

FOLK NORTHWEST

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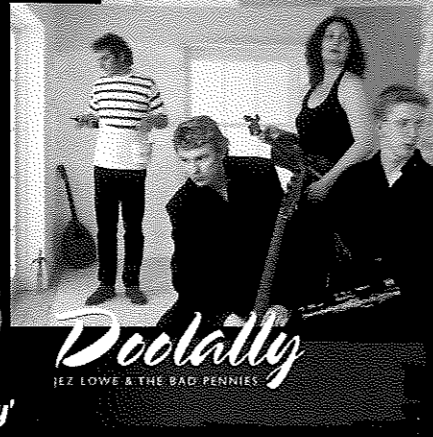


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01285 657181

4 MAR BAND Northwich Folk Club 01606 79356

5 MAR BAND Wimbourne Acoustic, The Mount, Corfe Mullen
01202 690856

9-14 MAR BAND GERMANY

18 MAR BAND Cambridge Folk Club, The Unicorn, Church Lane,
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19 MAR BAND Kingston Bhepuize Vill. Hall, Abingdon 01865 820381
24-25 Mar BAND Gosport & Fareham Festival

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01299 825409

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20 MAY BAND Norwich Folk Club

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30 MAY BAND Cleethorpes Festival

18-19 JUNE BAND Middlewich Folk & Boat Fest.

22-24 JULY BAND Trowbridge Festival (1 day)

12-14 AUG BAND Salthurn Festival (1 day)

26-27 AUG BAND Towersey Village Festival

10 SEP BAND Bromyard Festival

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Folk North West Contact Information



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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

Ken Bladen, 36 The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley, Lancs
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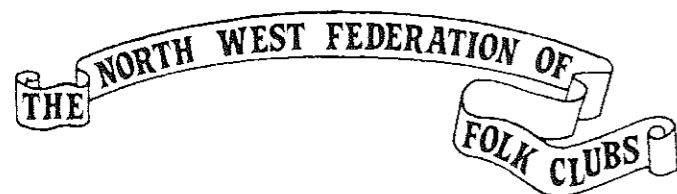
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CD's or tapes for review (or reviews of) and live reviews to

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Please note that the copy date for the next issue is April 10th 2005.



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EDITORIAL

A bumper issue of 68 pages this time in order to accomodate extra adverts. It is good to see so many events available to us in the North West and it seems, an increase in the number of guests making their way to folk clubs and arts centres in our region. I hear disturbing news that at least one brewery has banned live music in their licensed premises in response to the oncoming public entertainments licence legislation.

Sad to hear that 2005 will be the twentieth and final year of performing together for Artisan. They will be touring until 7th May, doing festivals in the UK, Canada and the USA during the summer and finishing with a series of concerts culminating in a final gig at the Penistone Paramount Cinema on Sunday 20th November 2005. We will miss them greatly for their harmonies, their sheer enjoyment of singing and their companionship. Fortunately they will still be around, Hilary as part of Quicksilver and The Mrs Ackroyd Band and Brian and Jacey as the new Brian Bedford Band (from May 2006) with American duo William Pint and Felicia Dale. More power to their respective elbows and thanks for the memories.

Ken Bladen
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CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS

I've been rather disturbed lately at the spiralling cost of artists for festivals. It strikes me that the sky is the limit for fees when trying to book an act, especially when the word 'festival' is used. In the main, it's the 'headliners', who are the culprits, with anything between three thousand and six thousand pounds being quoted as a conservative estimate.

Artists such as Bob Geldof, Rolf Harris and the late Lonnie Donegan have performed at festivals over the past few years and have been paid handsomely for their services, with fees befitting their elevated status. That in turn has made a number of artists from the folk genre feel that they too would like a piece of the financial action.

In the past, I know that acts have been abused by festival organisers who have worked them unfairly with up to four and five spots a day, Thankfully that now seems to be a thing of the past, but it meant that artists changed the way bookings were made, from quoting for a weekend to negotiating a daily rate.

Now I know there are festivals that can afford the fees being quoted, but for most, the inflated prices asked for preclude those artists immediately. Believe it or not, there are still festivals that run without proper sponsorship, although these days they are the exceptions rather than the rule.

Another point worth making is that there is only a certain amount of money you can charge festival goers for a ticket, if you want them to turn up in greater numbers. Each festival should be treated on its individual merits of what it can reasonably afford to pay for its performers, whilst agents and acts alike need to take a step back and take a long, hard look at the situation. It doesn't take a mastermind to realise that if fees continue to spiral, the trough will come up empty and the hand that constantly feeds them will be whittled away to the bone. This particular problem needs addressing sooner rather than later.

Cheers for now,
David Jones



What Folk programmes are on the radio TODAY?

compiled by Rob Dunford

SUNDAY

8.10 - 8.55am	RTE - MO CHEOL THU presented by CIARAN MAC MATHUNA	MW 567
1.00 - 3.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - THE REEL BLEND presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD	MW 810
6.00 - 8.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY (Rpt)	MW 810
7.00 - 8.00pm	BBC Radio Merseyside - FOLKSCENE presented by STAN AMBROSE and GEOFF SPEED	FM 95.8
		MW 1485
8.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Shropshire - SUNDAY FOLK presented by GENEVIEVE TUDOR also on BBC Radio Stoke	FM 96.0
		FM 94.6
9.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Cumbria - NORTHERN FOLK presented by ALISTAIR ANDERSON	see below
9.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Lancashire - THE DRIFT presented by PHIL BROWN (Rpt)	FM 95.5
10.00 - 11.00pm	RTE - THE LATE SESSION presented by AINE HENSEY	MW 567
10.00 - 11.00pm	DOWNTOWN RADIO - FOLKAL POINT presented by MAURICE LEYDEN	MW 1026

MONDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm	BBC GMR - THE PARLOUR presented by ALAN KEEGAN	FM 95.1
7.00 - 9.00pm	BBC Radio Derby - FOLKWAVES presented by MICK PEAT and LESTER SIMPSON	see below
8.00 - 9.00pm	RADIO MALDWYN - THE FOLK PROGRAMME presented by YVONNE & JOHN HART	MW 756
8.00 - 9.00pm	BBC GMR - SOUNDS OF FOLK presented by ALI O'BRIEN	FM 95.1

TUESDAY

8.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY	MW 810
9.00 - 10.00pm	MANX RADIO - MANX FOLK presented by JOHN KANEEN	MW 1368

WEDNESDAY

8.00 - 9.00pm	BBC Radio 2 - FOLK ROOTS & ACOUSTIC MUSIC presented by MIKE HARDING	FM 88 - 90.2
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THURSDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm	BBC Radio Shropshire - FRETWORK presented by NONNY JAMES also on BBC Radio Stoke	FM 96.0
		FM 94.6
8.00 - 9.00pm	BBC Radio Lancashire - THE DRIFT presented by PHIL BROWN	FM 95.5
8.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER	MW 810
10.00 - 12.00pm	BBC Radio Ulster - FRIEL'S FANCY presented by EAMONN FRIEL	MW 1341

SATURDAY

7.00 - 8.30pm	BBC Radio Scotland - TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD	MW 810
9.00 - 10.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - PIPELINE presented by GARY WEST	MW 810
9.00 - 10.00pm	RTE - CEILIDH HOUSE presented by NERRAN HANRAHAN	MW 567
10.00 - 11.00pm	BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER (Rpt)	MW 810
10.00 - 12.00pm	BBC Radio Ulster - FOLK CLUB presented by COLUM SANDS	MW1341
10.00pm - 1.00am	BBC Radio Wales - CELTIC HEARTBEAT presented by FRANK HENNESSY	MW 882

The frequencies quoted are those forming the basis for reception in the North West. Expanded station details are shown below:-

BBC Radio Cumbria	FM 95.6 (North/West), 95.2 (Kendal), 96.1 (South), 104.1 (Whitehaven), 104.2 (Windermere)	Tel:- 01228 592444
BBC Radio Derby	MW 756 (North), 837 (South), 1458 (West)	Tel:- 01332 361111
BBC GMR	FM 95.3, 104.5, 96.0 (Buxton)	MW 1116 Tel:- 0161 2002000
BBC Radio Lancashire	FM 95.1, 104.6 (Saddleworth)	Tel:- 01254 262411
BBC Radio Merseyside	FM 95.5, 103.9, 104.5,	MW 855, 1557 Tel:- 0151 7085500
BBC Radio Scotland	FM 95.8	MW 1485 Tel:- 0141 3398844
BBC Radio Shropshire	FM 92.4 - 94.7	MW 810 Tel:- 01743 248484
BBC Radio Stoke	FM 96.0	Tel:- 01782 208080
BBC Radio Ulster	FM 94.6, 104.1	MW 1503 Tel:- 02890 338000
BBC Radio 2	FM 92.4 - 95.4	MW 873, 1341 Tel:- 08700 100222
Downtown Radio	FM 88.0 - 90.2	MW 1026 Tel:- 02891 815555
Radio Maldwyn		MW 756 Tel:- 01686 623555
Manx Radio	FM 89.0, 97.2, 103.7	MW 1386 Tel:- 01624 682600
RTE (Radio Teilifis Eirann)	via ASTRA Satellite	MW 567 Tel:- 003531 2083111



RADIO XTRA

LIVE REVIEWS

ANDREW GREEN, supported by Smithereen, at Gregson Lane Folk Club on 11 November 2004

Quite a coincidence really - rhyming names on the bill. You don't see that often, and you don't see Andrew Green that often either. Despite opening this year's Fylde Folk Festival, he tells me that he's played very few clubs. That's a pity, because on tonight's showing, he's a lot to offer.

I've seen Andrew three or four times over the past year, and each time he has improved. Yes, he's still visibly nervous at the start, but he soon settles into his stride and is more and more comfortable with the audience as the music flows. His songs are well chosen and varied, ranging from the traditional and rare, to the contemporary and well known.

'Poverty Knock' is sung in a modern style. It's not the same as Jim Moray's recent recording; it's a bleaker interpretation. The words are divorced from the handloom's rattle and clatter but in a way that lets them hold their value as a song. Nick Drake's 'Thoughts of Mary Jane' is played in the original tuning. Davy Graham's 'Angie' follows, showing the guitar off at a fine speed.

It is unfair to pick out other highlights from a fine set, but for me the standout songs were these, and James Taylor's 'Country Road', the traditional 'Lord Franklin, where Andrew was joined by wife Amanda to sing the final verse, bringing a new poignancy to the song. 'Boots of Spanish Leather', Michael Hurley's 'The Werewolf' and father Eddie's song 'Who Pays The Fiddler Now' with the Morris tune 'Jack in the Green'.

Cecil Sharp's first collected piece in England was 'Seeds of Love' which Andrew plays in an open tuning, strings dampened, with right hand only picking through the song. The encore was 'The Time of No Reply' as fine as the Nick Drake recording.

Andrew's material was carefully chosen to keep within his vocal range. He was never forced, never reaching for a note or power that isn't there. His voice had clarity and tunefulness. Supported by intricate picking, his Fylde guitar brings out the melody, while his voice plays out the fragility of the verse. It's a finely balanced sound too, with the effects kept to the minimum, not over used just because they're there.

Resident trio Smithereen opened the evening. Jenny, Jim and Keith's songs were mostly their own compositions ranging from the reinterpretation of 'Route 66' into the 'A59' and more seriously 'Skylark', Jenny's song for her injured brother. 'Zamora' is a story of friends meeting years after they drifted apart, while the catchy 'Horse on a Hillside' tells of all our longings for freedom from the daily drudgery. As always, it was a tuneful and entertaining set, Keith and Jim's guitars weave together almost instinctively, with Jenny singing, and keeping them in order as only she can.

All in all, an excellent evening. Andrew Green gets this club's seal of approval. Oh, and I almost forgot to mention he brings his own soundman... don't know what he pays him though.

Don Moore

OYSTERBAND The Big Session at Southport Arts Centre on 4 December 2004

The Big Session is turning into a real phenomenon that is deservedly attracting big audiences to its concerts. The brainchild

of the Oysterband, it brings together a number of artists who all have one objective in mind, to promote and bring our music to a wider audience. This is the second time Southport Arts Centre has hosted one of the concerts, with a new CD, 'The Big Session - Volume 1', now released to run alongside the tour.



Oysterband along with James O'Grady, the unofficial sixth band member, kicked off the night with, 'On the Edge', and 'I Will Look For You', before June Tabor made her entrance to join them on the ever popular, 'John Barleycorn'. The Daily Telegraph recently described June as a national treasure and on this performance it's not hard to see why. Guitar and cello combined as John Jones and June dueted on, 'Love Will Tear us Apart'. June again showed why she continues to be in such demand with her rendition of, 'Lowlands Away'. Two more of the evenings guests appeared, the wacky husband and wife duo from America, Brett & Rennie Sparks who rejoice in the epithet, the Handsome Family. With guitar and banjo accompaniment, they explained that in the spirit of Christmas they were going to start off with a song about suicide!!!!

A favourite Oysterband song, 'Whitehaven', followed, with the Handsome Family bringing up the interval with two offerings, 'When the Helicopter Comes' and a song from the U.S. about sex and violence, but re-classified for British audiences to be about devils, 'The Home Carpenter', was delivered by Rennie in her highly unusual voice.

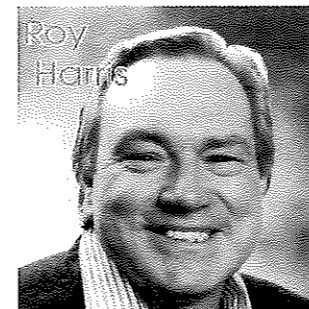
'As For You' and 'The Fire is Burning', from the Oysterband set the tone for the second half of the concert, with June Tabor once more dueting with John Jones on, 'The Factory Girl', written by Ireland's Sarah Makem. The audience clearly loved the concert, with Oysterband in outstanding form with, 'I'm a Man', 'Tumbledown' and what has become almost a band anthem, 'Blackwaterside'. Everyone came back on stage for the final song from the album, 'The New Jerusalem', quite simply a masterclass in close harmony singing. The two encores were sung very much tongue in cheek, 'Ring of Fire' and 'Road to Nowhere'.

All in all this was a concert of real quality, well received by an appreciative audience. For the future the possibilities are endless within this format, not only to broaden the music base, but also to showcase up and coming performers.

David Jones

ROY HARRIS at The Bothy Folk Club on 9 January 2005

The Bothy's first night of 2005 was rather special. Last year, Roy Harris was making his last national club tour and, on March 7th, instead of being at the Bothy as advertised, he was stranded on a distant railway station. So he made a special one-off trip from his present Cardiff base to fulfil this appearance - this time chauffeured by Mike O'Leary, who also contributed a couple of excellent songs.



"An honest singer" is what Clive called him at the close of the evening, but he began by remembering that Roy first appeared at the Bothy in 1968 - for £18 - and had adorned the Bothy's mini-stage many times since. Roy in turn remembered that on that first appearance he had opened with what was a newly found song to him - and had the chorus bashed back at

him by the Bothy audience! So he opened again with "All for me grog" this time expecting and getting a vigorous response.

Roy's laid-back humour is unchanged; his musicianship is still unparalleled, though his voice has faded a little from the full rounded timbre of his prime. He claimed "I only ever do twelve songs, but in a different order" but I've heard him do others in the past, and not previously one of two of those in this set. He included 'The Broomfield Wager', a less well-known version of 'The Foggy Dew', 'The Robin Adair', 'Blow the winds', and a delightful version of 'Barbara Allen'. He closed with that perennial 60s closing song, 'Wild Mountain Thyme'. This was superb start to the Bothy's 40th anniversary year.

Ian Wells

An Early Burns Night at The Red Lion, Newburgh 24th January 2005

To some folk the 24th of January may seem a little early to celebrate Burns Night, but in the case of The Room at the Top Folk Club at the Red Lion in Newburgh the great man's birthday missed their club night by one day, so they advanced the event by 24 hours. That's fine by me, as I regard Robert Burns as a man for all seasons and can listen to his works at any time of the year.

It took some resolve on the part of Mary and I to leave the warmth and cosiness of home and venture out to Newburgh on a cold and dark night; shades of Tam O'Shanter here! We were more than well rewarded for our efforts. The evening of words and music to which we were treated was a delight. The setting was perfect: a comfortable, spacious and mature pub with a selection of hand pulled real ales and an upstairs room which was warm and welcoming, with a high ceiling for good acoustics.

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The range of programmes has broadened to include several which, whilst not wholly devoted to folk, frequently include it and have potential to reward the discerning listener. These include BBC Radio 3's **Late Junction**, Monday to Thursday, usually 10.15pm - 12.00 midnight, presenters Fiona Talkington and Verity Sharp, and the **Andy Kershaw** programme, also Radio 3, Sunday 10.15 - 12.00 midnight. Both for details on the above and for information on occasional programmes/items/short series with a folk flavour on Radios 2, 3 and 4, the Radio Times is always worth close scrutiny. Frequencies: Radio 3 90.2-92.4 FM; Radio 4 92.4-94.6 FM, 198 LW; BBC information : 08700 100 222.

Of variable folk content is BBC Radio Scotland Monday to Friday 10.00-12.00 midnight with Iain Anderson and BBC Radio 2 Monday to Thursday 10.30-12.00 midnight, presented by Mark Radcliffe. Radio Na Gaeltachta FM 93.5/94 (Tel: 00353 91 506677), broadcasts on Astra Satellite Channel 22 and carries a range of Gaelic Music/Language programmes including Lan A Mhale, 7.00-8.00pm Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Note that local radio programmes may be subject to temporary alteration in day, time and delivery (AM, FM or DAB) when, for example sports coverage takes precedence.

Most regional/local programmes to a varying degree provide diary dates for clubs, concerts and festivals. The reliable standards set by for example, GMR and Radio Shropshire/Stoke for comprehensive and regular listings can, it is hoped, apply across the board. E.mail, website and Internet details are routinely given during programmes or can be found via the main telephone numbers and on-line searches. The number of programmes available on the Internet is increasing - some are retained for short period access - and it is understood that the whole of BBC Radio output should by now be accessible. The main BBC website is at www.bbc.co.uk.

Telephone numbers for radio stations, plus directions to other forms of contact, have been provided so that event organisers and artistes can fulfill the important role of promoting their activities in the region. Given the propensity for radio programmes to devote much air time to new albums, the listing of programmes is also intended to complement the extensive CD review feature in Folk North West.

To demonstrate an interested and active profile of folk listeners, do liaise with any and all programmes, stations and producers. The North West is favoured with a wealth of programmes which praise and constructive comment will help maintain. It is essential for listeners to provide feedback to the programme producers, for, as the song goes "You don't know what you've got till its gone".

In the last 18 months, the North West's seen a good area get even better, with the addition of not only GMR's "Sounds of Folk" programme but also Radio Lancashire repeating "The Drift". Speaking to folkies in other regions and looking at the situation elsewhere, we've certainly got what many other regions haven't (and envy). Irrespective of Internet expansion (which incidently has no positive additional impact on the issue of local event promotion/diary dates) it is all well worth nurturing, not least for regional flavour.

Rob Dunford

The Alison Younger Band, as Alison Younger, Chris Harvey and Mark Dowding were light-heartedly called for the night, had arranged an excellent programme of Scottish song, most of which was attributed to Burns. It's difficult to be objective about something that one admires, but others apart from myself know that the quality of Alison Younger's voice and her commitment to singing are perfectly suited to Scottish song and to Burns in particular. Her Scottish roots are apparent in her affection for the material.

The programme began with "Ye Jacobites by name" which got us off to a rousing start. One of my favourites, "Braw lads o' Galla Water" followed and softened the tone. I love joining in the refrain line "braw, braw lads". Very satisfying! Mark Dowding took the lead in "Banks and Braes" as these lovely Scottish songs flowed out one after the other and were beautifully accompanied by Chris Harvey on keyboard and accordion and Mark on six and twelve string guitars. Nothing was overstated; all in perfect measure letting the music speak for itself. Just as I like it.

The melodies did not come from just the voices. Chris played a couple of tunes on the accordion; the martial "Battle of Sherrifmuir" and the atmospheric "Crossing the Minch" which added instrumental variation to the programme.

If you have any sympathies with Bonny Prince Charlie they cannot but be roused by "O'er the water to Charlie" and "Will ye no come back again?". If you haven't, then you could just enjoy these great songs which we all did, joining in heartily. There was "Westlin Winds", "Rantin' Rovin' Robin" and lots more but I do not want to turn this appreciation into merely a list of songs. I must say though that the high spot for Mary and me was Alison's unaccompanied singing of "Aye Fond Kiss". Never heard it done better!

The three artistes provided a most enjoyable evening's entertainment. They were welcoming and inclusive to the point of inviting a few of us from the floor to contribute. John Littlewood brought us back briefly south of the border by reading poems by Keats and Auden and also Grey's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard". Marl's father John did us proud with a couple of the bard's poems including "Tae a Mouse". I managed a few of Burns songs, namely "The Lea Rig", "Nanie O" and "Willie brewed a peck o' maut".

The company sang out the evening with "Loch Lomond", the real words and we went home with an enhanced appreciation of Scottish song in general and Robert Burns in particular, thanks to Alison, Chris and Mark and the Room at the Top Folk Club.

Norman Wilson

FLOSSIE at the Railway Folk Club, Lymm. Thursday 27th January, 2005

Flossie Malavialle, but everyone knows her as "Flossie", was making her second performance at our Club. She arrived in her jeans and sweater...but for the performance she changed in our Club's dressing room (the ladies loo!), emerging as a beautiful butterfly. Our Bernard (Cromarty) teased her by setting up candles in red glasses by her CD stall..."looking like a french tart's boudoir!".

She loves to sing with her guitar and to tell her stories....in such a surprising accent! Have you ever heard a french person talking in english? They always have a strong french accent....but imagine someone with a strong french accent and a strong Darlington twang...that's Flossie. Her command of languages puts me to shame, I can just about order a beer in Spanish....she speaks fluent English, Spanish, she's learning Italian...and her command of Darlington dialect is amazing "like"!

As a teacher in the day, she tries hard to teach secondary kids to learn spanish...she was tickled when one of her students told her a joke. What do you call a spanish footballer when falls on the field? Grassy ass!



Using her love of languages with a deep voice full of passion, she sang Padam Padam (with a great chorus), La Martinana, La Vie en Rose and Ta Katie t'a quitte (a french tongue twister).

There was a magic moment when she chose to sing Les feuilles mortes (The Autumn Leaves) as a dedication for a woman in the audience whose father had died last year. It was magic because Flossie chose the song without knowing that it was so special to this woman's dad...it was the one he used to sing to his wife!

Flossie's a mate of Vin Garbutt, she drives him to a lot of his gigs...is that where she picked up the north eastern twang? She ended the night with Vin's Troubles of Erin...with an encore of the Edith Piaf's song, No Regrets

What a fabulous night!

At the end of the night, people were queuing by "her tart's boudoir" to buy CD's from her. She's has four now, her latest is Making up the Miles. Check out her website if you want to know more about Flossie or order a CD. And put Jan 26th next year in your diary to see her again at our Club.

Stewart Lever

FESTIVAL & SPECIAL EVENTS REVIEWS

Our Festival Year

Soon comes round the time for picking our summer itinerary. This year business commitments mean that June is pretty much out of the question, which sadly rules out Clitheroe and Four Fools (to which the morris side has again been invited). However, with the exception of bank holiday, weekends in July, August & September are pretty much free, so we have plenty of choice. This year we have finally made a concession to the arthritic knees and invested in a caravan, so we don't have to worry about accommodation for the late festivals; also we are committed to Southport Morris Weekend (which appears to coincide with Ormskirk Comes Alive, so we may be able to take some concerts in there) and are hoping to hear from Chester re working on the festival there.

Moor & Coast 30 April-2May

Is it really a year since we were in the tap & spile? Only the prices have changed.

First congratulations of the weekend must go to the camp site stewards who are coping admirably with the difficulties dropped on them at the last minute (literally) by the local council. Do these people want to have events in the town or not?

By the time we are organised and fed we have missed the start of the evening concert but arrive just in time to hear Howden/Jones being just about as topical as possible (it is April 30th) with Beltain. The fact that the set seems to be very much last years is not a problem for me as it is stuff I like, and it eases me back into festival mode for the summer. The loss of Tony Taffinder is compensated by the backing of a three piece band, the

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percussion definitely adding a new dimension to their music. Australian duo Cloudstreet begin with an excellent version of The Briar & The Rose and continue to express their considerable vocal skills throughout the set, also letting us know they are not without instrumental skill by playing jigs.

Stoney - last seen at this same venue 2 years ago - may not be what the purist want (which may explain why we don't see more of them on the folk scene) but are very talented and very entertaining providing a hour & a half of varied material that has everyone shouting for more.

Saturday & the weather is kind so we take advantage & forego the concert to stroll down to town; watch some of the dancing, of which Boggarts Breakfast seemed the most entertaining, having the originality to dance a five man dance from Sheffield to the theme from a French soap opera! However most of the afternoon is spent in or just outside The Plough were the sessions - both inside and out - and the crack are just part of the wonderful atmosphere as folk and locals mingle happily lapping up the sunshine and the very reasonably priced Sam Smiths.

The evening concert has two "repeats" from last night with Howden/Jones (bandless) and Cloudstreet but as both do totally different sets it not really a problem. It is the first time I have seen Don McKinnon, a Canadian with a deep brown voice, and anyone who can do justice to Stan Rogers songs is ok by me. The two Toms, Napper & Bliss, end the evening with a set in which the stories behind the songs are as entertaining as the songs themselves.

Sunday and we have a repeat of yesterdays weather so we very much repeat yesterdays activities, ie around the Plough because its just such a nice atmosphere around there and again a really good session on the go. The evening concert audience gradually builds up as the night goes on and is packed by the end when Chris & Julie demonstrate just why they are top liners wherever they go these days, to those who didn't arrive till later you missed a wonderful set by the magnificently zany Witches of Elswick, who in addition to providing some excellent arrangements of traditional songs are now also in the underwear business.

Summary

The festival did not seem as well attended as past years, how much of which was due to problems with the council I don't know, but I hope everything is successfully sorted for next year. The general atmosphere around the festival was good but it did seem to get off to a cracking start on Friday, die a bit on Saturday before recovering on Sunday; possible reasons for this could be the venue for the Saturday concert, the loss of a couple of advertised artists (Maxie & Mitch being unable to attend took away the comedy element which is a popular part of most festivals), or may have been just down to my mood. It certainly got me looking forward to another summer of entertainment and friendship on the festival trail.

Maryport 22 May

Firstly - congratulations to all the artists who showed real professionalism in very difficult circumstances.

Secondly to the organisers - what a disaster .The events in the navy club, which was the venue for the songs of the sea/folky type stuff, are those to which I'll restrict my comments. At one point a check round & discounting artistes and their families & companions produced a total of 3 paying customers (although not present I am reliably informed the Sunday was similar).

had Maryport mentioned on it I took the trouble to find out more. I saw nothing in the normal folk publications or at other festivals, the organiser of the local folk club had been given no notification, and as late as the Thursday before the event the timetable of events was still not readily available.

Thanks to all the artist, particularly Tanglefoot for whom performing to that size audience must have been a most unwelcome surprise, for providing some great entertainment; but we really need to know where the buck stops for this cock-up. I want to see festivals succeed and would love to have a 'local' one, but this was unfair to the sponsors, unfair to the artists and did a great disservice to festivals in general from the impression it gave to those not 'in the know'.

Chester 28-31 May

For us the festival started early as we were working on site on the Thursday, which meant we were able to enjoy a really good sesh that the staff had in the Royal Oak on the Thursday night. Thanks to the new proprietors of this establishment who made us really welcome throughout the weekend and solved one of Chesters biggest problems - i.e. the lack of decent washing facilities - by making their showers available at a very reasonable price.

Friday the site filled up making use of the overflow site necessary again showing how popular this festival now is. The social club was a bit of a sardines job Friday evening so we settled for the relative comfort of the ceilidh & then the sing around.

Saturday we attend two excellent meets, 1st Mr Smith demonstrating his skills beyond those comic and highlighting the need to adjust for differing audiences; then Tanglefoot who never had to (as sometimes happens at meets) resort to a mini concert, in fact so interesting was their chat and so obvious their love of what they do that the hour went quickly without a note being strummed or sung. I think everyone present made their way to the queue to see Tanglefoots afternoon set performed to an audience far more in keeping with their talents than last weekend at Maryport.

Because it is such a compact festival Chester seems to allow more scope for interaction with other festival goers than some other festivals and the overwhelming mood seems to be one of pure enjoyment, the only complaint I heard was from one first time visitor who seemed to expect a five star caravan site! Well I suppose you'll never keep everyone happy.

Main concerts at Chester are held in the marquee, the only disadvantage of this being the problem of getting a drink without missing part of a set, and, as arriving armed with a supply of cans is not my thing, the relatively alcohol free evening is a small price to pay for a concert that later became standing room only to see Mr Smith be truly amazing, Jez be penniless but priceless and Tanglefoot be just WOW.

Sunday and the dance displays include (as do most at this years festival) the wonderfully innovative Bradshw Mumpers. The street (or car park) entertainment at Chester is always well supported, which must be down to good organization and variation of programme, aided by the compact nature of the festival. On to the concert that includes Spiers & Boden, a duo fast climbing up my not to miss list, and Loose Chippings an eight piece group I hadn't seen before and unfortunately were, despite all the obvious energy, just not my cup of tea, but were different enough for the only possible advise be go and see them yourself.

Tears in their eyes (yes based on TVs stars) was an excellent

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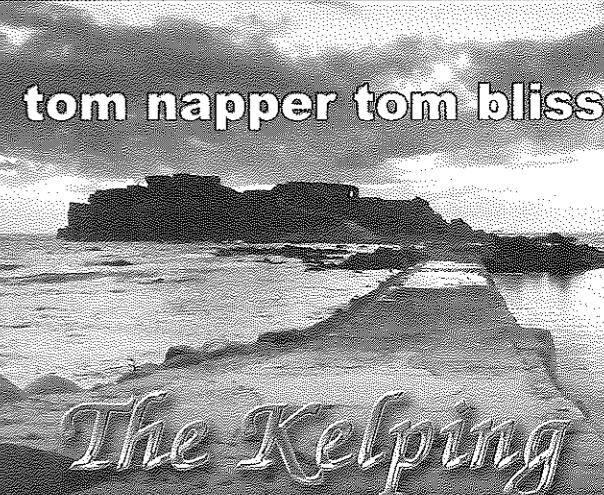
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idea and worth trying again, but I do think some of the participants took it a bit too seriously, for it to work properly I think caricature rather than imitation needs to be the rule of the day. On to the folk club with Kelly While showing talent runs in the family, wonderful rendition of The Galway Shawl, a beautiful song that seems to be making a come back, and Where've You Been.

I'm in pretty lazy mood Monday but that does not stop enjoyment of Tom Lewis doing songs of Stan Rogers and giving account of meeting Stans parents or of taking in sets by Last Nights Fun who never disappoint. Once again Chester show how to bring a festival to a close with everyone involved rather than just the end of the last concert.

Tuesday clear up the site head for home. Had a great time. See you all next year.

Cleckheaton 2-4 July

Arrived mid afternoon at campsite which gave plenty of time to set up nip into town to pick up wrist bands etc & have a chat. Get car back to site & parked up for the duration as the festival bus service at Cleckheaton is second to none, in fact we are on the first bus when the service starts to get to the Obidiah Brook for something to eat before the concert. Whitney Gin are a four part harmony group I hadn't seen before and somehow whilst they couldn't be faulted technically their performance did seem to lack a bit of passion. That could not be said of Duncan McFarlane & two thirds of his band. The set include Woodshed Boys which is one of my favourites and the good explanations to each song certainly add to the enjoyment.

Cloudstreet I 1st saw at Fylde last year, have seen a couple of times since and they just get better. One of the things about live music is that even with known artists you are never quite sure what you are going to get and even by their standards Cloudstreet are really on form tonight. I suspect quite a few of the audience, certainly including the local luminaries present, had not heard this duo before so for them to burst unannounced into King Willie certainly got everyones attention; if you have heard them sing this song you will know what I mean, if not make sure you do soon (they are off back to Australia at the end of this summer). Another first for me is the London Philharmonic Skiffle Orchestra. Only towards the end of the set did they get into 'proper' skiffle which I quite enjoyed, but I just wasn't on the right wavelength for the comedy which is an integral part of their act, however Helen tittered throughout the set, so it was plainly amusing to some.

Saturday and the chance to sample the festivals new venue, the Aakash, an Indian restaurant with a big function room that is given a somewhat surreal atmosphere by the numerous mirrored pillars. Unfortunately Duncan McFarlane is having a bit of an off day, to anyone who was seeing him for the first time at this concert I can assure you he is normally much better than this. In the town hall the talent that makes up Harvey Davidson (they are also half of Mrs Ackroyd Band amongst others), is undeniable and they certainly express it here though the impression was they were really wanting to get into Mrs Ackroyd mode.

Seize the Day are one of the acts well up on my don't miss list, you don't have to agree with all they say to enjoy their unique sound, though judging from the reaction agreement with the sentiment of United States was unanimous. Find time to eat before heading back to the Aakash (where we could have got a very reasonably priced buffet had we realised) to see Mrs Ackroyd and as expected Les is having fun with the mirrors (as did I because if a pillar is directly between oneself and the singer miming makes it seem as though you are singing wonderfully). Some old stuff that is still very funny and some new, particularly

Tony Blairs Picnic, that had me in stitches.

The line up for the evening concert included Seize the Day & Roy Bailey, which suggested not somewhere for the politically uncommitted, and Mrs Ackroyd to lighten the mood before bed. In fact the first two included love songs (and in Roys case kids song) and you can't get much more political than Les Barkers 'George W'. This was an excellent concert throughout, but special mention to Roy Bailey who just didn't seem in the mood to start, but somehow managed to feed off the audience to be, by the end of the set, at his very best. The Sunday sing in the Town Hall bar would have been really good had it not suffered from the perennial problem of noise in that venue - shame.

As we have to be away the afternoon concert is the end of the festival for us and what a good finale it is. I would have preferred Bruce M Baillie to do more of the lighthearted stuff that is his forte but lots of people seemed to enjoy his partnership with Tony Taffinder. Vin Garbutt to finish and once again he demonstrated why if organisers want to put bums on seats he is the man to do it. He must have been the best solo act on the circuit for years now and the end of this set in matrimonial mode with "November Wedding" & "Silver & Gold" was something even for an old cynic like me.

Thanks Geoff Pickles and his team for yet again providing a great festival at a reasonable price. In value for money terms Cleck cannot be beaten.

Argameles Weekend of dance 9-11 July

The teams began to gather on Lydiate scout field on Friday evening and by 9 o'clockish there were enough musicians in the Scotch Piper (oldest pub in Lancs) for a session to commence; lots of melodions, not a lot else, but that did not stop a good time being had with welcome refreshments provided by our hosts. Saturday morning the jingle of bells and plethora of colour assembled to board the coaches to Southport as eight teams (to become 9 later) set out to brave the less than kind weather. The morning saw the teams dancing at different locations along Lord St (Southport shopping area with plenty of public gardens) to unfortunately small gatherings (it was raining), before taking lunch and repeating the exercise on the promenade.

The teams all gathered later in the afternoon back at the gardens in Lord St and the weather relented to allow a much healthier size gathering enjoy (I hope) dances from all the teams, giving a good variety of North West (garland & other), Sword, Cotswold and Border. Two mass dances with all teams taking part more or less filled the ample available space and provided entertainment for spectator and dancer alike, the former I hope not being nearly as aware as the later of the numerous mistakes inevitable with new (for most of us) dances.

Back at HQ the refreshments and ablutions were most welcome before the ceilidh where it became obvious that some people had not done nearly enough dancing in the afternoon as the dance floor was permanently full, at least I used the excuse of having done plenty of dancing earlier to need to replenish liquid levels.

Unfortunately not all teams were able to stay for the Sunday event, but those of that did had a really enjoyable time, as much for the craik as the dance, at the Scotch Piper. On behalf of all the teams taking part thanks to Argameles for a 'reet good' weekend.

Saddleworth 16-18 July

I don't know who at Saddleworth had upset the gods but not enough that the campsite was a quagmire, only half way through

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the first song of the first concert a power cut may have been cause for concern for some of the better known "stars" of the showbiz world. Not so those of the folk world. Jim McDonald & The Hometowners both have us wondering if we have come to rely unnecessarily on electronic equipment. Surely the youth and inexperience of Jamie Scofield and Nicola Lyons would be found out as they had to cope with the additional problem of using a piano wheeled out from the depths of the civic hall as their keyboard was obviously dead? Not so; they coped as though it was the sort of thing that happened to them every day.

By the time Quicksilver come on stage the problems are forgotten, if anyone can cope with such circumstances it must be Hilary Spencer and her only problem is ridding her self of the useless mike. The wonderful arrangements these two produce coupled with some good humour make for a really enjoyable set. Stanley Accrington demonstrated his writing skills by having a song fresh written for the power cut and I thought his football shanty hilarious. I still haven't entirely got used to John Wright fronting a band rather than a trio but that doesn't stop him being an accomplished performer. He has always had the knack of picking the right song for himself, Windy Harbour being a good example here, and maybe he has really got it right this time by including not only the on stage talent of Joe Topping but his song writing skills as well, The Flame Danced Flamenco being the highlight of the evening.

Saturday morning the imagination is left to run wild with the thoughts of what mayhem Les Barker & Stanley Accrington may unleash when let loose together & whilst some of it worked and some of it didn't on the whole it was very funny, particularly the tale of three wise women. I move on to take in "a mon like thee" which is a tribute to Harry Boardman by Mark Dowding and Chris Harvey. It may have been poorly attended but I thoroughly enjoyed it, brought back some great memories - thankyou. So I meet back up with Helen who tells me I've missed Elbow Jane but should try to see them elsewhere if possible.

The remainder of the afternoon concert is enjoyed with some familiar faces and culminates with Mrs Ackroyd, as this is the first time I have heard Tony Blairs picnic they once again have me suffering from aching sides. The evening concert in the museum is standing room only but well worth while with a great line up including Stanley Accrington showing his serious side Special Trains (about the transportation of Jews to concentration camps) and Bill Whalley & Dave Fletcher introducing us to a very clever contraption that can be made to sound like just about anything. The late night session in the connie club generated a really good atmosphere to send us all away happy.

On Sunday I get the chance to see Pete Abbott, John Wright had done his song Windy Harbour on Friday and now he includes it in his set, good song and definitely an artiste to look out for. Over to the main hall to see the Demon Barber Roadshow and there energy packed set, had they been here Friday they could have acted as generator during the power cut, great entertainment though it did leave those of us who try to do a bit of morris feeling a little inadequate.

That's the end of the Festival for us, back to the van to pack up and leave the campsite to the bog-snorkelers. Thanks to all concerned for a very enjoyable weekend.

Otley

As the Korks concert doesn't start till 9 we pop into the Manor, for a pint of Thwaites mild, where the singing is already in full flow for those who wish to partake. Korks is not a very big room so we arrive early - good job too - it's standing room only before the nights out. Dave Vermond starts proceedings and his Plains

of Mollineux is a song that those of us who inhabited the terraces in the '60s could only too easily relate. It has been too long since I last saw Flossie and boy is she on form tonight. Multilingual, Kristofferson, Eagles, Garbutt inspired humour, Piaf and a lot of Va Va Voom. Tremendous set that has us bemoaning the fact she is only here for the Friday. It is definitely a case of 'follow that' and it's just as well there is someone of the standing of Jez Lowe to do so. Plenty of his own excellent songs, including Davies & Golightly that I particularly like, and a bit of Dylan thrown in. If the rest of the weekend lives up to the start we are in for a real treat.

On Saturday morning we had hoped to see some of the dance teams, but we (and they) are somewhat restricted by the weather. However we did see a pretty good rapper team before making for the main hall where Gracenotes were on form just as they had been at Fylde. Mary Humphries & Anahata provide a nice version of Barbara Allen with good cello accompaniment, and whilst it was pleasant at the time nothing else from the set really stuck in the mind. Les Barker, as always, had the place in uproar before asking 'how goes the war on terror George?' to which the answer as I write must be not very well.

For Saturday evening we decide to head up to the Grove for some of the Cajun madness that is Bayou Gumbo. If you want to sit back and enjoy the music in serene surroundings the Grove is not the place for you; I always feel a little sorry for the acts on early having to battle with the noise, but if you enjoy a really lively evening with something a bit out of the ordinary then it is well worth a visit for the late night Saturday.

Sunday is a better day for watching the dancers (is it just coincidence that half the Witches of Eastwick are here as morris musicians) who include the wonderful Dog Rose Morris.

The rest of the day we spend in the main hall which means we have to suffer a double helping of the Duncan McFarlane Band, Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies and Phil Beer & Deb Sandlands - oh what hardship. Much of what is to be said about these has been said, but worthy of mention must be Duncan McFarlanes Lord Franklin/North West Passage with help from Maggie Boyle for the Gracenotes trick of running songs together effectively. Jez Lowes Calico about a mining museum where the dummies are trapped prisoner underground just as the miners once were. When two talents such as Phil Beer and Deb Sandlands sing John Tams (one of my favourite songwriters) songs then "it doesn't get much better than this"; though the thought of Phil Beers undies waving about certainly is not in that category! Otley is a good festival in a nice town - it must be a beer drinkers paradise with almost everywhere selling real ale, the camp site catering was wonderful, they just never closed, and a bus service that never stopped.

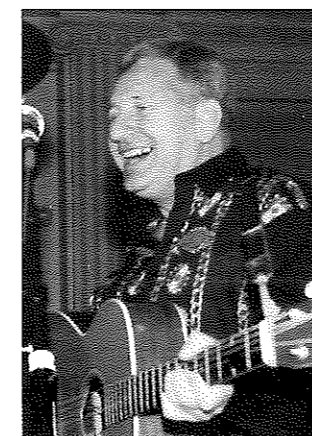
Geoff Smith

THE STORY OF LONNIE DONEGAN at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon on 16 November 2004

Since I was a young boy (now where have I heard that before?) I've always thought that the Ashcroft Theatre in Croydon was best suited for productions of touring shows and on Tuesday night I was proved right. The intimacy of the theatre lent, atmospherically speaking, a great deal towards enhancing a drab but highly entertaining performance of The Story Of Lonnie Donegan.

The first half opened with a paired down retrospective of the great man's career encapsulating his (nearly) 50 years in the business. The show centred on the Froffy Coffy Bar and introduced us to the exploits of the young people who gathered there and of course their adulation of a certain Mr Donegan.

The story also introduced the two main protagonists Lonnie's sons Peter and Anthony who managed to condense their dad's career in record time with power charged renderings of his greatest hits helped visually by the large screen photographic montage. On the one hand it was Peter's Sylvia Young stage school training that provided the (at times) over the top gesticulations from a theatrical point of view but it was Anthony's striking resemblance in vocal presentation, features and mannerisms that provided you with his dad's persona. Rattling along in a series of quick chance routines the ensemble left the audience almost breathless in Pump Boys and Dinettes fashion. From acoustic ballads to bursts of true rock 'n' roll the band played up a storm and whilst those of a more cynical nature may have thought that the cast played fast and loose with some of the repertoire you couldn't help but be impressed by the dynamics of it all. The hits came faster than a speeding bullet and included 'Putting On The Style', 'Pick A Bale Of Cotton', 'Have A Drink On Me', 'Battle Of New Orleans' and of course, 'My Old Man's A Dustman'. You see what I mean. Give the audience what they want and they'll give the artists the response they require.

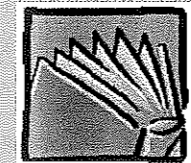


There were so many highlights such as the Stomp inspired 5 drummers and dustbins routine that I was seriously in danger in running out of ink! The adrenalin was certainly pumping because the well-rehearsed routines didn't let up for a second and the outstanding musical contribution of guitarist Paul Henry (I haven't heard the like since the days of Jackie McAuley) were truly stunning. Come to think of it, the Ever Ready batteries must have been super charged tonight because the show just whistled

by and by the end of the performance the entire audience rose as one to show their appreciation. Now I know it might not be very PC to applaud tribute shows but for me - much like I'm sure the Abba tribute next month featuring Bjorn Again will be sold out - all of the cast gave value for money and really, who can ask for more?

Pete Fyfe

JOHN'S DIARY CHAT



Hello again and welcome to this my first column of 2005. As I write it is nearing the end of January and as ever I start with a retrospect of where and what I have been doing since we last 'met'.

In November I attended at Birkenhead's Pacific Arts Centre to see the legendary Ralph McTell. I must say I was disappointed from the outset with the format of the night, it being a no-break concert of one and a half hours. With no support act easing us in to the event to create that feeling of anticipation for the folk icon and no comfort break interval, this dwelt on my mind throughout the evening and unsettled my concentration to a degree that I cannot recall much that was positive about the whole evening - 'Sorry Ralph, but that is how it was for me'. Anyway, each to their own. I am sure that many of the full house present enjoyed Ralph's performance.

At the Parkgate Boathouse Christmas Party we were entertained brilliantly by Sad Pig and the following evening Brass Tacks had a super time performing alongside Judy and Dave at their own club at Poynton FC. Dave Green dressed as an elf just had to be seen to be believed. But what a wonderful atmosphere at this top-grade folk club with over a hundred in the audience.

This month has seen me visit Alison Parker's Farmer's Arms sessions at Frankby (Monday nights) and Roger Parker's Old Manor club in Wallasey where the special guests were the Miv Cameron Band who were launching their second CD - "Live in Peace". Miv hails from North Wales and has a wonderful voice. She is backed by the two Phil's - McGinity and Chisnall and Kevin Lloyd, all Wirral-based musicians. The CD contains a number of tracks penned by Miv and is a true reflection of their mainly traditional folk style. Check it out at www.mivcameronband.co.uk for more details.

Our January guests at Parkgate were Nancy Kerr and James Fagan. BBC2 Horizon award winners these two are a class act. Nancy and James put on a storming display of mainly traditional music with Nancy even doing her clogging whilst fiddling at the same time - absolutely brilliant.

Presently, I am helping the local tourism department compile an exciting line-up of performers for the first ever "Wirral Folk on the Coast" Music Festival, which is scheduled to take place in the lead up too and over the weekend of the Mersey River Festival. WFOTC commences with Cream of the Barley and Brass Tacks performing at a non-federation member club - Bromborough FC at The Bridge, Port Sunlight on Wednesday 8th June. The following night at Parkgate FC, BT and Eddie Morris will have as our special guests Real Time. A Ceilidh dance will take place on the Friday night inside the Fort Perch Rock (yes this is actually a fort situated on New Brighton beach). The band will be The Lifeboat with their brilliant comical caller Arthur Marshall. Saturday afternoon at the same venue, but this time outside as well as in, will see a load of events taking place for the whole family with amongst other things - a kite festival, face-painting, Morris Dance Teams and local bands the Bayou Rhythms and Alison Parker and the Third Man performing in the courtyard of the fort between 1 and 5 pm.

On Saturday evening at the Floral Pavilion theatre, New Brighton, a folk extravaganza will take place with the Houghton Weavers topping the bill plus the Tom Topping Band, (seven piece), Elbow Jane (four-piece contemporary) and compere will be Bolton's own Bernard Wrigley. On the Sunday afternoon at Vale Park, Wallasey, a concert will take place on the bandstand, which has the River Mersey as its backdrop. Special guests will be Tanglefoot from Canada supported by many of the residents of Folk at the Manor and the local Magazine Pub. How about watching this concert whilst the Tall Ships "Parade of Sail" drifts by? Ah, I can just picture it now!! Finally, on the Sunday evening it is anticipated that the whole event will be brought to a close at the Old Manor club, Withens Lane, Wallasey by that wonderful bluegrass band from Cheshire - Baker's Fabulous Boys. The very very good news is that with the exception of the Floral Pavilion concert, all the events I have outlined will be free. It will be ticket only admission at the club venues though. So watch this space and the forthcoming national advertising for more details. In addition to all this, the Mersey River Festival is represented on the Wirral by two concerts at the Pacific Arts Centre, Birkenhead on June 10th - "Songs of the Seven Seas" and on June 11th - "All at Sea". Contact 0151-647-0752 or www.pacificroad.co.uk

Club News

More good news is that a Runcorn folk music venue entitled

"Folk at the Brindley" has joined the Federation. The marketing manager there, Peter Bentham, contacted me to ask for our support in publicising The Brindley which is a brand new building located in the centre of old Runcorn close to the bus terminus and alongside the canal.

Opened last September, the venue is a Lowry style theatre with a one hundred-seater studio with moveable auditorium seating and a four hundred and fifty seater theatre. Both facilities are simply superb. It is Peter's intention to only book performers of a national or international quality. In the first instance it will be about five or six times a year. The first concert to publicise for this venue is on April 1st when Elisa Carthy and Sharon Shannon will be the guesting with their bands. Sounds great. Contact details are - www.thebrindley@halton.gov.uk and 0151-907-8360.

Not such good news is that The Swan has dropped of our listings. I am not too sure why? But best wishes to the organisers anyway.

John Gibney tells me that St Anne's Acoustic Roots club (Tuesdays) has relocated to the Conservative Club, Clifton Drive North, St Annes (next to Woolworth's), start time 8-30pm. Contact John or Sue on 01252-721503.

Upstairs at the Railway has now become Upstairs at the Woodcock with Christine Stephen's club having moved to the Woodcock Inn, Newmarket Road, Ashton-under-Lyne. Same contact details for Christine at 0161-370-6587.

Carlisle Folk and Blues have suffered because of the appalling weather in Cumbria in January so ring them first to get an update as to who is performing where.

South Lakes Music Promotion will celebrate two successful years as a venue on April 7th when the principal guest will be singer/songwriter Angie Palmer - admission is free. Angie's CD "Road" is described by Bob Harris, BBC Radio 2, as "absolutely gorgeous, wonderful music".

Westhoughton FC's last night before the usual summer break will be on 29th April with Dave Mallett, a singer/songwriter from the States famous for the song "Inch by inch, row by row etc". Normal service is resumed on September 23rd with one of my favourites, the very excellent Allan Taylor.

In addition to the centre page diary listings, Dave Jones (Standish FC) tells me that he will be hosting a night in April with the date and artist/es still to be arranged.

Ian Chesterman at Wrexham FC reports some interesting news. His club is joining forces with another folk venue at Hengoed in the booking of artistes in an effort to entice performers to that area for so called double-header bookings. The result you will see in the centre pages means Wrexham benefits greatly with more guest performers being listed. On the 19th May a booking still to be confirmed is - John Nielson and Annette Batty. This is interesting for me as both are former members of the band Monticore who I lost track of quite some number of years ago. It's good to hear that they are back 'doing it' again.

The Railway (Lymm) has two nights scheduled entitled BIG SPOT nights when 'lesser mortals' are given a chance to shine. On 17th March Sandy and Geoff Clough are the named performers and on 28th April, John Jocys.

Charity Gigs etc.

Pauline Dowsett at Leigh FC tells me that the proceeds of the

'Joe's Charity Night' on Saturday 5th March will go to the Tsunami Emergency Disaster appeal. The club is celebrating 25 years together for Calico who will be performing along with Bram Taylor and Pennygate. Ring Pauline for further details - 01942-604603.

A whole raft of concerts are presented by Steve Henderson of Mr Kite Benefits the first of which this quarter is in aid of 'Crisis' on 13th March when Ashley Hutchings's Rainbow Chasers will be supported by Calum Robinson and Joe Taylor.

Brian Willoughby (ex-Strawbs) has highlighted to me his song "Rumours of Rain" which he has written together with his partner Cathryn Craig. On Hypertension Records the CD is distributed by Roper and should now be in most record shops at a nominal cost. Proceeds made from the sales of this record will go to the childrens' charity - "Folk for Peace". The list of participants on the record looks like a 'Who's Who?' of the folk music world, e.g. The band is - Brian, Stefan Hannigan, Dave Lambert, Saskia Tompkins, Gerry Conway, Rick Kemp, Rod Clements, Ric Harvey, Chris Leslie, Bob Fox. The chorus is made up of - Harvey Andrews, Martin Carthy, Ralph McTell, Nanci Griffith, Tom Paxton, Jacqui McShee, Chris Leslie, Benny Gallagher, Clive Gregson, Emily Slade, Steve Tilston, Jez Lowe, Derek Brimstone, Chas Cronk, and Martyn Joseph.

Festivals

The next official Open Door FC "Extravaganza" (No. 8) will take place on March 6th and will feature, The Boat Band, Bill Whaley and Dave Fletcher, John Connolly, and Kimber's Men. A full day ticket will only cost you a thousand pennies. Pauline Westall has more info on pauline@westall25.freemove.co.uk

"Irish Music on the Move" is a new one on me and will entail a roving festival of concerts and workshops taking place in Cumbria on the weekend of 4th to the 6th March. Lazonby Village Hall is one of the principal venues where on the Saturday a wide variety of workshops will take place between 11am and 5pm. Between 6 and 6-30pm those who have attended the workshops will be recorded and videoed performing on the main stage. In the evening the Irish Traditional band "Congress" will perform. My informant Mat Walklate is part of "Congress" along with Seamus Corley, Andrew Dinan, Cormac Byrne and Anthony Haller. On the Sunday afternoon "Congress" will also perform at the Kirkgate Theatre, Cockermouth. For further info ring 0161-881-0071 or visit www.matwalklate.co.uk

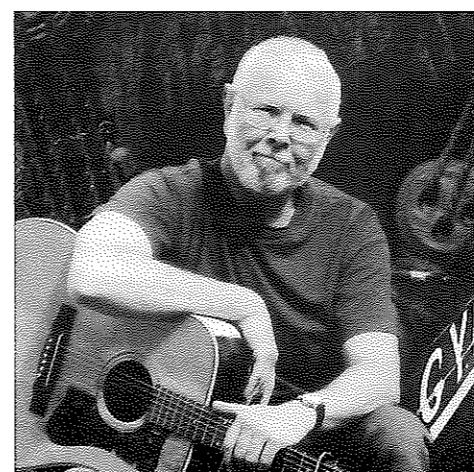
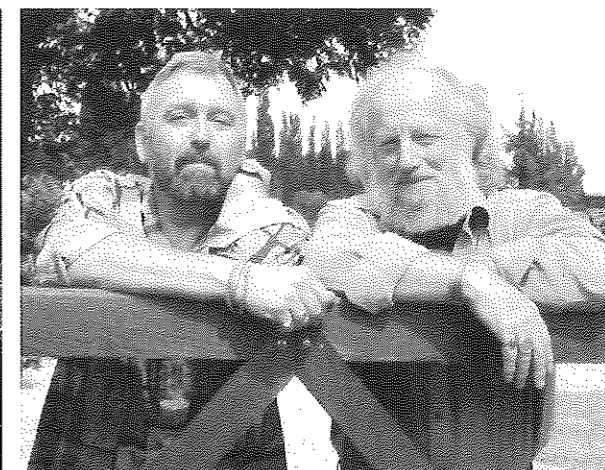
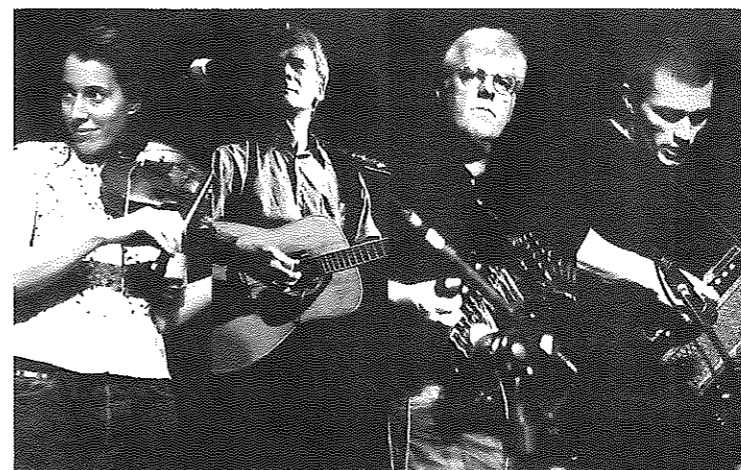
Lancaster Easter Maritime Festival and Trafalgar Victory Fair, 2005 - (what a mouthful!!) will, as the title suggests, take place from 25th to 28th March. This is described as the world's biggest gathering of traditional sea-song and shanty singers supported by a vast array of maritime-themed entertainments and activities, including ships-in-bottles, rope work and knot-tying demonstrations, illustrated talks and guided walks, salty storytelling, navy rum promotions and a grand celebration of seaside favourites. The Trafalgar Victory Fair will see an authentic recreation of a provincial fair of the period featuring on Easter Sunday the National Sedan Chair Carrying Championships. Visitors should also beware of the 'Press Gang' as the King's impressments service scours the quayside, seeking recruits to fight the French.

Artists booked so far include, Louis Killen, Tom Lewis, Andy Kenna, New Scorpion Band, Hughie Jones, Dick Miles, Liverpool Packet, Stormalong John, Derek Gifford, Three Sheets to the Wind, Red Duster, Shellback Chorus, Hautbois, Trim Rig and a Doxy, The Shanty Crew, Paul Sirman and Debra Cowan plus many more. Contact 01524-582810 or email vsimpkin@lancaster.gov.uk

Open Door Folk Club

The Star Inn, Church Street, Failsworth M35 9JN

Extravaganza 8 – Sunday March 6th



The Boat Band
Bill Whaley & Dave Fletcher
John Conolly
Kimber's Men

Tickets: whole day £10 – individual tickets available
contact Pauline 0161 681 3618 or pauline@opendoorfolkclub.co.uk

If shanties and songs of the sea are not your bag why not visit the Poynton Festival, which also takes place over the Easter weekend. On a new super duper site with camping facilities - the three main bands booked to appear are The McCalmans, Pentangle and Fairport Convention. More details can be obtained by ringing Judy Hancock on 01625-439848 or visit the festival website at www.poyntonfolkfestival.com

A special FREE festival celebrating Joe Stead's Birthday will take place at the Puzzle Hall Inn, Sowerby Bridge, Yorkshire from 17th to 19th June. Names for your diary are Shep Woolley, Gina le Faux, the Amazing Mr Smith, Nigel Mazlyn Jones, Paul Downes, Adrian Nation, Tim Broadbent, Monkey's Fist, Kimbers Men. Contact - banjostead@tiscali.co.uk

Droylsden Festival is due to take place from June 24th to 26th. Christine Stephen is your contact on Chrisstephen1@aol.com

The Four Fools Folk Festival also takes place from Friday 24th June to Sunday 26th June at a new venue, Lostock Hall Community High School. Hopefully, this year, Sean Cannon will not be lured away at the eleventh hour by The Dubliners and join an impressive line up that includes Martin Carthy (this year appearing as himself and not as Kevin & Ellen Mitchell, who will play themselves), Norma Waterson (Saturday only) and Les Barker to name but a few. Muldoon's Picnic, who visited last year, are back by popular demand. With the line up it is clear that the festival is very much a participation festival with a wide selection of workshops and presentation as well as the intimate "Meet the Artists" sessions. The new venue is especially ideal for the small informal sessions which makes this festival unique. There's something for everyone, Songwriting, Storytelling, Ballads, Shanties, Music Hall, Celtic Connection, Music Sessions, Sunday Songs and Folkus Workshops. As part of the festival, Newburgh Morris are organising a Day of Dance in Chorley Town Centre.

Lymm Festival will this year take place from 30th June to 7th July in the marquee in the grounds of the Railway pub. Doubtless there will be an advertisement giving full details somewhere inside this magazine but suffice it to say that on consecutive nights the following performers will appear, Bernard Cromarty, Nancy Kerr and James Fagan, Chris While and Julie Matthews, Back of the Moon, Anthony John Clarke, McConville/Cato and Wood, Garva ending with a Ceilidh on the 7th. Visit the club website at www.railwayfolkclub.co.uk

July 7th to 9th sees the Ormskirk Comes Alive festival with Bob Fox, Nick Hennessy, Gallimaufry, Jill Fielding Band, Frolicking Pete and the Fumbling Fingers Ceilidh Band, Jug O' Punch, Mark Dowding, the Riddlers, Tony Gibbons, Chris and Siobhan Nelson, Wench All, Pete Rimmer and Sara Marks plus Morris Teams and more. Info can be obtained by contacting music@abacuscare.com or visit the festival website. A fund-raiser event for this festival is schedule for April 1st at Ormskirk Civic Hall when "Trouble at Mill" will entertain Lancashire style. Tickets are #10-00 pounds (including hot pot supper) and can be obtained from Pete Rimmer on 01695-585400.

Musicians Wanted

A good mate of mine Bob Burrill who lives in Greasby, Wirral is seeking muso's interested in starting a regular Cajun music session somewhere on Merseyside. Bob, along with another great mate Ian Dawson, founder member of the Cajun band "Sack the Fiddler" are already set with guitar and percussion but are looking also for an accomplished melodeon and fiddle player to form a new band. A knowledge of Cajun music and an ability to sing Cajun songs would also be an asset. If you are

interested or know anyone who may be so, please contact Bob on r.burrill@merseymail.com

If you are a guitarist/singer with a liking for country, folk and country rock music Pauline Dowsett would like to hear from you. Two friends of hers, described as brilliant musicians, named Terry and Dave play in a Barn Dance Band called "Devils Fire". However, Terry and Dave are keen to perform to listening audiences and are looking for someone with a good sense of timing, rhythm and an ability to hold down harmonies. Terry and Dave hail from Tyldesley and Lowton so whoever joins them must be ready to travel to Tyldesley for regular rehearsals. Contact Pauline on paulinedowsett@northernboats.co.uk

Cumbria Folk News Website

Terry Howarth, organiser of Folk at the Wheatsheaf and Embleton Live has just posted an updated version of a website covering all aspects of folk music in Cumbria. All the work is done by him on a voluntary basis. The website has information about current folk clubs and venues in Cumbria and Terry is keen to publish articles about folk music trends in the county. In particular he would like to receive stories, pictures and anecdotes about the folk scene in that region in the early days - 1960's onwards. Was it called Cumberland then? Terry has already posted an article covering the history of Egremont Folk Club in the 70's, as he was actively involved there both as a musician and organiser. If you can cast light on anything 'folk' - as it used to be or even as it is now, then drop Terry a line. The site also includes an interactive element in the form of a calendar, which can be used by organisers or promoters to advertise their own events, and a guest book that encourages visitors to the site to leave comments.

The website can be found at www.collsarms.freemove.co.uk Terry's email address is terryh@collsarms.freemove.co.uk Contact telephone no. is 01900-604765.

New arts magazine

Graham Dixon at Gregson Lane FC tells me of a new arts magazine called - "Artslive" which came about as a result of an open forum held by SLAP (South Lancashire Arts Partnership). The magazine will be published each quarter and will contain comprehensive What's On information - similar to ours then Graham? The magazine has a web site to which you can contribute with details of your group/band/services/act or whatever - and free of charge as well. I think the best way to find this website is to put Artslive into your keyword facility on your PC. If you have any queries contact Graham on troubleatmill@btinternet.com

Words of thanks

Ruth, Ken and Dave (Risky Business) sent me an email a while back now in which they reported on Ruth's progress following major surgery. Apart from feeling a little tired Ruth is back singing again and raring to go for 2005. The band is taking bookings again so if you want to see them at your club tell your organiser to ring 0161-351-1797. Their new contact address is now 38 Hilary Road, Newton, Cheshire, SK14 4EA.

Graham Cooper

Those of you who read this column regularly will know that Graham Cooper contacted me last year with a view to publicising his forthcoming mini tour in this country. For those that are not aware Graham is a permanent resident in Portugal and will be in the country during March. Graham's principal bookings are at Porkies, Swinton and Cannock folk clubs. With his newly fretted Martin D28 and a straightened neck (the guitar that is) Graham tells me that it sounds great. If anyone would like to

have Graham perform free gratis then drop him a line on the email address graham.cooper@oninet.pt

Finally, I was shocked to hear recently of Vin Garbutt being unwell with respiratory problems and, having glanced at his website, I understand that at the time of writing, following hospital tests, Vin is doing OK. On 29th January Vin returned home from hospital for a period of relaxation and strength building in advance of undergoing surgery in a few weeks time. It is likely that Vin will be off the road for a while. So, on behalf of myself and everyone connected with 'Folk North West', may I extend to Vin and his family my very best wishes for a speedy and healthy return to fitness as soon as possible.

Why not visit Vin's website and drop him a line? at - www.vingarbutt.com

That's all from me this time have a great spring quarter and I look forward to talking to you again in June.

John Owen

SPOTLIGHT ON DEREK GIFFORD



Our trip to Australia seems to have dominated the summer last year and, although it was mainly a holiday (and a wonderful one as always), my gigs in Perth and Sydney kept my voice in trim and kept the CD sales flowing!

It seemed that no sooner had we returned than I was up to my neck in folk at the wonderful Broadstairs Folk Week in Kent followed by Hull Sea Fest with Three Sheets and then straight into our own Lancashire folk festival at Fylde. Having covered almost the whole country in those few weeks it was a pleasant opportunity to catch up with so many of you. You see - you can't escape old Gifford just because you live a long way off!

It was just after Hull that I developed a nasty cough and by the time I got to Fylde it had (unknown to me at the time) developed into acute bronchitis!! Luckily I had time to recover sufficiently (it took 3 weeks!) before my next singing engagement at the end of the month. After our Three Sheets booking at Northampton and my gigs in the home counties at the end of October the voice was soon back to normal. Apologies to those who may have missed these gigs and those at the end of the year due to the late appearance of this newsletter.

The knock-on effect of the bronchitis has also meant a delay in the progress of the new CD 'Sunny Corners' but the 15 songs are recorded and most of the accompaniments and the chorus line up are sorted. I hope to release the album some time later in the year but there is no deadline for this one and therefore I'm not rushing it!

Three Sheets to the Wind's first album 'All Tide Up' is selling well and has received some very good reviews the most recent being from The Living Tradition magazine. We have a number of bookings lined up for the year as a result.

The Lancashire Voices project is still on hold at the moment because, not only have I been ill with bronchitis, but Chris fell out of his apple tree (I must tell him not to do those George Washington impressions!) last autumn and laid himself up with a back injury. In a way he was lucky he didn't paralyse himself. He has, thank goodness, made a full recovery so we hope to

resume with the project soon.

As you can see I'll be doing a lot of work with Folkus at the beginning of the year including their residential weekend in February following the resounding success of the first one. If you've never played an instrument before why not join us and have a go? Apart from guitar there will be workshops on whistle, bodhran, fiddle and voice as well as other items depending upon demand. To find out more contact Alan Bell on (01253) 872317 or e-mail: alanbell@fylde-folk-fest.demon.co.uk

See some of you soon, hopefully. Bye for now,

Derek Giff Gifford.

ARTICLES

RUBY BOTHY - WHO CAN HANG A NAME ON YOU? (40 YEARS OF THE SOUTHPORT FOLK CLUB)

In the far-off days of 1964, when there was only a handful of folk clubs on Merseyside, (what goes around comes around!) four people; - Stan Ambrose, Dave Boardman, Tony Wilson and Christine Jones got together in order to run one in Liverpool. Their original idea was to make it a gathering where solo singers had a fair chance of showcasing their talents since hitherto, the existing clubs were all group-dominated. The quartet had served their apprenticeships as floor singers in places such as the Spinners Club, the Coach House and the Washhouse and were keen to show that soloists could run a club successfully. Thus it was that the Bothy concept was born on Monday 23rd November 1964, at the "Cattlemarket" pub in South Liverpool where the evenings were reasonably informal yet at the same time maintained continuity and generated a sense of participation, akin it was hoped, to a Scottish bothy. As the Club developed though and quite quickly, the founders discovered that they were singing more songs together and enjoying the group work as was the audience, with the blend of voices (Tony's powerful delivery in particular), Stan's whistle, Dave's guitar and Chris' banjo proving a winning combination.



The Southport Bothy Folksong Club

SUNDAY 4.00 P.M.
at the
RAILWAY HOTEL

Resident Group:
The Bothyfolk
Singers
STAN AMBROSE
DAVE BOARDMAN
CHRIS JONES
TONY WILSON

OPENING DATE 25th APRIL 1965

The Bothy Folk then, came into being and by the time it was decided to start an offshoot in Southport, they'd gained a good reputation locally. The four had been in the audience at a Spinners concert in Southport's Cambridge Hall when, during the interval, several fans approached them with a request to open up an operation in the town. This was the real boom era for 'Folk' with Dylan in the charts, Ian Campbell and Martin Carthy on TV, and the music regarded as a true alternative to what was then seen as meaningless pop driven assailing the ears of the young. The group took up the challenge beginning on a Sunday night in April 1965 and running for a while at the now-demolished Railway Hotel where when queues outside by 7PM for an

8PM start were the norm, larger premises had to be found. For the next 38 years, the "Blundell Arms" in Birkdale was to be the Bothy's home. Membership records from those days reveal 800/900 members per year in addition to as many visitors (what would have happened if they'd all turned up on the same night!?) and certainly early attendance was mandatory or you'd not stand a chance of admission.

The group eventually found that running 2 clubs in addition to doing gigs locally and nationally (main stage at Cambridge Festival 1966 - two-day ticket £1!) plus the day job burden was becoming too much of a chore and by now, a pick could be taken of Folk clubs in Liverpool any night of the week. I know, I know, it all seems so fanciful now. Something had to be abandoned - it was the Cattlemarket branch, and there then followed a period of consolidation for group and Club. Changes though, are inevitable and Chris, married to Hughie of the Spinners, left to concentrate on raising a family so that by 1968, once Dave Boardman had married and left to teach in Jamaica for 3 years the Bothy Folk Group was no more.

Stan's BBC 'Folkscene' programme on Radio Merseyside began to absorb more of his spare time so Tony Wilson recruited a local 3-piece 'The King's Shilling' to fill the gap but after a promising start, things weren't gelling like before and it was back to the days of the soloist-as-Resident with the best floor singers receiving an up-grade in the Autumn of 1969. Kevin Littlewood, Chris Taylor, Jim James & Raphael Callaghan, Dave Whitehead, Rick Scott and Frank Sellors all made up a strong team. Sue Fox was added but left after a short while, whilst Pete Rimmer replaced Frank Sellors soon after.

I'll leave the family tree here in the early '70s - there have been countless comings and goings since and far more than could be documented here. Suffice to say, there were some half dozen Residents doing everything from acapella ballads to bottleneck guitar when, fresh from Wilson Pickett and James Brown, I made my way up the stairs to the archetype club-over-pub rooms in 1971. A long-time Blues and R&B fancier, I felt I knew so much about Black music yet little or nothing about my own folk culture and it had begun to nag at me, so where better place to learn a thing or two than the Bothy.

Everybody in Southport knew of the club and it was recognised as being something to be valued, even by those who didn't know their Andy Williams from their Vaughan Williams. Tony Wilson was the ebullient front-person giving full vent to 'The Barnyards Of Delgaty' at 8PM prompt, still the commencing song to this day. I was, quite simply captivated not only by the songs but by the wealth of talent and the eclectic nature of the music presented. One week Mr Fox were the guests, followed later in the month by Tim Lyons, such were Wilson's catholic tastes and always interspersed with the glorious Singers Nights, surely the backbone of any erm, 'proper' Folk Club? (discuss)

The zeal of the regular singers was infectious. There was no hint of that 'I suppose we'd better start now' mentality and at the evening's end you'd feel truly part of a shared experience, a community of interests and enthusiasms. Bring it on - I wanted some of this! I was avid to learn more too, not just to be entertained, and diverted. I needed to know about the songs I was hearing and the singers who'd made them and who were still making them. Education just seemed implicit then as part of the Folk Club process - it wasn't just a night out, hell this stuff was more meaningful than a few pints and a packet of fags. (footnote; -Everyone seemed to smoke then, me included - the air would constitute an industrial hazard now, with hindsight.)

Early days' guests had included true source singers - Jeannie Robertson, Jimmy McBeath, Davy Stewart, showing I feel how

much the revival south of the border drew upon Scots influences including the name of the Club itself of course. The '70s saw Fred Jordan, Packie Byrne, Stan Hugill, Tom Anderson featuring together with the up and coming names on the revival and singer-songwriter circuits which had by then developed. Visiting US musicians were actively sought - Sara Grey, Billy Vanaver, Chris Smither and a particularly fine night with Mike Cooney springs to mind though Paul Simon had failed the audition in the mid-'60s, having been rejected by Tony Wilson in no uncertain terms which I won't go into right now! Suffice to say it's a legendary story!

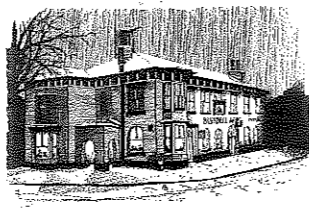
Anyway I was hooked, and with each week, increasingly seemed to get reeled in, with involvement in the Mummung team and Southport Swords dancers. I started to do a few floor spots, having sung in front of mid-'60s Beat groups I figured it would be a piece of cake (oops, wrong!) but built up a repertory, eventually being elevated to Residential status, which meant at that time, hey, travel expenses!

Ending up as Organiser by default when Tony, in 1975, took up a 6 month teaching secondment in Hull, everyone had looked at me when a temporary stand-in was mooted - and I'm still standing in for him now. CAMRA captured his energies and he also changed his name to Molyneux (a long story) and whilst he continued to sing, latterly sea-songs and shanties with Stormalong John, as regards the Club, he left me to it. He also left me a Club to be justifiably proud of and a slight feeling of inadequacy, which haunts me still. However, I like to feel we have a certain reputation with visiting singers and musicians who very rarely fail to receive a warm welcome or underachieve at the Bothy.



Bothy Residents early 1980
L-R: Keith Mandie, Pete Rimmer,
Clive Pownceby, Nev Grundy,
Bev Sanders, Ray Rooney

At the end of 2003, we regretfully left the "Blundell Arms" whose character had altered beyond belief over the previous 2 years and where once we were welcomed, we were now tolerated at best. That move was a tough decision after such a length of time, but the "Shelbourne Hotel" on Lord Street is our new home - I dislike change so maybe we're settled here now forever.



Whoever thought it would last this long anyway? Certainly not the founders - Stan Ambrose has said they'd thought maybe 2 or 3 years would see it through, rather like McCartney's early comments on the Beatles' longevity but time has surely shown the wiser.

Sadly 2004 saw the loss of two of those originals when Tony and Dave both died over the Summer months, and through the years there have been tragic and too-early losses of others of

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FOUR FOOLS:

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INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE SEA (PORTSMOUTH):

(2nd - 3rd July)

SADDLEWORTH:

(15th - 17th July)

TROWBRIDGE PUMP FESTIVAL:

(22nd - 24th July)

SALTBURN:

(12th - 14th August)

HULL SEA FEVER FESTIVAL:

(2nd - 4th September)

GREAT YARMOUTH MARITIME:

(9th - 11th September)

OTLEY:

(16th - 18th September)

BANBURY (tbc)

(7th - 9th October)

BEDWORTH (tbc)

(25th - 27th November)

FORTHCOMING:

ENKHUIZEN, HOLLAND (summer 2005, date to be arranged)

AUCKLAND FESTIVAL and other NEW ZEALAND venues (Jan/Feb 2006)

GREATER WASHINGTON DC AND NEW YORK FOLK SOCIETIES and other US venues (Oct 2006)

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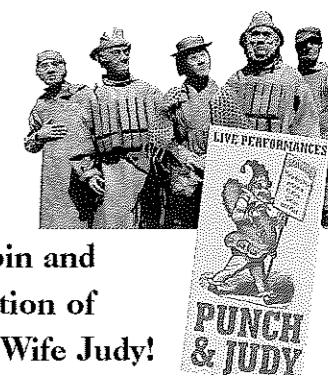
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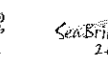


Beware the Press Gang!

For further information and to be placed on the Festival mailing list,

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or email Vslmpkin@lancaster.gov.uk



our number, though it's easy to get maudlin and rose-tinted at anniversaries. Maybe it's the time but this isn't the place, so I won't, except to say that this piece wouldn't be getting written at all, were it not for them and their early energies, dedication and vision.

Since you ask, we tick over just fine. Sometimes we're running a bit fast, occasionally we're out of time and now and again we need winding up but we never stop! Onwards and upwards eh? Only as good as your last Singers Night? (now there's a new thread for Mudcat!). Oh, and, as some of our Birthday week publicity says, "The Bothy's 40 - I'm not!"

Clive Pownceby www.bothyfolkclub.co.uk

FRANK HENNESSY'S CELTIC HEARTBEAT

Frank Hennessy is a consummate veteran radio and television broadcaster and a folk music performer who has been on the folk music scene for over forty years. Frank presents Celtic



Heartbeat on BBC Radio Wales for three hours each Saturday presenting, introducing a superb selection of folk and roots related music, but essentially he plays music he thinks is good without trying to categorise it too closely. His relaxed friendly broadcasting style, allied with homespun anecdotes and a great sense of empathy not to mention humour, make listening to Celtic Heartbeat a rare treat every week. His choice of music is truly eclectic and he features regular in depth interviews and discussions with high profile internationally recognised artists, such as Joan Baez and Dougie MacLean.

Frank started the renowned South Wales based folk group, The Hennessys, back in the mid 1960s with Dave Burns and Paul Powell. Their first major public performance was at The New Theatre in Cardiff in 1966. Two years later the group turned professional and headed across the Irish Sea for the next year or so. Whilst in Ireland, they spent their time honing their skills, and as Frank recalls "just about getting by", in the heady environment of the Irish folk revival, at its height during this period.

Although born and raised in Cardiff, the group had strong Irish roots (industrialised South Wales - particularly Cardiff and the valley towns - having attracted large numbers of migrants from Ireland and elsewhere). It was not until the Hennessys returned from Ireland in the early 1970s that they were exposed to the Welsh folk scene, enjoying its own folk revival, with protest singers, like Dafydd Iwan, playing to huge audiences. (Incidentally, much like Billy Connolly in Scotland, Max Boyce also emerged during this period as a 'serious' folk singer before moving into comedy). It was about this time that Frank's own talent as a songwriter began to shine. Songs from that period, such as 'Farewell to the Rhondda', 'The Old Carmarthen Oak' and 'Who Will Cast a Stone', have become part of the folk tradition not only in Wales but also throughout the UK, Ireland and the USA.

The Hennessys are as busy as they ever were, representing Wales at Celtic gatherings worldwide, from Dubai to Boston and from Lorient to New Orleans. These days the group still comprises Frank Hennessy and Dave Burns, who is also a formidable solo artist in his own right, and Iolo Jones.

In recent years Frank's passion for traditional and contemporary folk has forged another career. Frank's folk-roots programme "Celtic Heartbeat" on BBC Radio Wales now has a massive following, as borne out by the latest Welsh listening figures. The

show also has the station's highest number of listeners via the web. Proof if needed that folk-roots and acoustic music has a truly global appeal. He has also presented several excellent music series for BBC Wales television, including Way Out West - tracing the roots of Cajun, Appalachian and Cape Breton music, and Way Down Under, which took a distinctly Celtic look at the music and culture of Australia.

Frank Hennessy Produces and Presents "Celtic Heartbeat" at Ten o'clock on Saturday nights on BBC Radio Wales. (882 & 657 MW/AM. 93-96 and 104 FM stereo, Satellite channel 867). You can also listen via the Internet www.bbc.co.uk/radiowales where you can listen live on line, and at any time during the seven days following the initial transmission.

Lewis Jones

WHO NEEDS A FESTIVAL?

It is the bleak mid winter and folk music has retired to the depths of the club scene - hardly a festival in sight, but then who needs them? On a recent trip to Perthshire the home of some of Scotland's finest musicians it would seem as though a festival nonetheless was happening.

Friday night when we arrived we went to the Taybank Hotel in Dunkeld. This fine establishment was until recently owned by Dougie MacLean and under his influence it turned into a thriving music scene and even gained the honour of "Scotland's Best Music Bar" in 2002. Under the new owners it still continues as a great pub with great music.

Upstairs in one room we sat and sang with about 20 others, most of them regular visiting musicians and singers, some travelling over 30 miles each way for the Friday night singaround. Downstairs in the bar in front of a roaring log fire there was a bit of a session. If you don't have your guitar don't worry there are several hanging on the wall with a few fiddles and a good piano in the corner.

Another option on the Friday night could have been a visit to the Glenfarg Folk Club for their Christmas Ceilidh as we passed it on the way up to Perth. Glenfarg have their own festival centred around the main event of "The World Puff-a-Box Championship" and is well worth a visit in April.

Saturday night we had the pleasure of over two hours of great music from Tarneybackle in the rather splendid Birnam Institute just across the River Tay from Dunkeld. Tarneybackle were publicising the release of their third CD "Diamond" and from the crowd queuing at the desk, sales on the night went well and rightly so. Their performance is mostly Traditional Scottish songs with a few of their own. Tarneybackle have long established themselves as band with a good reputation for excellent musicianship and vocals.

Sunday the sun shone and we took a drive up the A9 to the tourist town of Pitlochry. This town has an excellent theatre showing several different plays each week. There is also a tremendous Scottish country dancing following with regular large gatherings of locals and visitors attending in Highland Dress for the occasion. For our exercise we opted for a walk in the hills above the town and popped into the Moulin Hotel for a spot of lunch on the way back to find a great session going on. Our visit was somewhat extended as I sampled their beer which is made in their own brewery across the road. As a result of our extended liquid lunch we failed to make it back to the Taybank Hotel where Alan Reid and Rob van Sante of the Battlefield Band were giving a concert.

Monday, well we had the opportunity to visit The Stirling Folk

Club for yet another concert this time with Old Blind Dogs in the evening. But once again we had to decline the pleasure as the thought of going back to work early Tuesday morning after an overnight drive was not a good idea.

Looking on the websites that give information about Scottish folk clubs in Perthshire it was easy to put our programme together. On another week we could have visited the tiny village hall in Dalguise, only a few miles up the A9 from Dunkeld, where Canadian singer Jennifer Clarke gave one of only two concerts while visiting the UK. Perhaps next time we will stay a little longer to see and hear more of what is available. Perthshire is a beautiful place to visit and with this mass of music and much more besides you will find lots to do. So who needs Festivals?

Noddy (Rob Wright)

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



Another Fivepenny Piece

A couple of issues ago I mentioned a website dedicated to the Stalybridge group, The Fivepenny Piece. One of the original members, John Meeks, has recently rerecorded some of the songs that the group used to sing that were penned by Colin Radcliffe with music added by John himself. This is a solo CD and I believe that John is playing all the instruments himself. I always felt that John's voice was very distinctive and, although 20 years may have passed since he performed with 5pp, he still has the vocal quality that makes this CD one for the fans to go out and buy. Where can you get it from? Go to www.5pp.co.uk and all will be revealed!

Weavers Anniversary

I have been asked to give a mention to the fact that The Houghton Weavers are going to be celebrating 30 years in existence as a group which doesn't half make me feel old as I first encountered them around 1976 when they played at the Windmill Hotel in Parbold - and no I wasn't old enough to drink in pubs then - where the landlord Austin Ball regularly had folk artists performing for charity nights that he held. The Weavers, of course, went on to bigger things when they made their TV break on the BBC North West talent programme "We'll Call You". BBC bosses were so impressed with their performance in this programme that they were asked to do their own series called "Sit Thee Deawn" featuring half a dozen songs a week from the boys and a comedy sketch spot from Joe "He were a great baker were our dad" Gladwin and Stu "I could crush a grape" Francis. The show went on for six seasons and regularly featured the songs of Alan Bell including the internationally covered "Bread and Fishes". The line up of the Weavers has changed over the years although original members David Littler and Tony Berry are still with them. More information of celebration gigs is on their website - www.houghtonweavers.com

MDMA

There is an organisation of which we have been made aware called the Manchester and District Music Archive (MDMA), whose aim as the title suggests is to collect and archive all aspects of music in the Manchester and District area. Whilst it would be fair to suggest that "pop" music and its associated culture will feature high on the list of priorities and will no doubt be a dominant force within the archive, folk music is very much in the minds of the organisers and they are keen to have folk music represented. What is the archive looking for then? The

aims of the MDMA are laid out on their website - www.mdmaarchive.co.uk - but in brief the archive wants to celebrate, protect, educate, guide and unite the music and people of the area. The archive is still in its infancy and many things have to be set up to get it up and running but Folk North West will be keeping in contact and will bring you further developments in due course.

Forgotten songs

Don't forget the song request page on the Folk North West website - www.folknorthwest.co.uk - see if you can help anybody looking for words to obscure and long forgotten songs. Please email the people concerned and drop me a copy of the email if you can help them at all.

Hiring Fair

The Hiring Fair is growing with artists who are looking for bookings in the area. If you want yourself or your group to be included, please have a look at the pages already on there to see the sort of information I'm looking for. A picture would be good as well. Email me with the information - webmaster@folknorthwest.co.uk Until next time - Happy Surfing.

Mark Dowling

Email: webmaster@folknorthwest.co.uk

LETTERS



Dear Ken

We don't normally send emails to load of clubs but since 'His worship the Pig' don't use the BCC box I thought we'd take advantage of the contacts, exchange information and possibly collaborate on booking some acts.

We are located down in the West Country only 10 minutes from the M5. Please have a look at our web site to get a flavour of the club and if you would like a link to your site then let us know. Also if you or any of your members are near us on a First Friday of the Month then we would be very pleased to see you.

All the very best and keep singing.

Tony & Trish Batten
Milverton Music Club, TAUNTON, Somerset; Tel:01823 400416;
www.milvertonmusic.freeserve.co.uk

OBITUARIES

MARTYN BENNETT 1971-2005

Martyn Bennett was born in Newfoundland, Canada in 1971 to a family rooted in both the Island of Skye and Wales. He spent his formative years in the Cordroy Valley surrounded by Gaelic-speaking Scottish immigrants who had come from Canna and Moidart in the Northwest Highlands of Scotland in 1820. When he was six years old, Martyn and his parents moved to Scotland where he heard first hand the music he had been exposed to in Newfoundland. At the age of 15, he enrolled in a specialist music school in Edinburgh, Scotland, which led to his acceptance at

the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, where Martyn began formal classical training for violin and piano.

Martyn fused rural and urban music mixing classical styles with contemporary rhythms and technologies, and emerged with a sound that was unique yet familiar, and in high demand throughout Glasgow. After finding his niche in the Gaelic/dance arena, Martyn began garnering attention by composing for European theatrical productions. Martyn composed for the Tom McGrath adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped and David Harrower's Knives in Hens. These works led to television and movie scores and eventually on to solo performances, highlights of which include performing as personal piper for the Tanzanian President on his visit to Edinburgh, a three month tour of the U.S. with Green Linnet recording artist Wolfstone, consecutive appearances (in 1995 and 1996) at the Edinburgh Hogmanay for crowds of over 90,000 people (and a couple of sheep), and a gig as entertainer for the Braveheart premiere at Stirling Castle.

He has appeared as a guest musician on numerous albums, and in 1996, the independent Scottish label, Eclectic Records released his first solo recording, a self-titled full length CD. The album brought the urban folk sounds of Martyn's music to an ever-widening European audience. In 1997, Rykodisc's release of "Bothy Culture" extended Martyn's musical reach across the pond and beyond. In 1999 Martyn released a collaboration with Martin Low entitled Hardland to rave reviews.

In November 2000 Martyn was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Unfortunately, after having gone through a year of chemo and radiotherapy the cancer returned. In the beginning of January 2002 he underwent a major operation to remove his spleen, which was found to have a tumour. 2002 involved having a radical course of chemotherapy followed by stem-cell transplant. Martyn Bennett sadly died on 30th January 2005.

(This is an abridged version of the obituary that appeared on the Footstompin' website. www.footstompin.com/artists/martyn_bennett There was also a substantial obituary in The Guardian on 2 February 2005 and this can be viewed on their website)

PETER WORTHINGTON

Frank Brough at Walshaw FC has provided the following obituary to Peter Worthington who died recently.

"Peter was a founder member of Walshaw Folk Club, helping to run the club and amusing us all with his poetry reading. We delayed our opening two years ago to allow Peter time to recover from a heart attack but unfortunately he never fully recovered his health and in August he was diagnosed with terminal cancer. He died on 2nd October, 2004. Prior to his heart attack Peter had been a keen fell walker, being an active member of various walking groups and completing his tenth hundred-mile walk with the Long Distance Walkers Association shortly before his heart attack. Due to his love of the countryside and folk music, Peter's sister requested the song "Old Pendle" be sung at his internment service by Walshaw FC's residents 'Capstycam'. Peter's friendly manner to both regulars and new faces will be sadly missed by us all at Walshaw."

DAVID MICHAEL RYAN - Singer 1948 -2005

It is with great sadness that I have to announce that Dave collapsed and died very suddenly on 17th January 2005.

Dave was a big man in every way, 6ft 5" tall, and built to match,

a clone of the wrestler Giant Haystacks, some folks said.

Dave ran Fleetwood Folk Club for over 16 years and was the lead singer in the group Spitting on a Roast (the name came from a 'spoonerism' of Roasting on a spit). Although no Martin Carthy, Dave was a fine singer and an adequate guitarist who could hold his own in any situation.



For several years Dave was only an occasional floor singer round the various Fylde clubs until he was "teamed up" with Mike France and formed Spitting on a Roast, within a few weeks he was dragooned into taking over the Fleetwood Club.

In the late 90's he decided he'd like to be a recording engineer. He'd no equipment, nor any money for a rig, so he applied for, and got a Millennium Grant for one - he could sell snow to the Eskimos! In the last 5 years he produced over 30 C.D.'s from Punk to Scolds Bridle, from School choirs to American song writers.

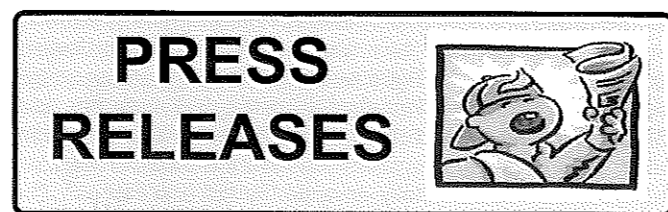
Dave was also a very active researcher; he worked assiduously to collate all the information available about the Fleetwood trawling trade. It was due to his drive that the acclaimed show "It all comes out of the Cod End" came to fruition. At the time of his death he was working on a project concerning the wrecks and rescues of the Fylde Coast.

Many visitors to the Fylde Folk Festival will remember Dave for his "running" of the events at the Steamer. For many years Dave had been an active member of the festivals' committee.

Although not by birth a "sandgrownun", he was actually born in Birmingham, Dave very much regarded Fleetwood as his home. He came to live here when he took up a job with the Civil Service.

He leaves a wife Catherine and sons James & Andrew. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

Ron Baxter



MERSEY SHANTY FESTIVAL

This annual celebration of Shanties and Sea songs again centres mainly in Liverpool around the historic Albert Dock. Artists provisionally booked so far include Les Pirates (Brittany), La Moresca Antica (Italy), Ship n Whales (Norway), The Caniffe Family (Ireland), Armstrongs Patent (Netherlands) and Vaikeste Lootspillide Uhing (Estonia), Hughie Jones, Stormalong John, Liverpool Packet, Fore and Aft and Portsmouth Shanty Men with lots more to be announced.

In addition to the weekend daytime performances on ships and around the quayside there are major evening concerts on



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- 04 Jul (Mon) **Anthony John Clarke (£6)**
- 05 Jul (Tue) **Tom McConville, Pauline Cato & Dave Wood (£6.50)**
- 06 Jul (Wed) **Garva (£6.50)**
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Thursday 9 June at Southport Arts Centre (01704 540011), Friday 10 June at Pacific Road Arts Centre, Birkenhead (0151 647 0752) and Saturday 11 June at Unity Theatre, Liverpool (0151 709 4988).

As usual, the festival kicks off with an informal free-for-all at the Baltic Fleet, Wapping, Liverpool on Friday night and this year it finishes on Sunday with an evening of Stormalong John and friends celebrating the life and songs of Tony Molyneux at the Ship and Mitre, Dale Street.

Full details of all events will appear on the festival's website www.merseyshanty.co.uk

IRISH MUSIC ON THE MOVE

THE BASIC PLAN: The cream of Manchester's Irish traditional music community decamps to the Lake District for the weekend of 4-6th March 2005. On the Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoon there will be concerts followed by sessions open to all and on the Saturday afternoon there will be workshops in a range of traditional instruments.

THE DETAIL: Accommodation for all the musicians has already been booked at a venue near Keswick. A venue has been made available that can accommodate some of the planned activities. It is a newly renovated village hall in Lazonby near Penrith and it will host the workshops and concerts on Saturday 5th March.

The Kirkgate theatre in Cockermouth has agreed to host the Sunday afternoon events. The Irish traditional group 'Congress' * will headline the concerts. The workshops will be provided by members of this band and by the other musicians coming from Manchester. Those not involved in providing workshops or performing in the concerts will probably have a 'fringe' session or two and everyone will get together for a big session after each concert.

There is a large constituency of amateur and semi-professional musicians in Cumbria with an interest in Irish music and this event will give them the opportunity to improve their skills, watch some good bands and join in with the best of sessions.

For the Manchester musicians it offers a much-needed weekend in the country with plenty of tunes and good beer (and walking and sight-seeing if that's what they're into). Musicians from the North-West and anywhere else in the British Isles are most welcome to attend but they will have to sort out some accommodation, as the hut is almost fully booked.

LOGISTICS: We need as much sponsorship and funding as we can get so that we can pay for the accommodation, to buy food for the weekend (a chef has offered to cook for everyone for free!), to help pay people for performing at the concerts and for providing the workshops and to pay for the advertising and promotion of the event. Folkus have provided £200 worth of funding towards the Saturday workshops!

* Congress comprises: Seamus Curley - vocal, guitar, mandola; Mat Walklate - flute, harmonica, whistle, Uilleann pipes, vocal; Andrew Dinan - fiddle. (Andrew is a former all-Ireland champion); Cormac Byrne - bodhran. (Cormac is a member of Young Tradition winners Uiscעדwr); and Anthony Haller - double bass. Further information can be found at: www.matwalklate.co.uk or email: walklate@btopenworld.com

JILL FIELDING'S TRIPPLICITY

Friday 26th November saw the launch of the newest album by the Jill Fielding Band taking place at The Rugby Club, Green

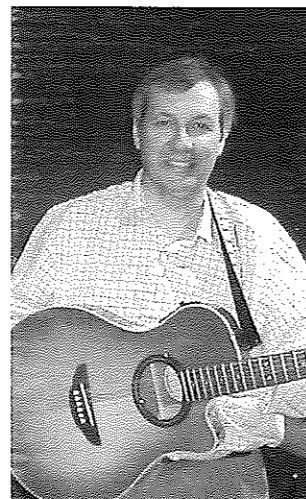
Lane, Ormskirk. The band comprises Jill Fielding on lead vocals, guitar and percussion, Pete Rimmer on lead guitar and Nigel Fielding on keyboards together with guest appearances from local musicians Mark Dowding, Tony Gibbons and Kate Howard.

The latest album consists of a mixture of traditional and contemporary ballads and instrumental interludes. The band have been steadily developing recognition with performances at festivals and concerts across the country and have supported many well known artists such as Bob Fox, Chris While and Julie Matthews, Bernard Wrigley, Nancy Kerr and James Fagan to name but a few.

Following on from the success of Jill's first album "Once upon a Dream" this new album features a host of great songs both traditional and contemporary. Paul Draper at the Dead Frog Studios in Bickerstaffe produced the album. Jill is one of the organisers of Ormskirk Comes Alive, the annual music and street festival which is now in its third year, taking place 7/8/9th July 2005 in various locations in and around Ormskirk. More details from Jill 01695 585400

RIMMER'S MELLOW FELLOW

Pete Rimmer's has recorded a whole CD of songs written by Donovan. It features 13 songs, everything from a couple of the big hits he had in the 60s such as 'Mellow Yellow' and 'Catch the Wind' to lesser known songs such as 'The Ferryman Daughter', 'Sand and Foam', 'Voyage to the Moon' and plenty of others from his various albums. The songs are played in a gentle Donovan style on guitars, bass, fiddle, viola, whistles, mandolins and recorders.



Pete has been a performer since 1967 in those heady days of the folk boom. Over these years he has been involved in most of the folk events in the North West of England such concerts at the Southport Arts Centre, Southport Theatre and Floral Hall. Pete is a long time resident singer at the world famous Bothy Folk Club in Southport and a regular performer at a number of folk clubs and festivals such the Fylde Folk Festival each September. He has also played with various barn dance bands, duos with Bev Sanders and Bill Hackney, backing guitarist with

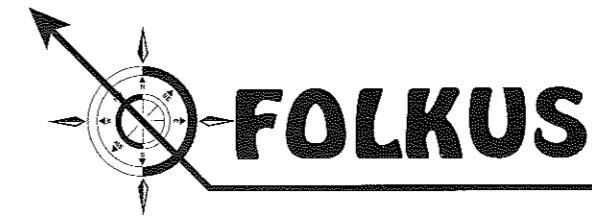
anyone who will put up with him. Pete also is the director of Ormskirk Comes Alive Festival and runs the Abacus Music Agency in Ormskirk. Pete has a quite a few recordings available and performs on CDs with Bill Hackney, Gallimaufry, and the Jill Fielding Band and others.

Along with Sarah Marks and Roger Gardiner make up Gallimaufry a trio who perform all over the North West. Their album is Kid on the Mountain. Pete's first solo album is called Fill My Pockets...With rain

Pete Rimmer, Tel 01704 567852; Mobile 07973 623210 or Email music@abacuscare.com; visit: www.donovansongs.co.uk

LAUREN SCOOPS TOP YOUNG FOLK AWARD

Lauren MacColl has won BBC Radio 2's Young Folk Award 2004/5. Lauren is a solo fiddle player aged 18 from Ross-shire,



The Folk Arts Network of the North West

Folkus is a Folk Arts organisation founded by enthusiasts to celebrate, support and build upon the continuing vitality of traditional and contemporary folk music, song and dance within the North West

SPRING PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2005

SATURDAY 5TH MARCH

Irish Music on the Move

Festival of concerts and workshops at Lazonby Village Hall, Nr. Penrith, Cumbria. Tuition on Fiddle, Whistle, Singing, Accordion, Banjo, Flute, Bodhran, Uilleann Pipes. Supported by Folkus. Details: Mat Walklate. Tel: 0161 881 0071

SATURDAY 12TH MARCH

Workshops Lord Street Primary School, Colne, Lancashire.

Bodhran, Fiddle, Guitar, Whistle.

SATURDAY 19TH MARCH

Nantwich Fiddle Day

A celebration of fiddle playing, workshops and performance with Ben Paley & Tab Hunter. Supported by Folkus. Details from Claire Smith Tel: 01270 583426

FRIDAY 25TH - MONDAY 28TH MARCH

Lancaster Maritime Festival

Folkus is supporting appearances of Tom Lewis (CAN) Debra Cowan (USA) Info: Tel: 01524 32878

FRIDAY 25TH - MONDAY 28TH MARCH

Poynton Folk Festival.

Folkus workshops. Guitar, Whistle, Fiddle, Bodhran. Info: Tel: 01625 872539

SUNDAY 3RD APRIL

Marine Hall, Fleetwood

Workshops. Guitar, Whistle, Fiddle, Bodhran, Spoons. Instruction on P/A, Stage presentation and performance.

SATURDAY 9TH APRIL

Workshops Hoole Community Centre, Hoole, Chester

Guitar, Whistle, Fiddle, Bodhran

FRIDAY 13TH - SUNDAY 15TH MAY

Garstang Walking Festival

Music provided by Folkus

Info: Tel: 01995 602125

Folkus workshops are from 10.30am until 4.30pm. Packed lunches advisable. Tuition on voice and wide variety of instructions available on request. All Folkus tutors are expert musicians and performers with great experience.



**FOR FURTHER DETAILS OR INFORMATION ON FOLKUS CONTACT:
THE SECRETARY, 55 THE STRAND, FLEETWOOD, LANCASHIRE FY7 8NP
TEL: 01253 872317 FAX: 01253 878382 email: alanbell@fylde-folk-fest.demon.co.uk**



Scotland. The BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Awards final took place on Friday, 3 December in the unique setting of London's Union Chapel. Lauren's winning performance and highlights from the event were broadcast on 8 December on Mike Harding's Radio 2 Folk Show. Lauren has now secured a special place at the 2005 BBC Radio 2 Cambridge Folk Festival and Towersey festival and will record a studio session for Mike Harding's Radio 2 Folk Show.

Originally from the Black Isle and now studying fiddle and Scots/Gaelic song at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Dance in Glasgow, Lauren has been playing the fiddle for eight years, having learned through the Gaelic Fèisean movement in Ross-shire. The highlights of her career so far have been playing gigs in Italy and Ireland and most recently playing for the British Ambassador in Norway for the RSAMD. Among her musical influences have been the leading exponents of Highland/Gaelic music such as Aonghas Grant and Iain MacFarlane along with players from Shetland, Ireland, Cape Breton and the thriving Irish music scene in Glasgow.

Lauren says: "It's still not sunk in, really! Everyone was so brilliant, the bands and singers, I just don't know how they judged it at all. They had a worse job than us, I think! Lauren, who also teaches fiddle playing, adds: " There were two fiddles in my family and they both came from my mother's uncles who I never met or heard play but there were two fiddles lying about. I played the violin at school, the usual school violin lessons. It was through the Fèisean movement, the weeklong summer school that I've been going to since I was - I think Primary 6 - quite young, anyway. That was just seen as holiday more than anything but gradually got me into playing."



Lauren is a full-time student but still finds time to play in public: "We're actively encouraged that playing and even going out to the pub for a tune is vital to what we're doing. I think if we sat in studying books all the time that has nothing to do with musicianship. So there's plenty of time for gigs and a lot of gigs have come through the academy. I've been to Oslo, there's a BBC TV programme that we all took part in for MME, that's on just now ... there's plenty of opportunity and they do all they can to make sure that you've got the time to pursue your own interests."

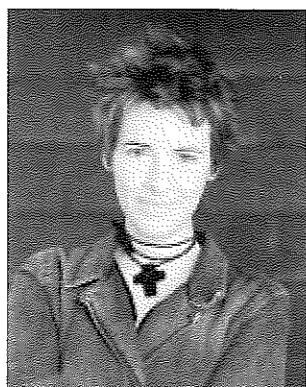
Lauren's prize also includes a concert spot at the Association of Festival Organisers' Conference 2005 and a year's membership to the Musicians' Union. The awards are open to young artists aged between 15 and 20, who perform traditional and acoustic music with roots in any culture. BBC Radio 2 has been staging the Young Folk Awards since 1998.

The other finalists were: Bella Hardy - a solo singer aged 20 from Derbyshire. Bella has been singing since an early age, and started learning the fiddle at the age of 11; Chillum - who are Thomas Wright (guitar), Matthew Dean (flute & whistle) and Will Lang (bodhran) aged 17 to 20 from Newcastle and Leeds; Kathryn Davidson - a solo singer aged 19 from Northumberland; Carly Blain and Rachel Cross - a fiddle duo, both aged 18 from Kelso in the Scottish Borders; Kerfuffle - a four piece ensemble aged 15 to 17 from Derbyshire, featuring Sam Sweeney (fiddle & djembe), Hannah James (accordion & vocals), Tom Sweeney (bass guitar) and Chris Thornton-Smith (guitar).

You can find out further details of the awards, see the pictures and listen to the 8 December show by visiting the following site: www.bbc.co.uk/radio2/r2music/folk/youngfolkaward2004_5/

ELEANOR'S TOUR

Eleanor McEvoy, possibly the finest female songwriter to have emerged from Ireland in recent years, tours the UK in April, including some festival appearances. Eleanor has brought something very special to the world of music and in turn the music world has given something back, success! She is a musician and songwriter of note, possessing all of the qualities that go to make up a complete artist. In a world where the word star and the gift of talent are often devalued, Eleanor McEvoy is neither an overnight success nor a four-week wonder. Today she is credited as one of Ireland's most successful and outspoken female singer songwriters having enjoyed personal chart success and numerous cover versions of her songs.



Her anthology album, "A Woman's Heart" became the best selling album in Irish history, and stayed in the Irish Top 10 for over a year. That was back in 1992. Since then Eleanor has released several albums of which her latest is "Early Hours". Over the passed few months she has been having regular airings on Terry Wogan's morning show with 'Days Roll by' from this CD.

Eleanor presents, with great clarity, music that is uncluttered via honest lyrics about her life and the life and times of those around her. Her voice, and music are unique and instantly recognisable. As well as her own solo tour throughout April, Eleanor was a special guest on the 'Homespun' tour Jan/Feb 2005 with Dave Rotheray of The Beautiful South and Sam Brown.

For further information on availability please contact: Darren Crisp darren@adastra-music.co.uk; Tel: 01377 217662; Mobile: 07789 077376; www.adastra-music.co.uk



NAPPER AND BLISS NEW RELEASE

Tom Napper AND Tom Bliss release their second CD "The Kelping" on Thursday March 3rd at The Grove Inn, Leeds. Produced by Phil Snell, it features guest Ciaran Boyle on Bodhran, and is available for just £11 (until 1st of April only) from <http://napperbliss.co.uk> and thereafter from Rocking Chair 01629 827013 PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU, UK

www.mrscasey.co.uk/rockingchair rc@mrscasey.co.uk

You can see them launch the new CD on 3 March at The Grove, Leeds. Then they have several dates in April and May in the North West and South and West Yorkshire, including 8 April-Arthur's Folk Club, Dog and Partridge, Macclesfield 01625 573 596; 30 April - Wath, South Yorkshire Festival; 13 May - Rotherham Arts Centre 01709 823621; and on 26 May Tom Bliss performs solo at the Topic Folk Club, Bradford 01274 883412

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Angie and Ken Bladen, 36 The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 3QU
Tel: 01257 263678 E-mail: four.fools@virgin.net

The First Sowerby Bridge Folk Festival

Joe Stead's Birthday Party

The Puzzle Hall Inn

Hollins Mill Lane

Sowerby Bridge

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Gina le Faux

Hot Rats

Joe Stead

Kimber's Men

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- | | | |
|----|-----|------------------------------------|
| 03 | MAR | SINGERS NIGHT (£1) |
| 10 | MAR | STEVE TILSTON (£6) |
| 17 | MAR | BIG SPOT SANDY & GEOFF CLOUGH (£1) |
| 24 | MAR | HARVEY ANDREWS (£7) |
| 31 | MAR | SINGERS NIGHT (£1) |
| 07 | APR | JOHN KIRKPATRICK (£6) |
| 14 | APR | SINGERS NIGHT (£1) |
| 21 | APR | PHIL HARE (£5) |
| 28 | APR | BIG SPOT GEOFF BIBBY (£1) |
| 05 | MAY | THE JOHN WRIGHT BAND (£8) |
| 12 | MAY | SINGERS NIGHT (£1) |
| 19 | MAY | JUNE ELLISON (£5) |
| 26 | MAY | SINGERS NIGHT (£1) |

Contact/Tickets: Stewart Lever 07919 270916
e-mail stewart_lever@yahoo.co.uk

SUNDAY		NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS	
Accrington Town Hall	7:30 PM	Blackburn Road, Accrington	Box Office 01254-380293
Bothy	8:00 PM	Shelbourne Hotel, 1 Lord Street West, Southport	Clive Pownceby 0151-924-5078
Folk at the Manor	8:30 PM	The Old Manor Club, Withens Lane, Wallasey	Roger Parker 0151-678-1962
Mr Kite Benefits	8:00 PM	Worden Arts Centre, Worden Park, Leyland (and other venues)	Steve Henderson 01772-621411
Open Door	8:45 PM	The Star Inn, Church Street, Failsworth	Pauline Westall 0161-681-3618
Walshaw	9:00 PM	Walshaw Sports Club, Sycamore Road, Tottington, Bury	Frank Brough 01204-413909
Walton	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Lilian French 0151-474-0979
Wooden Horse	8:30 PM	The Junction, News Lane, Rainford	Jim Coan 01772-452782
MONDAY			
Bacup	8:30 PM	Bacup Conservative Club, Inwell Terrace, Bacup, OL13 9AW	Paul Edwards 01706-872810
Conwy	8:30 PM	The Malt Loaf, Rosehill Street, Conwy	Denis Bennett 01492-877324
Folk at the Prospect	8:30 PM	The Prospect Inn, Weston Road, Weston Village, Runcorn	Roger Hanslip 01928-731567
Four Fools (new name/venue)	8:15 PM	Spinners Arms, A6 Road, Adlington, Lancashire	Ken & Angie Bladen 01257-263678
Red Bull	8:30 PM	The Red Bull, Hillgate, Stockport	Peter Hood 0161-432-4142
Room at the Top	8:45 PM	The Red Lion, Ashbrow, Newburgh, nr Parbold (changed venue)	Trevor Banfield 0151-430-0166
Swinton	8:30 PM	The White Lion, 242 Manchester Road, Swinton	Ged Todd 01942-811527
TUESDAY			
Crown	8:30 PM	The Crown, Heaton Lane, Stockport	Kieron Hartley 0161-291-8243
Everyman	8:30 PM	The Everyman Bistro, Hope Street, Liverpool	Christine Jones 0151-709-3336
Folk at the Forum	7:30 PM	Forum 28, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1HH	Box Office 01229-820000
Howcroft Inn	8:30 PM	The Howcroft Inn, 36 Pool Street, (off Vernon St), Bolton, BL12JU	Ron Callow 01606-863283
Longridge	8:30 PM	British Legion, Townley Road, Longridge, Nr. Preston PR3 3EA	Ron Flanagan 01772-785179
Maghull	8:30 PM	Maghull Community Ass'n, Green Lane, L'pool Rd North, Maghull	Joe Ryan 0151-531-9273
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	8:30 PM	St Anne's Conservative Club, Clifton Drive North, St Annes	John Gibney 01253-721503
Urmston Acoustics	8:30 PM	The Fox & Hounds, Woodsend Road, Flixton	Martin Kavanagh 0161-748-5497
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	9:00 PM	Fox & Goose, Wigan Lane, Wigan	Joan Blackburn 01942-321223
WEDNESDAY			
Alison Arms	9:00 PM	The Alison Arms, Preston Road, Coppull Moor, near Chorley	Derek Docherty 01257-791262
Blackburn	8:30 PM	Fleece Inn, Penny Street, Blackburn	Brian Kirkham 01254-720745
Burnley	8:30 PM	Waggon & Horses Inn, Colne Rd, Brierfield	Phyl Watson 01282-774077
Clarence	8:30 PM	The Clarence, Preston New Road, Blackpool	Ann Green 01772-683027
Cross Keys	9:00 PM	Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Near Oldham	Jim Schofield 01457-833897
Falcon	9:00 PM	The Falcon Hotel, Hardhorn Way, Poulton-le-Fylde	Pete Skinner 01253-301483
Red Bull	8:30 PM	The Red Bull, Hillgate, Stockport	Peter Hood 0161-432-4142
Walton	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Lilian French 0151-474-0979
THURSDAY			
Biddulph	8:30 PM	Biddulph Arms, Congleton Road, Biddulph	Eric Cox 01782-514896
Earby	9:00 PM	White Lion, Riley Street, Earby	Sharon Hobson 01282-841727
Fleetwood	8:30 PM	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood, FY7 6BT	Dave Hworth 01255-876351
Folk at the Wheatsheaf	8:15 PM	Wheatsheaf Inn, Embleton, nr. Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 9XP	Terry Haworth 01900-604765
Gregson Lane	8:30 PM	Gregson Lane Sports & Social Club, Gregson Lane, Hoghton	Graham Dixon 01254-853929
Parkgate	8:15 PM	Boathouse Pub/Restaurant, 1 The Parade, Parkgate, Wirral	Eddie Morris 0151-677-1840
Railway (Lymm)	8:30 PM	Railway Hotel, Mill Lane, Heatley, Lymm, Cheshire	Stewart Lever 07919-270-916
South Lakes Music Promotion	8:30 PM	Ulverston Sports & Social Club, Priory Road, Ulverston, Cumbria	Nick McDermott 07743-555227
Upstairs at the Woodcock	8:45 PM	The Woodcock Inn, Newmarket Road, Ashton-under-Lyne	Christine Stephen 0161-370-6587
Wigan (7 Stars)	9:00 PM	Seven Stars Hotel, Seven Stars Bridge, Wallgate, Wigan	Joan Blackburn 01942-321223
Wrexham	8:30 PM	Nags Head Inn, Mount Street, Wrexham	Ian Chesterman 01978-357307
FRIDAY			
Bollington	8:30 PM	Dog & Partridge, Palmerston Street, Bollington	Arthur Wakefield 01625-573596
Carlisle Folk & Blues-new venue	8:00 PM	The Sunset Suite, Carlisle Football Ground, Warwick Road	Myrna Rae 01697-72305
Hale & Harty	8:30 PM	The Kings Arms, Hale, nr. Milnethorpe, Cumbria	Frank Lewis 01524-734440
Leigh	8:00 PM	Conservative Club, Railway Road, Leigh	Pauline Dowsett 01942-604603
Northwich	8:30 PM	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich	John Booth 01606-79356
Pacific Arts & Exhibition Centre	8:00 PM	Pacific Arts & Exhibition Centre, Pacific Road, Birkenhead, Wirral	Box Office 0151-647-0752
Playhouse 2	8:30 PM	Newtown Street, Shaw, Oldham OL2 8NX	Barrie Cottam 01706-663117
Porkies	8:30 PM	Royal British Legion, Georges Road West, Poynton, Cheshire	Dave Hughes 01625-430149
Preston	8:30 PM	Moorbrook Inn, North Road, Preston	Rob Malaney 01257-231463
Rhyl	9:00 PM	Costigan's Pub, Bodfor Street, Rhyl	Jeff Blythin 01745-588072
Walton	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool	Lilian French 0151-474-0979
Westhoughton	8:15 PM	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton	Pat Batty 01257-230508
SATURDAY			
Barnoldswick	7:30 PM	Fosters Arms, Gisburn Road, Barnoldswick	Sharon Hobson 01282-841727
Buffet Bar	9:00 PM	Platform 1, Stalybridge Rail Station, Stalybridge	Jim Schofield 01457-833897
Citadel Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Waterloo Street, St Helens, WA10 1PX	Aby Jeffers 01744-762305
Lighthouse	7:00 PM	Lighthouse Restaurant, Lakeland Glass Centre, Ulverston, Cumbria	Jenny Thistlethwaite 01229-581121
Philharmonic Hall	7:30 PM	Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street	Liverpool Box Office 0151-210-2895
Platform	8:00 PM	The Platform, Station Buildings, Central Promenade, Morecambe	Glynis Johnson 01524-586823
Rattan & Rush Acoustic	7:45 PM	Rattan & Rush Tearoom, Market Street, Kirby Stephen, Cumbria	Penny & Paul 01768-372123
Southport Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Lord Street, Southport, PR8 1DB	John Sprackland 01704-540011
Standish	8:15 PM	St Ann's Parish Hall, Church Lane, Shevington, nr Standish, Wigan	David Jones 01254-54877

FEBRUARY into APRIL

(NB: Always check with club/venue organisers before travelling)

SUNDAY	27th FEBRUARY	6TH MARCH	13TH MARCH	20TH MARCH	27TH MARCH
Accrington Town Hall	Ring Box Office for details				
Bothy	ROY BAILEY Singers Night	Singers Night	ARTISAN Singers Night	Singers Night	Easter - tbc Singers Night
Folk at the Manor		Singers Night		CATHRYN CRAIG & BRIAN WILLOUGHBY	
Mr Kite Benefits @ Worden Arts Centre			ASHLEY HUTCHING'S RAINBOW CHASERS		
Open Door	DONAL O'CONNOR	EXTRAVAGANZA 8 (see JOHN'S CHAT)	Singaround	CHRIS FOSTER	Singaround
Platform			BLAZIN' FIDDLES		THE 4 MARTINS
Rattan and Rush			CATHRYN CRAIG & BRIAN WILLOUGHBY		
Walshaw	closed		BARLEYMOW		closed
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	IAN GOODIER & TOM BROWNE	Singers Night	Singers Night
MONDAY	28TH FEBRUARY	7TH MARCH	14TH MARCH	21ST MARCH	28TH MARCH
Bacup	BILL LLOYD	Singaround	BANDSNATCH	Singaround	REDMAYNE
Conwy	Singers Night	QUEENSBURY RULES	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	JOHN CONNOLLY	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
* Parkgate		THE ANIMALS & FRIENDS			
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	TOM LEWIS	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Singers Night	GRAHAM COOPER	Singers Night	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE	Singers Night
TUESDAY	1ST MARCH	8TH MARCH	15TH MARCH	22ND MARCH	29TH MARCH
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	closed
Everyman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	closed
Howcroft Inn		J.P. SLIDEWELL			
Longridge	Singers Night		KEN NICOL		

TUESDAY (cont'd)	1ST MARCH	8TH MARCH	15TH MARCH	22ND MARCH	29TH MARCH
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	ARTISAN	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Annes Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	2ND MARCH	9TH MARCH	16TH MARCH	23RD MARCH	30TH MARCH
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
* Carlisle Folk & Blues					FEAST OF FIDDLES
Clarence	RISKY BUSINESS	JOHN WRIGHT BAND	THISTLE	PRELUDE	JEFF WARNER
Cross Keys	ADRIAN NATION	ROSIE DOONHAN & BEN MURRAY	CATHRYN CRAIG & BRIAN WILLOUGHBY	YOUNG NO MORE	
Embleton Live					EQUATION
Falcon	Open Mic. - PA provided	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull		Music Session - English			
Southport Arts Centre		GALLIMAUFRY & FRIENDS			
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	3RD MARCH	10TH MARCH	17TH MARCH	24TH MARCH	31ST MARCH
Biddulph	ABBIE LATHE	Singaround	JOHN WRIGHT BAND	Singaround	Singaround
Earby	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Irish Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Wheatsheaf	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE		KEEPER'S FOLD		
Gregson Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night (Irish theme)	Singers Night (Irish theme)		RED 10
Pacific Arts Centre		RECKLESS ELBOW	CREAM OF THE BARLEY		
Parkgate					ARTISAN
Railway (Lymm)	Singers Night	STEVE TILSTON	Singers Night - BIG Spot	HARVEY ANDREWS	Singers Night
South Lakes Music Prom.	THE MIDDEN				
Upstairs at the Woodcock	Singers Night		Singers Night	Country Folk Night	
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham	SOLAN	BACK OF THE MOON	FEATHERS IN THE STEW		

	FRIDAY	4TH MARCH	11TH MARCH	18TH MARCH	25TH MARCH	1ST APRIL
Bollington	No programme available					
Carlisle Folk & Blues	IAN BRUCE			CHRIS JAMES		LANDER MASON & GARY DEWHURST
Hale & Hearty	Singaround					
Northwich	JEZ LOWE and the BAD PENNIES	28th Birthday Singers Night	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE		* Singers Night at the Antrobus Arms	Singers Night
Pacific Arts Centre		THE 4 MARTINS				STEVE KNIGHTLEY & MARTYN JOSEPH
Philharmonic Hall	BARBARA DICKSON			HOUGHTON WEAVERS		
Platform	GRAHAM COOPER and DARYL					VIN GARBUTT (tbc)
Porkies	Singers & Musicians			Singers & Musicians		Singers & Musicians
Preston	JOHN WRIGHT BAND			Singers Night		Singers Night
Rhyl					ELIZA CATHY & SHARON SHANNON	
Southport Arts Centre						
The Brindley in Runcom (new Federation member)						ELIZA CATHY & SHARON SHANNON
Waltton	Singers Night		Singers Night			Singers Night
Westhoughton	BERNARD WRIGLEY	JOHN TAMMS & BARRY COOPE (t/o)	CATHRYN CRAIG & BRIAN WILLOUGHBY		closed	closed
Barnoldswick	5TH MARCH	12TH MARCH	19TH MARCH	26TH MARCH	2ND APRIL	2ND APRIL
Buffet Bar	Singaround					Singaround
Mr Kite Benefits @ The Met, Bury	Singers Night					Singers Night
* & ** Leigh	JOE'S CHARITY NIGHT					STEVE KNIGHTLEY & MARTYN JOSEPH
Pacific Arts Centre		TOM TOPPING BAND				
Platform			DADE KRAMA			
Playhouse 2			KYLA BROX BAND			
Rattan and Rush		CATHRYN CRAIG & BRIAN WILLOUGHBY				PAUL MILLNS
Standish	KEN NICOL					
NB: * = Not usual night						
** = Not usual venue						

APRIL into MAY

(NB: Always check with venue/club organisers before travelling)

	SUNDAY	3RD APRIL	10TH APRIL	17TH APRIL	24TH APRIL	1ST MAY
Bothy		MICK RYAN and PETE HARRIS	Singers Night	ARCHIE FISHER	40th Birthday Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Manor		Singers Night	Singers Night	DEAR GREGORY	Singers Night	Singers Night
Open Door		Singaround	Singaround	J.P. SLIDEWELL	Singaround	Singaround
Waishaw		Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
Waltton		Singers Night	Singers Night	DAN MCKINNON	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse		Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	closed
MONDAY		4TH APRIL	11TH APRIL	18TH APRIL	25TH APRIL	2ND MAY
Bacup		Singaround	EDDIE MCGURK	DAMIEN RYAN	Singaround	VICTOR BROX
Conwy		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect		MICK RYAN & PETE HARRIS				Singers Night
Four Fools		Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Mr Kite Benefits @ The Met, Bury			CHUCK PROPHET & THE MISSION EXPRESS			
Red Bull		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	3 SHEETS TO THE WIND	Singers Night
Room at the Top		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton		STANLEY ACCRINGTON	Singers Night	PHIL HARE	Singers Night	ROBIN LAING
TUESDAY		5TH APRIL	12TH APRIL	19TH APRIL	26TH APRIL	3RD MAY
Crown		Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman		Singers Night	PETE QUIN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Howcroft Inn			HOWDEN - JONES and CHEFFINS			
Longridge		closed		JAN HOUGH & PELICAN BABES		Singers Night
Maghull		Singers Night	JOHN WRIGHT BAND	Singers Night	Singers Night	ROBIN LAING
St Annes Acoustic Roots		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY		6TH APRIL	13TH APRIL	20TH APRIL	27TH APRIL	4TH MAY
Alison Arms		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Burnley		Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians

WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	9TH APRIL	13TH APRIL	20TH APRIL	27TH APRIL	4TH MAY
Clarence	RACHAEL & BECKY UNTHANK	ARTISAN	ED RENNIE	KATHRYN ROBERTS & SEAN LAKE MAN	ISAMBARDE
Cross Keys	HOWDEN & JONES Open Mic. - PA provided	ROBIN LAING Singers Night	PINT & DALE Singers Night	ROBB JOHNSON Singers Night	RICHARD GRAINGER Open Mic. - PA provided
Falcon			JILL FIELDING BAND	FIVE IN A BAR	
Platform (12-45pm free)		Music Session - English			
Red Bull		Singers Night			Singers Night
Walton		Singers Night			
		14TH APRIL	21ST APRIL	28TH APRIL	5TH MAY
Biddulph			CHRISTINE COLLISTER		** SHOW OF HANDS
Earby		Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Wheatshaf	SARAH GREY & KIERAN MEANS		BOB FOX		ROBIN LAING
Gregson Lane		Singers Night		ROBB JOHNSON	FAIRPORT CONVENTION
Pacific Arts Centre				DAVE MALLETT	
Parkgate		Singers Night	PHIL HARE	Singers Night - BIG Spot	JOHN WRIGHT BAND
Railway (Lymm)	JOHN KIRKPATRICK	Singers Night			CLAUDE BOURBON
South Lakes Music Prom.	ANGIE PALMER (free)				Singers Night
Upstairs at the Woodcock	BANDERSNATCH	Singaround			Singaround
Wigan (Seven Stars)	JOHN WRIGHT BAND	Singaround	Singers Night		CLIVE GREGSON
Wrexham			22ND APRIL	29TH APRIL	6TH MAY
* Biddulph		15TH APRIL	ARCHIE FISHER		
Bollington				AMAZING MR SMITH	
Carlisle Folk & Blues		JOHN WRIGHT BAND		MICHAEL MARRA	
* Gregson Lane		Singaround	KEN NICOL		Singaround
Hale & Hearty			JOHN HOWARTH		
Leigh					
Mr Kite Benefits @ St Bedes Club, Chorley	KATE CAMPBELL & WILL KIMBROUGH				
Northwich	ELBOW JANE	Singers Night	HILARY JAMES & SIMON MAYOR	Singers Night	Singers Night
Porkies		Singers and Musicians			PAUL MILLINS
Preston				Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Southport Arts Centre		KEITH JAMES	GRADA		

FRIDAY (cont'd)	8TH APRIL	15TH APRIL	22ND APRIL	29TH APRIL	6TH MAY
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	PHIL HARE	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
Westhoughton	VIN GARBUTT (tbc) (ticket only)	THE DOONAN FAMILY BAND	DAVE BURLAND	DAVE MALLETT	closed (Re-opens 23 Sept)
		16TH APRIL	23RD APRIL	30TH APRIL	7TH MAY
Barnoldswick					Singaround
Buffet Bar		Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ Bury Met.					ELIZA GILKYSON
Philharmonic Hall	THE DUBLINERS				
Playhouse 2		MIKE SANCHEZ BAND			
Rattan and Rush		FROM HERE TO ABSURDITY (comedy)		DAVE MALLETT	
* & ** South Lakes Music Prom.		BLUE TAPESTRY			
Standish					JOHN WRIGHT BAND
NB: * = Not usual night					
** = Not usual venue					

MAY into JUNE

(NB: Always check with venue/club organisers before travelling)

SUNDAY	8TH MAY	15TH MAY	22ND MAY	29TH MAY	5TH JUNE
Bothy	SAM & ELAINE BRACKEN	JOHN MCGORMICK	Singers Night	Spring Bank Holiday	ALAN REID & ROB VAN SANTE
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night		Singers Night	PHIL MCGINITY	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ Worden Arts Centre	SHOW OF HANDS	GARVA			
Open Door		STEVE TURNER	JOE TOPPING	Singaround	Singaround
Walshaw	DANTES LEGACY		Singers Night		
Walton		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse		Residents Night	Singers Night	closed	Guest tba
MONDAY	9TH MAY	16TH MAY	23RD MAY	30TH MAY	6TH JUNE
Bacup		WENCH - ALL	Singaround	GANSLER & O'GORMAN	Singaround
Conwy	JOE TOPPING	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	PETE COE	Singers Night	JOE TOPPING	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians

MONDAY (cont'd)	9TH MAY	16TH MAY	23RD MAY	30TH MAY	6TH JUNE
* Rattan and Rush	WIZZ JONES Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	STEVE TURNER Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	JOHNNY SILVO	Singers Night	Singers Night	JOE TOPPING
Swinton	Singers Night	17TH MAY	24TH MAY	31ST MAY	7TH JUNE
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Howcroft	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM				
Longridge	Singers Night	ALISTAIR HULEIT	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Annes Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	11TH MAY	18TH MAY	25TH MAY	1ST JUNE	8TH JUNE
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Blackburn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Burnley	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Clarence	KIERAN HALPIN	JEZ LOWE and the BAD PENNIES	Singers Night	ROSIE DOONAN & BEN MURRAY	SAD PIG
Cross Keys	PETE MORTON	BANDERSNATCH	GRAHAM NIGHTS	Singers Night	BRAM TAYLOR
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic. - PA provided	Singers Night
Red Bull	Music Session - English				Music Session - English
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	12TH MAY	19TH MAY	26TH MAY	2ND JUNE	9TH JUNE
Biddulph				JULIE MATTHEWS BAND	
Earby	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Wheatsheaf		DANGEROUS CURVES		JIM BAINBRIDGE	
Gregson Lane	Singers Night		BRIAN PRESTON	TOMMY EMMANUEL	Singers Night
Pacific Arts Centre					
Parkgate	*JOHNNY SILVO		JEZ LOWE and the BAD PENNIES		* REAL TIME - part of Folk on the Coast Festival
Railway (Lymm)	Singers Night	JUNE ELLISON	Singers Night	EMILY DRUCE & STEVE JONES	
South Lakes Music Prom.				JILL FIELDING BAND	
Upstairs at the Woodcock	"Blues Night"	Singers Night			

THURSDAY (cont'd)	12TH MAY	19TH MAY	26TH MAY	2ND JUNE	9TH JUNE
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham		JOHN NIELSON & ANNETTE BATTY (tbc)		Singaround closed	
FRIDAY	13TH MAY	20TH MAY	27TH MAY	3RD JUNE	10TH JUNE
Boilington	No programme available				
Carlisle Folk & Blues	BEVERLEY SMITH & CARL JONES				
Hale & Hearty		Singaround			
Leigh		JOE TOPPING			
Mr Kite Benefits @ Worden Arts Centre					
Northwich	PETE MORTON	Singers Night at the Davenham Players Theatre	JOE TOPPING	Singers Night	VIN GARBUTT
Pacific Arts Centre	WATERSON and CARTHY			PEGGY SEEGER	
Porkies				BOB FOX	
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Rhyl	JOHN MCCORMICK	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SATURDAY	14TH MAY	21ST MAY	28TH MAY	4TH JUNE	11TH JUNE
Barnoldswick					
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ Worden Arts Centre, Leyland				CHRIS HILLMAN with HERB PEDERSON & MICHAEL WESTON KING	
Playhouse 2	PAUL LAMB & the KINGSNAKES			JULIE MATTHEWS BAND - ACOUSTIC	
Rattan and Rush	DEBBIE CASSELL & MARTIN ANSELL		JEZ HALL		
Southport Arts Centre		MICHAEL MARRA			
The Citadel	No programme available				
The Lighthouse	No programme available				
NB: * = Not usual night					
** = Not usual venue					
NB: THIS CALENDAR IN THE NEXT EDITION WILL COVER THE DATES - SUNDAY 29TH MAY to SATURDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 2005.					
TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CALENDAR INFORMATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY JOHN OWEN BY NO LATER THAN SUNDAY 17TH APRIL 2005.					

**ADVANCE DATES FROM
JUNE 2005**

BIDDULPH

July 16 Folk in the Park

BOTHY

June 5 Singers Night June 12 Alan Reid & Rob Van Sante (tbc)
June 19 Singers Night June 26 Tom & Barbara Brown
July 3 Robb Johnson July 10 Singers Night
July 17 Benji Kirkpatrick Sept 11 Pete Morton
Sept 18 Singers Night Sept 25 Jon Brindley
Oct 2 Pete Bond Oct 9 Singers Night
Oct 16 Cloudstreet Oct 23 Singers Night
Oct 30 tba Nov 6 Donal Maguire (tbc)
Nov 13 Singers Night Nov 20 Damien Barber
Nov 27 Singers Night Dec 4 Brian Peters
Dec 11 Singers Night Dec 18 Xmas Party

CARLISLE FOLK & BLUES

tbc 2005 Vin Garbutt, The Paperboys, John Wright Band,
Emily Druce & Steve Jones, Chris While & Julie Matthews,
Kristina Olsen

CROSS KEYS

June 1 Singers Night June 8 Bram Taylor
June 15 Chris Jones June 22 Paul Downes
June 29 Kimbers Men

FOLK AT THE BRINDLEY

July 13 Valerie Smith & Liberty Pike

FOLK AT THE MANOR

June 12 Bakers Fabulous Boys (part of Folk on the Coast)
June 19 Fiddlestone

FOLK AT THE PROSPECT

June 13 Redmayne

FOLK AT THE WHEATSHEAF

June 2 Jim Bainbridge June 16 Mike Freeman Tania Opland
June 29 Embleton Live -Real Time & Joe Topping
Sept 10 Embleton Live - James Fagan & Nancy Kerr plus support
- tba Sept 15 Dana and Susan Robinson
Oct 6 Steve Tilston Oct 29 Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman
support - tba Dec 11 Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies

GREGSON LANE

Jun 9 Singers Night Jun 23 Lynn & Barrie Hardman
July 7 Stanley Accrington + Melvyn & the Volcanoes
July 21 Singers Night Aug 4 Singers Night
Aug 18 Singers Night Sept 1 Singers Night & AGM
Sept 15 Pelican Babes Sept 29 Singers Night
Oct 13 Julie Ellison Oct 27 Singers Night
Nov 10 Pedigree Chums Nov 24 Singers Night (Lancashire
Theme) Dec 8 Alan Bell Band
Dec 22 Singers Night (Xmas Special)

LEIGH

June 24 Les Barker

NORTHWICH

June 3 Singers Night June 10 Vin Garbutt
June 17 Singers Night June 24 Singers Night
July 1 Tanglefoot July 8 Singers Night
July 15 Julie Ellison July 22 Singers Night
July 29 Singers Night Aug 5 Brass Tacks

Aug 12 Singers Night Aug 19 Singers Night

OPEN DOOR

June 19 Mary Humphreys & Anahata

PARKGATE

June 9 Real Time (extra night) (part of - 'Wirral Folk on the Coast'
Festival) June 30 Tanglefoot (Canada)
July 12 Colcannon (Australia) (extra night) July 28 tba
Aug 25 tba Sept 29 Allan Taylor
Oct 13 Chris While & Julie Matthews (extra night)
Oct 27 Ghosts of Electricity (ex Lindisfarne)
Nov 24 tba Dec 15 Mrs Ackroyd Band

PLAYHOUSE 2

June 4 Julie Matthews Band - Acoustic June 25 Blue Harlem
Sept 17 Lou Pride & Mo'Indigo (blues) Oct 15 Christine Collister
Oct 22 John Howarth (Oldham Tinkers) & Friends

PORKIES

June 3 Bob Fox July 1 Banister/Barlow
Aug 5 John Tamms & Barry Coope Sept 2 Elbow Jane
Oct 7 Garva Nov 4 Tanglefoot
Dec 2 Mike Silver & Johnny Coppin Dec 16 Xmas Party

RHYL

Sept tbc Julie Ellison

SOUTH LAKES MUSIC PROMOTION

June 2 Emily Druce & Steve Jones
July 7 Anthony John Clarke Aug 4 Rod Clements
Sept 8 Nancy Kerr & James Fagan Oct 6 tbc
Nov 3 John Spiers & Jon Boden Dec 1 Les Barker

SOUTHPORT ARTS CENTRE

July 8 Lunasa

STANDISH

June 24 Colcannon Sept (tbc) Dave Gibb
Oct 15 Chris While & Julie Matthews

SWINTON

June 6 Joe Topping June 13 Singers Night
June 20 Pat Ryan & Ken Howard June 27 Singers Night
July 4 Jon Brindley July 11 Singers Night
July 18 Geoff Higginbotham July 25 Singers Night
Aug 1 Phil Atkinson Aug 8 Singers Night
Aug 15 Bernard Cromarty

UPSTAIRS AT THE WOODCOCK

June 2 Jill Fielding Band
June 24 to 26 Droylsden Folk Festival

WESTHOUGHTON

Sept 23 Club re-opens Allan Taylor
Sept 30 Eileen McGann Oct 7 Nancy Kerr & James Fagan
Oct 14 Shep Woolley Oct 21 tba
Oct 28 tba Nov 4 tba
Nov 11 Tanglefoot Nov 18 Kieran Halpin
Nov 25 tba Dec 2 St Agnes Fountain

WOODEN HORSE

June 5 Guest tbc June 26 Four Fools Festival - closed
July 3 Tanglefoot Aug 28 Bridgnorth Festival - closed
Sept 25 Cloudstreet Oct 23 Mick Ryan & Pete Harris
Nov 13 Mike Nicholson Dec 11 Guest tbc
Dec 18 Christmas Party Dec 25 Closed
All other Sundays - Singers Nights

CLUB RESIDENTS (as on 25th January, 2005)

BACUP – Brian Eastwood, Boo Long, Joe Caswell, Mark Almond, Barry Mairs, Steve Brooks,
John Dean, Will Scribble, Tom Winstanley, Keith Winfield, Bernadette O'Connor, Lynn and Barry

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

BLACKBURN – Flatbroke

BOTHY – Clive Pownceby, Steve Freedman, Pete Rimmer, Bill Hackney, Alison Younger, Ray Rooney,
Nev Grundy, Bev Sanders

BURNLEY – Brillig, Korrigan, Wench All

CLARENCE – Liz Moore & Sue Bousfield, Andrew Green, Rebecca Green, Ross Campbell

EVERYMAN – Chris & Hughie Jones, Shirley Peden

FALCON – John Bond, Clansfolk

FLEETWOOD – Spitting on a Roast

FOLK AT THE MANOR – Gill & George Peckham, Roger Parker, Marje Ferrier, Phil McGinity

FOLK AT THE PROSPECT – Chris Hanslip, Carol & John Coxon, Dave & Cheryl

FOLK AT THE WHEATSHEAF – The Occasional Three

FOUR FOOLS – Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Malcolm Gibbons, Geoff & Lindsey Smith, Tom & Ann,
Angie Bladen

GREGSON LANE – Trouble at' Mill, Celtic Fringe, Smithereen, Caroline Lovett

HALE & HEARTY – Frank & Sheila Lewis, Steve Black, Bob Hellon, Dave Summers, Gillian Turner,
Ken Lawson, Roy Wilcock & Bridget Guest, John Hodgson, David Littlewood, Roy Adams

HOWCROFT INN – Micron (Mick Unsworth & Ron Callow)

LONGRIDGE – Ron Flanagan, Brian Preston

MAGHULL – Joe Ryan, Tony Gibbons, Loctuptogether, Bob Tyrer, Clover, Paul Robinson,
Joan Gallimore, Back in Business, Jane Day, Jill Fielding

NORTHWICH – Jamie Anderson, Brenda Yates, John & Ailsa Booth, Iain Bowley & Tom Francis,
Bill Pook

PARKGATE – Eddie Morris, Brass Tacks

PORKIES – Sad Pig (Dave Hughes & Judy Hancock)

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

RAILWAY (Lymm) – Stewart Lever, Nick & Lin Tysoe, Bernard Cromarty, Nelson Peach,
Don & Heather Davies

RED BULL – Peter Hood & Linda Edwardes, Peter Fox & Anne Yates, Ged Derby, Pete Farrow,
Pete Roberts, Jim Embleton, John Ashurst (poet)

RHYL – Rum Bum & Concertina

ST ANNE'S ACOUSTIC ROOTS – Sue Arrow

UPSTAIRS AT THE WOODSTOCK – Lynn & Barrie Hardman, Dave Jones, Dave South

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

WALSHAW – Capstycam

WALTON – Ray Ellis, Arthur Best, Joe Wilcoxson, Lil French, Tommy Everett, Andrew & Steve Hesford,
Sacked Paddy

WESTHOUGHTON – Auld Triangle

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

WREXHAM – Offa

(Please send alterations or additions to John Owen by email on johnowenbtacks@aol.com)

AT FIRST LIGHT

John McSherry's At First Light, played their first Scottish jig, received a tremendous reception from a spell bound Celtic Connections audience at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 17th January. The champion Uilleann piper and whistle player's band were on top form. McSherry's CV includes spells with Coolfin and Lunasa, two of the great Irish groups of the past decade, and there's something of both of these in the band that should put McSherry unassailably in the top division in his own right. The band is available in three, four and five piece versions - see www.johnmcsberry.com

Any Festival organisers and promoters interested in booking At First Light in 2005 or 2006 should contact Frank Bechhofer on 0131 -339-4083 or email: info@bechhoferagency.com; or visit: www.bechhoferagency.com

MACLEOD CROSSING TIDES

Scottish singer-songwriter Heather Macleod launched her eagerly awaited debut album, Crossing Tides, with a concert at Celtic Connections festival in Glasgow on January 27. Produced by Heather herself, and released on her own Leod Music label, the album includes the double bass legend Danny Thompson and double Grammy Award-winner Sugar Blue on harmonica, heading up a hand-picked list of top Scottish based instrumentalists.

Originally from the Isle of Lewis, but based in Edinburgh for the past decade, Heather is already well known for her singing with such diverse acts as the Eliza Carthy Band, La Boum's Wee Free & Jim Condie's Distant Cousins. Over the last two years, however, she has concentrated increasingly on developing her own songwriting and solo work, which have been warmly received by audiences and critics alike:



As well as her own headline appearances, 2004 saw Heather opening shows for such leading artists as Cara Dillon, Michael Marra, Eliza Carthy, Tam White, Bert Jansch and Paddy Casey. Her startlingly individual voice, together with her songs' potent poetic language, vivid imagery and filmic atmosphere has drawn comparisons ranging from Annie Lennox to Goldfrapp.

Apart from Sugar Blue, whom Heather originally met through working with Scottish bluesman Jim Condie, and who contributes his trademark scorching licks to two tracks, the rest of the album's guests have been drawn from her diverse experiences and acquaintances across the Scottish music scene. They include the multi-talented acoustic guitarist Steven Polwart; Donald Hay (Mystery Juice, Unusual Suspects, Nusa, Bachué, Sunhoney) on drums; leading jazzers Paul Harrison (piano), Stuart Ritchie (drums) and Marcus Britton (cornet/French horn); Donald MacDougall (Mystery Juice) on electric guitar, and an 4-piece string ensemble from celebrated alt.classical outfit Mr McFalls Chamber. For more information, please contact Heather on 0131 539 8238 or 07746 784909 or heather@stoneport.com For full biography please go to www.heathermacleod.org.uk

QUESTION TIME AT EXPLOREMUSIC

A new local service has set itself the challenge to answer any music related question posed following the launch of the spectacular Sage Gateshead. One of the most innovative music

information libraries available, ExploreMusic is a new Gateshead Council facility offering local people, visitors to The Sage Gateshead and internet users globally, access to a range of specialist music resources and information.

Headed by a team of specialist staff, ExploreMusic offers to answer any question posed about music by post, email, text message, via their website or in person and the team have already managed to answer 60 per cent of questions asked, on everything from "Where can I find an electric guitar teacher in the Durham area?" to "Can you help me find a recording of The Shoemaker of Delft?"

Based within The Sage Gateshead, the service includes a unique online music listings facility, with up-to-date information about music events and activities across the region, including workshops and courses, community bands and choirs, music tutors, and instrument makers and repairers.

Composition software is available for visitors to notate their own music in The Sage Gateshead and take it away with them, as well as subscriptions to online musical dictionaries and audio libraries. Five listening posts give the opportunity to listen to CDs of upcoming performers at The Sage Gateshead, and examples of CDs available for loan at The Sound Gallery @ Gateshead Central Library. There is also a range of music books available for loan, a reference collection and a variety of music magazines and daily newspapers.

Julia Mitford, ExploreMusic manager, is a jazz and local folk music expert and heads a team of nine music specialists. She said, "The team has a broad interest and expertise in all music genres including jazz, funk, folk, rock and pop, dance and classical, so we're hoping to be able to answer questions on a very wide subject area, whilst offering support to our visitors."

Membership is available to all visitors of The Sage Gateshead regardless of whether or not they live in the area and the facility is accessible to everyone. ExploreMusic is still keen to hear from all community music groups, music organisations, music teachers, instrument makers and repairers, and event promoters to register their details on the online music listings service and to arrange display of leaflets at ExploreMusic within The Sage Gateshead. You can register all things musical for the listings in a number of ways. Go to www.asaplive.com/ExploreMusic/Home.cfm, click on music listings and fill in an online form, telephone ExploreMusic on 0191 4434630 or send an Email to exploremusic@gateshead.gov.uk for a form to complete and send back.

To pose a question, visit ExploreMusic in The Sage Gateshead, which is located in The Joan and Margaret Halbert space. This is next to the east entrance of the building nearest to BALTIC and is open between 9.30am-8.30pm, 7 days a week. Visit the website: www.asaplive.com/ExploreMusic/Home.cfm or telephone 0191 443 4630 for further information.

AFO HOLD SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE

After three years at the Palace Hotel in Buxton and a change of date, the Association of Festival Organisers (AFO) Conference moved to the Moat House, Telford. 215 delegates representing over 75 Festivals, 14 agents and 10 associated trade stands gathered at the Moat House over the weekend of 12th-14th November for what was the biggest AFO Conference since the Association began in 1987.

A wide range of key speakers, seminar sessions, and contributions from delegates both old and new gave the Conference an "amazing buzz". Saturday night saw the

FOUR FOOLS FOLK FESTIVAL

LOSTOCK HALL COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

TODD LANE NORTH, LOSTOCK HALL, PRESTON, LANCS. PR5 5UR

FRI 24th - SUN 26th JUNE 2005

NORMA WATERSON (SAT)
TOM & BARBARA BROWN
PETA WEBB & KEN HALL
HARVEY DAVIDSON
BACK IN BUSINESS
CLIVE POWNCEBY
KEITH KENDRICK
SCOLD'S BRIDLE
DEREK GIFFORD
MARTIN CARTHY
STEVE JORDAN
JOHN MORRIS
LES BARKER
CARA
CHRIS COE
JIM MAGEEAN
JOHN CONOLLY
CAPTAIN SWING
HANNAH HUTTON
ANDY CASSERLEY
MULDOON'S PICNIC
DANNY & JOYCE McLEOD
CRAIG; MORGAN; ROBSON
KEVIN & ELLEN MITCHELL
THE SHELLBACK CHORUS
DAVE FLETCHER & BILL WHALEY



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AVAILABLE ALL WEEKEND

Weekend Tickets:- £36.00 (before 1 June 2005) £40.00 after
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(Camping/Caravanning £3 per person, up to 3 nights)
(available for ticket holders only)

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY TICKETS £20.00 EACH

Tickets and information (LARGE SAE please) from:-
Angie & Ken Bladen, 36, The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley,
Lancs. PR7 3QU. Tel (01257 263 678)

e.mail: four.fools@virgin.net Website:- www.four-fools.co.uk

Showcase Concert bringing new acts to the attention of the gathered crowd and the Conference rounded off with a goodwill message that the '60's Folk Music boom may well have returned in the shape of ever increasing number and popularity of Folk Festivals in England.

The Showcase Concert and Conference together collected over £250 for Swarbaid and distributed literally thousands of information leaflets, booklets and other publications to a crowd of delegates eager to learn more, meet and greet, and of course network with like-minded people.

A full report will appear in the next News Bulletin from FolkArts England and will be copied onto the FolkArts England website (see below). The Conference team would like to thank all those who came, helped organise and stage this landmark event.

For more information about future events and FolkArts England please contact PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU Tel: 01629 827014 Fax: 01629 821874 info@folkarts-england.org or visit www.folkarts-england.org or www.afouk.org

FOLK SECTOR CHALLENGES NEW EDUCATION MINISTER

At the annual Folk Arts Network Conference delegates sent a strong message to Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State for Education and Skills to take Folk music, dance and song seriously and build it into the national curriculum of the country's education programme. The recently launched Music Manifesto aims to provide every young person with a first-class range of music experiences through their education. The members of the Folk Arts Network are determined to see that Folk Roots and Traditional music is not overlooked.

The Folk Arts Network Conference took place from 4-5 February 2005 at the Lord Leycester Hotel, Warwick and was aimed at anyone who runs projects and workshops in the Folk Arts genre and who would like to meet others doing the same or for anyone wanting to learn how to do it.

The Folk Arts Network (FAN) was established in 1990's and is a powerful networking organisation for all those involved with folk development projects across the country. It comes under the umbrella organisation FolkArts England, an Arts Council England funded national folk development agency.

For more information visit the Folk Arts Network website www.folkartsnetwork.org.uk email info@folkartsnetwork.org.uk or call the FolkArts England Office on 01629 827014.

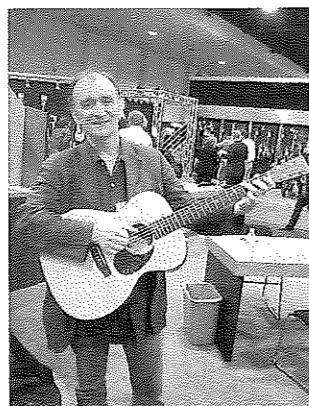
CARTHY PATRON OF FOLKARTS...

With a long and distinguished career researching, singing, arranging and supporting his beloved folk music, Martin Carthy now adds his name to FolkArts England a new national development agency. Martin has always been very supportive of work towards better recognition of Folk and Roots music and is excited at the opportunities now available to this Arts Council funded organisation.

FolkArts England is a national development agency for folk, roots, traditional and acoustic music in England incorporating Association of Festival Organisers (AFO), Folk Arts Network (FAN), Shooting Roots (youth project) and the Direct Roots directory - the guide to folk, roots and related music and arts in the British Isles.

For more than 40 years Martin Carthy has been one of folk music's greatest innovators, one of it's best loved, most

enthusiastic and, at times, more quietly controversial of figures. His skill, stage presence and natural charm have won him many admirers, not only from within the folk scene but far beyond it. Martin has formed musical partnerships with amongst others, Steeleye Span, Dave Swarbrick and his award winning wife Norma Waterson and daughter Eliza Carthy, which have resulted in over 40 albums, including 10 solo albums. Martin's much anticipated new solo album 'Waiting for Angels' on the Topic label was released last year, his first since 1998.

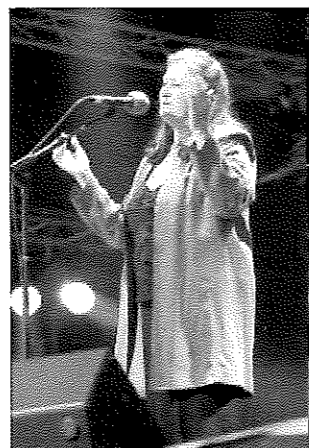


In adding his name as Patron in support of FolkArts England Martin continues his life long belief that the musical traditions of England can only be damaged if they are not performed. FolkArts England has a mission to see to it that this beautiful music is performed, developed and is passed on for future generations, a message that is shared with Martin in his groundbreaking world tours.

For more information please contact: FolkArts England, PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU. Tel 01629 827014; Fax 01629 821874; info@folkarts-england.org; www.folkarts-england.org

...AND NORMA WATERSON HONOURED

Her home University recognised the achievements of Hull-born singer and musician Norma Waterson, who has achieved global fame with her group The Watsons, at the university's Winter Degree Ceremonies 28 January by presenting her with an honorary doctorate. From a musical family, Norma Waterson grew up in Hull and has established herself as an international folk legend as a result of 30 years of touring to places including America, Australia and Europe, and releasing a string of albums. Norma was orphaned at an early age and brought up by her grandmother, sister and brother.



It was with her siblings that she developed first her interest in skiffle music, in the 1950s, and later a group, The Watsons. Her debut album with The Watsons was called Frost and Fire, and her hits since have included For Pence and Spicy Ale. Norma continues to tour with her husband, Martin Carthy, and their daughter.

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Alan O'Leary plays a considerable amount of folk music. Alan is an Irishman who was drawn to London as a young man by the great sounds which were abroad at that time and whose life is still distracted by those memories and sounds. Alan is also an Irish traditional musician who plays all over London and loves most types of music. Although a lover of radio he gained his first break in hospital radio and graduated to hosting his own popular Folk Routes on the much-missed CMR. He brings to Spyda an enormous knowledge and appreciation of all good music.

He recently featured a Ralph McTell interview on his Spydaradio programme. Alan's also involved with Copperplate Consultants/ Distribution/ Mail Order who mostly promote Irish traditional music and it's musicians)

You can access Spydaradio via: www.spydaradio.co.uk

NEW FOLK HARP FROM PILGRIM

Pilgrim Harps is a company run by the craftsmen; they gain enormous satisfaction producing refined harps in this environment, using exceptional materials. With a wealth of experience (harps have been made in their workshops since 1968) they provide a range of harps designed to meet the needs of a surprisingly diverse market. Harpists' interests range from early, classical, folk and contemporary music to pop or jazz. They make harps to suit all ages and abilities - including lever harps, 'student' pedal harps to orchestral concert grand harps, also hire, 2nd-hand and reconditioned harps.

Between the four partners at Pilgrim they have well over 100 years experience of making and restoring harps. Working on harps of all ages, shapes and sizes is vital in working on this type of challenge. Distilling all of the essential elements of this instrument has proved revolutionary but subtle. They have achieved around a 30% reduction in the price when compared with their other 34 string models. Its appearance is clean and uncomplicated whilst remaining reassuringly familiar. They are so excited about this new harp that they have decided to name it after the image on their logo - 'The Skylark'. A harp they like to describe as "the low cost harp with the expensive sound".

2005 sees Pilgrim Harps now able to offer 'The Skylark' a 34 string 'lever harp' without any compromise to the stringing; semi-tone levers; reliability and most importantly the quality of sound. The secret lay in what they describe as the 'design challenge' applying their specialist, traditional hand-made approach yet with a fresh look, drawing on their vast, knowledge and experience and seeking harpists' honest opinions.

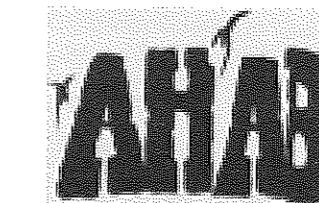
Pilgrim Harps, Stansted House, Tilburstow Hill Road, South Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8NA, UK. Tel: (01342) 893242 Fax: (01342) 892646 info@pilgrimharps.co.uk www.pilgrimharps.co.uk

CD REVIEWS



AHAB Leviathan (Own label)

Ahab is a Cumbria based band that describes its music as "progressive rock fused with folk". The current line up got together in May 2003 and comprises experienced musicians from a range of musical and performance backgrounds - Jane Barrett (vocals), James Bentley (bass), Steve Hartley (drums & percussion), Chris Holmes (electric/acoustic guitars), Dave Livingstone (acoustic guitar), Mark Newport (Fiddle) and Pete Shaw (sound). Bentley also produced the album.



Ahab is undoubtedly a band with potential. The band has had a number of very positive reviews about their high-energy live performances; their high point in 2004 was performing to an audience of about 3000 people at the Knochengoroch Festival.

Leviathan draws upon a number of traditional folk/rock influences and shows some promise. The traditional "The Bonny Ship the Diamond/Lament of the Leviathan" and their own compositions, "Dance with me" and "Hope and Vanity", demonstrate this, as does the concluding track on the CD - a heartfelt lament in the form of an adaptation of the W.B. Yeats poem, 'Heaven's Cloths', with Barrett, wringing out an emotive performance reminiscent of This Mortal Coil.

There are 10 tracks on this CD and, as you would expect with any genre than includes the description 'progressive rock', four of them exceed six minutes in length. Some might say this is stretching the tolerance limits of self-indulgence a bit too far. There is a tendency for lead singer Jane Barrett's vocals to be overshadowed by the instrumentation: this seems to be more getting the balance right through better production than about the quality of her voice. I'll reserve my judgement until the next CD.

Leviathan is available from Ahab's website at www.ahabmusic.co.uk

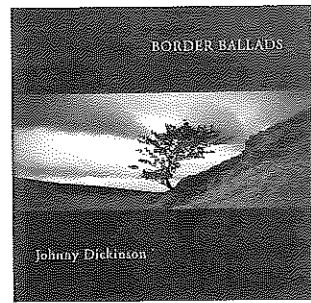
Lewis Jones

JOHNNY DICKINSON Border Ballads (Mawson & Wareham Music MWMCDSP63)

"Praise be"...a CD with something new to offer! Now, I'm not going to say this album will be to everyone's taste but if you're looking for something strikingly different I think you'll be hard pushed to find it. Johnny Dickinson is a great singer who hails from Northumbria and he wears this accolade with his heart on his sleeve. He draws on his knowledge of the area by combining lyrics from A C Swinburne's collection of Border Ballads with his own tunes and in doing so treads where no man has trod before (at least to my knowledge).

Unlike Bob Fox, who takes a more commercial (OK 'folky') approach utilising the original melodies, Johnny comes in from a totally different tack. In doing so, he has more in common with Alan Hull in his Pipedream period. In fact I could almost hear a

touch of Kenny Craddock in the arrangements. Now my reason for drawing your attention to this is to give the layman a better perspective of where (at least to me) the album falls when trying to compare it.



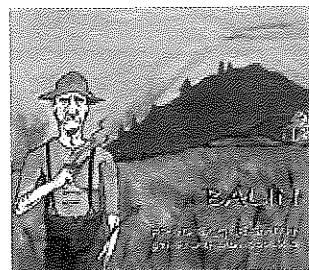
There are several standout tracks on the album but for me it has to be 'The Jolly Beggar' with its quirky re-interpretation set to a waltz and read instead of sung. So you can forget your Jack The Lad treatment with its jolly-up cheerfulness and instead listen with new ears and a treatment that would do The Bonzo Dog Doo-Daa Band proud. As I said opening up this

review this is the kind of recording that will prove startling not least because it's fresh and exciting like the first time you came across Steve Earle or Ry Cooder. For me personally - it's blow away! Further info from www.johnnydickinson.com

Pete Fyfe

FRED EAGLESMITH AND THE FLATHEAD NOODLERS Balin (AML Records)

If you've been listening to the flood of American roots music that followed the success of 'Oh Brother, Where Art Thou?' you'd be forgiven for thinking that you need only to have lived an Appalachian mountain life to lay a claim on the roots. No, ladies and gents, the bluegrass community has flourished to some extent or other in many areas. It even snuck over the border where that old Canuck, Fred Eaglesmith, was working away on the Ontario farmland. 'Balin', Fred's release with The Flathead Noodlers is not a rootsy bandwagon jumping affair but a return to the



bluegrass style that we heard on his early records. To that approach, The Noodlers basically add some wider instrumentation with fiddle, banjo, Dobro, mandolin, etc. giving the music a more rounded sound.

The subject matter ranges from such as 'Bailing Again', which resonates with the farming life themes of Fred's early records, to the likes of 'Small Motors', which is lyrically more like his more recent observational material. Favourites around here are 'Rooster Fight' whose subject matter isn't for the faint hearted, 'Do You Love Me Now', whose harmonies are to die for, 'Tin Pot Nelly', with a salute to mothers that will ring true for many, and the tale of neighbourliness, 'I Shot Your Dog'.

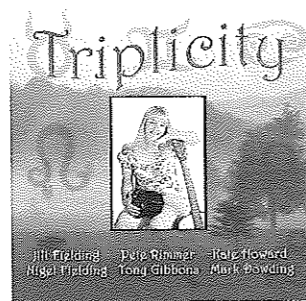
Yes, you'll guess from these titles that this is music with a tale to tell. It's a marvellous record with the live feel of a bunch of musicians who just got together in the studio and had a ball. Typified in the 'hidden' track at the end where we find Fred in a bluegrass ramble when he forgets the words to the song. Great stuff. Flathead Noodling? You're going to have to stop me and ask.

Steve Henderson

THE JILL FIELDING BAND *Triplicity* (Own label)

The Jill Fielding Band plays a wide range of traditional and contemporary music originating from both sides of the Atlantic. Jill, a resident at Maghull Folk Club, has been establishing a reputation around the folk scene over the last few years. Her

first album, *Once upon a Dream*, came out in autumn 2002 and, towards the back end of 2004, she released the follow up, *Triplicity*, the title of which is drawn from an astrological reference.



As well as providing the lead vocals on the album and playing guitar, percussion, bodhran, concertina and whistle, Jill is joined by regular band members Pete Rimmer (lead guitar and vocals) and Nigel Fielding (keyboards and harmony vocals). She has drawn in three extra artists for this album - Tony Gibbons (Garva and a range of other collaborations) on Cittern and Mark Dowding on banjo. Kate Howard completes the line up by contributing, with Tony, harmony vocals on several tracks.

Regular folk circuit aficionados will recognise many of the songs on Jill's CD. The contemporary ones include 'Aragon Mill', Si Kahn's much recorded tale of working class woe, Dave Mallet's children's classic, 'Garden Song' and Robin and Linda Williams fragile portent of home coming, 'Don't Let Me Come Home a Stranger'. The band enjoys singing and performing songs that local artists have written - Kevin Littlewood's 'Rainbow Warrior' is a welcome inclusion. There are also examples of beautiful traditional songs like 'Sally Gardens', 'Flower of Margherally' and 'Once more'.

While all these songs are pleasantly delivered and undoubtedly go down well with folk club audiences, they don't quite come off on this CD. The alphabetical, rather than structured running order of songs tends to inhibit the flow of the material. Because the tracks were cut as 'live' takes in the studio, rather than produced as studio cuts, the artists have perhaps missed the opportunity to get it right second or third time. It takes a lot of courage to make a live album without an audience. The audience generally inspires better one off performances from artists but also provides the atmosphere as an important backdrop to a live CD. This band of musicians are all extremely good but you feel that without the audience I'm afraid this 'live' CD tends falls between two stools.

This CD is available from www.jillfielding.ndo.co.uk

Lewis Jones

DAVID HUGHES I Can Explain (The Folk Corporation TFCCD2010)

David Hughes is probably best known to a number of you as the other one in St Agnes Fountain, who isn't a member of Fairport Convention or Chris While or Julie Matthews. Don't let that fool you. Lurking under the cover of this naturalised Essex man is not only a Liverpoolian but also a fine songwriter.

If David is not a 'big name' for audiences, that situation gets reversed when it comes to fellow musicians. Take a look at 'Solution', the opening track on 'I Can Explain'. There's the well-travelled Gerry Conway on drums and a stellar cast of Jacqui McShee, Helen Watson, Chris While and Julie Matthews on backing vocals. David provides a rollicking tune and a sideswipe at businesses looking for 'solutions' in neat packages - remember those automated phone calls to the bank - just improved customer service, my friend. Hey, don't get me going.

If David can sound a little cynical or even sorry for himself at times, there's no question that here is a man with his heart firmly slapped on his sleeve. Listen to 'Who Could Ask For Anything

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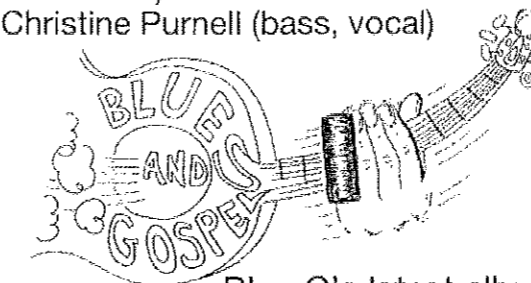
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More' where his old pal Bert Jansch adds guitar to a song that bemoans his inability to turn talent into success. 'I Drive A Red Car Now' takes us through a mid-life crisis while Johnny Marr (ex-The Smiths) motors the song along with some great harmonica. Friends Reunited gets a dig from David on 'Send A Message' and broken hearts



generally litter the lyrics on other tracks.

There are excellent songs with a personal perspective from front to back and support throughout from a host of talented friends. Great work by Mark Tucker on the production controls guarantees that this is David's finest record to date.

Despite the irony of the title, I'm glad that David feels he 'can explain' with this record because I can't. Tell me why we ignore talent like this. You can search me but I've no idea. Time for you out there to investigate methinks.

Steve Henderson

ASHLEY HUTCHINGS' RAINBOW CHASERS Some Colours Fly (Talking Elephant Records)

When you've been a founding member of Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span and The Albion Band, your next venture is going to get the music public rubbing their hands with anticipation. Alongside Ashley Hutchings, the young faces that peer at you from the publicity shots tell you immediately that he's looked to youth for inspiration rather than drawing on his long list of established pals. None of the names are familiar to me. A gamble you might say but there's no question that the current Folk circuit has managed to develop a wealth of young talent - I won't bore you with a list of names, you'll know plenty. So, what has Ashley's keen ear found for us?



'New Blue Stockings' is a look at modern ladies with more cultured tastes than those required for binge drinking - yes, there is hope and this song with its late 60's feel, upbeat guitar, fiddle, bass and harmonies suggests the same for this new line-up. The next track, 'When I Jumped Ship' starts with sweet vocals from one of the young ladies, Ruth or Jo - apologies for the lack of detail as I'm working with an early copy of the CD. Later in the same song,

Ashley's rumbling vocal on one verse provides that moment of recognition though, even by now, you can see the character of this young outfit has begun to develop. Quite clearly, it's about contemporary Folk music with a gentle approach on ballads, strong harmonies from the entire band and some good musicianship all round. The contemporary element means that electric guitar sits subtly in the background of a track such as 'About Dawn' but that doesn't stop them from adding some swirling strings to the mix.

The styles do vary with, for example, 'The Gypsy Jigg' being exactly what it says it is and sounding like it might have been pulled straight from a wedding party in Eastern Europe. However, if you were looking for a musical link back to Ashley's past, I'd say that the music reminds me of one of his earlier discoveries, Nick Drake. Perhaps, then, it is no surprise to find that 'Given Time' is a song about, and dedicated to, Nick. Not, of course,

that the vocals here are the same but that feel of Folk music, taken into a new area by the ambitious use of harmony and strings, pervades the whole record. I reckon the Hutchings' nose may well have sniffed out another winner.

Steve Henderson

HILARY JAMES WITH SIMON MAYOR Laughing With The Moon (Acoustic Records CDACS 047); Lullabies With Mandolins (Acoustic Records CDACS 049)

Laughing With The Moon: Hilary James and Simon Mayor plough an intriguing furrow with fingers in a variety of different pies. Mixed metaphors aside, you are as likely to find them working with school children as you are in a folk club. Educated and elegant is the phrase that comes to mind listening to 'Laughing



With The Moon'. Hilary writes songs and Simon contributes tunes into a mix that includes everything from traditional arrangements and classical flavours to songs that you'd class as standards. About the only constant in this varied world is the use of 'mandos' - yes, mandolin, mandocello, mandola and even a mandobass are found all over the record though

mainly in Simon's hands. All get played with exquisite style and Hilary's vocals and mandobass work are fine. So, the likes of the Scottish flavoured traditional song 'The Shearings Not For You', classical harp tune 'Carolans Concerto' and well-worn 'Shenandoah' arrive present and correct on this CD. It is impeccable in its way but - here come the sting in the tail - I'm afraid that it leaves me rather cold. There are no real complaints to be made; 'nice' is what you'd call it. Personally, I just prefer a bit more grit in my music but don't let me put off those of you who go for the 'smooth as silk' approach which is available here by the bucketful.

Lullabies With Mandolins: Having mentioned above that I prefer a bit more grit in my music, I have to eat my words with this album of lullabies, 'Lullabies With Mandolins'. Though there's no more grit to it, the smooth approach is exactly what is required for an album of lullabies aimed at providing a restful evening.

A quick glance at the titles gives you the picture. Included here, you'll find 'Lavender's Blue', 'Over The Hills And Far Away', 'Dance To Your Daddy', 'Hush-a-bye Baby', etc., etc. Added to this well-known list, you'll find they spice up the variety with a French lullaby, 'Fais Dodo', as well as classical tunes taken from Schubert and Vivaldi. Musically, it is exactly what it says on the tin with mandolins all over the place - or, to be fair, mandolins in the widest sense with mandocello, etc. All presented in the smoothest manner that you could imagine.

Of course, lullabies have a fairly specific appeal - we're not talking about dancing, parties or anything like that. However, parents (or grandparents) out there may find this CD useful whether it is for lulling a tired offspring into a gentle sleep or winding themselves down at the end of the day. OK, put your feet up here.

Steve Henderson

MIKE KATZ - A Month Of Sundays (Temple Records COMD2095)

Established for some years now as the piper with Scotland's Battlefield Band, Mike Katz has made his mark (as much as say Alan MacLeod did with the Tannahill Weavers years before him) with tremendous performances on what I see as the lead guitar

The Bothy folk song club 40th anniversary

After the successful 35th birthday 'do' in the millennium it will be no surprise that this year marks our **Ruby anniversary**, and that a week of festivity is planned to celebrate.

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-00-

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Tue 19 th April	8.00pm onwards	The Park and the Upsteps Birkdale	Southport Swords and the Argarmes - Dance displays.	£Free
Wed 20 th April	8.00pm onward	Scarisbrick Hotel, Lord St. Barons Bar	Strawhead - they're unique! 31 years performing and still going strong ... blimey!	£Free
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Fri 22 nd April	8.00pm 'til midnight	St. Johns Ambulance Hall, Wright St.	Celebration Ceilidh with the High Level Ranters. Caller ; - Benny Graham	£6.00
Sat 23 rd April	10am 'til 4.30pm	Town Centre	Dance displays with Southport Swords, the Argarmes and friends.	£Free
Sat 23 rd April	8.00pm	The Shelbourne Hotel, Lord St. West	A celebration evening, buffet and surprises.	£6.00
Sun 24 th April	12.00 'til 3.00	Scarisbrick Hotel, Lord St.	A music and song session hosted by Steve Freedman.	£Free
Sun 24 th April	8.00pm	The Shelbourne Hotel, Lord St. West	Stormalong John and friends.	£2.50

** Owing to fire and licensing regulations at all venues, admission will be limited for all indoor events, so it's advisable to book in advance to avoid no-ticket misery. **

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The music may sound scruffy in an endearing way but I'm sure the band has taken a lot of time and care over the presentation of the overall sound. Take, for instance the beautiful setting of the song "Derwentwater's Farewell" coupled with one of my favourite tunes "Sir John Fenwick's Flower Among Them All" which is performed at a pleasantly majestic march tempo and shows how well the wall of sound can be harnessed. With the main melody line led by the sweet-toned Northumbrian small pipes and concertina it is the intricately interwoven addition of violin and swooping whistle providing the harmonies that are the icing on the cake. In general I admit to liking my vocalists with a bit of punch (possibly because of my penchant for Celtic music) but lead vocalist Tim Laycock is ideal at conveying the songs in a very English way as displayed on Rudyard Kipling's "A Smuggler's Song". Year's ago when I first started going to folk clubs the songs and tunes were performed in much the same way as the New Scorpion Band do today.

Some may call the arrangements naive and whilst comparisons maybe drawn from the popular children's series Bagpuss I loved that form of presentation. The accompanying booklet includes well-researched notes that make for interesting reading although from a personal point of view I wish they'd included the lyrics as well. All in all a tremendous effort and as ambassadors for a form of music that I thought had died out long ago I look forward very much to their continued success.

Out On The Ocean:

The one thing I like about the British approach to 'folk' is that there's always been a traditional boy's own element of "...if it sounds ok - we'll do it..." The New Scorpion Band come across that way on this recording with all the members; Tim Laycock, Brian Gulland, Robin Jeffrey, Sharon Lindo and Robert White



lustily joining in with a proper yo-ho-ho spirit. In my experience most British shanty crews have a tendency to spend their time extolling the virtues of toiling on the sea and then introducing harmonies and glorifying the whole process. Well, I'm with ex-sailor Shep Woolley on this one in as much that there should hardly be any presentation as such just good,

robust singing. In that respect the NSB do this admirably - not in a slap-dash way you understand but just solid performances of some well established favourites including 'Sally Brown', 'The Wild Goose Shanty' and a less well-known version of 'South Australia'. Now, as much as the next man I enjoy the sound of a shanty sung at full throttle but at times it's nice to turn a song on its head and by giving the song 'The Capstan Bar' a form of laid back integrity the band score bonus points as far as I'm concerned.

With the inclusion of a multitude of instruments at their disposal (melodeons, hammered dulcimer and cornet amongst them) this recording provides the listener with an ear pleasing audio soundscape that captures the essence of the sea admirably. As with any release by the New Scorpions there are plenty of useful sleevenotes on where the band discovered the songs and tunes and as 2005 sees the launch of Sea Britain this CD would be a very worthwhile purchase. By the way, it's a bargain coming in at just under 76mins.

Copies of these CDs (each priced at £13.00 inc p&p) are available from 38 Castle Road, Isleworth, Middlesex, TW7 6QS or check out the band's website at www.new-scorpion-band.com

Pete Fyfe

GERRY O'CONNOR Journeyman (Lughnasa Music LUGCD962)

Beauty, they say, is in the eye of the beholder. Maybe, but in my case it is in the ear of the beholder. Striking out with a no frills album of fiddle tunes is reasonably rare these days of over production. Paying attention to detail, with wonderful sets of tunes, Gerry O'Connor makes his chosen instrument sing with lively performances that will make the listener want to dance. OK, so there are splashes of colour from son Donal on piano, Paul McSherry (guitar), Martin O'Hare (bodhran), Martin Quinn (accordion) and Neil Martin on cello but it's Gerry's graceful, delicate touch that shines through.

This is a sensitively recorded album that will make you feel it is a pleasure to have encountered a musician that has soul running through his fingers. Many of the sets feature well established melodies such as 'The Maid Behind The Bar/Paddy Ryan's Dream/Music In The Glen', but it's the interpretations of these tunes that will bring a smile to those of us who have often performed them in sessions. The key changes and lightness of touch are a joy and, I have to say, I couldn't fault one track on



the CD. Everyone involved on this project should feel justifiably proud - nice one chaps! You can obtain more information from www.gerryoconnor.net

Pete Fyfe

BRENDAN POWER - Harmonica Nights (Own label); Plays The Music From Riverdance (Greentrax Records CDTRAX 135); Tradish (Tethnik Records 109)

Harmonica Nights:

Try not to criticise me too harshly for being human but, much like the best lover of 'folk', I also enjoy "chilling out" listening to a variety of other music. So, with that in mind, and with my punter friendly hat on, I'd like to say that Brendan stretches his not inconsiderable talents to encompass tracks such as "Baby Can I Hold You", "Cavatina" and "What A Wonderful World", and - as Barry Norman might have it - "...what's wrong with that"? Well, nothing actually and in fact I'm pleased to report that Brendan once again excels himself pouring his soul into each track.

By the way, for those of you that think he's forgotten his roots the album includes two traditional tracks 'Three Irish Tunes' and (the only vocal provided by Julian McKean) 'Shenandoah'. OK, so to a lot of you reading this review you might feel that Brendan has sold out to the power of the big buck but then again we all have to earn a crust and as much as it might hurt, if it helps to pay for your explorations of a more 'artistic' nature then it's a small price. Having said that if you just like listening to good music (particularly in the car as I do) the CD comes highly recommended.

Plays The Music From Riverdance:

I just knew the moment I started to play this CD that I was going to enjoy it. You see the mere mention of certain musicians brings a smile to my face and, let me tell you, Brendan is one of those unique performers. As much as I enjoyed the very first recording of 'Riverdance', Brendan's artistry raises the musicality to a whole new level. He injects so much passion that the flowing, powerful performance just seeps from the musician into his instrument. I could only even hazard a guess at how the intricacies of Bill

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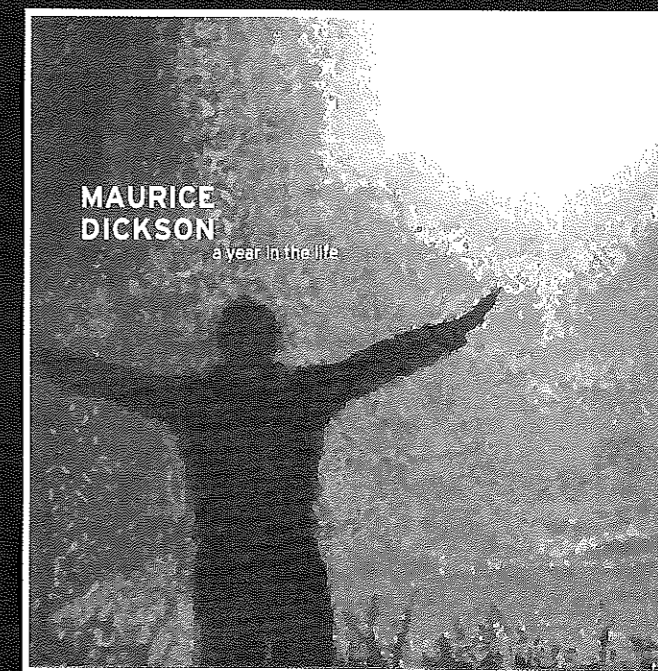
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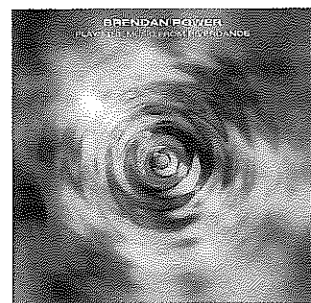
"Highly accomplished songs and inspired musicianship".

Folk Roots magazine



www.mauricedickson.co.uk

Whelan's melodies ('Riverdance', 'Reel around The Sun' and 'Countess Cathleen') could be attempted on such an instrument.



Brendan surpasses himself in the Irish Harmonica stakes with a dazzling display of pyrotechnics that will leave the layman slack-jawed in incredulity.

The accompanying musicians lend weight to an already substantial recording and, if you hadn't guessed it by now, I thoroughly recommend you purchase the album at all costs - play it to your mates and impress them with your knowledge of truly astonishing musical dexterity.

Tradish:

Ah now, Brendan Power. Perhaps I'm a little biased but then again what's left to say about one of the finest musicians on this planet? Years ago I was seduced by 'Genevieve' performed by Larry Adler. My admiration for anyone who can handle such a one-dimensional instrument as the harmonica (although I'm sure that there would be one or two musicians out there who would put me straight on that score!) has my utmost respect. As the album title would suggest, this is not a strictly traditional outing for 'the moothie' (as our Scottish cousins would have it) but ably demonstrates the diversity in which it can be utilised. With thirteen of the fifteen tracks written by Brendan, this is indeed a tour de force and is as much jazz and new age as it is folk.

Accompanying him on a variety of guitars are such luminaries as Stephen Cooney, Chris Newman and Ian Carr alongside Gerry O'Connor's tenor banjo and the sweet toned mandolin of Andy Irvine. You see one thing this album proves is that when you are the 'best' you surround yourself with the best and I'm sure all the musicians involved had a real blast. As I'm writing this piece I'm listening to the brilliantly titled 'Sweet Bulgaria', showcasing another musical bridge that has been crossed, while Ian Carr's gorgeous accompaniment to 'Farewell To Muswell Hill' transports the listener to yet another genre.

Sometimes a reviewer should just let an album speak for itself and trust me this particular one speaks volumes. If you're looking for something a little different I couldn't recommend the album more highly!

For more details on these CDs visit: www.brendan-power.com
Pete Fyfe

QUARTZ All The Good Times (CRM133)

There is nothing finer than a good song sung in tight harmony and that's what you get when you listen to Quartz, who for me are right up there with the finest exponents of the acapella art on these shores. All The Good Times brings together a collection of songs from a diverse group of songwriters who have all tasted success with their music.

'Sweet Thyme', gives Pete an early chance to show off his bass credentials, which forms the bedrock of the groups overall sound. Julie Matthews penned, 'Starting All Over Again', which certainly lends itself to this interpretation. 'English Meadow' is a song with a true traditional feel and - poachers beware - if you get caught a much tougher option lies on the far side of the world. This song is perfect for the quartet's voices.

Richard Thompson's songs traverse a whole spectrum of subjects. 'Withered and Died', is given the inimitable Quartz

treatment. 'A Song For Ireland', has been performed in many different guises, some better than others. What makes this version stand out is that the precise diction means you can hear every word. Paul Metsers has written many outstanding songs. 'Peace Must Come' challenges nations to put peace before greed and self. Will they ever listen? I doubt it. Sung here with a real belief. A 'land' shanty, which helped build the rail line through the 'Clay Cross Tunnel' in Derbyshire. A song with a great tag line.

You can always guarantee a song has real quality when Dave Swarbrick is involved. His tune for 'To Althea From Prison', gives a poignancy to Richard Lovelace's words. On the Brian Bedford classic, 'You Are There', Quartz excel, as one top a cappella group 'tip their cap' to another. 'Sweet William', is an eminently singable traditional song, the subject matter being penned as a number of metaphors.



Mick Ryan has a reputation for writing songs that provide food for thought. 'Prince of Peace', is one such song that gives the singers a real chance to express themselves.

A song from the group's early days of singing, a Joy Masfield/ Leon Rosselson collaboration, 'Cobweb of Dreams' is followed by 'Never Grow Old', written in the style of an early 20th century hymn. If only we had the recipe!! The most instantly recognisable of all the songs on the CD is 'Linden Lea', sung here to Vaughn Williams' beautiful tune that is almost 200 years old and was carried to America and then to Ireland. Again Quartz demonstrate why they continue to be 'in demand' to perform.

Judith takes the lead on 'Silvery Moon', a gentle song performed with great sensitivity, which was written as a hymn; word changes give it a black gospel feel. 'We'll Work 'til Freedom Comes', gives free reign to those who enjoy 'joining in'.

Ian Tupling, one half of 'Loctup Together', can always be relied upon to write songs that are real 'sing me' material and 'Come the Day' bears this out. Two lumps of rock, 'Rockall and the Eddystone Light', are unlikely subjects for a song, unless in the hands of the late, great, 'Flanders and Swann'. The music hall era almost certainly saw the birth of these humorous songs. A rousing finale with a song that gives audiences a real chance to belt out the chorus, the traditional, 'All the Good Times'.

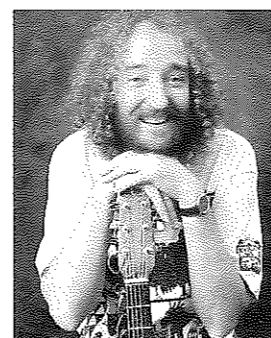
Nineteen tracks, producing in excess of an hour of finely honed harmony, by a quartet that instinctively knows which songs to choose so that they bring the best out of their collective talent. It's another offering from the Cock Robin Studio, with Chris Harvey producing, clean, concise sound, both well balanced and engineered.

David Jones

STEPHEN QUIGG Highlands Tomorrow (Lowland CD014)

Stephen Quigg was born in Ayrshire and still uses it as a base to travel to his gigs throughout Europe. He has gained a big reputation and following, particularly in the Highlands of Scotland, for his arrangement and sensitive delivery not only of traditional ballads but also the more upbeat Scottish folksongs. His reputation is beginning to spread and for the last four years he has been a key member of The McCalmans, that renowned Scottish folk institution, Not only has he played a wide range of folk venues through the country, he's also performed acclaimed

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the next time. Allan Taylor performs, 'Wrecked Again', he recites the reasons and builds up a slow version of a song the 'The Macs' have been doing in their set for many years on a regular basis. One of Ian's four nieces, 'Janet McCalman', provides a musical treat with, 'Highland's Tomorrow'. We all have dreams to pursue, but we never quite have the courage of our convictions to make them reality. A beautiful voice, obviously she doesn't get this trait from 'Uncle Ian'!!!!

Dick Gaughan is a singer of great perception who has never compromised his beliefs and sold out. 'War Outside', is a relatively new song that Ian gleaned out of the Bosnian conflict. Dick once again demonstrates his gift of interpreting a song the way it was conceived. Ian himself delivers, 'Strange Dawn', it was written as self-therapy following the tragic death in 2001 of McCalman founder member, Derek Moffatt. Derek's death has left a huge void, both musically and personally for the many people he touched with his professionalism, love, sense of humour and above all his genuine humanity to his fellow man. A true star indeed.

Sheena Wellington bemoans the 8-3-0. If you've ever taken the A830 single track 'highway' from Fort William to Mallaig, tears of laughter are guaranteed. Ian never misses a chance to poke fun at this 'farm track'. Ian sings another song of longing, again for his country, but more specifically, Edinburgh. Like, 'Strange Dawn', this is a song of private thoughts, rather than something to be shared with others. A fine song that deserves a wider audience than 'one'.

Derek Moffatt sings 'Seagull Cry' and any song performed by Derek is a masterclass in clarity and musicianship. So many have so much to thank him for. Ian wrote this song thirty years ago and like so many of his offerings it remains fresh and topical today. Like Barbara Dickson, Isla St Clair went south of the border to seek her fame and fortune. But both have Scottish traditional ballads as a common thread running through their musical careers. 'Shian Road', started life as a poem dedicated to Ian's father, by then in his eighties, the tune came later and the haunting pipes give this number an eerie, yet peaceful feeling.

Performed by the McCalmans, 'WMD', [Weapons of Mass Destruction]. Iraq raises its head in the strangest of places. Written I'm sure initially very much, tongue in cheek. Well they do say that truth is stranger than fiction. Another outstanding musician who is no longer with us is, Davy Steele, here along with, Drinkers Drouth he sings, 'Bound To Go' and there is no better song to end this collection with. Davy had a voice like velvet that seemed to flow effortlessly. Along with Derek, Davy is, I'm sure, playing to sell out, celestial audiences.

Ian McCalman is very much a man of our time. His songs and stories continue to entertain, inform and at times amaze and long may he continue.

You can buy this CD from Music Scotland www.musicscotland.com

David Jones

VARIOUS ARTISTS Men Folk/Women Folk/Cutting Edge (Fellside Recordings FECS 1/FECS 2/FECS 3)

As the saying goes, "One man's meat..." Well, rest assured, there's plenty of meat on these three compilation albums from the Fellside label. I've always wanted a job like this; Bob Hallard filled in his gap year by working at the company under the guiding ears of Paul Adams and his reward was putting together these three CDs.

He had plenty of great tracks to choose from and an abundance

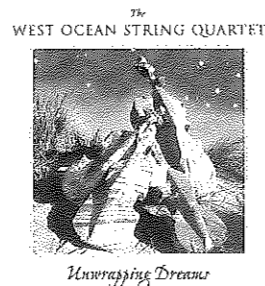
of artists including Martin Carthy, Bob Fox & Stu Luckley, Jez Lowe, Nancy Kerr, Kirsty McGee and Maddy Prior to name just a few. The albums are tremendous value for money (only £6.99 each!) with about 20 tracks on each disk and are broken down neatly into categories under the self-explanatory titles of 'Men Folk', 'Women Folk' and 'Cutting Edge'. I suppose that from a personal point of view the most popular release will be the Cutting Edge album with tracks from young whippersnappers Dr Faustus, Spiers & Boden and 422 but dig a little deeper and you're bound to discover some real gems.

Further information from www.fellside.com

Pete Fyfe

WEST OCEAN STRING QUARTET Unwrapping Dreams (Wren Records WRCD402)

There's only one word to describe this album - Sublime! In a way, there's no more to read but that would be doing a disservice to what has to be my record of the year. Take four truly gifted musicians add a touch of high art with a sprinkling of 'traditional folk' and you have the perfect recipe for success.



The musicians are Seamus McGuire (violin), Niamh Crowley (violin), Kenneth Rice (viola) and cellist Neil Martin who all contribute equally in a performance that raises the standard from staple 'folk' fare to encompass 'classical' high brow in one easy step. This isn't some quirky indulgence but a true fusion of how two forms of music can help to raise each

other's profile. To offer the reader of this review a more direct appreciation of the banquet laid before them, imagine the music as the soundscape to one of those old movies that were filmed in the highlands of Scotland (or Ireland) with pictures of rolling hills and blooming heather. Although McGuire might be the main protagonist when it comes to the folk element, this is after all an ensemble performance and each musician should be applauded for his or her contribution. Some of the melodies provided by members of the quartet (mainly Martin & McGuire) are in the traditional idiom and such is the seamless join that I can see them being incorporated into folk sessions.

Although there's a certain stately-ness lent to the proceedings for those looking for a slightly more up tempo tune should listen to Carl Hession's glorious "Morning Gallop" that sounds as if it could have been lifted from the 'Irish R.M.' series. This is serious music from serious musicians but dispense with the pomp and ceremony and enjoy it for what it is, a truly enjoyable combination of cultures. Further information from www.wrenrecords.ie

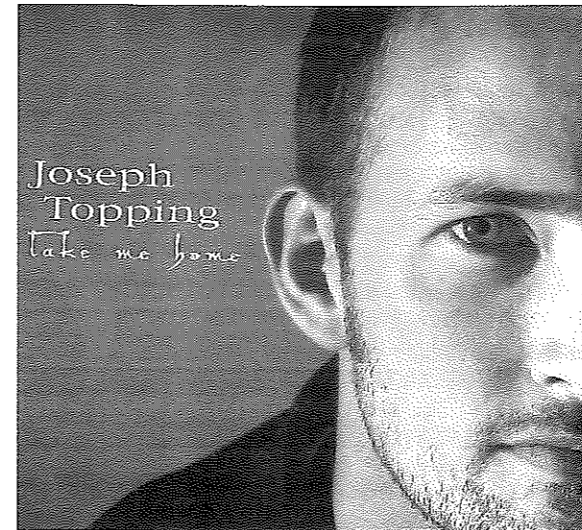
Pete Fyfe

CD RE-ISSUES

FAIRGROUND ATTRACTION The Very Best Of...(BMG 82876 637212)

This album celebrates the success of Fairground Attraction, best known for launching Eddi Reader's career as a major vocal talent. From the sleeve notes, written by co founder Mark E Nevin and, with Reader, responsible for writing many of their songs, there's a strong feeling that there was an underlying tension in the band from the start - Reader's clear driving ambition was to launch a

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solo career.

Having done the rounds of, and got noticed via, the small clubs and pubs, they were picked up by RCA in 1987 and their debut single 'Perfect' went to number 1 in the UK singles charts within two weeks of its release - in the days when you had to sell more than a few hundred singles to top the charts.

The core of this collection, pulled together by Nevin, is from their million selling debut album *The First of A Million Kisses*, with an eclectic pop mix of folk, jazz, country and Cajun. Reader's vocals were obviously the star attraction and it's only surprising that the band stayed together for barely 12 months before they split. Hints of what was to come from Reader saw the inclusion of 'Jock O'Hazeldean' and the recently revived 'Ay Fond Kiss', taken from a second album of B Sides and unreleased material. The remainder of this collection are five tracks from the 1994 release of a live album *Fairground* had recorded in Japan, where their popularity soared at the height of their success.

This 21-track budget CD represents good value for money at £6.99, even if 'Perfect' has lost its resonance for me because it got played to death on the radio and still features in TV commercials. That shouldn't detract from the rest of the collection, which is obtainable via the Amazon website: www.amazon.co.uk and, as they say all good record shops...

Lewis Jones

THE LOVIN' SPOONFUL The Very Best Of... (BMG 82876 637252)

The Lovin' Spoonful became part of popular folk and rock music culture that arose out of Greenwich Village in the 1960s. Centred on the amiable John Sebastian's creative writing and performing talents, the Spoonful managed to capture the sometimes naïve optimism that represented the spirit of the alternative music scene enveloping America in the latter part of that decade. This led to a string of hits on both sides of the Atlantic for the band, with "Do You Believe in Magic," "Summer In the City," and "Daydream," being not only the most evocative but the most resilient.

The name of the group (an apparent sexual reference) derived from a line from the Mississippi John Hurt song, 'Coffee Blues'. The band also narrowly missed out on being the group chosen to feature in the TV series that was to make The Monkees household names for that generation. Sebastian, who appeared at Woodstock in 1969, later went on to become a successful solo performer and continues to write and perform today.

This 18-track budget CD is available for £6.99 and is obtainable via the Amazon website: www.amazon.co.uk and record shops (remember them!)

Lewis Jones

DVD REVIEW

SHOW OF HANDS The Video Collection (HMDVD01)

It's a pleasure to be a reviewer sometimes. I've always held the belief that a DVD should be educational and entertaining and just to prove the point, here comes the latest release in the form of a 'greatest hits' DVD of Show Of Hands that combines a majority of the lads visually recorded performances to date. There's the "Big Gig" (you know, the one filmed at the Royal Albert Hall) the documentary "Stairway To Devon" and the "The Promos". From a strictly personal point of view I was looking

forward to *Stairway* as I hadn't seen it before and I wasn't disappointed for it proves an insightful and informative backdrop to how it all started for the duo.

The interviews are conducted in a down-home kind of way (just as they're rising from their beds in the morning) and where as say reality TV seems intrusive you don't get that feeling here. The cogs of the wheel of how a (for want of a better term) cottage industry can reap rewards from 'folk' music should be required viewing for Harvey Goldsmith wannabes as the camera pans onto their business partner Vaughan Pearce counting the money gleaned from merchandise sales at a gig. It's also interesting to note that you can indeed make a few bob from the industry no matter how low down the pecking order you may feel - and let's face it folk music has always appeared to be the poor relation. Just in case you thought things were getting too 'cushty', here's a couple of blokes living the life of 'real' musicians on the road complete with staying on mates floors and the countless stops at roadside cafes to driving the obligatory white van.

They've been there, seen it and done it a thousand times before but the DVD doesn't leave you with the feeling that they're cynical, far from it in fact. They're just realists who happen to have a good time enjoying doing what they're doing. For the most part I'd say the excellence of the DVD comes when viewing 'Country Life' and 'Crazy Boy' both of which employ 'proper' filming techniques with deft production work from Bob O'Connor. Phil and Steve have come a long way since I first heard them on a bandstand in Gloucester and more power to them for achieving their dream. Contact www.showofhands.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

NEWSREEL

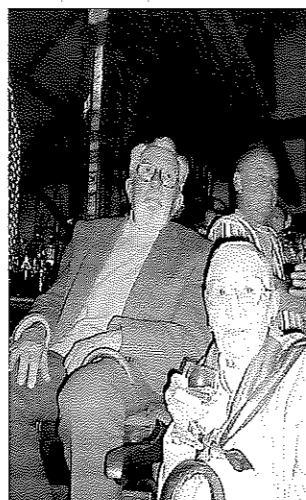


NEWS IN BRIEF

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A COPPER PLATED TOAST TO BOB



Bob Copper's life is also going to be marked with a memorial day at Cecil Sharp House in London on Saturday April 2nd and is a benefit for the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. A Toast to Bob - a day celebrating of the life of Bob Copper Beginning around midday, the afternoon session will include a singaround, an audio-visual presentation about Bob, and a concert. An evening concert will feature the Copper Family and special guests. So far lined up to take part during the day are Bob Davenport & the Rakes,

Billy Bragg, Martin Wyndham-Read & Iris Bishop, Dan Quinn and Will Duke, Brian Peters, Dave Arthur & Pete Cooper, Peta Webb & Ken Hall, Jeff Davis, Jeff & Gerret Warner, Vic Gammon, Vic & Tina Smith, Jim Ward, Bob Lewis, Eddie Upton, Piers Bishop, and the English Country Blues Band (Ian Anderson, Rod Stradling, Maggie Holland and Ben Mandelson). Shirley Collins will emcee the evening concert. This event is a benefit for the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library. Ticket prices are as follows: £20 all day £15 afternoon only £15 evening only (concessions apply: £15, £12 & £12) Visit the website: www.efds.org

TOM PAXTON

US Folk legend returned to the UK in February 2005 - the first leg of a farewell tour for the veteran singer songwriter. Tom Paxton's songs are known and loved around the world: "The Last Thing On My Mind", "Ramblin' Boy", and "Bottle Of Wine", just a few of his truly timeless works. His generosity to both audiences and fellow musicians is renowned, and his passion for justice and the ties that bind people together is unwavering. For all this and more, Tom Paxton ranks as one of the most revered musicians of his generation.

Tom appeared at the BBC Folk Awards at The Brewery in the City of London on Monday February 14, 2005 where he was honoured with a "Lifetime Achievement in Songwriting." Tom Paxton's songs are known and loved around the world: "The Last Thing On My Mind", "Ramblin' Boy", and "Bottle Of Wine" just a few of his truly timeless works. His generosity to both audiences and fellow musicians is renowned, and his passion for justice and the ties that bind people together is unwavering. For all this and more, Tom Paxton ranks as one of the most revered musicians of his generation.

Amongst the artists who have recorded Tom Paxton songs are Glen Campbell, Judy Collins, John Denver, Neil Diamond, Placido Domingo, Dolly Parton, Jose Feliciano, Harry Belafonte, Arlo Guthrie, The Kingston Trio, The Weavers, Peter, Paul & Mary, The Chad Mitchell Trio, Pete Seeger, Dion, Sandy Denny. As Nanci Griffith once said: "I think we are all born singing Tom Paxton songs". How true.

PETE ABBOTT

Pete Abbott has been playing to folk audiences in the North West of England for some years now and in doing so, has touched the hearts of many of his listeners. Pete is a very relaxed performer and communicates well with his audience, whether he's performing in a small folk club or a large theatre.

Pete has a growing reputation as a writer of thought-provoking songs. In fact, John Wright recently recorded 'Windy Harbour', a song that appears on Pete's acclaimed new CD *Against The Wall*. His direct and honest lyrics and his ability to deliver them with expressive emotion have left a lasting impression on many of those who have had the opportunity to hear them. On Saturday, 5 March Pete appears as support to Ken Nicol at Standish Folk Club, Shevington, (contact Dave Jones 01254 454877 for details) and from 15 to 17 July he's at the Saddleworth Folk Festival, Uppermill.

To find out more about Pete and his latest news visit: www.peteabbott.co.uk

ARTSLIVE

Graham Dixon has been involved in a new publication 'artslive' - a 3 monthly magazine that covers South Ribble, Chorley & West Lancs. The South Lancashire Arts Partnership (SLAP) and

Chorley & South Ribble Borough Councils are funding the Editorial, Printing and Production. It will cover all aspects of Performing & Visual Arts. (This came about as a result of an open meeting - organised by SLAP - whereby artists could voice their concerns over lack of publicity)

The first copy is now available. It may be a bit sparse as far as input from artists and arts groups are concerned but that is were you come in. Please ensure that that you send in details for the next one. For information about hard copies contact Graham Dixon - contact details below

Obviously distribution is paramount and (Hopefully) as 'artslive' develops we can pinpoint efficient and effective distribution outlets that will have maximum response from interested parties. There is a PDF copy of the First Edition available at www.artslive.ukart.com please print a couple of copies for distribution to your colleagues & groups. The website also acts as: a Stop Press where you can input your dates (if your site or sites that you feel should be added; a Forum; and a Classified Ads section where you can advertise yourself your group or any art-related stuff for free

Don't forget you can still advertise your gigs/club meetings -in the North West at <http://www.calsnet.net/lancashirefolk>; For further information visit www.artslive.ukart.com or tel: Graham on 01254 853929

FOLK MUSIC IN CUMBRIA

Terry Haworth has posted an updated version of a website covering all aspects of Folk Music in Cumbria. He does all the work on a voluntary basis because he loves the music and wishes to promote a better image for Folk Music generally.

The website has information about the folk clubs and venues in Cumbria where folk music can be heard. He is also keen to publish articles about folk music in general in Cumbria and in particular stories, pictures and anecdotes about the folk scene in the early days. Terry has already posted an article covering the history of Egremont Folk Club in the 70's as he was actively involved in that as a musician and organiser, but he is keen to collect any kind of information about the folk scene in Cumbria as it was or as it is now.

The site also includes an interactive element in the form of a calendar, which organisers/ promoters can use to advertise their events, and a guest book that encourages visitors to the site to leave comments and suggestions. The website is at: www.collsarms.freemove.co.uk and Terry is happy for you to contact him if you would like any further information by email: terryh@collsarms.freemove.co.uk or tel: 01900 604765

HEARTS OF COAL

March will see the twentieth anniversary of the end of the Miners' Strike - which was also the beginning of the end of coal mining as a way of life in many places. To mark this anniversary some of the singers from No Masters, including Coope Boyes and Simpson, have again teamed up with Janet Russell of Yorkshire Dales Workshops to perform *Hearts of Coal*, a words and music production drawing on history, humour and songs written by and about mining communities.

Just as she did with the performances of *The Christmas Truce*, which toured in Yorkshire and Cumbria in 2001 and 2002, Janet has brought together the wealth of talent in local community choirs to take part in the two Yorkshire productions. Then a month later, there's a performance with *The Rolling Stock Company*,

with Barry Coope as Musical Director at The National Folk Festival. Songs always played a big part in the life of mining communities and working with Ray Hearne, Fi Fraser, Janet and the mighty sum of eighty voices in The Roses and Thorns Choir or The Rolling Stock Company is always a pleasure - so wherever you catch up with it, the music and stories make this a combination worth hearing.

Hearts of Coal - with Barry Coope, Fi Fraser, Jim Boyes, Georgina Boyes, Ray Hearne and The Roses & Thorns Choir led by Janet Russell; Tickets & Info: 01274 581504 / 01535 600101; 5 March - Assembly Rooms, Pontefract Town Hall, Bridge Street, Pontefract, WF8 1PG - 7.30 pm; 6 March - Otley Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley LS21 1HD - 7.00 pm; 9 April - Hearts of Coal - with Barry Coope, Jim Boyes, Fi Fraser, Ray Hearne, Georgina Boyes and The Rolling Stock Company; National Folk Festival, Sutton Bonnington - Tickets & Info: 01296 415333 or email johnh@fosterwiggins.co.uk

You can also contact Georgina Boyes by email: georgina@nomasters.co.uk or tel: 01709 375 063.

HUW CHIDGEY AND CATHERINE HANDLEY

Huw Chidgey and Catherine Handley both live and work in South Wales, in the shadow of the Brecon Beacons. Singer and guitarist, Huw, was born and brought up in the area, while Catherine has chosen to live there, where she has become principal flautist with the Welsh Synfonia and a highly regarded teacher at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff

They have had a rollercoaster first two years of playing together, which has included two tours of mainland Europe where they played at the Bergues Festival in France and the Mettmann Festival in Germany, where they met many other musicians and made some good friends.



Their debut CD "In the Tradition" has received great reviews in folk magazines such as Taplas and Folk on Tap, as well as airplay on BBC Local radio

stations, and nationally on BBC Radio Wales - mainly on Frank Hennessy's Celtic Heartbeat programme. They have also recorded three live performances for BBC Radio, and supported Lindisfarne on their final UK tour.

Concert performances continue to take them away from the established mainstream folk club circuit, though they've still managed to fit in the likes of Cottingham Live, The Wurzle Bush in Brinklow and Pontardawe Folk Club this year.

This summers highlights were another trip to Europe, The Big Cheese Festival in Caerphilly, the Cwmaman Folk and Blues Festival and the Swanage Folk Festival. In the meantime they continue to take their style of traditional and contemporary UK folk music to audiences up and down the country at events that vary from Music Society Recitals to Wine Festivals, not to mention concerts and Ceilidhs with their band "Raglan".

2005 is beginning to take shape with appearances at the following festivals confirmed: Cornwall Folk Festival; Wheaton Aston Folk Festival; Droylsden Folk Festival 24 - 26 June (more details at: www.droylsdenfolkfestival.org); Denholm Folk Festival (Scotland); Land Light and Locals (Scottish Borders); Cwmaman Folk and Blues Festival and Tredegar House Newport (both Wales). They also plan to release the new CD, "Moving On", in March. In Spring 2006 they will tour New Zealand.

JEZ LOWE'S MIDNIGHT MAIL

Some prestigious gigs are coming up in the UK for Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies and there is a huge solo North American tour lined up for Jez in April, and the band are booked into some of Britain's biggest festivals for later in the year. There is also a chance that the Bad Pennies will be joining Jez on a more brief US visit at the end of the summer, and there is a Jez Lowe/James Keelaghan festival appearance slated for June in California. Finally, that much touted reunion tour by Jez and Jake Walton might finally happen before the year is out, here in the UK. For those of you in Europe we can now release that Jez and the band will have three concerts in Germany in March. Germany's Folker magazine featured a great review of Doolally last month, and has a full interview with Jez in the next edition.

Amid whispers of a 2005 re-release of 'Tenterhooks - The Art Edition', Tantobie Records are still rejoicing in the continuing success of 'Doolally', which is still garnering huge radio plays around the world, all of which helps keep sales at a healthy pace, five months after the album's release. All this will no doubt be enhanced by a promo video that The Bad Pennies are currently working on, featuring songs from the album, aimed mainly at overseas festivals and booking conferences, but which Tantobie records hope might even be made available commercially... we'll see!

Tour Dates in the North West include 4 March BAND Northwich Folk Club 01606 79356; 18 May BAND Music At The Clarence, Blackpool; 18-19 June BAND at Middlewich Folk & Boat Festival.

PETE HARRIS AND MICK RYAN

Pete Harris and Mick Ryan have had a busy and successful 2004 with enjoyable gigs all over the country, including in May their first ever incursion north of the border. They say they were well received and will be returning to Scotland during Autumn 2005. Festivals they played included Towersey, Reedham Ferry, Cheltenham, Bromsgrove, Tenterden and Chorley.

June saw the release of their latest album "Something to Show", which has garnered some excellent reviews and is selling well. It is available from most mail-order stores, or directly from Doug Bailey at www.wildgoose.co.uk. In July Pete left his part-time teaching job, and is now a free agent (a bit scary, but good!). As from September Mick's teaching load has reduced from 0.5 to 0.4. This means they are now even more available for gigs (organisers please note!). They took a Winter break until March (although Pete continued a busy schedule of Blues gigs) to allow Mick to concentrate on writing his new show, "The Ship", which tells the story of an 18th century warship, from construction to its final days as a rotting hulk. It should be ready for performances in the Summer (again, organisers please note!).

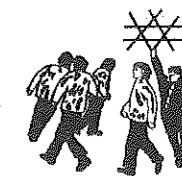
Gigs are building steadily for 2005, and we are already booked for festivals at Fareham and Gosport, Chippenham, Belper and Swanage, with others in the pipeline. They look forward to seeing many of you in 2005.

They play several gigs and festivals around the North West and Staffordshire, including: April 3 The Bothy Folk Club, The Shelbourne Arms, Southport; April 4 Folk at the Prospect, The Prospect Inn, Runcorn, May 5 Chequemates Folk n' Roots Club, Coton and Hopwas Social Club, Hopwas, Nr. Tamworth; and May 29-30 Chester Folk Festival.

JULIE ELLISON

Julie Ellison will be a familiar name to many Folk North West readers, especially to those who heard her live broadcast on

8th Saltburn Festival of Folk Music, Dance & Song



12th, 13th & 14th August 2005

Guests invited so far ...

Vin Garbutt, Marie Little, Stilherum, Pete Betts, Zoot, South Bank Grunters, Mad Jocks & Englishmen, Stan Gee, The Wilson Family, Jim & Mu Wilkinson, Sister Act, Shy Talk, The Redcar Sword Dancers, Feet First, The Island Girls, Allan Taylor, Napper Bliss, The Wisker Family, Alan Bell, Captain Coopers Motley Crew, The Backshift, Shellbacks, Bram Taylor, Loco's in Motion, Mike Gardiner, The Doonan Family, Pigeon English, The Old Rope String Band, Real Time, Nebula, John Tams & Barry Coupe, Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies, John Wright Band, Darlington Mummies, Judith Haswell Band, Scratch Band, Sheffield City Giants, Roll a Penny

Ceilidhs, Singarounds, Sessions, Chance to Meet, Workshops, Concerts
Punch & Judy, Folk Dance Displays, Street Entertainment, Various Choirs,
Folk on the Internet, Indoor Craft, Ethnic Clothing & Bric-a-Brac Market, Tai Chi,
The Fred Jordan Memorial Trophy for Unaccompanied Traditional Styled Singers
and a Singer Songwriting Competition.
Superb Camping Facilities. Full 24hr Security etc.
And the usual line-up of Artists that will make this Festival Unique.

FESTIVAL WEEKEND TICKETS £40 - after June 1st £44

SATURDAY TICKETS £25 - SUNDAY TICKETS £22

ALL CHEQUES TO BE MADE PAYABLE TO: SALT BURN FOLK FESTIVAL please!

Special Family Rates, Children under 10 years Free, Children aged 10 -16 half price,

Souvenir Festival Magazine & Programme of Events - £2.00 • Individual Event Tickets will be on sale subject to availability.

Camping Tickets can be purchased when booking Weekend Festival Tickets

The cost of camping is £10 per person for 1 - 3 nights (Festival Ticket Holders)



For further details and information, please telephone: 01287 622623 or write to
Folk Festival Office: 57 Marske Road, Saltburn, Cleveland TS12 1PN
enclosing an A5 size S.A.E (82p) please. www.saltburnfolkfestival.ukforum.com

Radio GMR's "Sounds of Folk" programme or saw her perform at Rhyl and Conwy Folk Clubs during 2003/2004. Her 2004 tour was boosted when Conwy FC regular John Taylor, a big Ralph McTell fan, asked Ralph if he would invite Julie to perform as a guest at his concert during the South Shields International Guitar Festival. This performance, together with extensive radio airplay for her debut solo CD across the UK, USA, Canada and Australia, has helped to bring Julie's name to a much wider audience.

Julie will return to the Folk North West region on Thursday 19th May as a guest at the Railway Folk Club (Lymm), with further visits planned for Northwich FC (15th July), Gregson Lane FC (13th October) and Rhyl FC (TBC). More details can be found at www.JulieEllison.co.uk or by calling 07981 984 760

MICHAEL MARRA

Michael Marra undertakes an April/May UK 2005 tour. He plays at least two dates in the North West - 29 April at Carlisle Folk Club and 21 May he's at Southport Arts Centre. However, Michael is looking to add a number of other dates during this period and you can email or ring Stoneyport Agency jb@stoneyport.demon.co.uk; heather@stoneyport.com (Heather MacLeod) or tel 07968 131 737; 0131-539 8238 (Heather MacLeod; Tu-We-Th from 2-6pm). You can also visit <http://www.stoneyport.demon.co.uk/index.html>

MULDOON'S PICNIC

Muldoon's Picnic is a five-part harmony-singing group, based in Glasgow. Their repertoire is highly eclectic and ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous: singing everything from folk songs to world music to madrigals to spirituals to barbershop to part-songs to sea shanties to Victorian parlour music, mostly their own arrangements. Muldoon's Picnic is available for weddings, conferences, private parties, folk festivals, theatrical performances, James Joyce appreciation jamborees and what have you.

www.muldoonspicnic.org.uk; contact@muldoonspicnic.org.uk

CHARLIE BARKER

Charlie Barker, a new young singer/ songwriter and guitarist with a wealth of experience can be seen regularly performing in many of the acoustic venues and folk clubs in her native South Yorkshire/ Derbyshire area, and has supported well-known acts at these venues. Charlie is now the resident musician at The Castle Inn, Sheffield, where she performs on the first Sunday of every month.

She has appeared at the Royal Festival Hall, London, in the National Festival of Music for Youth, on BBC Radio Sheffield and Sheffield Live and has made a solo performance on the

BBC 1 showcase 'The Next Big Thing'. More recently, Charlie has begun to promote folk venues and acoustic music while appearing on stage with local radio station Peak FM, at various road show events around the UK. Over the years, American folk and country artists, such as Nanci Griffith,



The Dixie Chicks, Janis Ian and Alison Krauss, have inspired Charlie. She always had a love for music and began playing Cello at the age of 7, and still plays in a local orchestra. Her love of the guitar followed on in the same year and immediately she began to combine this with the songs of artists that she admired.

In 2004, Charlie recorded her first CD, 'New Horizons', which

includes original material. For more information, booking details visit Charlie's website www.charliebarkermusic.com or contact Partnership Promotion & Management on 0114 2361040, Email: thepartnership@charliebarkermusic.com

HARDRAW GATHERING 2005 - JULY 29 -31 2005

There has been a hasty rearrangement of this event. One set of organisers has bowed out, and another set is taking the reins at short notice. The mini-folk- festival based around the Green Dragon Public House (up at its lovely setting by Hardraw Force!) will definitely go ahead in 2005. Landlord Mark Thompson has handed control to Steve Fairholme (mainstay of the successful Black Sheep Otley Festival since its inception). Steve in turn will gather together a few reliable and experienced stalwarts to make things hum.

Last year's Hardraw format, which was almost exclusively 'concert-based', has been dropped in favour of more participatory and casual events. There'll still probably be a pay-on-the door 'folk-club' style concert in the large back room on the Friday evening and another (featuring a major name) on the Saturday evening.

At all other times over the weekend there will be sing-a-rounds, musicians' sessions and dance teams on the go. These will take place in the subsidiary rooms, main bar and outside in the grounds (where there's a bandstand!) and will hopefully be steered or given focus by well known names from the folk scene.

Events other than the concerts will be free, perhaps with an opportunity for voluntary contributions from those who feel supportive. The aim is to make this year's event much more of a gathering, with opportunities for people to play, sing and dance together, and to make the most of the wonderful location of the Green Dragon and the hospitality of its folk-enthusiastic landlord.

Watch out for more details closer to the date - in the meantime, mark the dates in your diary! A new website will shortly be up and running at www.hardrawgathering.com. Meantime for info email: OtleYFF@hotmail.com or Tel/Fax - Steve Fairholme on 01943 464858

CLOUDSTREET

Cloudstreet have updated their news page for all of those who have been following their travels and related adventures, so if you'd like to see what they've been up to, follow the "news" link from www.cloudstreet.org. They've also added some further entries to our gig list.

COLCANNON UK/EUROPE TOUR 2005

Australian group, Colcannon, undertake another European/UK tour in 2005, following their successful 2004 visit, and would be very pleased to hear from concert, clubs and festivals who would be interested to book them. The 2005 tour sees them touring as a 4-piece. They are available from Fri 24 Jun to Sun 31 July 2005 and we have already got some gigs in place: See their website for contact details: www.colcannon.net

Dates confirmed in the North West so far are 14 July - Parkgate FC in the Wirral and 17 July - Saddleworth Festival. These are regularly updated on their website.

DANA & SUSAN ROBINSON RETURN

Dana, & Susan, traditional and contemporary singers/musicians from the US, finished their fifth UK tour at the end of February and embark on a further UK tour in August/September 2005. To

check dates booked so far you can check their website or contact Vivienne Bloomfield, the Other Agency, Offspring Records, tel: 01908 542894 Mob: 07770 977891; www.otheragency.co.uk; www.offspringrecords.co.uk. Vivienne is booking dates and can provide a demo. Dates in and around the North West region booked so far include Folk at the Wheatsheaf, Cumbria, on 15 September. You can also check their website - <http://www.robinsongs.com>

FOOTSTOMPIN NEWS

New Celtic Music

Fine Friday - Mowing the Machair -: The second CD for the Foot Stompin' label featuring this enormously talented trio. John Murray, Music Producer, BBC Radio nan Gaidheal said, "Just to let you know that 'Mowing the Machair' landed on my desk today and it is fabulous. Great songs, great playing, great arrangements. Kris Drever's singing is a knockout, I just love it - he brings new life to every song he sings". Price £11.25 (£12.50 for first time customers)

Billy Connolly's World Tour of New Zealand: The beautiful music from this TV series was written by John McCusker and the CD features John and a host of other musicians (including Billy Connolly) performing it. Price £11.69 (£12.99 for first time customers)

Douglas Montgomery & Stewart Shearer - Crossing Warness - : This is the recording debut of another fine Orkney duo. This time Saltfishforty fiddle player, Douglas Montgomery, has paired up with guitarist Stewart Shearer and together they have made a really superb album! Many of the tunes are self-penned and a particular mention must go to the waltz written by Stewart - Holland Bay - it's a beauty! Price £11.25 (£12.50 for first time customers)

Katherine Campbell - The Songs of Amelia and Jane Harris: Unrequited love, illegitimate children, rape, murder, stolen kisses and a young man drowned in front of his own true love, oh, and a lass dressed as a man. Not a soap opera but traditional Scottish ballads - Katherine Campbell sings these fascinating songs written down by sisters Jane and Amelia Harris over 150 years ago. Katherine Campbell: vocals, Mairi Campbell: fiddle, Tony McManus: guitar, Peter Shepherd: melodeon, Gary West: smallpipes. Price £11.25 (£12.50 for first time customers)

James Graham - Siubhal -: James Graham is a young man taking the Scottish music scene by storm. His beautiful voice enchanted the judges to such an extent that he carried off the title BBC Radio Scotland Young Traditional Musician 2004 at the finals concert in Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. But, it isn't only his stunning voice that is so impressive; he delivers the songs with perfect diction and tone. And he can sing not only love songs and airs so beloved of Gaelic culture, but, because of his immaculate timing, he can also sing for dancing - a very difficult skill indeed! This debut CD is beautiful, and also features musicians James Ross, piano, Donal Brown, flute & whistles, Kris Drever guitar, Christine Hanson, cello & Phamie Gow, clarsach. Price £9.89 (£10.99 for first time customers)

The McCalmans - Tangled Web -: Ian McCalmann, Nick Keir, and Stephen Quigg are the current line-up of this talented Edinburgh-based band. Honoured with the "Services to Traditional Music Award" at the recent Scots Trad Music Awards, this group again perform a fine mix of traditional and topical material means that guarantees an interesting and often humorous 50 minutes of listening. Catch these guys live if the opportunity arises - in concert, they're nothing short of fantastic! Price £11.25 (£12.50 for first time customers)

Classic Album

Dick Gaughan - Handful of Earth -: We are delighted to have this classic CD available on our website. Voted Album of the Decade ('80s) by magazine Folk Roots, Handful of Earth is Dick Gaughan's best blend of traditional and contemporary songs. Dick Gaughan's voice brings these songs to life. His guitar playing, at times spare and others complex is the perfect compliment to his unique singing style "Handful of Earth" is the probably the best introduction to his music. And includes "Song For Ireland", "World Turned Upside Down", "Both Sides the Tweed", and "Workers Song". His compatriots on the album are Brian McNeill, Stuart Isbister and Phil Cunningham. Price £11.25 (£12.50 for first time customers).

Amazing Bands: Silly Wizard

One of Celtic music's best-loved groups, Silly Wizard, set the standard for Scottish folk bands in the 1970's & 80's. Their magical sound of accordion, fiddle, great rhythm section coupled with Andy M Stewart's ballad singing guaranteed them a huge following around the world.

Silly Wizard "evolved" in Edinburgh in about 1971 - around a nucleus of Gordon Jones, Bob Thomas and Johnny Cunningham. They didn't play many gigs away from town at first as Johnny was still at school! (Although he had been known to be picked up by the band at the school gate to be driven to Sutherland for a gig and be decanted from the van at the school gates next morning!) The band then ran the Triangle Folk Club in Edinburgh on Saturday Nights. The first foreign tour was in 1972 when the three went off to France - a seriously memorable tour - they discovered some wonderful people who remained friends throughout the band's touring years and also discovered that we could indeed play concerts! Soon after this great plans began to grow for a "big" Scots band with two guitars (doubling on other string things - bouzouki, mandolin, banjo etc.), accordion, fiddle and bass.

The band needed a Scots singer so they asked vocalist and tenor banjo player Andy M Stewart to join. Johnny's brother Phil came into the studio (from school) and played some accordion and Alastair Donaldson took over on bass. This produced a set of demos that got the band a deal with Transatlantic's XTRA label and after some re-mixing and extra accordion from Freeland Harbour the album was released as "Silly Wizard" Now a six piece, the band toured for many years throughout Europe. Read more about Silly Wizard

We have managed to get a hold of some of the band's Wild & Beautiful CDs. On this CD Johnny Cunningham took some time out and Dougie MacLean joined in his place with drummer Roy Ashby who also played on some tracks. This is one of my favourite albums. Andy M Stewart's version of The Blackbird is a classic as is the extended tune sets that made my heart skip a beat as a young lass listening to them. Price £13.49 (£14.99 for first time customers)

Scottish Music Legends: Hector MacAndrew

Hector MacAndrew (1903-1980) was born at "The Cottages", Fyvie Castle, Aberdeenshire, in 1903. His father, Peter, was a fiddler and a piper. Peter was born in Moulin in Perthshire and in the early 1890s moved up to Fyvie Castle where he was gardener and piper to Lord Leith. This Perthshire connection links the family back to Niel Gow. Hector had two brothers: his older brother was an accomplished piper who was taught by his father and also played cello. His other brother played the bass fiddle (or double bass). In addition to teaching Hector fiddle, his father also taught him the pipes. Pat MacAndrew (his son) said about

Hector: "My father actually could play the pipes but he suffered from nose-bleeds. Every time he blew the pipes his nose would bleed." Nevertheless, he was able to transfer what he had learned on the pipes onto the fiddle. Pat noted: "He was acknowledged as probably one of the best players of pipe music on the fiddle," and said that a lot of the top pipers in Scotland came to their home to hear his father play just after the Second World War.

As well as learning Scottish music from his father, Hector was taught violin for three to four years by a Mr Alexander from Edinburgh, and in fact moved down to Linlithgow to be near him.

Amongst Hector's favourite tunes, which he played frequently, were "Lament for Abercairney" by Niel Gow and Marshall's "Chapel Keithack". Pat felt that his father liked playing North-East material particularly, especially if the Gow tradition from Perthshire is included in the definition of North-East. Indeed, Pat said that his father "really wanted to keep the Gow tradition going". Hector also played some tunes by James Scott Skinner, whom he met briefly, such as "The Miller o' Hirn" and "The Baker", but felt that Skinner's slow airs were in general better than his reels, which sometimes exhibited considerable likenesses to each other. Pat MacAndrew takes a similar view. Read more at http://www.footstompin.com/artists/hector_macandrew; Information from Dr Katherine Campbell (<http://www.celtscot.ed.ac.uk/fiddle/macandrewhector.htm>) Check out The MacAndrew Collection book and CD.

"The genuine Scottish fiddler has an infallible sense of rhythm, never plays out of tune and is a master of his distinctive and inimitable style". Those words of Yehudi Menuhin sum up the unique qualities in the playing of Hector MacAndrew, without question a master, perhaps the greatest Scottish fiddle player of the 20th century. This book is Hector MacAndrew's compositions in their entirety. The tunes cover a wide range of genres including slow strathspeys, pipe reels, pipe marches and more from one of the most revered fiddle players Scotland has produced. This collection of his compositions was arranged and published by his son Pat. Price £11.69 (£12.99 for first time customers)

Foot Stompin' Celtic Music. Read the news and reviews. Discuss the articles and CDs. Hear the Scottish music from Scotland's bright stars. <http://www.footstompin.com/>

The National Folk Music Festival

Friday 8th April from 5pm to Sunday 10th April 2005

Final plans for the guest list are now being tidied up. I may not produce a full colour leaflet this year and you will not receive anything else through the post concerning National Folk Music Festival publicity.

Our accommodation capacity is the same as last year's but considerably less than some of the previous years, so it is important, if you want to come to the festival, that you book as soon as possible. I know many of you double up in a room. This is very helpful as it can mean I can double the numbers at the festival but even so, when you book and you do double up in a room, please let me know the names of the people sharing that room. This information is required by Sutton Bonington Campus for fire regulations.

The loss of hostels over the last couple of years means that our residential capacity has been reduced by 60 and if the loss of those rooms reflects a loss from those attending, then the Festival revenue is down by over £2,000. In these circumstances, if you are not on the official guest list but want to help with the Festival, I regret that I am not in a position to offer

any complimentary tickets. I hope this will not stop you booking and enjoying, hopefully, what is one of the best, if not the best, Festival of the year!

Shock - Horror! This will be the last National Folk Music Festival held at Sutton Bonington in the spring. The University's term now runs through for a forty-four week period from the beginning of September, without a break for Christmas and Easter holidays. The campus is, therefore, not available to us as it has been for the last twenty-plus years. August might be a possibility, but otherwise if anyone can give me any assistance with other conference centres that you feel might be appropriate, please let me know.

Looking forward to hearing from you. Many thanks.
JOHN HEYDON - ORGANISER National Folk Music Festival, 3 Church Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2QP. Tel: (01296) 415333
Website: www.thenationalfolkfestival.co.uk

The Algarve Welcomes New Annual Festival

Portugal is looking for a little Irish charm to boost bookings to the Algarve, with the launch of a major new Irish music festival in Praia da Luz in the Western Algarve.

The new Festival of the Wild Geese (13 - 20 March 2005), will feature internationally acclaimed acts including the Three Irish Tenors, the Gypsy Café Orchestra, Finbar, Martin & Aine Furey and the Irish dance troupe Celtic Rhythm.

A celebration of Irish music, dance, sport, and culture, the Festival of the Wild Geese builds on the Irish roots of its sponsors (the Oceanico Group), while focusing on the Algarve's natural attractions of sun, sand, golf and easy accessibility. The combination is set to attract visitors from the UK, Ireland, and the local Portuguese community, to what will become an annual event.

Duarte Padinha of the Algarve Tourism Association, said: "The nature of holidays to the Algarve is changing and as part of this we want to offer customers many different reasons to return to our region throughout the year, attracting both new and repeat visitors with the combination of colour, life, culture and natural appeal of the Algarve."

The Festival will be hosted at the Estrela da Luz complex in Praia da Luz, a new, four-star, resort, incorporating three swimming pools, health and beauty centre, the Steve Davis Club Room, art gallery, a gymnasium designed by footballer John Aldridge, restaurants and bars.

Presented by comedian Willie Miller, the bands and dance troupe will perform each evening in the official festival marquee, located close to the centre of Praia da Luz. During the day activities include a three-day golf competition, hosted on the renowned Boa Vista, Palmares and Morgado golf courses, while the Irish love of racing ensures the 2005 Cheltenham Race meet will be shown on big screens, with guests also able to enjoy a flutter on their chosen horse.

The name of the new St Patrick's Festival - Wild Geese - dates back to the 17th century and the Irish Brigade that left Ireland to fight with the French Forces. Since this time it has been used for the many Irishmen who served in overseas armies, and today it is used for all who fly to foreign shores to live.

Praia da Luz, the location for the Festival of the Wild Geese, is a traditional Portuguese town in the Western Algarve, about 45 minutes drive from Faro airport. For further information on the Festival visit www.festivalwildgeese.com or call 0871 990 3388



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Tel: 01253 872317 Fax: 01253 878382 email:
alanbell@fylde-folk-fest.demon.co.uk

visit our website

www.fylde-folk-festival.com

Festival artists booked so far include:

Waterson/Carthy, (Sat) Roy Bailey, John McCusker Band (Sun) Niamh Parsons (Eire) John Wright Band, Sid Kipper, (Fri) James Keelaghan & Hugh McMillan (Can), Ken Nicol, Eileen McGann & David K. (Can), Shirley Collins, Cathryn Craig & Brian Willoughby, Eric Roche, Threlfall, Ellison & Edwards, Steve & Kristi Nebel (USA) Steamchicken Dance Band, Tich Frier, Strawhead, Sara Grey, Alan Bell Band, Keiron Means, Bryony, Stanley Accrington, Scolds Bridle, Brian Preston, Trouble at' Mill, Th'Antique Road Show, Andrew Green, Thistle, Moorland Folk, Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Quartz, Tom Walsh, Elbow Jane.

PLUS 50 more famous national & local artists.

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OUTDOOR PERFORMERS: Flipjack Jugglers, Fiddling Green Jig Machine, Trim Rig & A Doxy

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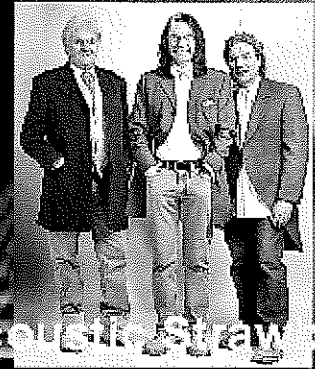


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Further Information:-

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Tickets & Accommodation: Clitheroe Tourist Info Centre: 01200 425566
and St Mary's Centre Box Office: 01200 424217