Haswell, Wirral	Alison Parker	0151-648-4444
Falcon	9:00 PM	The Falcon Hotel, Hardham Way, Poulton-le-Flyde	Pete Skimmer	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, FY7 6BT	Dave Ryan	01253 876351
Folk at the Flying Picket	8:30 PM	The Flying Picket, Hardman Street, Liverpool	Jim Peden	0151-428-5615
Folk at the Manor	8:30 PM	The Manor Club, Withers Lane, Wallasey	Roger Parker	0151-638-1987
Folk at the Prospect	8:30 PM	The Prospect Inn, Weston Road, Weston Village, Runcorn	Roger Hanslip	01928 731557
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, Houghton	Graham Dixon	01254 853929
Hale & Hearty	8:30 PM	The Kings Arms, Hale, Cumbria	Frank Lewis	01524 734440
Howcroft Inn	8:30 PM	The Howcroft Inn, 36 Pool Street, Bolton	Ron Callow	01606 863283
Jonkers	7:45 PM	Jonkers Restaurant, 9 Chapel Street, Llangollen, LL20 8NN	John Spicer	01978 861158
Kings Arms	8:30 PM	The Kings Arms, Delph Lane, Haskayne	Sue Howard	0151-526-9927
Leigh	8:00 PM	Conservative Club, Railway Road, Leigh	Pauline Dowsett	01942 604603
Liverpool	8:30 PM	The Ship & Mitre, Dale St, Liverpool	Helen Hobden	0151-727-0088
Maghull	8:30 PM	Maghull Community Centre, Green Lane, L'pool Rd North, Maghull	Joe Ryan	0151-531-9273
Mr Kite Benefits	8:00 PM	c/o 24 Acom Close, Leyland, Lancashire PR25 3AF	Steve Henderson	01772 621411
Northwich	8:30 PM	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich	John Booth	01606 79356
Open Door	8:45 PM	The Bull's Head, Oldham Road, Failssworth, Manchester	Pauline Westall	0161-681-3618
Oswaldtwistle	8:30 PM	St Mary's Parish Centre, Lock Street, Oswaldtwistle	Dylan Owen	01254 390391
Parkgate	8:15 PM	The Boathouse, 1 The Parade, Parkgate, Wirral	Eddie Morris	0151-677-1840
Platform	8:00 PM	The Platform, Station Buildings, Central Promenade, Morecambe	Box Office	01524 582803
Playhouse 2	8:30 PM	Newtown Street, Shaw, Oldham OL2 8NX	Barrie Cottam	01706 663117
Porkies	8:30 PM	Royal British Legion, Georges Road, Poynton	Judy Hancock	01260 252633
Preston	8:30 PM	Moorbrook Inn, North Road, Preston	Rob Malaney	01257 231463
Railway	8:30 PM	Railway Hotel, Mill Lane, Heatley, Lymm, Cheshire	Don Davies	0161-432-4317
Red Bull	8:30 PM	The Red Bull, Hillgate, Stockport	Peter Hood	0161-432-4142
Rhyl	8:30 PM	Costigan's Pub, Bodfor Street, Rhyl	Daryl Moorley	01745 353859
Ring 'O Bells	8:30 PM	Ring 'O Bells, Farnworth Street, Widnes, Cheshire	Jean Finney	0151-424-3672
Room at the Back	8:45 PM	The Railway Inn, Parbold, Wigan WNB 7PG	Seth Hobden	01257 463766
Ruthin Acoustic Music	8:30 PM	The White Horse, Llanfair DC, near Ruthin, Denbighshire	Campbell Finnie	01824 750730
SAFRA Night	8:30 PM	The Wagon Inn, High Street, Uppermill, Oldham	All O'Brien	01457 870391
Second Friday	8:30 PM	Sanite Parish Centre, Cavendish Road, Sedgley Park, Prestwich	Bill Smetthurst	0161-796-0698
St Annes Acoustic Roots	8:30 PM	Civil Service Sports & Social Club, Shepherd Road, St Annes	Sue Arrow	01253 721503
Standish	8:15 PM	St Wilfrid's Parish Centre, Standish, N' Wigan	David Jones	01254 54877
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
Umston Acoustics	8:30 PM	The Fox & Hounds, Woodsend Road, Flixton	Martin Kavanagh	0161-748-5497
Walton (Friday/Sunday)	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Lillian French	0151-474-0979
Westhoughton	8:15 PM	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton	Pat Batty	01257 230508
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	9:00 PM	Fox & Goose, Wigan Lane, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223
Wigan (7 Stars)	9:00 PM	Seven Stars Hotel, Seven Stars Bridge, Welgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn	01942 321223
Wooden Horse	8:30 PM	The Junction, News Lane, Rainford	Jim Coan	01772 452782
Wrexham	8:30 PM	Nags Head Inn, Mount Street, Wrexham	Ian Chesterman	01978 357307

JUNE DATES			
(NB: Always check with club organisers before travelling)			
	2nd June	9th June	16th June
SUNDAY			
Bothy -- Birkdale, Southport	closed - Jubilee weekend	Jez Lowe	Singers Night
Citadel Arts Centre - St Helens		Danu	
Folk at the Manor -- Wallasey	Singers Night	Singers Night	Auld Triangle
Open Door -- Fallsworth	Extravaganza 2	Singaround	Singaround
	Bernard Wrigley, Kieron Means, John Spiers & Jon Bodeh		
Walton -- Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse - Rainford Junc.	closed - Jubilee weekend	Singers Night	Ola
MONDAY			
Conwy -- Malt Loaf	3rd June	10th June	17th June
Farmers Arms - Frankby	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Prospect -- Weston Village	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Red Bull -- Hillgate, Stockport	Singers Night	Lynn & Barrie Hardman	Singers Night
Room at the Back -- Parbold	Singers Night	Singers Night	Itchy Feet
Swinton -- White Lion	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Triton -- Aigburth, Liverpool	guest tbc	Singers Night	Geoff Higginbottom
	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
TUESDAY			
Furness -- Dalton in Furness	4th June	11th June	18th June
Howcroft Inn -- Bolton	Open Session	Risky Business	closed
Jonkers -- Chapel Street, Llangollen (new club)	Singers Night	Bandersnatch	Roam (Rudd & Walker)
Liverpool -- Ship & Mitre	Singers Night	Jon Harvison/Saskia Tompkins	Anthony John Clarke
Maghull -- Green Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ring O'Bells -- Widnes	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Anne's Acoustic Roots @ new venue - Civil Service	Bandersnatch	Singers Night	Singers Night
Sports & Social Club, Shepherd Road, St Annes	Open Session	Open Session	Open Session
Urmston Acoustics -- Flixton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan -- Fox & Goose	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY			
Accrington Town Hall	5th June	12th June	19th June
Alison Arms -- Coppull Moor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Beer Festival (to 22nd)
Blackburn -- Fleece Inn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Brewery Arts Centre - Kendal	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Broken Token -- Standish	Singers Night	Fairport Acoustic Convention	
Burnley -- Brierfield	Singers and Musicians	Cyrl Tawney	Singers Night
** Clarence - Blackpool (formerly Hole in One)	Cross O' T' Hands	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Cross Keys -- Uppermill	Ken Periman	Alan Bell Band	Singers Night
Deeside -- Heswall, Wirral	Hands in Pockets	Bram Taylor	Solan

	5th June	12th June	19th June	26th June
WEDNESDAY (cont'd)				
Falcon -- Poulton-le-Fyde	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic. - PA provided
Flying Picket - Hardman Street, Liverpool (new club)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Kings Arms -- Haskayne	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull -- Hillgate	Singers Night	Music Session - English		
THURSDAY				
Biddulph -- Biddulph Arms	6th June	13th June	20th June	27th June
Fleetwood -- Steamer Hotel	Julie Matthews - solo	Singers Night	closed	Robb Johnson
Gregson Lane -- Houghton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Parkgate -- The Boathouse	Singers Night	Kelle White & Kwame Yeboah	Singers Night	Chris Moreton
Railway -- Heatley, Lynn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ruthin Acoustic (new venue White Horse, Llanfair DC)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Martin Simpson
Wigan -- Seven Stars	closed	closed	closed	Singaround
Wrexham -- Nags Head	7th June	14th June	21st June	28th June
FRIDAY				
Accrington Town Hall	Kate Rusby			
Brewery Arts Centre - Kendal	Singers Night	Little George Suraf & Blue Stars	Nicola Reed/Mike France	Waterson and Carthy
Carlisle Folk & Blues -- Carlisle	Singers Night			
Citadel Arts Centre -- St Helens	Singaround			
Hale & Harty -- Hale, Cumbria	closed			
Leigh -- Conservative Club, Railway Road (new club)	Roam	Singers Night	Anthony John Clarke	
Northwich -- Harlequin Theatre	Mad Jocks & Englishman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Tanglefoot (Canada)
Porkies -- Poynton	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Preston -- Moorbrook Inn	Tala (Sarah Jones Band)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Bernard Wrigley
Rhyl -- Costigan's Pub		Singers, musicians, poetry, stories		
SAFRA Night -- Uppermill	Singers Night	Bernard Wrigley		
Second Friday -- Prestwich	closed	Singers Night		
Walton -- Liverpool	closed	closed		
Westhoughton -- Golf Club	8th June	15th June	22nd June	29th June
SATURDAY				
Accrington Town Hall	1st June	Fairport Acoustic Convention		
Buffet Bar -- Stalybridge Rail Station - Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night		
* & ** Carlisle Folk & Blues	Tannerhill Weavers -- @ The Stanwix Arts Theatre			
Open Door -- Fallsworth	Extravaganza 2			
Dave Burland, Roy Clinging, Vic Gammon & Annie Dearman/Steve Harrison				
Oswaldtwistle - St Mary's Parish Centre - Singers Night				
*Railway - 'Saturday Culture Special' + Appalachian Dancing				
Standish -- St Wilfrid's Parish Centre				Best O' T' Bunch
Note: * = Not the usual club night				Tanglefoot
Note: ** = Different venue				

JUNE (into July) DATES			
(NB: Always check with club organisers before travelling)			
SUNDAY	7th July	14th July	21st July
Bothy	Pat Ryan & Ken Howard	Singers Night	Tanglefoot
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Reckless Elbow
Mr Kite Benefits - St Michael's School, Chorley	Singers Night	Red Duster	Singaround
Open Door	Singaround		
Playhouse 2	Hamish Stuart Band		
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	John Connolly	Singers Night	Singers Night
closed - 4 Fools Festival w/ end			
MONDAY	8th July	15th July	22nd July
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Farmers Arms	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Prospect	Singers Night	Graham Holland	Singers Night
Red Bull	Nick Durham/Huw Chidgey	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Back	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Gary & Vera Aspey	Jon Brindley	Singers Night
Triton	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
TUESDAY	9th July	16th July	23rd July
Furness	closed		closed
Howcroft Inn	Sing a Love Song		Phil Seddon
Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Magnhull	Singers Night	tba	Singers Night
Ring O' Bells	Chris and Carol	Singers Night	Rick O'Shea
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	60's Nostalgia Night	Cath Mundy & Jay Turner	Open Session
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night		
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	10th July	17th July	24th July
Allison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Broken Token	Singers Night	Solan	Singers Night
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Clarence (Hole in One)	Tanglefoot	closed	closed
Cross Keys	Joe Stead	Steve Tilston	Singers Night
Deeside	Taggart and Wright	Speakeasy	Anna Beattie/Daz Barker
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Flying Picket	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic. - PA provided
Kings Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
* Railway (Lymm Festival)	Garva	Singers Night	Singers Night

JULY (into August) DATES			
(NB: Always check with club organisers before travelling)			
WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	10th July	17th July	24th July
Red Bull	Music Session - English		
THURSDAY	11th July	18th July	25th July
Biddulph			Harvey Andrews
** Biddulph (Town Hall)	Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies		
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Guest (tbc)
Gregson Lane	Singers Night		Singers Night
Parkgate			Houghton Weavers
Railway	Lymm Festival Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ruthin Acoustic Music	Singers Night	Singers Night	Guest (tbc)
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham	closed	closed	closed
FRIDAY	12th July	19th July	26th July
* Biddulph	Local Singers Showcase		
Carlisle Folk & Blues		Brampton Live (+20th/21st)	
Hale & Hearty	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Leigh		closed	
Northwich	Singers Night & John Moncur	Tony Howard & Lindsey Hunt	Singers Night
Porkies	Kieran Halpin		Fiossle
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SAFRA Night			Rhuddlan Festival 1st Night
Second Friday	Singers, musicians, poetry, stories	Saddleworth Festival (+20 & 21)	Graham Bellinger
Walton	Oldham Tinkers		
Westhoughton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
closed	closed	closed	closed
SATURDAY	13th July	20th July	27th July
* & ** Biddulph (@ Biddulph Grange Country Park)	Folk in the Park		
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Oswaldtwistle	Singers Night		
Platform -- No folk artists during June, July & August			
Playhouse 2	Hamish Stuart Band		
Standish			
Note: * = Not the usual club night			
Note: ** = Different venue			

AUGUST (into September) DATES					
(NB: Always check with club organisers before travelling)					
	4th August	11th August	18th August	25th August	1st September
SUNDAY					
Bothy	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Anthony John Clarke	Singers Night	Singers Night
Open Door	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	closed - Bank Holiday w/ end	Singers Night
MONDAY					
26th August	5th August	12th August	19th August	26th August	2nd September
Comwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Farmers Arms	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	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	Kinin	Singers Night	Tony Gibbons	Singers Night	Singers Night
Triton	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
TUESDAY					
6th August	13th August	20th August	27th August	3rd September	
Furness	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Howcroft Inn	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Liverpool	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ring O' Bells	Dave Green	Singers Night	guest - tba	Singers Night	Open Session
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	Theme Night - Travellin'	Open Session	Pete Abbott	Open Session	Open Session
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					
7th August	14th August	21st August	28th August	4th September	
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	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Tom McConville
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
**Clarence (Hole in One)	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Cross Keys	Tom Brown & Ian Goodier	Risky Business	Anthony John Clarke	Roy Clinging	Hilary Spencer
Deeside	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic. - PA provided	Singers Night
Flying Picket	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Kings Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Music Session - English	Music Session - English	Music Session - English	Music Session - English	Music Session - English

AUGUST (into September) DATES (cont'd)					
(NB: Always check with club organisers before travelling)					
	15th August	22nd August	29th August	5th September	
THURSDAY					
8th August	15th August	22nd August	29th August	5th September	
Biddulph	closed	closed	closed	Jez Lowe	
Fleetwood	Folk in the Lounge	Singers Night	Colcannon (N. Euston Hotel)	Folk in the Lounge	
Gregson Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Parkgate			Real Time (Kenny Spairs Joe Wright & Judy Dinning)		
Railway	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Ruthin Acoustic Music	Singers Night	Singers Night	Guest tbc	Singers Night	
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	
Wrexham	closed	closed	closed	Solan	
FRIDAY					
9th August	16th August	23rd August	30th August	6th September	
Carlisle Folk & Blues				James Keelahan	
Hale & Harty	Singaround			Singaround	
Leigh	closed				
Northwich	Kinin	Singers Night	Singers Night		
Porkies				Bernard Wrigley	
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Ken Nicol		
SAFRA Night	Singers, musicians, poetry, stories				
Second Friday	closed				
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Westhoughton	closed	closed	closed	closed	
SATURDAY					
10th August	17th August	24th August	31st August	7th September	
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Oswaldtwistle					
Playhouse 2				Anthony John Clarke	
Standish					
Bluecoat Arts Centre - School Lane, Liverpool City Centre					
(new member of Federation - no artists yet booked					
see Autumn edition of this magazine)					
NB: Folk/Roots concerts on various days					
Note: * = Not the usual club night					
Note: ** = Different venue					

ADVANCE DATES FROM SEPT 2002

Accrington Town Hall

Sept 15 - Bernard Wrigley & Oldham Tinkers
Sept 22 - Bill Jones Trio Oct 6 - Cara Dillon

Biddulph

Sept 5 - Jez Lowe Sept 19 - Tommy Sands
Oct 3 - Cath Mundy & Jay Turner Oct 17 - Niamh Parsons
Oct 24 - Show of Hands Nov 3 - Ralph McTell
Nov 7 - Artisan Nov 14 - Chris While & Julie Matthews
Nov 21 - Bob Fox

Bothy

Sept 8 - Grace Notes Sept 22 - Martin Carthy
Oct 6 - Robb Johnson Oct 20 - Th'Antique Road Show
Nov 3 - Steve Tilston Nov 17 - John Pearson
Dec 1 - Roy Bailey Dec 8 - Robin Laing

Broken Token

Sept 4 - Tom McConville

Cross Keys

Sept 4 - Hilary Spencer Sept 11 - Cath Mundy & Jay Turner
Sept 18 - Tom McConville Sept 25 - Gibb Todd

Folk at the Manor

Sept 15 - Elbow Jane Sept 29 - George & Gill
Oct 20 - Bram Taylor Nov 17 - Sad Pig
Dec 15 - Tom Topping Band

Howcroft Inn

Sept 24 - Kinin Oct 8 - Jon Harvison
Oct 22 - Loctup Together Nov 12 - Lynne & Barrie Hardman

Mr Kite Benefits

Sept 29 - Songwriters in the Round Clive Gregson, Kristina Olsen, Jez Lowe & Kirsty McGee
Oct 27 - Chris While & Julie Matthews
Dec 1 - St Agnes Fountain

Open Door

Sept 15 - Geoff Higginbottom Oct 19 & 20 Extravaganza 3
Willoughby & Craig, Bill Caddick, Pete Coe Buzz Collins,
Roam, Martin Carthy Nov 24 - Sara Grey

Parkgate

Sept 26 - Robin Laing Nov 28 - The McAlmans

Playhouse 2

Sept 7 - Anthony John Clarke Sept 27 - The Strawbs
Oct 25 - Show of Hands Nov 2 - Colvin Quarmby
Nov 23 - Tickled Pink Dec 21 - St Agnes Fountain

Porkies

Sept 6 - Bernard Wrigley Dec 6 - Christine Collister

Prospect

Sept 9 - Cath Mundy & Jay Turner
Oct 7 - Geoff Higginbottom Nov 11 - Mike Nicholson
Dec 9 - Stanley Accrington

Railway

Sept 12 Real Time

St Anne's Acoustic Roots

Sept 10 Ken Nicol & Joe Broughton

Second Friday

Sept 13 - Meranem Oct 11 - Leg Platters
Nov 8 - Backbone Dec 13 - The Bunch

Standish

Nov 9 Maurice Dickson

Swinton

Sept 9 - Nick Durham & Huw Chidgey
Sept 23 - Maurice Dickson Oct 25 & 26 Swinton Folk Festival

Westhoughton

Sept 20 - Colcannon (Australia) Sept 27 - Harvey Andrews
Oct 4 & 5 - Lucy Kaplansky (tickets now available for LK)

Wooden Horse

Sept 29 - Hilary Spencer Nov 10 - Mike Nicholson
Dec 8 - His Worship & the Pig

Wrexham

Sept 5 - Solan Oct 3 - Willoughby & Craig
Nov 10 - Bram Taylor Dec 5 - Kieran Halpin



CLUB RESIDENTS



BIDDULPH - Liz Holland, Jeff Parton, His Worship and the Pig

BLACKBURN - Flatbroke

BOTHY - Clive Pownceby, Pete Rimmer, Ray Rooney, Neville Grundy, Bill Hackney, Alison Younger, Steve Freedman

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

BURNLEY - Brillig, Korrigan

CLARENCE - Scold's Bridle, Rebecca Green

DEESIDE & FARMERS ARMS - Fickle Finger

FALCON - John Bond, Clansfolk

FLEETWOOD - Spitting on a Roast

FOLK AT THE FLYING PICKET - Jim & Shirley Peden, Chris & Hughie Jones, Bernie Davis

Brian Ferguson, Lennie Cruikshank

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, Helen & Dave Summers, Roy Wilcock & Bridget Guest, John Hodgson, Bob Hellon, Gill Turner, Ken Lawson, David Littlewood, Roy Adams, David Hall

HOWCROFT INN - Ron Callow, Mick Unsworth (Micron)

MAGHULL - Joe Ryan, Tony Gibbons, Loctuptogether, Bob Tyrer, Clover, Paul Robinson,

Joan Gallimore, 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, Dave Walmsley

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

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

RAILWAY - Heather and Don Davies, Trevor Morton, Rick & Lesley Nelson, Bernard Cromarty

RED BULL - Peter Hood/Linda Edwardes, Peter Fox/Anne Yates, Ged Derby, Pete Farrow

Pete Roberts, Jim Embleton, John Ashurst (poet)

RING O'BELLS - Jean Finney, Ian Hare, Chris Roach, Jean Crompton, Jan McNichol

Stan Hesketh, Peter Cheetham

SAFRA - Geoff Miller, Ali O'Brien, Dave Fieldhouse

SECOND FRIDAY - Redmayne

TRITON - Bob Tyrer, Norbert Hulmes, Frank Jenkinson

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

WESTHOUGHTON - Auld Triangle

WOODEN HORSE - Quartz, Loctuptogether, Back in Business, Rob Peacock, Mark Dowding

WREXHAM - Yardarm/Offa

(Updated April 2002) - new info. to John Owen on 0151-678-9902 or email JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com

FOUR FOOLS FOLK FESTIVAL

**ST MICHAEL'S C of E HIGH SCHOOL
ASTLEY ROAD, CHORLEY, LANCS.
FRI 28th - SUN 30th JUNE 2002**

DAVE FLETCHER & BILL WHALEY

TANGLEFOOT (CANADA) (Sun)

GRAHAM & EILEEN PRATT

GRAHAM O'CALLAGHAN

HARVEY DAVIDSON

PETE WATKINSON

HANNAH HUTTON

NIAMH PARSONS

DAVE SUMMERS

ARTISAN (Sat)

TIM LAYCOCK

QUARTZ

DICK MILES

JOHN MORRIS

JIM MAGEEAN

JANET RUSSELL

JOHN PRENTICE

MARK DOWDING

NICK HENNESSEY

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ALISTAIR ANDERSON

JOYCE & DANNY McLEOD

USED NOTES (CEILIDH BAND)

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Weekend Tickets:- £30 before 1 June 2002, £35 thereafter.

OAP/Under 16 Half Price, Under 11 Free.

Tickets and information (LARGE SAE please) from:-

**Angie & Ken Bladen, 36, The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley,
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**MIDLANDS FOLK
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**CONCERTINA
PLAYERS**

The next monthly meetings are:

Saturday 15th June 2pm to 5pm
Saturday 20th July 2pm to 5pm
Saturday 17th August 2pm to 5pm
Saturday 21st September 2pm to 5pm

**The Alison Arms, Preston Road (A49)
Coppull Moor, Nr Chorley**

English, Anglo & Duet Concertina players are welcome.
Venue may change please ring to confirm location.
Please contact Angie Bladen on 01257 263 678
or Mike Bartram on 01744 817 127

**Broken
Token
Folk Club**

Every Wednesday
evening from 8.15pm



GUEST NIGHTS

Wed 12th Jun
CYRIL TAWNEY
Wed 17th Jul
SOLAN
Wed 4th Sep
TOM McCONVILLE

All other Wednesday
evenings are Singers
Nights.

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Tel:- 01257 263 678 E-mail: four.fools@virgin.net
Website:- <http://freespace.virgin.net/four.fools/btindex.htm>
Don't Miss The FOUR FOOLS FOLK FESTIVAL 28-30 JUNE 2002.
Visit the festival website at www.four-fools.co.uk

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bryonygriffith fiddlevocals
willhampson melodeon
leesykes bassguitar
richashby drums

blackswanrapper
fiona&tinytaylor
dogroseorris

**THE
DEMON
BARBER
ROADSHOW
JULY-OCTOBER 2002**



for more information
contact
us at address below



Three's Company is a new artists'
collective representing:

The Demon Barbers
(Band & Roadshow)

Steve Tilston

Withy Creek
(Maggie Boyle Jon Brindley Chris Parkinson)

Fay Hield & Damien Barber

Grace Notes

The Witches of Elswick
Black Swan Rapper

three's_company@hotmail.com
www.threescompany.org.uk
PO Box 152 Keighley
W Yorks BD21 0YT
01535 661991

Promo CD available

regularly at Bedford and St. Neot's Folk Clubs. He has also
been recently billed as accompanist to **Hilary Spencer**.

Arizona Smoke Review also featured regularly on full page
spreads advertising their tours in the early Fed.' magazines.
The only member of that band that I have any information on is
Pete Zorn who has recently joined the Albion Band - everyone
does in the end!!

Other national artistes that were listed in the early days and
continue to work successfully on the scene include:

**Harvey Andrews, Gordon Tyrell, Cilla Fisher & Artie Trezise,
Tufty Swift, Eddie Walker, The McCalmans, Johnny Collins
and Jim Mageean**, to mention but a few!

I know that there are many others that I haven't mentioned but
as this article is already over 3K words and as I haven't eaten
for three days I think it's time to call a halt! Apologies if I haven't
included your favourite local artist or group but remember I've
worked only on the 'ancient' copies of the magazine so that
many now well established local artistes have been missed out
(**B. Peters** and **G. Higginbottom** immediately spring to mind!)
Space doesn't permit me to continue my quest through the late
80's and 90's artistes anyway.

No doubt when the Federation hit's its 50th birthday and I'm
either dead or too old to do a repeat exercise someone else will
be able to make rude comments about the current band of pro-
fessional performers - me included I hope!

It's been a long but enjoyable trail and I hope you enjoyed shar-
ing it with me. Don't forget the magazine would love to hear
from those out there who have 'disappeared' (cue for a folk
song!) so **do** write (to Folk North West not me!) and let us know
your whereabouts.

Derek 'Giff' Gifford

PARODY - SINGER THREE

To my friends depicted within - some way after Kipling

We be singers three -
a writer, some shanties and balladry,
Lately come back from the pubs of Whitby,
with never a penny of money.

I murmur my verses into my guitar,
(A writer, some shanties and balladry)
So no-one can hear just how bad they all are,
and never a penny of money.

I'd like to be known as a shanty king,
(A writer, some shanties and balladry)
I bellow the verses because I can't sing,
with never a penny of money.

I'm the one with the curious tone -
(A writer, some shanties and balladry)
Forty-three verses in this monotone,
and never a penny of money.

We're at every folk club singers' night -
a writer, some shanties and balladry -
But no-one will book us, we don't think that's right,
we've never a penny of money.

We be singers three -
a writer, some shanties and balladry -
Lately come back from the pubs of Whitby,
with never a penny of money.

by Ian Wells

(Ed:- It was St George's Day on March 23rd. I was sent this in
celebration and believe it deserves a wider audience. The
sentiments in the song are excellent and it is worth a trip to see
Back in Business perform the song).

ST. GEORGE'S FAMILY TREE

Come, gather round, says good St. George, and drink your beer
in the English sun.
Come, gather round, and I will tell you who may be counted an
Englishman.

First came Angles, Jutes and Celts, to plant their feet upon the
land.
The Pictish folk in the hills of the north, and Roman ships on the
southern strand.
Saxons came as the Romans faded. Longships raided round
my shore;
Vikings came like wolves to the sheepfold - stayed to live by
the farmer's lore.

Come, gather round, says good St. George, and drink your beer
in the English sun.
Come, gather round, and I will tell you who may be counted an
Englishman.
Pict or Celtic, Roman, Saxon - he may be counted an
Englishman.

The Roman wall runs over the moorland; Roman blood runs in
my veins.
Saxons fought and lost at Hastings; England chafed at the
Norman rein.
France and England fought like brothers; Huguenots came as
friends to stay.
Dutchmen drained the sea from the fens, and their houses stand
there still today.

Come, gather round, says good St. George, and drink your beer
in the English sun.
Come, gather round, and I will tell you who may be counted an
Englishman.
Be he Norman, French or Dutchman -
Pict or Celtic, Roman, Saxon - he may be counted an
Englishman.

Black men came from the shores of Africa, brought as slaves
against their will;
Some went on, some stayed and married - black blood runs in
the family still.
Came back again, two centuries later, now from the Caribbean
sun.
Bangla Desh, Pakistan and India sent their daughters and their
sons.

Come, gather round, says good St. George, and drink your beer
in the English sun.
Come, gather round, and I will tell you who may be counted an
Englishman.
Be he Asian, or Jamaican -
Be he Norman, French or Dutchman -
Pict or Celtic, Roman, Saxon - he may be counted an
Englishman.

People came here over the centuries, Jew and Gentile, slave
and free,
Each one brought his blood and his culture, freely given as a
gift to me.
Each one, then, I will receive, whoever his ancestors be;
All of them are my sons and my daughters, all of them held in
the same degree.

Come, gather round, says good St. George, and drink your beer in the English sun.

Come, gather round, and I will tell you who may be counted an Englishman.

Jew or Gentile, slave or freeman –

Be he Asian, or Jamaican –

Be he Norman, French or Dutchman –

Pict or Celtic, Roman, Saxon –

Come, gather round, and I will tell you, he may be counted an Englishman!

by Mike Bartram

HIS WEBMASTER'S VOICE

www.folknorthwest.co.uk



First of all, hearty congratulations to the Federation on its Silver Jubilee. I don't quite go back to the birth of the Federation but I was there in its infancy. As we used to say in the Dicconson Arms when our esteemed Chairman of the time, Nigel Firth, entered the room – "HAIL TO THE FEDERATION" Here's to the next twenty five years.

Right – down to business: the website is a great way to see if anybody knows something that you don't in a shorter time span than the magazine can provide and to this end there are a couple of forums of enquiry (should that be fora? Mind you there are only two of them.) One is the 'Song Search' page that has had several requests placed on them that I have been able to either answer on my own or point people in the right direction. There is, at the moment, a request that has me stumped. If anybody knows the lyrics to the Marie Lloyd Music Hall song – 'One of the ruins that Cromwell knocked about a bit' then I would very much appreciate if you could get in touch. I can't find any lyrics on the web but I did find out that the song was based on Corfe Castle in Dorset!

Another forum is the 'Hints and Tips' page, where I encourage people to pass on their experiences on to the rest of us. One of the recent queries that someone may be able to help with is the age-old problem of sore fingers when you play the guitar. Regular playing hardens the ends of your fingers but until this happens, it can be quite painful. Does any reader have any advice that they can pass on please? Send it to the email address below and I'll put it on the site for all to see.

The BBC Treasure Hunt appeal is still ongoing – I'm looking for people who may have recorded folk programmes such as Folk on One, Folk on Friday, and Folk on 2 from before 1984. Details are on the site. I have put a thread on the Mudcat forum (www.mudcat.org) to the same end that has yielded some interesting finds.

Finally the usual request to any Artist or Organiser that has a website that does not appear on the links page – send your URL to me and I'll include it in the relevant category. Any other folk related links are also welcome.

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

LETTERS



Dear Editor,

I can't say that I remember the first edition of Folk NW, but I have been reading it for long enough to regard it as an essential source of folk information. Living in Preston, I feel at the heart of Lancashire - whichever direction I go in I can find a friendly folk club.

After all this time, it would be easy to take the Federation and its members for granted. However, I remain eternally grateful to all the organisers who offer the hospitality of their club every week and the officers of the Federation who publish the magazine to lead me there.

I am eagerly anticipating the Silver Anniversary edition and I am already poised with my highlighter to plan my visits for the summer. Congratulations to you all. I shall now look forward to the Golden Anniversary edition - I wonder who will appear in the calendar then!

Henry Peacock

Dear Editor,

From today [21 February 2002] only the same two performers will be allowed during the course of an evening's entertainment in bars and restaurants that don't hold a public entertainment licence (PEL).

In a judgement at the High Court this afternoon, it was decided that the two-in-a-bar rule, which applies in over 111,000 liquor-licensed premises in England and Wales, must be interpreted as strictly as possible. This means that if a pianist and a singer are playing, it becomes a criminal offence for licensees to allow another singer (or indeed any other musician) to do a turn. Unless, of course, a PEL is first obtained from the local authority.

The High Court judgement also ruled that MIDI files constitute 'recorded sound'. Under the two-in-a-bar rule (s 182.1 of the Licensing Act 1964) no combination of 'recorded sound' and live performer is allowed without a PEL being in force. The implication is that use of MIDI files during a live performance, even if only one live performer is involved, will be illegal unless the premises is covered by a PEL.

The case (London Borough of Southwark v Sean Toye) arose when Southwark successfully prosecuted former landlord Sean Toye for allowing karaoke without a PEL in September 1999. The karaoke manufacturer funded the landlord's defence because, he argued, the MIDI files in use did not count as 'recorded sound' as usually understood, and therefore the s 182 exemption should apply.

This frustrating judgement may, in the end, speed up reform. I hope that David Heath MP will be able to raise it in the House of Commons during his adjournment debate on reform of PEL's (Wed 27 February).

Hamish Birchall

Dear Ken Bladen

I was quite disturbed on reading "Live Review" of the Bram Taylor Band written by David Jones in the Winter 2001 issue of Folk Northwest Magazine.

Firstly the review suggests not only was this a live review but was also to be a review of Bram Taylor's latest CD Fragile Peace. The only reference to the CD was a mention of the title track within the 'live review'. I noticed that this misrepresentation was apparent in several other 'reviews' by David Jones in the above issue of the magazine.

Although the review generally was quite complimentary and favourable in its content, I was somewhat disgusted in Mr Jones comments in the last paragraph. Yes Bram Taylor and his band are polished and professional and I would not expect any top class performer be it in a regular folk club or any other live setting to be any less. If our artistes are not good and well rehearsed, and polished then clubs are not going to book or be prepared to pay their fees, as audiences will not venture out to our folk clubs for mediocre acts. If Mr Jones had bothered to look at Bram Taylor's gig list which I know is available at all performances covering solo and band dates, he would have seen that virtually all these bookings are in what he refers to as folk based clubs or venues.

I feel that the Band and Bram Taylor were done an injustice in this review it being very patronizing and somewhat rude. I've always found Bram Taylor approachable, entertaining and professional in his assessment of his audience of the day and venue, structuring his performance material to accommodate the said audience. If this makes him too polished then in Mr Jones opinion all our top artistes are not for the 'run of the mill' folk club. This can only then be detrimental to the artist's music and most of all to the continuation of the local small folk clubs and venues, offering a service to the public almost every night of the week.

I feel it was an insult to folk audiences integrity and intelligence, Bram Taylor's reputation as a performer, and others in his trade, having a knock on to their livelihoods. I found Mr Jones to be somewhat hypocritical as he himself puts on very polished performers at his folk based club.

At least Bram Taylor and the band are owed an apology. Fragile Peace CD should be properly reviewed in a future issue of your magazine.

This from a disgruntled folkie and floor singer.

Carol Langdale (Mrs)

To the Editor

Comments on article in Folk Northwest Winter 2001

I have just read the review by David Jones of the Bram Taylor Band at the Staindrop Comprehensive School 13 October 2001 and Fragile Peace (Fellside FECD159).

An interesting piece but a little bemusing, apart from mentioning that Bram performed Fragile Peace there was no other reference to the CD (which by the way I think is first class). If this article was also meant to include a review of the said CD then it failed by omission.

That comment aside by real concern with the article, which is a balanced report of the concert and very favourable towards Bram, stems from the very personal view expressed by the author in the second sentence of the concluding paragraph. Having noted that Bram has now taken up folk singing as a full time professional, the referenced statement could have an influence on Folk Club organisers when they are booking acts. I saw Bram at the Wadebridge Folk Festival in 2000 and not

only was his performance very polished and, dare I say, professional the material was exactly what I was expecting from a Folk Singer at a Folk Festival. Could it be that Bram is versatile enough to "tailor" his performance to suit the audience and the venue? I believe he can and does!

Yours sincerely

Don Bailey

Dear Ken

With reference to Folk Northwest Winter 2001 – Bram Taylor Band live at Staindrop and 'Fragile Peace' CD Understanding the voluntary and often under-appreciated work of a reviewer, we are very reluctant to criticise but feel that we must take exception to the article by David Jones on two counts.

Firstly, the title of the article suggests that he is reviewing both a live performance and a newly released studio CD. Whilst he does review the performance in depth, there is no specific comment on the CD. Is the implication that it is so similar to the live performance that no further comment is necessary? Sorry to disagree, but this is never the case – you must either review the CD separately or leave it out of the title.

Secondly, and more seriously, after a full and accurate review of the performance David suggests in his final paragraph that Bram Taylor is too polished a performer for most folk clubs. This comment is very complimentary to Bram, but is highly insulting to organisers and members of the majority of clubs who have put so much time and effort into creating a more polished, professional atmosphere in their guest nights.

'The Tradition' needs sessions and singarounds where people can forget words, fumble their tuning, etc in the company of friends while they develop their talent, but it is a fact of life that if you ask people to pay, they expect and deserve a polished performance.

We have seen and enjoyed performances by Bram Taylor for many years on the folk circuit and admire the effort that has gone into developing this professionalism that David appears to dislike. Fortunately a glance at the gig list (freely available on the night or on www.bramtaylor.freeuk.com) shows that there is no shortage of folk club organisers who also appreciate a polished performance.

We really do recognise the value of your work David, but on this occasion it is impossible not to speak out.

Yours sincerely

Frank and Marian Holmes

Dear Mr Bladen

Re: Review of Bram Taylor Band (live) and CD by David Jones (Winter 2001)

We would like to object to the cavalier way Mr Jones has treated Bram. How can you review a live concert and CD in the same article. In truth, the CD is hardly mentioned. The live review is quite complimentary but the unfair criticism of Bram being 'professional and polished' is nasty. Bram has always taken great care with his singing and playing and to be lambasted for it is wrong. His gig list shows that most places he plays are folk clubs although Mr Jones states that he's too polished for folk-based venues. We have either run or been involved with 5 clubs and Bram has been booked at all of them and most clubs in Kent. We feel that Mr Jones owes Bram an apology and the slight on other 'polished' performers.

We have enclosed a copy of the review we have done of "Fragile Peace" for our local Kent magazine – perhaps you would consider printing it. (Ed:- see page 47)

Kathy and Bob Drage

Dear Ken

I have recently read the 'Live Review' of the Bram Taylor Band, written by David Jones, in the winter 2001 issue of Folk Northwest Magazine.

I think David Jones has completely missed the point which is, Bram Taylor appeared at Staindrop Comprehensive School to help that school to raise funds, he knew the audience would be mixed with many non 'Folk' fans present and adjusted his repertoire to suit all.

I have seen Bram Taylor many times in "Folk based clubs" in my area and in the south, and he has always pleased the audience with his voice and pleasant manner.

Bram has been playing guitar and singing on the circuit for a long time and, like all good folk singers, he has improved and polished his performances with experience. So I could not believe David Jones final paragraph stating, "Bram's polished performance would exclude him from Folk Based Clubs"! Come on now, we have all experienced wrong notes and forgotten lyrics at singarounds/floor spots, as to be expected, as artists learn their trade, but when we pay a few extra pounds to see a guest artist (and buy a CD) we surely expect a more professional approach.

Is David Jones suggesting that performers such as Jez Lowe, Vin Garbutt, Eddie Walker, John Wright and Bram Taylor, to name but a few, have become too professional for their 'Roots' and should be excluded from 'Folk Based Clubs', does he also think that all 'folk based clubs' only book performers who are not 'Polished' in their approach? I certainly hope not!

Any views from other readers?

Yours sincerely

Patricia Britten

Dear Mr Bladen

David Jones Live Review – The Bram Taylor Band – Folk Northwest – Winter 2001

I have read the above review by David Jones with interest, and consider that the somewhat negative comment contained in the last paragraph is worth further comment.

Within this part of the Fenland area, there are six, 'folk based clubs' which are active, successful and well supported. It is in considering the underlying reasons for these perceived strengths that has prompted me, somewhat belatedly, to put pen to paper.

One of the key ingredients to this local success is that booked artists are expected to be professional and polished performers. A commercial manner is, and will always have its place. The fee paid to the performer is often fairly nominal and as a consequence, the artist needs to bolster this by sales of CDs and tapes etc to make it worthwhile.

I am sure you will agree that there is nothing worse than poor presentation by a paid performer. This can promptly give rise to a fall in the numbers attending and have an immediate adverse impact on the income of the club. This then limits the organiser's ability to continue to book artists for the future, if not

endanger the survival prospects of the club.

Surely, Mr Jones should be actively encouraging, if not persuading, the 'folk based clubs' to whom he refers, to readily open their doors to Bram Taylor and the many other like talented performers that are dependent upon the folk scene for a livelihood.

Is this a subject to Mr Jones in another article perhaps?

Yours sincerely

T J Hutson

Dear Ed

I was surprised to see in "Folk on the Radio" just how much folk is available, though obviously not enough. The problem seems to be it is not all available to all.

As one who lives in an area of poor radio reception, I can't even get decent reception on Radio Cumbria after about 8pm. Thankfully Radio Scotland is perfect – I can appreciate that people on a local station border must feel quite cheated.

I am a total idiot as far as the technology is concerned, but I do know that via digital TV radio stations for just about every musical taste other than folk are available. If it were possible to bring together all the folk programmes produced UK wide onto one digital station, would it not be possible to provide such a station 'on the cheap' and if so can we not campaign for it?

If such a scheme is impossible I apologise for wasting your time. Congrats on a great mag.

Geoff Smith

Dear Mr Bladen

Although I live in Ireland at present, I'm originally from Wigan. In the past two or three years I've developed an interest in folk music, particularly in folk music from my native county.

I got your address from the Folk North West Website on the internet and wonder if you could help me. Could you recommend some CDs of good Lancashire folk music and if I could obtain them by mail order? I have "Owdum Edge" and "Deep Lancashire" on tape but they are very bad copies and I would like them on CD. Also I have an album called "From the North" by Gary and Vera Aspey and if you could tell me where I can find more stuff by this couple, I'd be most grateful (I believe they have a great album called "A Taste of Hotpot").

Also, just recently I've started playing the fiddle and I would like to learn some Lancashire fiddle tunes (the only ones I know offhand are "The Stockport March" and "The Manchester Hornpipe" but I'm sure there must be hundreds more) and if you could tell me where I can find books of Lancashire fiddle music, again I'd be most grateful. I'm visiting Wigan in June and if I can find a good session in a pub I hope to be able to join in on me fiddle, or, failing that, my mandolin (which I can play).

Well, Mr Bladen I hope to hear from you soon.

Yours

Frank Platt

PS If you'd rather e-mail me, I can be contacted on frankplatt75@hotmail.com

Dear Ken

I have been a professional singer on the folk and acoustic circuit

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music # craft works # song # stories

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since 1993. I currently have a special project, which I'd like to let your readers know about. It involves a song I wrote, thinking I might be able to use it to help the environment. I have enclosed an A5 copy of the lyrics and manuscript – in case you wanted to share it with your readers.

To explain the background to all this; my son (Peter, aged 9) is a member of "Friends of the Earth" (I enrolled him so that he would receive the magazines and hopefully develop a caring attitude towards the environment) and last year they wrote asking him to increase his monthly donation. As the payer of the donation, and being that I make my living entirely from singing, I said I couldn't afford to do that. Then an idea occurred to me; I could try to write a special, anthem – type song, which I could (with good will from useful contacts) try and turn into a single (like the "Band-Aid" song, which raised money for the starving people in Africa). I wrote the song last year and ever since I have been trying to think of ways of getting it and the project to people's attention. I tried all my contacts first, then I contacted some famous names like Rolf Harris, I am trying to get our children's schools interested in singing on the recording. I contacted Blue Peter and I intend to contact radio stations once I have finished the recording.

I am keeping a "newsroom" about the project on my web site; so that anyone who is interested can hear the song and review progress. I also do regular live gigs (an up-to-date list can be found on the web site) with my excellent Kindred Spirit musicians, performing my own songs alongside popular favourites. The web site address is www.elainesamuels.co.uk

It is proving to be a very hard struggle, but I'll keep trying to spread the word and hope to raise awareness and funding eventually. Thanks Yours sincerely **Elaine Samuels**

Dear Editor,

I am pleased to inform you and your readers that Folkus has been successful in applying for grant aid from North West Arts for the year 2002 - 2003.

With this funding secured, the organising committee can now plan a programme of events for the full year ahead.

With Cumbria becoming part of North West Arts, Folkus has been charged with developing music making and supporting musical events within the county in addition to developing working programmes in Cheshire.

Apart from the day long workshops we stage on a regular basis, Folkus is also supporting festivals and community projects where possible within our budget restrictions.

For the interest of your readers I enclose a schedule of forthcoming events Folkus will be supporting during the summer months.

Once our plans are confirmed for the Autumn, I will of course advise you and you readers accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Bell. Chair. Folkus.

For information contact Folkus, 55 The Strand, Fleetwood, Lancs FY7 8NP.

Tel 01253 - 872317 Fax 01253 - 878382.

email: alanbell@fylde-folk-fest.demon.co.uk

OUTLINE OF FUTURE EVENTS FOR FOLKUS 2002

JUNE

8/6 **Clitheroe Folk Festival**, Trinity Methodist Hall Parson Lane. 10.30am-12.30 pm Bodhran. Guitar. Fiddle. Whistle
15/6 **Middlewich Folk & Boat Festival** 10.30am-2.00pm Bodhran. Fiddle. Melodeon. Whistle

JULY

13/7/02 **Ulverston in Cumbria Furness Tradition Folklore Festival** venue tbc workshops on guitar, fiddle, harmonica, clog dancing, singing during the day.
20/7/02 **Brampton Folk Festival** in William Howard Centre. 10.30am-12.00 pm Bodhran. Fiddle. Guitar. Whistle.
20/7/02 **Saddleworth Folk Festival** 10.30am-12.30pm Fiddle. Guitar.
21/7/02 **Saddleworth Folk Festival** 10.30am-12.30pm Bodhran. Whistle

AUGUST

10/8/02 **Maryport Sea Festival** workshops to be arranged

Obituary – Hester Woods

I was told yesterday of the sad death a few days ago of Hester Woods, 27 years old, daughter of Ian Woods and a singer with a beautiful voice of her own. She was a regular and popular member of Wigan Folk Club, who was always cheerful despite her medical problems; and would forever be entertaining us with humorous tales about her job at the hospital, and about life in general. She was also a member of St Michael's Amateur Dramatic Society in Wigan and performed in pantomimes etc with them, bringing her acting talent to the fore as well as her musical talent. Although she usually sang unaccompanied, she

was an able player of the violin, viola, cello and harp.

For a short time she was a member of the Shellback Chorus, and led the song "Solid Fas" when we performed at the Mersey Shanty Festival in June 2001.

I have started a thread at Mudcat Cafe. Anyone who wishes to add a few words to that should go to: www.mudcat.org/thread.cfm?threadid=46878

Joan Blackburn

NEWSREEL



THE BUSKERS BALL CONTINUES...

New Venue: Thursdays at the Volunteer, Darwen Rd, Bromley Cross, Bolton, from 8pm to 11pm. The website has been updated with this info: www.busker.freeuk.com/page1.htm

Contact Alec for further info or to book your spot: tel 01204 527414 or email: busker@freeuk.com

CARAVAN AND CAMPING FOLK

There have been two new websites established for those that like to combine their caravan and camping with folk music. The websites can be found at: www.folkgroup.fsnet.co.uk - this is the website for the Folk Dance and Song Group of the Camping and Caravanning Club; www.folkgroup.fsnet.co.uk/northwest/ - is the website of the North West Section of the above Group. The Lancashire Folk Association Website is not restricted to campers and caravaners and can be found on <http://web.onetel.net.uk/~lancashirefolk/>

CHORLEY FOLK ALIVE AND KICKING

John Joyce writes....As you know (or then again maybe you didn't) The Folk Club at the Inn on the Park, Astley Village, closed during the summer. Since that time I have attended Frank Wilson's Club at the Prince of Wales on a few occasions and had a really good time. Last night I decided to call in again, sing a few songs, and see what everybody on the scene was up to. Imagine my surprise when Wolfman told me that Frank had decamped to Ireland and was not likely to return, he had written a rather cryptic note that Wolfman let me read which suggested he had some serious problems to take care of but it would be totally inappropriate to speculate in this note what those might be. So that left Wolf & myself, holding the fort last night and by 9.30 things did not look promising. However after Wolf and I had done our thing, Steve Britner and friends from Coppull arrived, a group from Preston including Caroline (beautiful rendition of a Slaid Cleaves number) and an absolutely stunning guitarist, Tony Robinson, did a mini set of covers and original songs. Other equally competent singers made up the difference. Mel came down but he had forgot his concertina, never mind it was still a great evening. Right, cut to the chase. The landlord wants to keep the evening going so I agreed to help wolf run the evening. It will still be the second and forth Monday in the month and we will be looking for Artists to play once a month. If you are interested e-mail or phone. Tony Robinson had actually designed a Web site for Frank at www.hengestudios.freeerve.co.uk/chorleyfolkclub We will amend the site and use it to keep everyone informed, eventually.

PRESS RELEASES



FURNESS TRADITION FESTIVAL, JULY 12 - 14 2002, ULVERSTON, CUMBRIA

Andy Frame, Publicity Coordinator, Furness Tradition tells us about the planned festival.

Song and dance, workshops, junior showcase, song and music sessions, festival ale. Now in its 4th year Furness Tradition is a friendly festival based in the picturesque market town of Ulverston. The weekend kicks off with the Friday Gathering in the Glaxo Social Club. Led by Furness Tradition Allsorts, the evening will provide a preview of some of the festival's highlights plus floor spots from both local and visiting singers, musicians, and dancers.

On Saturday we take to the streets with music, dance and local craft displays throughout the town centre. There are also workshops for instruments, song and clog-dancing; storytelling; a craft fair; music market; Furness Folk Club will be running their popular singaround session; a music session; the foot race over Flan Hill is being revived again after last year's foot and mouth outbreak. In addition to all this, we have what is perhaps the most important part of the festival - the Young People's Showcase - the culmination of the work we have done with youngsters from local schools and community groups throughout the year.

On Saturday evening the Spectacular concert and dance features Stanley Accrington, Altar Native, Taffy Thomas (all back by popular demand), Janet Russell, Jim Woodland, Neil Adams, Judy Turner, Alex Fisher and Jigbusters. Sunday starts with a walk over Hoad hill with a tug-o-war using the rope made during Saturday's craft display. This is followed by a survivors' session in one of the local pubs. And don't forget the Festival ale brewed specially by the local Foxfield brewery!

Ticket Prices are:- Weekend (includes workshops): Adult £12, Child/Pensioner £9, Family - 2nd child free.
Friday Eve: Adult £5, Child/pensioner £4, Family - 2nd child free, Group of 10+ £4 each.
Workshops: £2 Saturday Junior Showcase: Adult £2, Child/Pensioner £1, Family - 2nd child free.
Saturday Evening: Adult £7, Child/Pensioner £5, Family - 2nd child free, Group of 10+ £5 each.

More details are available from: - Furness Tradition, 60 Soutergate, Ulverston, A12 7ES; Tel: 01229 582704; Email: trad@hartown.demon.co.uk or kmode@onetel.net.uk; Website: www.furnesstradition.org.uk (online May 2002)

BIRTH OF NEW SUMMER FESTIVAL SNOWDONIA, NORTH WALES.

Snowdonia is well known as one of Wales's dramatic and beautiful landscapes and this year on it's boundaries "Cwmni Llyn Ffynhonnau" will host a major folk festival, featuring some of the top names in the business.

The venue for "Glynllifon Folk Festival" is the exquisite Country Park Glynllifon, Llandwrog, Nr Caernarvon, Gwynedd, north Wales. 28th - 30th June 2002.

Friends Of The Earth@Elaine Samuels 2001(A song project to raise money for the environment. Elaine hopes to release the song as a single & donate all proceeds. Keep an eye & ear out for it!)

G D Em C G D

V1. This is our home a ref-uge in the emp-li-ness, A jew-el of life a mir-i-cle of birth. A bub-btle of air bet-ween us & ob-il-vi-on, spin-ning thro' time a-cross the u-ni-verse. Tell ev-'ry one the time has come to change things shout it out loud for ev-'ry-thing you're worth. Fol-low your heart be-lieve & make it hap-pen. Join hands to-ge-ther, fri-ends of the earth. CH. We want to li-i-i-vo save the world (rpt. twice after V1 & 4 times at end)

V2. Can we be friends, live our lives together? In meadows of green, under skies of blue. Be a part of my world, stand up & say you're with me Be there for me & I'll be there for you. Tell everyone the time has come to change things. Shout it out loud for everything you're worth. Follow your heart, believe & make it happen. Join hands together, friends of the earth.

Elaine Samuels is a SW London based singer-songwriter. She sings with some excellent musicians, including fantastic electric violin player, Sim Jones. Find out more about the "Friends Of The Earth" fundraising project, hear the song & see where they are performing live on her web site (or phone for a gig list).

Elaine Samuels & Kindred Spirit info & bookings: 020 8898 6040. www.elainesamuels.co.uk

Amongst those filling the bill are the legendary "Oysterband", Johnny Fean, Rod Clements and Peter Stanley & Brian Golbey. The festival is also hosting a vibrant array of up and coming musicians on the folk scene such as North Cregg (trad Irish), Neck (folk rock), Five Furious Fish (fast folk), Bearcats (cajun), Mabon (trad Welsh) and Baker's Fabulous Boys (bluegrass). Also there is Bill Jones and Martin Simpson both having raised their profiles between them with steady gigging and winning best newcomer/best album/best instrumentalist at the BBC Folk Awards.

Coming in from across the shores are the blistering Breton band Tijaz and from Finland's Swedish speaking community are the aggressively modern mythical sounds of Gjallarhorn. The renowned Fernhill are a talented daring deconstructional band seen as the prime movers in the Welsh folk scene. For further information please visit our website www.glynllifonfolkfestival.co.uk; tel info 01286 830798 or 07050223682. Caravanning (prior booking) and camping on site.

Planned as a weekend of great music and atmosphere on three stages. Folk It/ Rock It/ Trad It in a fantastic trendy young/family orientated festival. Put this date on your calendar. Don't Miss It.

BYRD FLIES IN

Legendary Former Byrds frontman **Roger McGuinn** tours the UK again in 2002 to support his Grammy-nominated new LP 'Treasures from the Folk Den' (Appleseed), a collection of re-worked classics featuring collaborations with the likes of Joan Baez, Eliza Carthy, Pete Seeger, Jean Richie and many others.

McGuinn, a highly accomplished acoustic guitar player and songwriter, will play material dating back to the Byrds and the many solo albums he has recorded since the band split up in the 70s - an absolute must for music fans of all ages.

His North West gigs which are both in June are:- He plays the Lowry at Salford Quays on 25 June (Tickets £18.50 tel:0161 876 2000) followed by the Southport Arts Centre on 27 June (tel: 01704 540011; Tickets £17.50)

STILL FULL OF GRACE AND DANGER

The great Scottish singer songwriter, **John Martyn**, is back on tour in the UK this June and July. John has romanced us with his voice and blessed us with his songs and unique guitar style for more than 30 years. From early classics such as 'Solid Air' to last year's rebirth on Independent 'Glasgow Walker' and 'Deliver Me' - his unlikely but stunning association with House-mistress Sister Bliss, he has retained a creative edge unmatched by virtually all his peers.

Always spellbinding live, he stands alone, combining tradition and modernity like probably no other. He tours with long time associates Spencer Cozens on keyboards and Jim Lampi on bass. He hits the North West on 17 June, when he appears at the Neptune Theatre in Liverpool (tel: 0151 709 7844 ; Tickets £15.00), and the following day plays the Lowry in Salford Quays (Tickets £14.50; tel: 0161 876 2000). The penultimate date of the tour is on 1 July at the Charter Theatre in Preston (tel: 01772 258858; Tickets £15.50)

MIDDLEWICH 2002, 14-16 JUNE - THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

The good news - win tickets to Cropredy! The bad news - available only to those at the opening concert-featuring Fairport!

More good news- great English singer/fiddler Elle Osbourne is added to showcase/hiring fair concert-2.00pm Sat. 15th June at Middlewich British Legion. The bad news- capacity is 250. More good news- the mainsite festival bar will be hosted (and run) by the festival committee-sessions & singarounds anyone? The bad news- more choice/even better value.

More good news - Kinderton Bar & Restaurant is the 'official festival club venue-meet the artists-late night xtra's etc. Full details on the website. The bad news- the owner is passionate about live music, food, & Guinness.

More good news- tiered seating block confirmed for mainstage marquee-giving total capacity 750. The bad news- if you haven't booked a ticket in advance(ticket holders have priority access), bring something to sit on.

Join-us in June? A warm welcome- whatever the weather.

Dave Thompson-festival director.

Box office- tel. 01606 834575;

Email: stephen@ndent.freeseerve.co.uk;

Visit the website: www.middlewichfolkandboatfestival.com

P.S. More good news- Sarah Hayes just confirmed for Showcase Concert and 1st Prize in Festival Raffle is 2 weekend tickets to Sidmouth.

FOUR FOOLS FOLK FESTIVAL 28 - 30 JUNE 2002

This is the 14th Four Fools Folk Festival (the nomadic festival). Now happily relocated at St Michael's School in Chorley this is a Festival not to be missed. Not been before? Well, all events take place under one roof so the longest it will take you to get from one venue to another is 2 minutes (providing you don't get sidetracked by the real ale bar and craft stalls). The school is ideally suited to our kind of festival. This is a festival that thrives on the smaller events and also participation. There is always somewhere to sing and somewhere to play. There is also the space for 'extra events' or space for you to go and swap tunes/songs with friends. The campsite is at the back door (free to season ticket holders) and there is hot food available all day and evening throughout the weekend.

As you will see from the advert in this issue, we have our roots based firmly in the tradition and have managed to bring together a line up of singers dancers and musicians second to none to join us in this celebration of traditional song, music and dance. I'm not going to name names here, they are all in the advert, but they all have one thing in common, a great love of our traditional music, song and dance.

Saturday sees Newburgh Morris and invited guest Morris teams dancing in the town centre during the day and returning for our Saturday Ceilidh with top national band 'Used Notes' led by none other than Dan Quinn. Our caller for the evening is Alistair Anderson so a great night is guaranteed.

So, come and celebrate with us in a weekend of singarounds, sessions, workshops, concerts, ceilidh, folk clubs and more, you will be guaranteed a warm welcome. Come make the rafters roar with us at the 'little festival with the big heart'.

Visit our website www.four-fools.co.uk or contact Ken and Angie on 01257 263678 for further details.

NO MASTERS IN CAMBRIDGE...AND NEWS OF CDS TO COME

Cambridge Folk Festival weekend (1-4 August) sees a busy time for No Masters musicians, with Coope Boyes & Simpson and Token Women appearing on the Radio 2 stage. Then Coope Boyes & Simpson feature in a Main Stage first appearance at Cambridge for Blue Murder - the combined

Waterson-Carthy, Mike Waterson and Coope Boyes & Simpson band. See www.cam-folkfest.co.uk for further details of the Festival and www.coopeboyesandsimpson.co.uk or www.nomasters.co.uk for information on Coope Boyes & Simpson and their records.

Cambridge offers a major chance for audiences to hear songs from Coope Boyes and Simpson's new solo album for No Masters (NMCD20 due for release early summer) and Blue Murder's Topic debut, "No One Stands Alone" (TSCD537). Token Women's set will include material from their latest No Masters album, ELSA (NMCD18) which was recently voted on of the best records of 2001 by the European magazine in FolkWorld - see www.folkworld.de For more on Token Women see www.shindy.co.uk and www.nomasters.co.uk.

COOPE BOYES & SIMPSON have a new CD release in early summer, as yet untitled. Commenting powerfully and with humour on the state of the nation, ecology, America past and present - there's even a lullaby - the album features ten new songs from Lester and Jim. As well as a Jaques Brel song, there's likely to be a traditional item or two in the finished track listing, and two stunning new songs written by fellow No Master's musician and Blue Murderer, Mike Waterson.

JO FREYA of Token Women, the six-piece European women's band, and The Fraser Sisters have been commissioned to write a song for the village of Edwinstowe - the Sherwood home of the Major Oak and, according to legend, the place where Robin Hood and Maid Marian were married. The song, which is intended to be a celebration of the village, will be a collaborative work, with lyrics include contributions from local schools and community groups. Jo will blend these with her own writing to create a text and then write a tune. The whole piece will then be performed by a local colliery band. The commission will be a big contrast to her last musical excursion which in March and early April, saw her working with women's groups in Bahrain. Well known as a writer of evocative, personal songs and exciting dance tunes, Jo has also been asked to write a number of commissions in the past, including a suite of music highlighting the different personalities of the women associated with Lord Byron and 'Perjuring Little Whore', a suite based around themes from the traditional song Fanny Blair.

For more information on No Masters or co-operative members - please contact georgina@nomasters.co.uk

PASSING NOTES YOUTH MENTORING PROJECT

Here follows the next instalment of information regarding 'Passing Notes', the first national mentoring scheme for young up and coming folk musicians, devised and organised by Huntingdon Hall.

Below is information regarding the six young musicians chosen to be mentees, and the professional folk artists who have been paired with them as mentors. The mentees will perform on stage in some form with the band indicated, of whom the mentor is a member. This is the first national scheme of its kind; we are looking to make it as successful as possible.

Damien O'Kane, aged 24, plays banjo and guitar -living in Newcastle Upon Tyne, studying at the Northern College of Music, was suggested by Karen Tweed for the scheme, who is one of his lecturers. He was a member of his family's six piece band until 1997, touring Iceland, Austria, Sweden and Switzerland, as well as being the first Irish music band ever to perform in their home town! He is being mentored by **Joe Broughton of The Albion Band** will perform in some form with The Albion Band on Friday 26th April 2002.

He and Joe Broughton will then lead a workshop between 11am -1pm on Saturday 27th April, exact details to be announced, cost £5 for adults, £2 for under 16s.

Matt Nelson, aged 22, plays saxophone and guitar - originally from Ilkley, West Yorkshire, he is currently studying at Stafford University. Has played with band "The Pack" at Sidmouth Folk Festival, Whitby, Otley, and Holmfirth. He is being mentored by **Andy Cutting** and will perform in some form with **Chris Wood** and **Andy Cutting** on Friday 17th May 2002.

He will be leading a workshop with Andy Cutting, Chris Wood and Chris' mentees Jim Murray and Daniel Hollinghurst. The workshop, exact details to be announced will cost £5 for adults, £2 for under 16s.

Jim Moray, aged 21, plays drum, guitar and sings - from Birmingham, qualified as a finalist in the BBC Young Folk Award and has been a backstage volunteer at Sidmouth Festival, as well as winning the 1998 Mercury live music prize with his first indie band, Silver Surfer. He is being mentored by **Chris Wood** and will perform in some form with **Chris Wood** and **Andy Cutting** on Friday 17th May 2002.

He will be leading a workshop with Chris Wood, Andy Cutting and Chris' other mentee Daniel Hollinghurst and Andy Cutting's mentee Matt Nelson. The workshop, exact details to be announced, will cost £5 for adults, £2 for under 16s.

Daniel Hollinghurst, aged 23, plays piano and trumpet - from Hemel Hempstead, Daniel is deputy organist and choirmaster for Great Gaddesen Church and has a largely classical background. He has had a strong interest in folk music for the past four years. He is being mentored by Chris Wood and will perform in some form with Chris Wood and Andy Cutting on Friday 17th May 2002.

He will be leading a workshop with Chris Wood, Andy Cutting, and Chris' other mentee Jim Murray and Andy Cutting's mentee Matt Nelson. The workshop, exact details to be announced, will cost £5 for adults, £2 for under 16s.

Debbie Chalmers, aged 22, plays fiddle - currently living in Birmingham, she is being mentored by **Karen Tweed** and is currently in her 3rd year of a music degree at Birmingham Conservatoire. Debbie has played lead fiddle in folk dance bands and has played at folk clubs as both a support and headline act. Debbie will perform in some form with **Karen Tweed and Roger Wilson** on Friday 21st June and will be leading a workshop with Karen Tweed between 11am-1pm on Saturday 22nd June.

The workshop will be a song arrangement workshop open to any age/sex instrumentalists who have been playing for at least two years. This will be an arrangement workshop, looking at different ways of putting traditional tunes together and making them interesting and fun. It will mainly be working by ear, although music will be available. The workshop will cost £5 for adults, £2 for under 16s.

Gjenya Tambray, aged 22, plays guitar and sings - from Buckfastleigh in Devon, was in the heats and finals of Radio Two Young Folk Musician 2000 and has been performing locally in Wiltshire for a number of years, including the Chippenham Festival in 1999 and 2000. She is being mentored by Kellie While, of E2K and The Albion Band, and will perform in some form with E2K on Friday 12th July 2002; and will be leading a vocal workshop with Kellie While on Saturday 13th July between 11am - 1pm. The workshop details are below...

DENT FOLK FESTIVAL

21st 22nd and 23rd of June 2002

A WEEKEND OF FAMILY FUN THROUGHOUT DENTDALE IN THE BEAUTIFUL YORKSHIRE DALES!

Friday 21st June at The Festival Marquee

MARTIN CARTHY

Plus Shebeen and The Lakeland Fiddlers 7.30 pm Tickets £8 & £6

Friday 21st June At The Memorial Hall
Ceilidh with The Garsdale Street Band
9.00 pm Tickets £4 & £3

Saturday 22nd June at The Festival Marquee

MICHAEL MCGOLDRICK

& DEZI DONNELLY

WITH JOHN JOE KELLY AND ED BOYD

Plus Sam & Elaine Bracken 8.15 pm Tickets £9 & £6.50

Saturday 22nd June at The Memorial Hall

BILL JONES & PETE MORTON

WITH SARAH WRIGHT

Doors open 8.15 pm Tickets £9 & £6.50

FREE EVENTS OVER THE WEEKEND INCLUDING SUNDAY FEATURING...

PETE MORTON WITH TAFFY THOMAS / MIKE WILLOUGHBY & CAROLYN FRANCIS

KEN NICOL / RAY STUBBS ONE MAN BLUES BAND / THE WILD WOOD BAND

THE RAT CATCHER'S DAUGHTER / MILNTHORPE STEEL BAND / SHEBEEN

THE STRAITJACKET CIRCUS

PROMENADE THEATRE WITH SPELLBOUND

STORY TELLING WITH TAFFY THOMAS

Crook Morris / Westmorland Step and Garland Dancers / Eden Arabic Dancers

Two Real Ale Tents / Vintage Bus Rides/ Workshops For Children & Adults

TICKET HOTLINE 01524 582803

WEB SITE: www.dentdale.com

EMAIL: dentfolkfestival@talk21.com

Organised by Dentdale Business Forum

With Funding from Business Link Cumbria & South Lakeland District Council

Saturday 18th May; 11am-1pm (Adults £5, Under 16s £2) with Chris Wood and Andy Cutting, Matt Nelson, Jim Moray and Daniel Hollinghurst

Saturday 22nd June 11am-1pm Song Arrangement Workshop (Adults £5, Under 16s £2) with Karen Tweed and Debbie Chalmers

This workshop is open to any age/sex instrumentalists who have been playing for at least two years. This will be an arrangement workshop, looking at different ways of putting traditional tunes together and making them interesting and fun. It will be mainly working by ear, although music will be available.

Saturday 13th July; 11am-1pm; A-Z of Singing (Adults £5, Under 16s £2) with Kellie While of E2K and Gjenya Tambray. Minimum age 12. An active vocal workshop touching on different themes for every letter of the alphabet. This fun and involving workshop will cover topics essential to every singer, from the importance of choosing the right material for your voice to breathing technique, stage technique and diction. Group exercises will explore the joy of singing and the inspiration behind some traditional folk songs.

Tickets for all workshops are available from Huntingdon Hall Box Office between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on 01905 611 427. Website: www.huntingdonhall.com

NEW WEBSITE FOR QUEEN'S HALL

The Queen's Hall in Widnes which stages a variety of music concerts, including folk, blues and roots, has recently launched a new website. You visit it on: www.queenshall-widnes.com and Peter Bentham, their Marketing Officer, would like to know what you think about it.

SCOTTISH FOLK DIRECTORY 2002/2003

The latest SCOTTISH FOLK DIRECTORY 2002/2003 will shortly be going to press. It contains over 340 contacts for folk clubs, festivals, organisations, performers, instrument makers, shops, media, and other services - an indispensable tool for professionals and enthusiasts alike in the Scottish folk and traditional music scene.

To reserve a copy, available at £4.00 including postage within the UK (£4.50 elsewhere), visit their website: www.scottishfolkdirectory.com and email them. If you order right away, you can help them determine the length of their print run.

'SOUNDINGS' - BRINGING BRADFORD TOGETHER IN MUSIC

A new global music project is set to take Bradford by storm. The Tasmin Little Music Centre at the University of Bradford will be working on Soundings, in conjunction with community music specialists Whitewood and Fleming, in April and May.

Based at Dean Clough in Halifax, Whitewood and Fleming have considerable experience of creating original cross-cultural music, and have also developed their stand-alone band the Fusion Club. The Fusion Club developed out of the Site - Lines Orchestra, which performed the 'Sitelines Suite' in Bradford Mela 2001. Now the artist involved are hoping to create brand new music for the Soundings project, as well as give a brand new performance of the 'Sitelines Suite' with the Bradford Global Orchestra. Local would-be performers are encouraged to apply now to be part of the project.

There are two groups that Bradford people are welcome to join whatever their age, ability, or indeed instrument.

The **Small World Band** will be exploring, improvising and composing with Whitewood and Fleming musicians Inder Goldfinger and James Squire. This is an opportunity for musicians to bring their own expertise and styles to a new group. It is open to all instrumentalists, and there will be a limited supply of basic percussion instruments to play for singers or those who don't have an instrument.

Bradford Global Orchestra will perform the five-movement 'Site-Lines Suite', a highly appealing and accessible piece of music composed by the Fusion Club in autumn 2000. A reasonable level of sight-reading is necessary as the music is in notated form. Again, a wide range of instruments is required, from violins to accordion and tabla.

The Fusion Club will also be playing. The band consists of instruments ranging from piano, flute and electric violin to tabla, dhilruba, accordion and gamelan. The band performs its own original music, as well as working on theatre shows and creating community shows.

Soundings will work across cultures and musical heritage to produce new music from participants, allowing members to explore new ways of expressing themselves and to be influenced by each other. People from all parts of the Bradford Community are encouraged to join the project working alongside in the Goldfinger and James Squire as part of the Small World Band, or with Jim Pywell, Fellow in Music on the 'Sitelines Suite'.

Rehearsals start on Wednesday 24th April for the Global Orchestra, and Thursday 25th April for the Small World Band. The performance is on Saturday 18th May.

Please call 01274 233185 or email artsadmin@bradford.ac.uk for further information.

WINNER OF POYNTON FOLK FESTIVAL SINGER/ SONGWRITER COMPETITION 2002.

Edward Clemetshaw tells us that songwriter, Charlotte Peters Rock, has written and sung her new song, 'Steam an Temper', which won the 2002 Poynton Singer/Songwriter competition.

In praise of mothers of large families, this song draws attention to those women who 'just got on with it'. All their lives were lived within range of their home and kitchen. They never had much money, but they reared their families as well as they could, taking in other women's children as well, where necessary. This breed of women has largely died out now. But they were the backbone of Britain, in their time. You can hear the song by following the link: http://artists.mp3s.com/artist_song/2350/2350375.html If you wish to send feedback, it would be greatly appreciated.

WOW! WITH A KNIGHT TO REMEMBER!

Sir Bob Geldof is to top the bill at this year's Orange Wow Festival in North Shields, Tyne & Wear. Sir Bob, organiser of Band Aid and Live Aid, and former lead singer with the Boomtown Rats, will take to the Orange World Stage at 9.30 p.m. on Sunday 2nd June.

A host of star names will perform at this popular arena for world music including Aswad, Cheikh Lo, Yat Kha and Jazz Jamaica All Stars. The event, which runs for three days over the Bank Holiday weekend from June 1 -3, includes four stages with music to suit all tastes, including blues, rock, pop, Celtic, salsa, roots, soul, reggae and more!

This year's Orange Wow Festival coincides with the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and a very special Jubilee Picnic is planned for

the afternoon of Monday 3rd June in Northumberland Square in North Shields, with fun for all the family, fancy dress & talent competitions and surprise guests from the world of showbiz! Although the main festival programme has been revealed, major announcements can be expected over the next few weeks from festival media partner Metro Radio.

To keep up to date on the latest Orange Wow news, log onto www.orangewow.co.uk or call the festival hotline 0191 2008909.

**SPOTLIGHT
ON
ST ANNE'S ACOUSTIC
ROOTS CLUB**



The St Annes Acoustic Roots Club has uprooted itself yet again, this time to the St Annes Civil Service Sports and Social Club on Shepherd Road, St Annes. Club members are delighted with the friendly atmosphere at their new venue, where there is no competition from televised football matches or from public bar regulars who have been known to shout down and even jeer at the singers!

The club has grown considerably since it started up in October 1999, and has many impressive performers as well as original songwriters among its regular members. Some of the talented young members who first plucked up their courage to perform in public in the friendly and encouraging atmosphere of the club, have now taken their first steps towards a professional career, while several older members have been inspired to dust off their old skills and take up gigging once again.

The club continues to function every Tuesday, with a concert once a month, featuring top performers in a variety of styles. On all the other Tuesdays there will be open sessions where any performer is welcome to "have a go", whatever their level of expertise, and whatever their type of music, be it Folk, Jazz, Pop, Country, Classical, or entirely original material (but please, no heavy amplification – the club does aim to be 'acoustic'!).

It doesn't have to be musical – people are welcome to perform whatever performance art they specialise in – the club has enjoyed Irish dancing, Lancashire dialogue poems and Comedy. Listeners and valued too!

The club now uses the function room at the Civil Service Sports and Social Club. As it is no longer in a Public Bar, the club is able to welcome younger singers and musicians as well as the regulars. Adults are, however, able to access the Bar.

There is a charge of £1.00 (fantastic value – including a free raffle ticket!) for the open sessions, and a charge of from £3.00 to £5.00 for concerts.

Both sessions and concerts start at 8.30pm. For details please phone Sue or John on 01253 721503.

(Ed:- I am pleased to see the return of the Spotlight. Why not shed some light on the activities of your club and send it to me? You can beam it down to me by electronic mail. If you have a photograph as well so much the better. We will be able to see what goes on. Details of how to find the club, the choice of beer, availability of food etc are meet and drink to us.)

CD REVIEWS



ALTAN - The Blue Idol (Virgin Records CDVE961/8119552)

I've followed Altan from the very early days and have watched with fascination as they've matured. That may sound condescending but it's not meant to be. For those of you who get a copy of the CD will know what I mean from the opening track 'Daily Growing'. For a start there's the lead-in of subtle keyboard (who else but Donal Lunny) and who's that joining Mairead on vocals, none other than Paul Brady. So, already a musical nirvana. The following track 'Uncle Rat', with a melody leaning heavily on 'Follow Me Up To Carlow', the band proves, beyond a doubt, that not every jig, reel, or song has to be performed at break-neck speed to achieve the desired effect.

The album at times reaches parts that I suppose verge on 'new age' in the construction of the chords and the delicacy of the instrumentation. Particularly effective is the backing on the track 'Pretty Young Girl' with guest vocalist Dolly Parton, a surprise element that shocks in a nice way. Needless to say, the tune sets are immaculately executed. OK, so the band doesn't exactly push the boundaries anymore but while they still turn out quality albums like this, who could ask for more?

Pete Fyfe

HARVEY ANDREWS - 'The Gift' [1204HYP]

In the not too distant future, Harvey Andrews will have spent forty years as a troubadour. A songwriter of immense talent and sensitivity and a wordsmith that many who aspire to greatness would do well to study and imitate. I think I have heard every recording he has ever made and still prefer minimal backing with just Harvey and his trusty guitar taking centre stage.

The opening track on this CD, 'Spinning Concertinas', looks at the very fabric that makes the folk tradition so compelling, the making of the concertina, a work of love and precision, very much like performing live to an audience. For that purpose, 'If It Wasn't for the Song', the artist would have nothing to offer, a fine a cappella rendition, enhanced by a chorus guest list that would cost a not too inconsiderable sum to book at your club! Tom Paxton was a huge influence on Harvey during his early years, '1964', was a time of experimentation, but for some it was one chance too many.

If you can remember those songs you hated with a passion, I bet 'Jug O' Punch' and 'Wild Mountain Thyme', would be fairly high on your list, along with the bodhran player lurking in the corner of the room, 'That Perfect Folk Club in the Sky', is somewhere I'm sure many of us will perform one day. Watching Alex Campbell on stage made Harvey's mind up that performing was going to be the life for him. Despite being surrounded by friends, you can still feel lonely; something Alex experienced on many occasions in his all too brief sojourn with us. The title track of the CD has bittersweet overtones.

Solitude is a must for the most part for, 'The Songwriter', staring at the page for hours is an occupational hazard, for those who are perceived not to have a proper job! The one thing that drives artists mad is to be labelled. 'Pigeon-Holed', explains the dilemma, it has a very French feel with the accordion backing.

Dyed-in-the-wool folkies are easy to spot at festivals, with

tankards hanging from their belt loops. 'English Ale', is an anthem to their powers of being able to hold their liquor. Sung a cappella with the backing of the fine chorus heard earlier. Another song of nostalgia, and a celebration of the right of every man, woman, and child to be heard. Through the decades, there have been so many causes to fight for, but when push comes to shove, in the end, as time marches on, do we really, 'Give A Damn'.

How many of you remember the days pre-amplification, just one man and his guitar. Now we are conditioned and without all that hardware, we somehow feel cheated. It's an art that needs rekindling; 'From the Heart', tells the story much better than I ever could. Hands up all of you who have made an art form out of, 'Driving in the Middle Lane', the song maybe tongue in cheek, but the consequences of being stuck behind such a monster continues to exasperate.

'Anon', a word we see on so many published works, be they poems, short stories, or songs. I expect in years to come even Harvey's songs will be introduced without him getting his rightful dues as the songwriter, or worst still being introduced as 'trad'; a life's work, which to others means so little. Sympathetic backing for a song of deep poignancy. A short song but to the point, 'Little Businesses' is just eight lines but tells succinctly how the life of the folk singer has changed and not for the better I stress. 'Fading Voices', a look back at the vitality of youth, tunes of glory giving way to age and the new order. They would do well to take the best from experience.

Harvey in this recording takes a long, hard look back at the past, not just personally but how it has affected us all in one way or another, certainly since the middle of the last century. His words and music are as strong and meaningful as ever they were, presented in an unobtrusive, but at the same time powerful way to make you sit up and take stock. Of all the songwriters of his genre that this country has produced, he continues to see things clearly, in a way others don't. He truly is a man for all seasons, whose legacy of songs is a real gift.

David Jones

MARTYN BENNETT - Glen Lyon (Footstompin' Records CDFSR1714)

When do you lay aside the trappings of commercial success to concentrate on your art? That's the question I pondered whilst listening to this intriguing CD. For Martyn Bennett it would appear, the time is now. I mean, the idea of using his mum Margaret (acknowledged as a fine singer in the traditional style herself) as the main vocalist isn't the first idea that springs to mind. However, here, he does just that and, in a cock-eyed way, it works at least at one level. Unfortunately, as I don't understand the Gaelic language this makes uncomfortable listening for me - not unpleasant, just uncomfortable, and possibly the richer for it. At least it makes me more aware of the mood Martyn is trying to convey.

The recording has obviously been crafted with a certain 'feel', in much the same way as a well-made documentary on native Indians or indeed crofters would be utilised. This is an ambitious project that, I'm sure, Martyn feels he can express to a wider audience. As the press release states this is a reflective album whether it is a commercial reflection we will have to wait and see.

Pete Fyfe

PAUL BRADY - The Missing Liberty Tapes (PBMCD001)

In 1973 Paul Brady replaced Christy Moore in Planxty. After

Planxty broke up for the final time, he toured with Andy Irvine, sharing an album in 1976. Paul Brady was in a wonderfully creative spell and, by 1978, he was ready to issue his first solo album, "Welcome Here Kind Stranger".



He marked the launch with a concert in front of an expectant audience at Liberty Hall, Dublin. He recorded the concert just for himself, but later mislaid the tapes. Luckily for us, they have recently come to light in his attic! They captured an exciting evening, which marked a high point in Irish music.

Paul first introduced Andy Irvine to play haunting harmonica on Paddy's Green Shamrock Shore. One after another, he added Donal Lunny, Paddy Glackin, Matt Molloy, Liam O'Flynn and finally Noel Hill. "We'll have a football team in no time!" he remarked. With Paul in great voice, they sailed grandly through songs like 'Mary and the Soldier', 'Don't Come Again', and notably, 'The Lakes of Pontchartrain', before finishing with a fine set of tunes. There was still time for Paul to return alone to sing the powerful 'Arthur McBride'.

Paul Brady moved on to rock music, and this proved to be his final recording of traditional Irish music. If you would like to go back to that remarkable time, or would like to know what made it so special, this recording will transport you straight there.

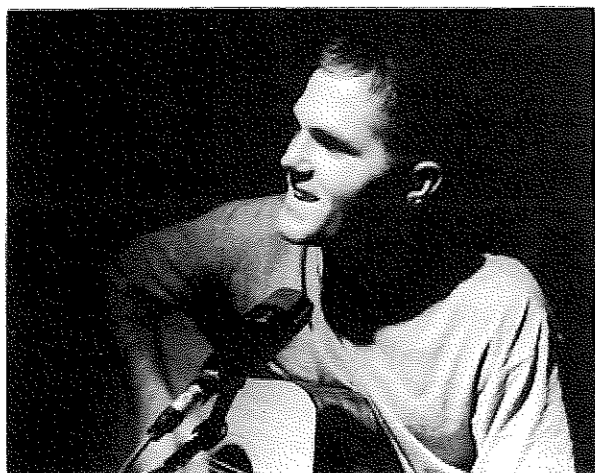
Henry Peacock

JEFFREY FOUCAULT - Miles from The Lightning (Rock River Records)

If you read the titles on Jeffrey Foucault's 'Miles From The Lightning', you'll get a good picture of the land that his songs inhabit; 'Thistledown Tears', 'Street Light Halos', 'Dove And The Waterline', 'Highway And The Moon'. The imagery is very strong and I like singer songwriters who can paint a picture with their songs. His gentle guitar picking and warm voice make for comfortable listening though the lyrics often tell of a less comfortable life in his rural American homeland.

Some might balk at the rather austere content of the lyrics but it's no different to the tough tales of working the land that we hear in traditional music from all over. He produces a 'by the campfire' type feel to the songs and gets assisted in this on 'Dove And The Waterline' by songwriter Peter Mulvey. However, we could do without the genuine sound of crackling fires on 'Buckshot Moon' – especially, those of us who remember Neil Young employing the same trick. As usual, the respite to the tales of hardship comes with some love songs even though she disappears over the horizon in Jeffrey's 'Californ-i-a' – the classic American escapist image of that state as per Steinbeck's 'Grapes Of Wrath'. Like that novel, this record is a fascinating

picture of life's rougher edges. Though some may find that the view is too depressing, it is classic singer songwriter melancholia at its best.

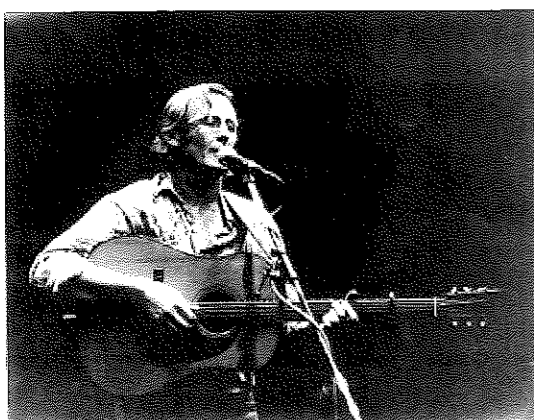


The lyrics often have a different angle to them, and anyone who can come up with a lyric like, 'I need a woman with a heel like Achilles - so, that I know that there's one way that I can win', is alright by me. The CD is available from www.jeffreyfoucault.com or via a good record importer such as Fish Records.

Steve Henderson

ALISTAIR HULETT AND DAVE SWARBRICK - Red Clydeside (Red Rattler Records RATCD005)

In a day and age when the majority of the nation seems to be more obsessed with fame than politics, it's good to get a reminder that our lives are more influenced by politics than fashion. It's also good to find Dave Swarbrick adding his expressive fiddle to songs worthy of his skills. We have Alistair Hulett to thank for those songs. He's probably best known for 'He Fades Away', which has been covered by June Tabor, Andy Irvine, and Roy Bailey. However, the rest of his catalogue is worthy of investigation and 'Red Clydeside' arrives as a welcome addition.



The CD focuses on a period between the turn of the last century and the First World War. Scotland was assumed to be a poodle compared to the English bulldog that provided poorly rewarded work in shipbuilding, mining, etc. before proposing participation in the bloody war. Circumstances guaranteed to produce a Socialist hero like John MacLean, who became known as 'The Red Clydesider' after leading the workers' revolt. Alistair may have written these songs almost 100 years afterwards but he applies a very traditional approach to the songs. He has

researched the period in depth and provides references for further reading on the sleeve notes.

The opening track, 'The Red Clydesiders' is typical; its traditional feel has Swarb's fiddle dancing all over it, to provide a strident folk sound as befits the subject. There follows tales of the textile mills, the housewife hero - Mrs Barbour, calls to sign up for war, John MacLean's return to Glasgow after release from prison in Aberdeen, a general strike, the difficult life for MacLean's wife, and, finally, his funeral attended by ten thousand supporters. It's a romantic tale alright and Alistair has managed to turn this labour of love into a CD bristling with excellent tunes and sympathetic playing from one of our finest fiddle players. Whether you're of a political persuasion or prefer to spend Saturday shopping for Armani, there's a lot to appreciate about this record.

Steve Henderson

SEAN KEANE - Seansongs (Circin Rua Teo CR001 CD)

A new album by Sean Keane always fills me with great expectation and anticipation. Having 'burst' on to the circuit as a solo singer in his own right 11 years ago, Keane's albums have been consistently good. Each new album brings a new dimension to Keane's maturity as a high quality performer. He has made an outstanding impression in folk venues and festivals throughout his native Ireland, Britain and Europe as well as across the Atlantic. This is his fifth album of new material and succeeds a 'best of' compilation.

Keane's ability to deliver traditional and modern contemporary folk songs in a distinctive relaxed, almost ventriloquistic, vocal style is only matched by his uncanny knack of picking great songs by some excellent songwriters, many of whom share his Irish roots and heritage. His recordings encompass writers from diverse American country, Irish, and English folk traditions.

His latest CD is a double for the price of a single album, although I feel the first CD is outstanding and the other a bonus. That, however, may be down to my preference for modern contemporary songs. The second CD, by contrast, draws on Keane's Irish roots, including a few jigs, reels and hornpipes, and a simple minimalist production on often less familiar traditional songs and tunes.

CD1 starts off with 'The Crossing (O Siyeza)', a song of uplifting optimism with a full cast chorus. The song was written by Johnny Clegg, who had close a working connection with southern African roots musicians long before Paul Simon discovered them. The song combines African rhythms and chorus with a wonderful Uilleann Pipe accompaniment, which works brilliantly.

Current band member, Peter O'Hanlon, who plays guitar and provides backing vocals on several tracks, wrote the Irish country Americana influenced "Trick of Time", the main theme of which is the more we speed up, the less we make progress. O'Hanlon also put the music to the plaintive war poem, "Song of the Camp". Bayard Taylor, a nineteenth century American writer and poet, who travelled extensively throughout Europe, wrote the poem at the time of the Crimean War. With pathos, it contrasts the harmony of soldiers singing the night before a battle at which they face the discord of death.

The outstanding Irish songwriter, Mick Hanly, provides three tracks on the first side, including the haunting and evocative ballad, "Burnt out star". One of the best songs on the album, it recounts the experience of love requited that has now faded like a "burnt out star". Hanly also provides the idiosyncratic "Heard it before Joe" and "Landslide", the sing along fantasy of a man trying to win the heart and hand (and presumably the

rest of the body) of the woman he loves.

Ron Kavana's off sung and recorded, "Reconciliation", was made for Keane's voice and it's surprising that he's taken so long to record it. On the surface, it's a song about two lovers attempting reconciliation after a bitter quarrel. On a deeper level, it symbolises the attempts to reconcile the warring religious and political communities in the island of Ireland, and the North in particular.

What would an album of modern contemporary music be without a Richard Thompson song? "Withered and died" was written in the early 1970s and appeared on Richard and Linda's first album. It was a classic as soon as it had been written and Keane does it complete justice. He has rearranged the old American love ballad, "Aura Lee", which strongly influenced the tune of "Love me tender", covered the Gillian Welch song, "Barroom Girls", and does a fine version of Julian Dawson's quasi religious "Pilgrims", which Plainsong and the writer have previously recorded.



The second CD includes a refreshing reinterpretation - as a lilting lullaby - of Stephen Foster's classic "Beautiful Dreamer"; and Keane goes back to the 1960s to rework, with simple acoustic backing, the wonderful Hayes and Rhodes song, "Satisfied Mind", made famous originally by performers such as Joan Baez and Judy Collins.

In keeping with the strong Irish theme running through much of the second side, the album concludes with the traditional "The Close of an Irish Day", a song that links the beauty of Ireland with the sorrow of those that have had to leave the island to seek their futures elsewhere.

As an album, this rates as one of Keane's best. His relaxed but penetrating voice hits the heart and emotions in all the right places. As with his previous albums, it took me several plays to appreciate the performances but it now ranks as a firm favourite. The first CD stands as a great album in its own right. Great songs sung by a great singer accompanied by great musicians.

Lewis Jones

PAT KILBRIDE - Nightingale Lane (Temple Records COMD2089)

A quick note: Pat Kilbride has re-joined the Battlefield Band - must check them out! Like Alan Reid, I've been following Pat's career with more than a passing interest and therefore I have been champing at the bit to hear his latest solo offering.

Amongst others, Tommy McManamon, of the Popes, contributes

banjo along with the great Gino Lupari and Miriam Kavanagh; so let's just say the calibre of musicians joining Pat speaks volumes. No slouch himself, Pat displays dazzling dexterity on the guitar and cittern and he really comes into his own with his fine vocals. From the jaunty traditional 'Kinsle Herring' to Gerry Rafferty's 'Rickrack' each track is crafted with care.

The final word of congratulation should go to the three-guitar workout title track 'Nightingale Lane' with a lush production that is neatly underplayed. Whether you're looking to extend your repertoire of tunes or relax in some warm honeyed vocals you won't be disappointed.

Pete Fyfe

FRED McCORMICK - The Song I'm Composing

"With drinkers and talkers, the bar it was packed, in sardine proximity they were well stacked". Fred McCormick sings here on the track, 'The Funpub'. "The noise of the disco resounds through the night, like some poor soul in torment or demented delight", he continues. It was, I think, some 25 or more years ago that I first came across this finally-recorded artist, who was part of the once thriving Liverpool folk n' session scene. He struck me as a serious young man, deeply rooted in the Irish tradition and Sean nos style singing, yet with this recording of 20 of his own 'climactic creations' or 'libations from the luncheon of life' as he variously refers to them, Fred finally establishes himself as his own man.

One of the most dedicated practitioners of the humorous observation of present-day and everyday follies a la 'Funpub' or 'The Bacon Butty' [Modern Life is Rubbish say Blur - Fred would agree!] yet equally able to hit the heart hard with lines like "I hear your voice on every breeze that blows between us two" from 'I Told My Friends'. You'll find railings against wider injustices here too - tabloid press moguls, far right polemics and the right to roam.

All these songs are a cappella - it's his preferred way of expression and somehow with accompaniment they wouldn't have the same impact, - you need to concentrate on voice and lyric just as we and McCormick would when listening to a traditional singer. Nearly all his songs are autobiographical - 'mostly the product of my own over-heated imagination' he says, yet he's one of the most sincere singers I know. Using largely traditional tunes, these are not parodies however. Whilst at times beautifully downbeat, there are uplifting moments of high hilarity, so that whilst Fred remains an earnest fellow, he has a humanity about him with no trace of euphemism or artifice in the end result.

You won't hear another recording like this in a good while. Write for this CD plus associated lyric/biog booklet for a mere six pound [post inc] to 2 Orchard Grange, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 6DZ. or ring 0151 678 6311.

Clive Pownceby

KEVIN & ELLEN MITCHELL - Have a Drop Mair (Musical Traditions MT CD 315-6)

This is a double CD produced by Musical Traditions who are also publishers of the magazine of the same name. This is no quick commercial fix of a recording; in fact, it took almost three and a half years from conception to production. It is, in itself, a tribute to the dedication of both the singers and Rod Stradling, the producer. Kevin and Ellen will be already quite well known in the North West, I'm sure, due mainly to their regular appearances at the Four Fools Folk Festival and at a few of the local folk clubs on occasion. In these CD's you are treated to the very best of both Scots (Ellen) and Irish (Kevin) unaccompanied traditional singing.

On the first CD Kevin and Ellen take, for the most part, turn and turn about, although Ellen has the edge by sneaking in a couple of extra songs! The material is mostly ballads, many of them from the Child collection, sung in their lovely, clear, story-telling style. Old favourites like 'An Old Maid in a Garret' from Ellen, and 'Miss Mouse's Ball' from Kevin, break up the rather mournful list with a bit of frivolity. Personal favourites on this CD are Ellen's 'Lady Mary Ann' (a version of 'He's Young but He's Growing') and 'Queen Amongst the Heather' (learned from the singing of Belle Stewart), and Kevin's 'The Creggan White Hare' and the title track 'Have a Drop Mair'.

The second CD follows the same format of turn and turn about and, once again, Ellen sneaks in a couple of extra songs! Well, we all know who rules the roost now don't we! Again, ballads dominate and amongst the better known songs are excellent renditions of 'The Shamrock Shore' and 'Erin's Farewell' (to the same tune as 'Parting Glass') from Kevin and 'Mary Mild' and 'I Must Away, Love' (the classic night visiting song) from Ellen. This CD also has a more nautical flavour in parts too - which suits me fine!

The package is exceptionally well produced with an accompanying booklet containing all the lyrics (not that they are necessary due to Kevin and Ellen's near perfect diction) and details of the sources of the songs both in terms of their pedigree and how the two singers came to learn them. Full marks to Rod Stradling's recording technique too; he has captured their voices perfectly.

As I said in the introduction, this is not a commercial production in the accepted sense (for example, it has no bar code) so to obtain a copy you need to contact Musical Traditions Records, 1, Castle Street, Gloucester, GL5 2HP (01453 759475) or visit the website - www.mustrad.org.uk. Even better, go and see Kevin and Ellen when they are in the area and buy one at the end of what I know will be a very enjoyable night.

Derek Gifford

KATY MOFFAT - Cowboy Girl (Shanachie 6054)

Many people over here assume that a strong American accent in a vocal and a storytelling approach to the song means that the music is Country. On this basis, I have asked a number of American musicians whether they consider themselves to be Country artists. The regular answer to this question is that they are American Folk artists and couldn't possibly be Country as that means that they are from the same school as Shania Twain and Garth Brooks. But let's not get too hung up on this. It is, after all, only a musical 'box' that helps us to talk about the music.

Certainly, Katy Moffat's 'Cowboy Girl' does a great job in sending all those musical 'box' theories out of the window. Before anyone tells me that this is Country, we should understand that this album is a collection of songs from the time when cowboys were kings, alongside more modern songs describing that period. Can you get more traditional than that? Answers on a postcard, please. Better still, buy me a Lone Star beer and we'll discuss it.

Katy's voice has that perfect high pitch that lends itself to lonesome songs such as 'Texas Rangers'. Then, there's also enough power in it to drive along the traditional arrangement of 'John Hardy'. The musical styles adopted include that lilting feel to tunes that plod along in the nicest possible way. You know, those that feel like your singing as you ride along on your horse - or, is that a trick of memory from watching too many John Wayne films? Others have a Mexican feel, Tex-Mex if you want,

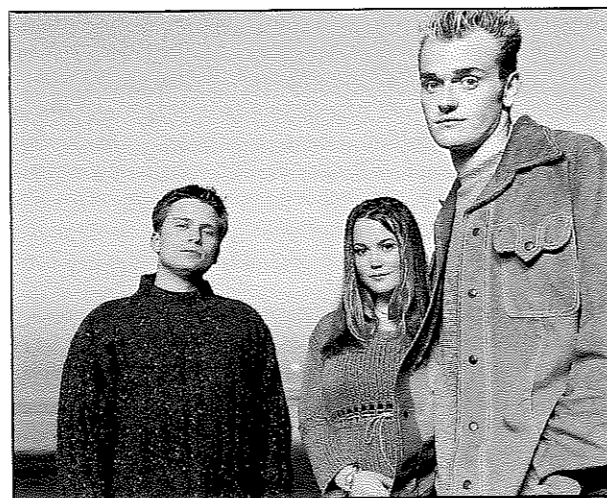
that is hardly surprising given Katy's Texan background. Indeed, this is more fistful of dollars than John Wayne and typified by the self-penned, 'Black-Eyed Caballero', and Tom Russell's 'Haillie Lonigan'.

All these tracks, and the rest of the record, benefit from the sparse musical backing of guitar, mandolin, and upright bass. In particular, we should mention David Wilkie whose musical assistance on all fronts has helped guide the whole project by creating an ideal accompaniment to a record that is clearly a labour of love for all concerned. With labours of love in mind, the presence of 'The Wayward Wind' on here reminded me that Neil Young did a version of the song on his homage to the country life, 'Old Ways'. An album neglected by his fans for no reason at all. Fingers crossed that 'Cowboy Girl' doesn't meet the same fate because it doesn't deserve it.

Steve Henderson

NICKEL CREEK - Nickel Creek (Sugar Hill Records SUG CD 3909)

Nickel Creek have celebrated a gold album in the US with their debut, 'Nickel Creek'. So, not an original title but a great start to life in the music business. It has benefited from the attention being showered on that other acoustic leviathan, the 'O Brother, Where Art Thou?' soundtrack album. Records like these are causing Nashville's music row to wonder what happened to big hats and good lookin' gals with cowboy boots. However, anyone who has listened to 'Pigg River Symphony' by Cathryn Craig will know that you don't have to go too far back in the American acoustic music tradition to find roots that have a distinctly British feel. And so it is with Nickel Creek.



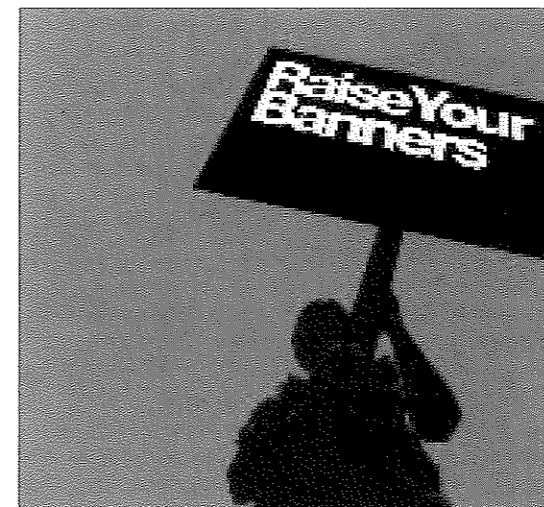
Nickel Creek is a young band fronted by Chris Thile on mandolin and banjo, with able support from Sara and Sean Watkins on fiddle and guitar respectively. Their music could be put into a bluegrass category; but it's fascinating to find that their debut has traditional songs, like 'The Fox' and 'Cuckoo's Nest', being given treatments that wouldn't sound out of place on a CD from one of their Folk contemporaries, such as Emily Slade. They've even taken some Robert Burns lyrics for inspiration, 'Sweet Afton', and done a cover of a Sinead Lohan song, 'Out Of The Woods', to complete the full set of influences from the British Isles. Though the band is very capable all round, and produces some wonderful harmonising, it is Thile's playing which catches the ear. On the opening track, 'Ode To A Butterfly', he blazes away on mandolin and banjo to give us a really vibrant opening, and the rippling mandolin run on 'The Lighthouse's Tale' is a joy to behold. After a short promotional UK tour, they are planned to tour in the autumn at which point I suggest you find yourself

paddling towards Nickel Creek.

Steve Henderson

RAISE YOUR BANNERS - Various Artists (RYB Records RYB2001)

The 'Raise Your Banners' Festival was first held in Sheffield in November 1995. It was originally intended as a weekend event to commemorate the life and work of Joe Hill, the American songwriter, political and trade union activist, on the 80th anniversary of his death. Such was the success of the first festival; it has now become a biannual event in the calendar, celebrating working class struggles through political song. It's attracted over 100 performers from home and as far away as North America, Africa, and Australasia.



This CD features 19 tracks from an eclectic cross-section of performers who have graced the Festival. Roy Bailey was, until last year, the Chair of the festival organising committee, so it was fitting that he compiled this celebratory CD fundraiser.

The four events that have so far taken place have introduced international artists such as the remarkable 86-year-old Faith Petric, from California, Rebel Voices from Seattle, and Kath Tait, a London based New Zealander. All are featured on the CD together with Julie McNamara and the US collective, Black Voices.

At the core of 'Banners' have been stalwarts of the political cadre of folk artists that have kept alive and developed the tradition of radical and socialist politics, including Leon Rosselson, Dick Gaughan, Frankie Armstrong, Sandra Kerr, and Robb Johnson.

Recorded with Band of Hope, Roy Bailey has included his rendition of the chilling, yet optimistic, Jack Warshaw composition, 'If They Come In The Morning'. South Yorkshire compatriot Ray Hearne contributes his own, 'Rother Sing a Don Song'; Coope, Boyes and Simpson deliver, in their inimitable acapella style, Lester Simpson's 'The Rhyme of No Man's Land', set amidst the carnage of the First World War. Robb Johnson is long time friend and collaborator with Bailey and his offering, 'Be reasonable' (Demand the Earth), fittingly takes the stance of greatest resistance - if you don't demand the impossible, you are not likely to achieve it.

The renowned American feminist Holly Near delivers a stirring gospel influenced arrangement on 'I ain't afraid', which challenges the death, destruction and intolerance created by organised religion. Sandra Kerr reminds us of the ignored

involvement of womankind in industrial and domestic struggles with the excellent, 'We were there'; Tommy Sands performs his own composition, 'Daughters and Sons', and the album finishes appropriately on the theme of international working class solidarity with Billy Bragg's adaptation of 'The Internationale'.

Roy Bailey believes the Raise Your Banners Festival is "among the most important Festivals presented in the UK and indeed, further afield." This compilation CD should help to build the finances of the Festival, place it on a more stable footing for future events, and encourage listeners to go along to the next event which is planned for November 2003. If songs could inspire revolutions and social change for the better, this album is an excellent place to start!

If anyone wants to buy a copy, it's £12 inc. p&p, you can get it from Roy Bailey at Fuse Records, PO Box 1147, Sheffield S11 7YA (more details of track listing and how to buy visit Roy's website at www.roybailey.net).

Lewis Jones

MICK RYAN AND PETE HARRIS - 'The Long Road', Wild Goose WGS305CD

This is the fifth album from Mick and Pete and what a delight yet again. From the pun ridden 'Holmes and Watson' and the throw away 'Desperate Dan' to the poignant and moving, yet never over-sentimental, 'Song For John', and the superbly arranged traditional song, 'The Crafty Maid's Policy' we have the essence and range of this duo's repertoire.

As might be expected there are a number of Mick's own songs as well as a good smattering of traditional material arranged and, in some cases, extensively revised by Mick and Pete. Add superb instrumentation from Pete's wide acoustic range of implements as well as guests Steven Faux on fiddle and Paul Sartin (almost a resident at Wild Goose these days) on oboe and you have an almost perfect range of accompaniment to Mick's firm voice.

Pete's inventive harmonies on most of the songs serve only to enhance them even further. All the songs have a sort of inherent link with 'the road' hence the title of this album. I particularly liked the opening track 'The Road to Dorchester', an up-tempo song with strong social comment, taken from the folk musical, 'A Tolpuddle Man'. The unaccompanied 'Poppies' sounds very Keith Marsden in style but was written by Mick.

Modern technology came to the aid of Mick for the original words to 'Time To Remember The Poor', which he obtained from the Internet. Paul Sartin's oboe on this track is especially apt. One song which does stand out from the rest both in terms of its origins and its style is 'Strange Fruit', originally made famous by Billie Holliday and sung solo unaccompanied by Mick with a genuine depth of feeling. Mick and Pete finish in fine style with 'The Wrong Side of the World', another song from 'A Tolpuddle Man', which might well appear in my own repertoire eventually as yet another funky number! I'll let your imaginations run on that one!

What more can I say except well done Doug Bailey at Wild Goose and let's hope we see more of these two in the North West over the coming months. If you can't get to see them and are bursting to buy the CD after this superlative review (for which they have paid me not a penny!) you can order it by credit card from Musikfolk Ltd. on 01326 318085 or by cheque from Wild Goose at May Cottage, Wherwell, Hampshire SP11 7JS.

Derek Gifford 51

SHARON SHANNON & THE WOODCHOPPERS – Live In Galway (Daisy Label. DLCD003)

Sharon Shannon always look as though she's having a great time playing and this comes across clearly on this new release. Together with The Woodchoppers, she careers through a selection of work from previous albums plus two unreleased tracks as a bonus. I wish I'd been in Galway for this session which kicks off with 'Sandy River Belle' an American tune which lopes along led by Shannon's accordion and enriched by mandolin and fiddles. They raise the tempo for 'Mouth of the Tobique', a set of three tunes, including one French Canadian, which effortlessly blend into each other.

Of course, not all the material is traditional. Ian Carr's 'Diamond Mountain' is a fine tune, which gives Mary Shannon a chance to bring mandolin to the fore, notes pealing and cascading all around. 'Bonnie Mulligan', another non-traditional piece, belts along with the fiddles especially giving it plenty of elbow. The collective energy of the band bursts out of the speakers and carries you away. Well it does me. There are one or two more reflective moments. For example, 'The Mighty Sparrow' starts out with just guitar and accordion setting up a gentle swing. But the majority of the tracks are weren't made for contemplation.

As usual, Shannon doesn't only play accordion, she also turns in fine contributions on fiddle and whistle. Listen to her dexterity on 'Rathlin Island' where she whistles up a breath-taking performance. And it isn't just being showy either. There is a real feel for melody and all players are full of infectious exuberance. Equally lively is Mary Shannon's outing on 'Jimmy's Return', which features her banjo.

This is music, which draws on several traditions, and, whilst 'The Bungee Jumpers' doesn't feature any Australian tunes, it does take material from three other sources. It opens with some solo accordion on an American traditional tune before the pace hots up for another French Canadian tune and they finish with a brisk workout of American fiddler, Rodney Miller's tune. By way of geographical contrast there follows a joyous romp through Galician piper, Carlos Nunez' 'A Costa de Galicia'. There is even a parting homage to the Penguin Café Orchestra with 'Music For A Found Harmonium' also given the unstoppably joyful treatment that makes the whole of this CD one to constantly re-play and drive everyone mad. Which is just what I'm doing.

Paul Donnelly

BRAM TAYLOR – Fragile Peace FELLSIDE FECD159

We knew that this warm, ebullient, accomplished Lancashire man was good, but this CD is a delightful surprise – he has really excelled himself this time.

All the songs, both traditional and contemporary, are well chosen for his voice, i.e. "Thorn upon the Rose", "April Morning", "I'll lay you down love" and "Stone by Stone". "Fields of Gold" with Emily Slade's piano playing is spine-tingling. The heartfelt lyrics of Garbutt's 'The Troubles of Erin' are ably complimented by Serge Gorlin on alto-sax. It's grand to hear an Andy M Stewart/Phil Cunningham song 'Lovers Heart'.

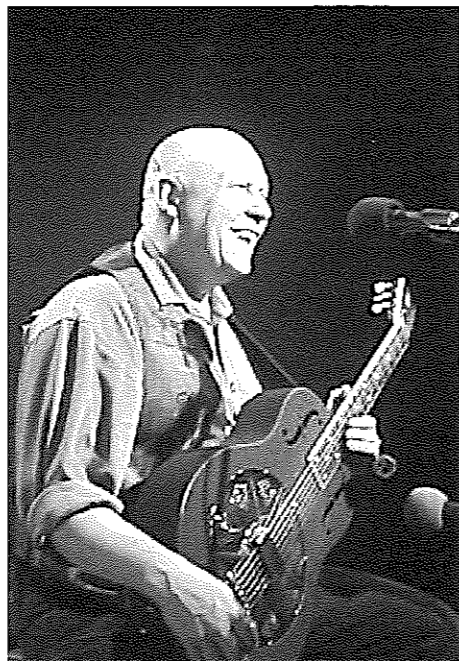
There's great dedication and accomplishment given to the songs – many of which are emotionally moving.

We do seem to live in a world of 'Fragile Peace'.

Kathy and Bob Drage

DAI THOMAS – Songs From The Ragged Backside Of The American Dream (Redeye Records REDR 1005SB)

Yes, it took 6 years but he's finally done it. Dai Thomas has produced his first CD after being nagged by a number of local Folk club organisers. This is a pretty good thing all round, as many of the so-called Blues clubs tend to ignore you if you don't play electric guitar. So, I know that Dai sends out thanks to the Folk clubs who give some space to the blues tradition, as well as enjoy his educational sets.



'Songs From The Ragged Backside Of The American Dream' is pretty much like the live Dai Thomas. It concentrates on early blues and old timey music played on acoustic guitar with and without bottleneck, banjo, autoharp and cider jugs (honest); fanatics can check the sleeve notes for the precise age of his instruments that, in an effort to achieve authenticity, date back as far as the 1920's. Without Dai's patter between songs, the CD is less of a lesson in history and more of a record of some of the most celebrated songs of the early blues period. However, though he includes the likes of 'Hard Time Killin' Floor Blues' from Skip James, his encyclopaedic knowledge of this area means that there are less well-known tracks like the old timey, 'He Rambled'. While we're on the subject of rambling, I could have done without the comments about the performances slipped in by Max Haymes' otherwise educational commentary on the tracks – I do the reviewing round here!

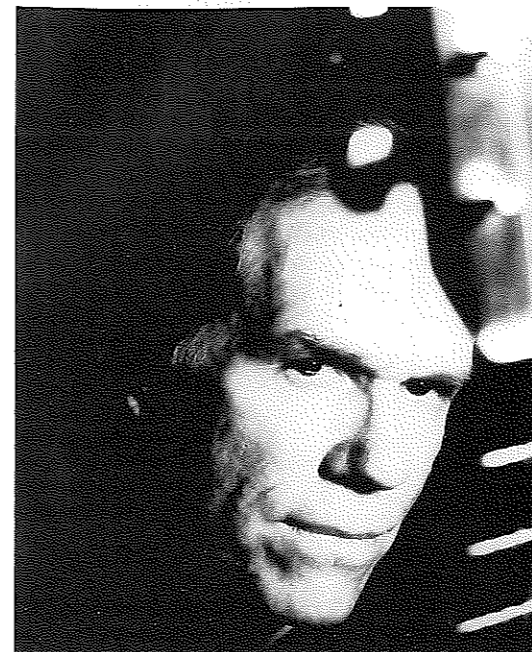
Though I'm sure Dai himself would not claim to have laid down definitive versions of these songs on this CD, he does a great job in keeping a tradition alive. As the guy behind the counter in an American music shop said to Dai – nobody plays it like this any more. The CD, £10 including postage, is available directly from Dai at gigs or by calling 0161-707-4063.

Steve Henderson

LOUDON WAINWRIGHT – 'Last Man On Earth' (Evangeline GEL 4025)

I'm sure that he'd hate the idea but Loudon Wainwright is something of a national institution, despite the occasional jibes at Brits in his songs. Those of you old enough to remember, will recall appearances with topical songs on Jasper Carrott's TV programme, which brought him a new audience. Add this to his

already established audience, and there are enough people out there to guarantee some decent CD sales. For his part, Loudon has produced a consistently good set of albums with some great, mainly autobiographical, songs. So, does 'Last Man On Earth' maintain those standards?



Well, if I tell you that the album's 'White Winos' has been nominated for the Best Original Song at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2002, you'll recognise a sign that he's still on good form. It's a tale about his mother's ritual nightcap of a glass of white wine, with a typical Loudon twist or two about the significance of the choice of drink – 'father drinks beer, lover drinks red wine'. It's typical Wainwright with a great tune and a lyric that will strike a chord with many listeners. Herein lies his strength in that his songs reflect not only his own feelings but also those of an audience that has grown up with him. Whilst earlier albums dwelt on matters of the heart, now he wrestles with getting older. 'The Last Man On Earth' title track tells of his reluctance to take up modern technology such as the Internet, mobile phones, etc. Ringing any bells out there? 'Missing You' is that life without a loved one that none of us can imagine until it happens. The track that follows beats the same path of 'Living Alone'. 'Fresh Fossils' is wonderfully poetic about footprints in sand being the start of a new fossil, whilst 'Graveyard' has Loudon sat by his parents graves – what else could he do with nobody to share a glass of wine?

No, it's not cheery stuff, but deals with the grittier aspects of getting old whilst providing us with a chuckle here and there. If you feel brave enough to take it head on, it's worth the effort. Definitely up there with Loudon's best moments.

Steve Henderson

DAR WILLIAMS 'The Green World' (Razor and Tie/East Central One RTIECD001) and 'Out There Live' (Razor and Tie/East Central One RTIECD002)

Dar Williams is best known over here as one third of Cry, Cry, Cry - the other two being Lucy Kaplansky and Richard Shindell. She has a number of parallels with Lucy and the potential to make more of a name for herself over here, too. Rather surprisingly, two albums landed through the door at much the same time. Her fourth studio album, 'The Green World', alongside a live album - 'Out There Live' - to support a UK tour.

I'm not sure about the intentions of the record company here but it allows a neat overview of Dar Williams.

The live record captures Dar over three days in her home town of New York with a full band and a delirious audience. It represents a collection from her four studio albums including 'The Green World'. Some of the chat between songs makes it sound like a college outing with lots of giggling in the partisan crowd. Musically, the sound might be described as pop-rock and seems to have moved quite a way from her folkier roots. Personally, I find that the music is too much like bland pop with an occasional good tune, and rather distracting if I'm meant to be listening to thoughtful lyrics. I missed her live shows over here but the solo setting may well have worked better.



After the live album, I looked forward to the studio effort as something that would reveal her song writing skills. Sadly, yet again, I was disappointed. 'I Won't Be Your Yoko Ono' was amusing with its straightforward approach to relationships. 'After All' shows another angle to her song writing with tenderness in both tune and lyrics. Then, a track like 'I Had No Right' with its tale of political activists reveals an awareness of what's important in life. Yet, some of the other lyrics seemed rather obtuse bordering on pretentious. How about the lyric 'There are new shirts on the clothes racks, should I feel like one of them?' I'm not the most literate guy in the world but that just passes me by. Just like these albums have done.

Steve Henderson

TREFOR & VICKI WILLIAMS - Timeless Land (101 REC CD 14)

It is always a pleasure to review a CD by Welsh Artists and this one is no exception, being all the better for those artists living in North Wales, my own patch.

Trefor and Vicki have become more accomplished, both instrumentally and vocally, over the years and this album is one notch up again from their last. Produced at 101 Recording Studio in Heswall by Mike Johnson, his superb engineering, and production skills shine through and, like his recent album



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Festival artists booked so far:

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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 A'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, Youhwave. Shindig.

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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