

FOLK NORTHWEST



Maurice Dickson

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Folk North West Contact Information



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e mail: JOHNOWENBTACKS@aol.com

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

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e.mail: four.fools@tiscali.co.uk

Advertising, subscriptions, club membership enquiries to

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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 July 10th 2005.



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EDITORIAL

Every time I sit down to put together the next issue (with invaluable help from Lewis Jones, Paul Holden and John Owen), I hope to be able to have nothing to report in the Obituaries section. It was with great sadness then that I was told by various sources of the death of Cyril Tawney. One of my earliest memories of him was at Cornwall Folk Festival in a late night session. A little assistance was required as it was late in the evening and in an upstairs room. It was a guest singaround and Cyril was 'tired'. Every time it came round to his turn my wife Angie would give him a nudge and he would stir and immediately launch into songs which I'd never heard him sing before or since. It was one of those unforgettable occasions where it was a privilege to be there. Tom Lewis has kindly provided a fitting tribute to Cyril.

I am also indebted to Brian Bull for the sort of article we would like to feature regularly. He has put together an account of the final battle of the Alabama and thus set the song, Roll Alabama Roll, in context. He has also produced an incredible sketch of the ship.

This I am pleased to say is the last issue produced on a rather outdated computer, the new one is on order and eagerly awaited. I hope it can type faster as well.

I've just listened to Mick Groves's new solo CD - Fellow Journeyman. It is a lesson in quality, clarity and content.

Ken Bladen
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CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS

I know many of you will be aware by now that Vin Garbutt has been quite ill and needed treatment for a heart complaint, that allied to further complications means it will be a while before we see one of folk music's most popular artists back amongst us. He is now firmly on the road to recovery, but it made me stop and think about my own mortality and how we tend to take things for granted.

I know on the face of it, singing for a living to some might seem quite glamorous, but it can be fairly arduous. The travelling certainly takes its toll and for the most part it means sleeping in a different bed every night, not to mention the diet of sandwiches, pies and other unhealthy snacks, often consumed 'on the hoof' as the performer travels the length and breadth of the country. I hear you say "ah, but it's their chosen profession. Yes that is a fact, but it is stressful by its very nature and over a prolonged period takes its toll on your health.

Despite all of its negative properties, being on the road and being a musician is something I doubt any of the artists on the folk scene today would readily give up. However, spare a thought next time you go to a concert for those in the spotlight.

To Vin on behalf of all his many fans here in the North West we wish him a full and speedy recovery.

Cheers for now

David Jones



What Folk programmes are on the radio TODAY?

compiled by Rob Dunford

SUNDAY

8.10 - 8.55am
1.00 - 3.00pm
6.00 - 8.00pm
7.00 - 8.00pm

8.00 - 10.00pm

9.00 - 10.00pm
9.00 - 10.00pm
10.00 - 11.00pm
10.00 - 11.00pm

MONDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm
7.00 - 9.00pm
8.00 - 9.00pm
8.00 - 9.00pm

TUESDAY

8.00 - 10.00pm
9.00 - 10.00pm

WEDNESDAY

8.00 - 9.00pm

THURSDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm

8.00 - 9.00pm
8.00 - 10.00pm
10.00 - 12.00pm

SATURDAY

7.00 - 8.30pm
9.00 - 10.00pm
9.00 - 10.00pm
10.00 - 11.00pm
10.00 - 12.00pm
10.00 - 12.00pm
10.00pm - 1.00am

RTE - MO CHEOL THU presented by CIARAN MAC MATHUNA
BBC Radio Scotland - THE REEL BLEND presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
BBC Radio Scotland - CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY (Rpt)
BBC Radio Merseyside - FOLKSCENE presented by STAN AMBROSE and GEOFF SPEED
BBC Radio Shropshire - SUNDAY FOLK presented by GENEVIEVE TUDOR also on BBC Radio Stoke
BBC Radio Cumbria - NORTHERN FOLK presented by ALISTAIR ANDERSON
BBC Radio Lancashire - THE DRIFT presented by PHIL BROWN (Rpt)
RTE - THE LATE SESSION presented by AINE HENSEY
DOWNTOWN RADIO - FOLKAL POINT presented by MAURICE LEYDEN

BBC GMR - THE PARLOUR presented by ALAN KEEGAN
BBC Radio Derby - FOLKWAVES presented by MICK PEAT and LESTER SIMPSON
RADIO MALDWYN - THE FOLK PROGRAMME presented by YVONNE & JOHN HART
BBC GMR - SOUNDS OF FOLK presented by ALI O'BRIEN

BBC Radio Scotland - CELTIC CONNECTIONS presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
MANX RADIO - MANX FOLK presented by JOHN KANEEN

BBC Radio 2 - FOLK ROOTS & ACOUSTIC MUSIC presented by MIKE HARDING

BBC Radio Shropshire - FRETWORK presented by NONNY JAMES also on BBC Radio Stoke
BBC Radio Lancashire - THE DRIFT presented by PHIL BROWN
BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
BBC Radio Ulster - FRIEL'S FANCY presented by EAMONN FRIEL

BBC Radio Scotland - TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
BBC Radio Scotland - PIPELINE presented by GARY WEST
RTE - CEILIDH HOUSE presented by KIERAN HANRAHAN
RTE - FAILTE ISTEACH presented by DONNCHA O'DULAING
BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER (Rpt)
BBC Radio Ulster - FOLK CLUB presented by COLUM SANDS
BBC Radio Wales - CELTIC HEARTBEAT presented by FRANK HENNESSY

RADIO FREQUENCIES

MW 567
MW 810
MW 810
FM 95.8
MW 1485
FM 96.0
FM 94.6
see below
FM 95.5
MW 567
MW 1026

FM 95.1
see below
MW 756
FM 95.1

MW 810
MW 1368

FM 88 - 90.2

FM 96.0
FM 94.6
FM 95.5
MW 810
MW 1341

MW 810
MW 810
MW 567
MW 567
MW 810
MW 1341
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)		
	MW 756 (North), 837 (South), 1458 (West)		Tel:- 01228 592444
BBC Radio Derby	FM 95.3, 104.5, 96.0 (Buxton)	MW 1116	Tel:- 01332 361111
BBC GMR	FM 95.1, 104.6 (Saddleworth)		Tel:- 0161 2002000
BBC Radio Lancashire	FM 95.5, 103.9, 104.5,	MW 855, 1557	Tel:- 01254 262411
BBC Radio Merseyside	FM 95.8	MW 1485	Tel:- 0151 7085500
BBC Radio Scotland	FM 92.4 - 94.7	MW 810	Tel:- 0141 3398844
BBC Radio Shropshire	FM 96.0		Tel:- 01743 248484
BBC Radio Stoke	FM 94.6, 104.1	MW 1503	Tel:- 01782 208080
BBC Radio Ulster	FM 92.4 - 95.4	MW 873, 1341	Tel:- 02890 338000
BBC Radio 2	FM 88.0 - 90.2		Tel:- 08700 100222
Downtown Radio		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

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".

Over the last couple of years, 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

LIVE REVIEWS

KIERAN HALPIN AND JAMES KEELAGHAN Live At Penrith Playhouse on 8 February 2005.

February 8th saw a very special evening organised by Penny and Paul from the Rattan and Rush Acoustic Tearoom at the Penrith Playhouse, featuring two singer/songwriters at the peak of their profession, Kieran Halpin and James Keelaghan. Kieran opened with a song recorded by The Battlefield Band, 'Port of Call' which is about the expression of grief in liquid fashion, a thing that probably most of us have tried at one time or another.

Next was a beautiful song Kieran wrote for his then three and a half year old daughter, 'Making up the Miles', not exactly the lullaby you might expect. Kieran's talent for touching the heart is amazing, he puts into words so easily what we are all feeling. I, personally find the line 'every breath I take is yours' just so moving. Kieran says he wrote this song in three minutes, it's four and a half minutes long?

We then moved the a song 'No Turning Back' which in turn progressed onto the very powerful 'Farewell to Ride' which is so full of feeling as it tears at the heartstrings, then to lighten the mood somewhat, 'A Perfect Time' which is Kieran's 'pop' song. This is a short (can't be longer than three and a half minutes as Radio 1 D.J's attention span is no longer than this) light-hearted song, consequently we needed to move on to something a little more serious with 'Like Sister and Brother', 'All the Answers' and 'Letter to America', all of which have their own story to tell as is the case with all of Kieran's songs, after which, he got a little sentimental and sang 'Nothing To Show For It All' which was written whilst away in Sydney, Australia and then finished off with a song about the Mardi Gras 'Closing Down of Paradise'. After a set like this, there was no way Kieran was going to get away without an encore, so back he came to uproarious applause with another quiet, reflective song of optimistic love, 'Hold On' which wooed us all.

After a short break, we welcomed James Keelaghan who writes songs about life as seen through the eyes of the ordinary man, Hugh McMillan, who is a bass player and a half, and Jane Clark, who plays the fiddle like she was born to it. They kicked off with 'The Turn of the Wheel' and moved swiftly into 'Hillcrest Mine', which as it sounds, is a song about Canada's biggest mining disaster, both of which are on James' latest CD 'Then Again'.

Next came 'River Run' a song about the fight of the people against the building of a dam on the east side of the Rockies. Here is a writer whose every song has a story to tell. All of James' songs are steeped in the history of Canada. We then moved on to 'Woodsmoke and Oranges', about a trip on Lake Superior. James takes you on the trip with his words and the sounds from the exceptional fiddle playing of Jane Clark. You can feel yourself travelling along the water with the mood changing as the storm moves in.

A song about the Parliament buildings added to the Peace Tower came next in the form of the 'Stonecutter' followed by a piece in Jane's own style with her self penned 'For Joe' which she wrote for a friend. This was a very moving piece featuring Hugh on mandolin and finished off with a reel from the pair of them. James then launched into 'My Skies', moving onto the 'Harvest Train', a traditional tune from Prince Edward Island.

Hugh then continued on his ever-faithful bass for their early morning song 'I would I Were'. When you see Hugh with his



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-Eva McCreaney, Irish World

"Bags of energy, with a style that is somewhat reminiscent of early Pogues..."

A great live act, as I can testify!
-Dave Brookes, Folk Monthly

"This is a tiger of altogether different stripes, Jugopunch show signs of growing and 'Cold' itself even dips a toe into rock music, with some beefy rhythms - more please!"

-Simon Jones, The Chronicle

bass, they appear to be as one, his playing is so natural. 'Cold Missouri waters' is the story of Waggoner Dodge and his smoke jumpers trying to escape the terrible bush fire of August 1949 and how Dodge's crew lost their faith in him and also their lives along with it, when they couldn't see the sense in what Dodge was trying to do. A total change of tempo to end the evening came next with Sam Larkin's 'Mirabeau Bridge'. This is definitely the song for all audiences to sing along to.

How James ever thought he might get away with finishing there I don't know, so of course he was back but with a different kind of ending. James, Hugh and Jane all came back but not onto the stage, nor did they have any microphones, they performed 'Tomorrow is Another Day' wandering across the theatre as everyone sang along, then backstage still singing and gradually fading out. What a wonderful end to a truly exceptional evening. It does your heart good to see performances like this and leaves you counting the days 'til you can see them again.

Anne Jones

HIS WORSHIP AND THE PIG, supported by Kooler, at Gregson Lane Folk Club on 17 February 2005



Whatever I say, nothing can adequately convey even a flavour of the performance by His Worship and the Pig. Dave Boulton and Jeff Parton were on excellent form and appeared to enjoy themselves as much as the audience appreciated them.

Dave plays guitar, and bodhran, to Jeff's guitar, mandola,

mandolin and banjo. They share the singing and patter in a way that suggests not only great skill and occasional rehearsal, but also a genuine enjoyment and empathy for what they are doing. And what they are doing so comprehensively is to entertain. There are no pretensions here, just a flow of original songs. Most are wildly funny, even surreal, but there is serious stuff included in the mixture. There are choruses; easy and tuneful to drag even the most niggardly of the audience along with them.

Standout songs are hard to pick in this excellent set. 'Saying Goodbye To The Sea' tells of a redundant fisherman fallen on hard times, taking a shore job. It's a song about the end of another tradition, and we're left to think why such a sad song produces a memorable chorus. 'The Whiskey Song' is a tongue twister naming just about everything on the top shelf, whilst 'If You Had a Brain' puts into song a phrase we've all used at some time. 'One of Those Days' puns wildly all over the place and then 'You're Only As Old' and 'Little Willie's Walnut Whip' and the non-Child ballad of 'Big Cosgrove' were as good as it gets.

Support came from 'Kooler' a four piece from Darwen, mainly singing songs composed by guitarist Kevin Cookson. The 'Hurricane Mitch' trilogy recalled a natural disaster in the Caribbean; 'The Lost Children' recalled the thoughts of foster parents about the children into who's lives they had tried to bring some affection and care. They're thoughtful songs mostly sung by Paul Craven, tuneful, yet bringing forth serious issues for today.

Host John Poulton kept order amidst the chaos, and started the evening off in lively fashion with a set, including a version of Eric Idle's 'Galaxy Song' and then his own 'The Beatles and The Stones'; set in a Lancashire music shop which some of us know well. Graham Dixon's sound engineering provided a clear and sympathetic balance for the capacity audience.

So, if you've seen them, you'll understand why we enjoyed His Worship and the Pig so much. If you haven't, then don't miss the next opportunity. It wasn't just the music, or the songs - silly and serious. It was the simple pleasure of seeing people enjoy their music with us, and for us.

Don Moore.

FRED EAGLESMITH supported by Angie Palmer (a Mr Kite Benefit) at St Bedes, Whittle le Woods on 19 February 2005.



Although Fred Eaglesmith has been a regular visitor to these shores, you never quite know what to expect. You do know that he's going to play some good music and have some 'off the wall' comments upon whatever he finds.

This time we learned how the air space under a Canadian registered vehicle remains Canadian air space; even though his tour bus may be in the United States, and thus that Canadian rules apply, even though they were at a Blue Grass festival. Fred lamented the music that invented substance abuse now no longer tolerates it. There followed observations on the inadequacy of Hadrian's Wall, the incomprehensibility of Newcastle accents, and the idiosyncrasies of pub opening hours. I can tell you how funny he was, but really, you had to be there.

We got a lot of good music on the way. Fred played a Tacoma guitar, sang his own songs of open spaces and small lives; his delicate picking enhanced the textures. The serious songs tell of big landscapes and endless roads, bleak images and quiet desperation. Mixed in were songs of a lesser seriousness and in such a high energy set, standout songs are hard to pick. It was the total experience of a Fred concert that we all enjoyed. It would be wonderful to see him with his full band.

Support came from Lancastrian, Angie Palmer. I have to be careful here, because I may use too many superlatives. I had seen her open for Kathryn Williams last year and was really excited to see her again. I wasn't disappointed. This is a songwriter and guitarist to challenge the best in England today. From her opening 'Footprints in the Snow' to the closing 'Down the Street of the Cat who Fished' this was top quality material. (The song is fascinating on her 'Road' CD - almost nine minutes long.) Her Guild guitar was strummed and picked as well as any I have heard. The lyrics were always thoughtful and held the interest, nothing trite or contrived here. Her gig with a band at Kendal Brewery the week after was sold out, and no wonder.

Andrew Green's sound system never failed to get every nuance out of two excellent performances. As always, Mr Kite himself, Steve Henderson, deserves thanks for bringing us the opportunity to see people of this calibre. Oh, and the 'Street of the Cat who Fished' is in Paris. It's on the left bank in the Latin Quarter, near Notre Dame. I'm sure I've walked down it - but I didn't notice the name at the time, and I couldn't have written a song like that.

Don Moore

FIDDLESTONE at the Bromborough Folk Club, Bridge Inn, Port Sunlight on 5 Mar 2005

Mal Lowe (lovely gentle man that he is and regular at the Bromborough Folk Club) loves Fiddlestone so much, and was so certain people would come from miles around, that he arranged a special Saturday concert for the band at Bromborough Folk Club's usual venue at the Bridge Inn. The Folk Club usually meets on Wednesday and is a brilliant singers

club with dead posh mikes, PA and lights. Check out their website for reviews and sound clips www.bromfolk.co.uk. Well, Mal was right, it was a sell out! I'd only seen Fiddlestone do a couple of songs before but I was treated to a full set of songs.

Les Bourne (excellent guitarist, with both fingers and plectrum, told us that the band has been together for a long time and introduced their first instrumental, written 28 years ago was called Tilt in your Kilt but tonight they were calling it Lilt in Your Kilt but in ten years time, they'd call it Wilt in my kilt but in 20 years time, (smiling) they'd have to call it, Wilt in my Kilt!

Andy Grimes couldn't make the gig so Dave or "Bugsy" to his friends (concertina player) told us welcome to Fiddlest as they were "one" short! I'm not that quick on the uptake so thanks to John Coleman, the Club's main MC for explaining the joke to me! Mal Ashman makes up the fourth band member, playing guitar and mandola. Mr Ashman's a teacher when he's not performing with Fiddlestone.

Their songs and tunes ranged around traditional and contemporary and they performed some real gems from the early seventies folk scene. I was amazed to hear and (remembering every verse!) of Ewan MacColl's song The Shoals of Herring. They performed the well-known Rawtenstall Annual Fair but in unaccompanied four part harmonies just like a Victorian musical hall rendition of the song. They performed a couple of heart-rending songs, Andy Barnes', The Last of the Great Whales and Richard Thompson's Dimming of the Day.

I particularly enjoyed Dave Swarbrick's ragtime song That's Me With You, especially with Bugsy's sand dancing! The end song I've never heard before, Dougie McLean's Your Singing Land about Australia with a knock out chorus which the Bromborough crowd belted out. I enjoyed them so much I've booked them for a "big spot" at the Railway, Lymm www.railwayfolkclub.co.uk on Thursday 29 September 2005. If you get chance to see them, do go to see them.

Stewart Lever

JOHN WRIGHT BAND at Biddulph Folk Club, at The Biddulph Arms on 17 March 2005



Playing in the acoustically perfect upstairs room in the Biddulph Arms, John Wright, together with band members Joe Topping and Ruth Angell produced a stunning performance to a good-sized audience at what can only be described as 'one of the best nights of the year'.

John has played at the club a number of times before, although in a different line-up, and he has always gone down well with a warm and enthusiastic crowd. But this performance was exceptional as he sang a mixture of old favourites, requests and some newer material.

Apart from his fabulous voice, one of his many strengths is his ability to pick some cracking songs. The way he worked his very enthusiastic audience with first his inter-songs chat and then their chorus involvement, you would think that he was conducting a singing workshop as he orchestrated some fabulous harmonies.

Another great strength is his ability to surround himself with some

very, very talented musicians. Joe and Ruth showed why they are making such a name for themselves on the folk scene. For people so young (in folk terms anyway) these two represent all that is good in an emerging younger generation that will hopefully take over. The future of folk is definitely safe in their hands!!

John Wright gave us a glimpse of the song-writing talents of Joe Topping, who demonstrated his versatility on the guitar, while Ruth Angell (who is part of Ashley Hutchings Rainbow Chasers) was amazing on the fiddle, and the evening lived up to its high expectation. At the end of one of the songs, both went into a fast and furious tune - high-energy stuff that definitely sets them apart from the rest. The enthusiasm they showed even had the audience gasping for breath by the end. Absolutely amazing!!!

My advice to anyone is don't take my word for it, get out and see them for yourself - you definitely won't be disappointed.

Eric Cox



Hello everyone. As we all begin to move around more freely after our winter hibernation in this country, isn't it refreshing to see the blossoms of Spring abounding everywhere?

I hope you all had a very pleasant Easter. We did - at Poynton Festival, which this year was located at a new spacious venue at Woodford Memorial Hall and grounds, a mile or so down the road from Poynton Folk Club. With a large main concert hall and bar it was packed to the rafters for the McCalmans and Fairport Convention concerts. Not quite so for Pentangle but a goodly audience nonetheless.

The Macs did admirably when the excellent sound team had the facility taken away from them by a local power surge. Such is life. But, coming down from the stage on to the audience floor did nothing to dim the enthusiasm of this tremendous trio who coped superbly. Ian in 'rambling mode' covered the inevitable spaces with his tall tales whilst Nick Keir and Stephen Quigg bounced off him in similar style 'smiling through adversity'. Well done you three.

Fairport were truly - fantastic - and for me are the finest band of their kind I have ever seen. Recent surgery on his arm saw Dave Pegg sitting on stage playing tambourine whilst a stand-in bass player stood in brilliantly. Chris Leslie's (clear as a bell) singing is unique and when he eventually duelled up on fiddle with Ric Sanders I experienced that overwhelming feeling of 'being so lucky to be in the audience'. Simon Nicol's rendition of Richard Thompson's 'Crazy Man Michael' is a classic and knowing every word, it had me singing along merrily, or was it the Guinness? Hopefully I was not a distraction for those sitting close by.

The support acts complemented the headliners extremely well with my favourites being Fiona Simpson, Ben and Joe Broughton, Arthur Wakefield and Dave Clarke (Bollington FC) and the festival directors themselves - Sad Pig (Dave Hughes and Judy Hancock). Fiona and her band did a wonderfully uplifting 'theological set' on the Sunday morning then, going solo at the evening concert as support for Fairport, Fiona showed how talented she is singing contemporary and traditional folk songs to her own guitar accompaniment. What a range? What a voice?

Again I was singing along from the outset when Fiona kicked off with Jack Hudson's "She like's to go working". I hadn't heard anyone sing this song since the days of West Kirby's Black Horse Folk Club and the Tom Topping Band.

Ben and Joe were their usual mix of speedy musical dexterity and comedy and when Ben lapsed into singing like the 'Chipmunks' it was hard to discern whether it was the soundman playing around with the desk or whether it was Ben himself, the mimic. A tremendous duo these two. There are not many festivals that can brag that the festival directors are one of the best acts at the festival. But this is clearly the case at Poynton where Judy and Dave excelled.

Stewart Lever (Railway FC organiser) informs me that his visit to Poynton was his first and he certainly intends to visit again. He particularly enjoyed Bernard Cromarty's four-instrument performance and his rendition of 'Dark Island' brought tears to his eyes. Bernard's ability with ragtime music was also a feature. Stewart 'had a do' at the festival song-writing competition compared by Dave Green, a regular at Poynton and Northwich FC's. Stewart, although rather nervous entered his song 'Mersey Miracle Rag'. Ann English and her daughter Shelley who sang a song about a 'special friend' won the competition. Ann stated that she would use the prize money to 'Buy back her 'Strat', which was misheard by someone who suggested Ann said, 'She's going to buy back her guitar strap'.

Stewart comments that he enjoyed the singarounds at the 'Davenport Arms' even though the landlady and the rain chased us into the pub from the lovely beer garden. This was my main contribution to the festival and it seemed to go down OK as I sang and maintained order at these sometimes-unruly affairs. No problems at all this time thought except a bit more room would have been a bonus. But what is it they say about - 'a select few'? The watching locals appeared to enjoy our musical fayre and with an all-female Morris Team dancing outside, the atmosphere was tremendous.

Congratulations to Judy, Dave and their committee for an excellent festival. I am sure they will have learned much from the experience of moving to a new venue. I bet they can't wait for Poynton 2006.

Since my last report, James Keelaghan, (with Hugh McMillan and Jane Clark) and Artisan have given our folk club at Parkgate two excellent nights for the months of February and March. As expected the room was bursting at the seams for James and it was an honour to be able to front him once again. We also had a one-off visit from those 60's pop icons The Animals. It was good to have Artisan back with us because as most of you will be aware the group is splitting up in November this year with Hilary devoting more time to Quicksilver (with Grant Baynham) and Mrs Ackroyd's Band. Brian and Tracy will continue with their agency work and the Brian Bedford band will be formed.

I must also mention to you an unsung hero who, every time I see him, never ceases to amaze me with his guitar dexterity, (both acoustic and classical), his singing, his song writing and his ability to cover well-known songs to perfection. I mean 'The Urban Troubadour', otherwise known as John O'Connell. John is a scouser - so he is obviously a 'good lad' and is a resident performer with the duo 'Ground Pig' at O'Neill's Bar in Liverpool city centre on Friday and Saturday nights, weekly. This time I paid another visit to Bromborough Folk Club to see him in 'folk' mode. In my opinion - he is simply a 'star waiting to be found' by the folk scene. Club/venue organisers should seek him out; he is truly a magnificent artist.

spent continuing to help Wirral Tourism and Marketing department complete the arrangements for the first ever "Wirral Folk on the Coast" Music Festival, between 8th and 12th June, 2005. There should be a full advert somewhere in this mag. with more details. I strongly recommend you all to diary the events as, apart from one concert (Saturday night) they are all FREE.

The aim is to enhance the image of folk music on Wirral and I am sure that all the high quality acts lined up will certainly provide superb entertainment not only for 'folkies' but also for the public in general.

Admission to the three major folk clubs on the 8th, 9th and 12th is by free ticket only and can be obtained by ringing the club organisers as follows: -

8th - Bromborough FC - John Colman - tel.no.0151-334-0759

9th - Parkgate FC - Eddie Morris - 0151-677-1840

12th - Old Manor FC - Roger Parker --151-678-1962

On the evening of Friday 10th a Ceilidh will take place in the courtyard of Fort Perch Rock, New Brighton where Anthony John Clarke and his band will be providing the interval entertainment. All musicians and singers are also encouraged to get along there as there will be a musician's session/singaround taking place in the bar - until late. Free tickets for this evening can be obtained by ringing any of the above three numbers.

A polite request though - Please do not take tickets for any of the above four nights and then not use them, as they are sure to be full houses.

Free walk-up events will take place at Fort Perch Rock on the afternoon of Saturday 11th (five bands/performers plus Morris Dance Teams are booked) and at Vale Park, Wallasey on the afternoon of Sunday 12th (four bands are booked including Tanglefoot (Canada) and Fiddlestone). No tickets are required for these two events.

Finally ring the box office at the Floral Pavilion Theatre, New Brighton, 0151-639-4360 if, on Saturday evening the 11th you wish to see - the Houghton Weavers, the Tom Topping Band, Bernard Wrigley, and Elbow Jane. Tickets are only #10 (full price) and #8 pounds (concessions).

Club News

Bad news first - Brian Kirkham at Blackburn FC tells me that unfortunately the club has had to close due to a change of licensee. What is wrong with these ill-informed individuals? Many thanks Brian for your membership of the Folk North West Federation and may you find and create another club in the not too distant future.

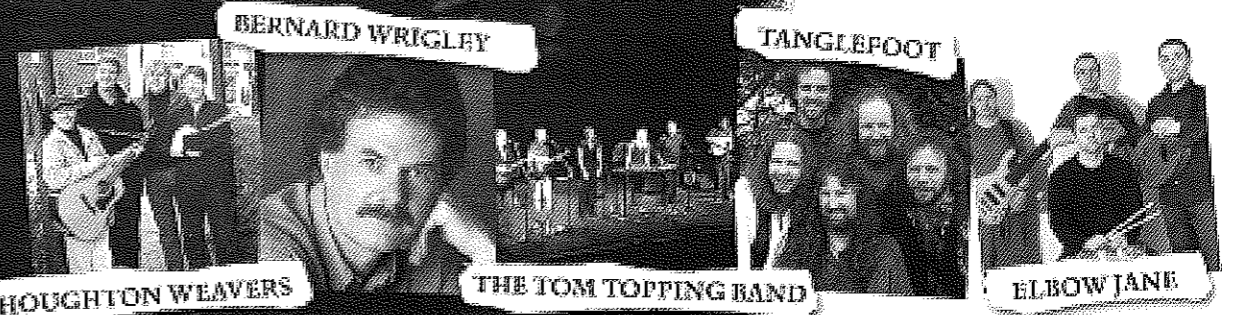
Burnley FC has moved from the Waggon and Horses Inn to Burnley Miners Social Club, Plumbe Street, Burnley. Earby FC has moved from the White Lion to the Station Hotel, Colne Road, Earby.

Terry Howarth informs me that 'Folk at the Wheatsheaf' and 'Embleton Live' will from Friday 3rd June become 'Folk in the Barn' and will be located at Rosehill Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven. The new venue will take place on alternate Fridays so as not to clash with Carlisle Folk and Blues activity. Contact number for the Barn is - 01900-604765. Occasional concerts in the Theatre will also take place and the first is scheduled for Friday 22nd September when the guest will be Julie Felix. Box Office numbers are 01946-692422 or 694039. Terry informs that the Barn is an excellent venue and will be ideal for folk music. It is a converted Georgian barn building situated in the

WIRRAL FOLK ON THE COAST FESTIVAL

8-12th JUNE 2005

Wirral's first ever folk on the coast festival in celebration of this year's Mersey River Festival and Capital of Culture Year of the Sea!



The Houghton Weavers will be supported by The Tom Topping Band, Bernard Wrigley and Elbow Jane in concert at The Floral Pavilion in New Brighton on Saturday 11th June.

Tickets for The Floral Pavilion Concert in New Brighton on Saturday 11th June will be on sale from late April, please contact the BOX OFFICE ON 0151 639 4360.

For further information about the Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival and tickets for other venues, please contact the Tourist Information Centre at Woodside, Birkenhead on 0151 647 6786, email: tourinfo@wirral.gov.uk

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Other bands and artists playing at different venues during the festival:

CREAM OF THE BARLEY
BRASS TACKS
PHIL CHISNALL
EDDIE MORRIS
REAL TIME
ARTHUR MARSHALL AND
THE LIFEBOAT BAND
ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE
DON WOODS

BAYOU RHYTHMS
ALISON PARKER AND
THE THIRD MAN
SAD PIG
TONY DAVIES
TANGLEFOOT
FIDDLESTONE
BURGUNDY ROAD
TANSKY
BAKER'S FABULOUS BOYS
AND RESIDENTS FROM
LOCAL FOLK CLUBS

Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival 2005

grounds of Rosehill Theatre. It offers pleasant and comfortable seating and a concert area with bar facilities and ample free and safe parking. Disabled parking is available adjacent to the Barn and there is level access to the foyer with toilets including disabled facilities and a lift to the first floor. Sounds great Terry. Best wishes to you all at the Barn.

Carlisle Folk and Blues club has located on a permanent basis to the Sunset Suite, Carlisle Football Club, Warwick Road, Carlisle. In view of the disastrous weather you had early in the year Gill/Myrna, I trust it is on high ground. Stay dry.

Angie Bladen at the Four Fools FC has asked me to remind everyone of what is on offer on Monday nights at The Spinners Arms, Church Road, Adlington. 'Wonderful evenings of folk music and song' is the promise as theme nights, sessions, singarounds and guest nights provide the variety. The set up for guests nights is interesting as this club never actually advertises in advance who the guest or guests will be. Previous surprise guests have been Pete Coe, Janet Russell, Kevin Dempsey and Joe Broughton, the two Toms Napper and Bliss and Strawhead. Many of a similar quality are promised for the future so get along there. You will be assured of a warm welcome.

Ian Chesterman at Wrexham FC has informed me that Shanty man Tom Lewis has asked to promote a night at the club on Thursday 2nd June when the special guest will be Pete Coe. No doubt there will be a song or three from Tom himself and of course Offa the excellent club residents.

Pauline and Jim Coan at the Wooden Horse FC have advised me that Sunday 5th June will now be a charity night with the performers being that fine bunch, Quartz, Loctuptogether, Back in Business and the 'Folk North West' webmaster himself Mark Dowding.

Sunday 17th July sees Roger Parker and Co. at the Old Manor FC presenting as their special guests WIYOS (all the way from New York). This band is an acoustic Americana trio who play vaudevillian ragtime-jugband-blues and hillbilly swing. Apparently it's a great sound reminiscent of the 20's and 30's. They use washboard, harmonica, kazoo, guitar, upright bass, and all three sing. Sounds a WOW!

Peter Hood at the Red Bull, Stockport tells me that on 5th September the club will host a chap by the name of Jeff Warner. Jeff will be on tour from the USA and plays banjo, guitar and concertina. He is a much-acclaimed artist and well-respected performer who sings in the old time fashion and American folk style.

This club has also lost one of its resident performers to other climes, i.e. Jim Embleton who has moved away from the area. Helen Kennedy who plays guitar and 30-string Irish harp replaces Jim. She has a large repertoire of traditional material and is a very accomplished performer. Helen is also a writer and artist and has written several well illustrated childrens books which are available from www.cheshirelittlefolk.co.uk

I received some very interesting and positive info from Paul and Penny at Rattan and Rush Acoustic Tearoom, Kirby Stephen and it is an announcement aimed at all musicians and performers who would like to develop themselves on stage, performing to gain confidence whilst using a professional PA system. On the second Wednesday of each month, commencing at 7pm, the Acoustic Tearoom Sessions will take place aimed at the young and the not so young, to develop skills and gain encouragement from each other. There will be an entrance fee for non-players and in the due course of time if this venture proves to be a success then professional workshops may follow. At the time of writing this column the next session was scheduled for 11th May

so if you are interested give Paul and Penny a ring on 017683-72123 or email them on acoustictearoom@aol.com

Brian Preston at Longridge FC has not been very well over the last year or so, so give him a call or drop him a line on info@ampworldmusic.com Best wishes for a return to full health Brian. The folk music world needs your quality of performance so - All the best mate.

Arts Centres

I mentioned The Animals earlier, well if you would like to be taken back to that era with another artist how about visiting the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall on Monday 30th May when that 'Sunshine Superman' himself - Donovan- appears on his 'Beat Café' tour. The name of his latest CD, it is his first album release for nine years.

Still on the Arts Centre theme - on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th June some of the very best in national and international shanty and maritime singing will be appearing at the Southport Arts Centre (Studio One) and on the following night at Birkenhead's Pacific Arts and Exhibition Centre.

The theme on the 9th is 'Mariners All' and will feature - La Moresca Antica, a six-piece band from Italy, Armstrong's Patent from the Netherlands, Stormalong John, Three Sheets to the Wind and Liverpool Packet.

The theme on the 10th is 'Songs of the Seven Seas' and will feature - Vaikeste Lootspillide Uingu from Estonia, Hughie Jones (ex-Spinners), Fore 'n' Aft, Ship 'n' Whales from Norway, and Portsmouth Shanty Men.

Also at Studio One (Southport) on 17th June is an interesting band of Polish musicians who call themselves the 'Warsaw Village Band'. This band won the BBC Radio 3 Best Newcomer Award for World Music in 2004. They are described as - "Combining the verve and passion of six young Polish musicians with a vocal style based on 'bialy glos' (the primeval but melodic 'white voice' used by Polish shepherds), stringed instruments that sound like horns and the trance-like rhythms of two drums. They create an incredible audio and visual experience. Catch them here before they (inevitably) take Beverley Folk Festival and Glastonbury by storm!" "Dark beauty, powerful and rough" - Folk World.

Visit www.warsawvillageband.net

Charity Concerts

Steve Henderson of 'Mr Kite Benefits' has two fund-raising concerts lined up, the first one being on Friday 3rd June when Julie Matthews will perform solo, with the cause being 'The Extended Family via the International Aid Trust'. The venue is The Worden Arts Centre, Leyland.

On the following night at Bury Met, Chris Hillman and Herb Pedersen are performing with their very special guest Michael Weston King. The objective is to raise funds for Vision Aid.

Festivals

A Folk Festival (no formal title) is scheduled for 17th to 19th June at the Alison Arms, Preston Road, Coppull Moor, Chorley. Contact number is the pub on 01257-791262.

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 takes place the same weekend

(Friday 24th to Sunday 26th June) at its new venue, Lostock Hall Community High School. For details see the advert on page 45, the website www.four-fools.co.uk or contact Angie and Ken on 01257 263678 or via e.mail four.fools@virgin.net

Lymm Festival is an 8 evening event and will this year take place from 30th June to 7th July in the marquee in the grounds of the Railway pub, at Heatley, near Lymm. As I mentioned in the last edition this consecutive night festival will have the following super guests: - Bernard Cromarty, Nancy Kerr and James Fagan, Chris While and Julie Matthews, Back of the Moon, Anthony John Clarke, Tom McConville/Pauline Cato and Dave Wood, Garva ending with a Ceilidh on the 7th and a music session inside the Railway pub conducted by the all-female group The Marmalade Club. I've got my tickets. How about you? See the club web site for full details at - www.railwayfolkclub.co.uk - or give Stewart a ring on 07919-270916.

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.

Biddulph's twelfth Folk in the Park is scheduled for Saturday 16th July at the beautiful location - Biddulph Grange Country Park. Bring your own chairs, tables, food and drink to this picnic style event and enjoy the likes of Wirral's Elbow Jane (contemporary folk), Jug O Punch (Irish), The Gordonnaires (Rock) and Elvis Fontenot and the Sugar Bees (Cajun). Give Eric Cox a ring for tickets on 01782-514896.

Brampton Live Festival (near Carlisle) celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year from 22nd to 24th July with the headliners being Richard Thompson, and the Kate Rusby Band, plus Tony Benn and Roy Bailey, Tannahill Weavers, Keith Donnelly and many more. Box Office for tickets at 01228-534664 or www.bramptonlive.net

Performer Snip-its

I am delighted to learn that Fiona Simpson (formerly of the duo Therapy) is back on the road again as a solo artist and as such will be bringing her beautiful talents to the fore once again. There are not many female artists on the English folk scene of the highest calibre like Fiona. Her voice range has been described as being 'silky smooth with an ability to astonish'. Equally at home singing to her own guitar accompaniment or a capella, Fiona was jaw-droppingly outstanding at Poynton Festival recently where her experience of television and BBC radio appearances and national and international touring shone through and delighted her audiences. Contact details to book Fiona are 07981-639-336 or folksingerjohn@aol.com

Ewan Carruthers will be in England from 15th to 22nd June and is inviting late bookings but not on 22nd when he will be appearing at Bromborough FC. Contact no.001-510-793-4143.

Coope, Boyes and Simpson are launching their first album for three years at the Beverley and East Riding Folk Festival on 19th June. Entitled 'Triple Echo' their breathtaking a capella singing takes in versions of some classic traditional pieces like 'Bushes and Briars' and 'The Banks of the Green Willow' and compositions by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Percy Grainger and George Butterworth. www.coopeboyseandsimpson.co.uk

Ron Trueman-Border has asked that should anyone wish to

contact him for bookings you can find him on 0208-302-2527 or at wolf@mydoor.freeserve.co.uk

Following the success of his short tour earlier this year Graham Cooper is intending to visit the UK again from his home in Portugal sometime over the next 6 to 12 month period and he is seeking out some gigs from those club/venue organisers who used to book him so regularly when he was prominent on the British folk circuit, pre 2000. The bookings would need to be over a period of a week or two and Graham is prepared to travel around the region if not the country to compile this sort of tour. Graham is still an extremely active performer in Portugal both in the theatre and on the club scene. He is extremely adept on keyboard/piano and guitar and has a super voice. When he was one half of a duo with Harvey Andrews he describes himself as being the 'musical half'. That is not to say though that he is any slouch when it comes to 'patter'. He can spin many a yarn and has much experience of life to draw on. Ring 07981-639-336 or contact folksingerjohn@aol.com for further information and to arrange bookings.

Finally, I was saddened to read in the last edition of the sudden passing of Dave Ryan the organiser at Fleetwood Folk Club and a member of the Fylde Festival committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest sympathy to Dave's family and to those closest and dearest to him.

That's all from me this time have a fantastic summer. Hope to see you at the forthcoming Chester and Bridgnorth Festivals and at the Old Manor and Northwich folk clubs. I look forward to talking to you again in September.

John Owen

ARTICLES



FOLK MUSIC AWARDS

Talking of 'real life' I watched the BBC Folk Awards last night (Feb 25th) on a tape a friend had sent me. I had missed it the week before when it was live on the TV because I was visiting my mother in London. It's the first time I've seen it on television and I have to say it looks like a grand old party, one that I'm never (understandably) likely to be invited to. I know my limitations and an award winner I certainly am not and never will be. It looks like a real good do though, and it must give singers and musicians a chance to meet other professionals they've not had a chance to see since the last awards. I suppose the Hollywood Oscars are the same insofar as it seems to me to be the same people who get invited each year. To an extent of course that is entirely understandable. Martin Carthy, Steeleye Span and Kathryn Tickell to name but three stand out as leading exponents of their art and they deserve all the credit they get. Carthy especially so.

The awards were presented by an odd assortment of people. For example The Good Traditions Award (Steeleye Span were the winners) was presented by a pretentious hat belonging to a novelist who has followed the group for 33 years, but read everything from notes he had prepared earlier; and this proffers the question "Why if he is a fan of the group was it necessary for him to read notes?" Others who also read notes were Chris While and Julie Matthews who presented the Best Folk Club Award to Hitchin Folk Club and, whilst Hitchin Folk Club thoroughly deserve an award that has in the past been given to

clubs with only a fleeting connection with what I consider is a traditional folk club, they again read everything word for word praising the club with about as much sugary prose as they could muster. Frankly it sounded completely insincere. Possibly they meant every word they said, but I tell you this girls - You would have sounded much more sincere had you not read it out in such a stilted fashion. Another who chose to read, instead of simply announcing, was surprisingly Ralph McTell who gave The Lifetime Contribution to Song Writing award to Tom Paxton. At least Ralph sounded sincere if again a little stilted. But the worst award speaker of all to my amazement was Bob Harris who read every word in giving the Lifetime Achievement Award to Jack Elliot. Apparently (reads Bob) Jack was the main inspiration for the Skiffle Craze in England in the 1950's and he was a huge influence on Pete Seeger in the 1960's. Well excuse me, but Pete is some 13 years Jack's senior and had already topped the American music charts before Jack had hardly picked up a guitar. I remember seeing Jack and idolising him in the late 1950's in many a Soho folk club, Cecil Sharp House too, and he was a real hero. But if there was any influencing done between the two of them, then it was the other way around. I leave it to you to decide if Jack Elliot had any major influence on the skiffle scene in Britain. Bob Harris had his facts wrong and obviously knew little about the folk scene.

So it seemed a pity that some of the other award presenters also knew nothing or next to little about the media they were presenting within. But to their credit some of those in this list were actually very good at it. Bernard Hill, who admitted with a degree of modesty and shame that he had not been involved in the folk music scene since going to Mike Harding's Folk Club in the 1960's, gave the Folk Singer of the Year Award to Martin Carthy and did so without reading anything. He sounded sincere and did a damn good job. So did the Landlady of the Pub in The Archers who gave The Best Live Act award to Bellowhead. Likewise Bruce Dickinson who gave the Best Group Act to The Oyster Band - Big Session, and Sir Gerald Kaufman who presented Martin Carthy with an award for The Best Traditional Track. Others included Charles Kennedy (MP) whose fragile connection to folk music was his father who had apparently played Highland Fiddle. Charles at least learnt his lines and without any script awarded Karine Polwart an award for The Best Album. Good on you Charles a busy politician taking the time to prove he is a true professional. I suppose having the leader of the only party to stand out against the war in Iraq was most fitting as all folk singers worth their salt would have been behind him on that one. Not a word was read; they had all memorized their script. John McCusker however knew everything about Kathryn Tickell and was able to give the wittiest and longest introductions of the lot when he presented her with The Folk Musician of the Year award. So too Noddy Holder, with whom I remember having a drinking session one lunch time in a West End pub. (I'd forgotten about that). Noddy presented Karine Polwart with an award for The Best Original Song - The sun's comin over the hill.

Karine Polwart (and The Sun's comin over the Hill) leads me to my next and biggest criticism. The sound and the general production. The producer as expected was Jon Lennard and whether he has had sleepless nights over the sound is anybody's guess. In charge of sound were Paul and Kevan Long (they might have been better if they had built Sydney Harbour Bridge) and I name them because the sound mix throughout was absolutely abysmal. In almost every live song the vocals had been mixed so far back into the accompanying musicians that it was difficult to hear what anybody was singing about - unless of course you knew the song. Jack Elliot was about the only exception, and strangely enough of course I knew the song he was singing. But even Tom Paxton (Last thing on my mind) was too far back in the general mix, although the sound men might

be able to claim some excuse from the fact that Tom looked to be standing about a yard off his mike whilst Ralph McTell was the regulation one inch.

Why on earth did the BBC allow soundmen to be in charge of a medium where the story line is the most important thing to the song if they can't get the words far up enough in the mix so that you can follow them? The sun's coming over the hill had a lovely melody and I can understand from that small fact alone why the song is so popular; but I have to confess I don't know what the sun did before it came over the hill, or what it did after it came over the hill. Karine's accent along with the dreadful sound mix completely obliterated the rest of the plot. What is the point of having an award for the best song but presenting it in such a fashion that it's almost impossible to hear the words?

Praise should go to the BBC for at least supporting folk music, which is ignored by all the other channels, and I have in this column before singularly picked out Jon Lennard for the wonderful work he has done in this medium. Perhaps it was a dreadful room; perhaps the singers didn't arrive in time to give the soundmen a chance to perfect their art. But it is a pity to have this huge hiccup for such an important occasion.

I enjoyed the chance to look around the audience to see faces I know and there were quite a few. I just hope the likes of Stanley Accrington, Paul Downes, Jim Mageean, The Wilson Family, Johnny Collins, George Papavgeris, Shep Woolley, Pete Coe, Eddie Walker, Jon Harvison, Keith Kendrick, Gina Le Faux, Kieron Means, Sarah Grey, Mick Peat, Jeremy Taylor, Dave Webber, Anni Fentiman, Bram Taylor, Mick Harris to name just a few, were invited there as well. They are the true stalwarts of the folk scene and by Jove they deserve recognition.

Joe Stead

HIGH NOON IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL

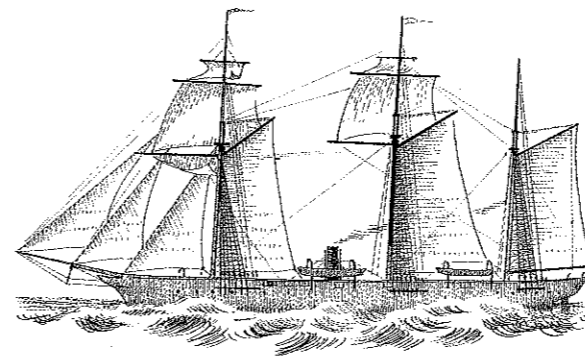
Sunday, June 19th 1864, dawned a fine, warm day in the English Channel. In the French port of Cherbourg people were setting off for church but a strange air of expectancy hung over the town. The reason was not hard to find. Huddled in the harbour, in desperate need of extensive repairs and refitting, lay a vessel which had gained worldwide notoriety during the past twenty two months. In that time she had ranged across the world's oceans, terrorising the commercial vessels of the United States with such effectiveness that many of them cowered in port or registered under some other nation's flag to escape destruction.

The dilapidated vessel in Cherbourg Harbour was none other than the Confederate raider, the ALABAMA and in her rampage across the globe she had done untold damage to the economy of Abraham Lincoln's Northern States, destroying sixty four vessels and bringing Northern trade close to a grinding halt. Perhaps of equal significance was the fact that no less than fourteen Union warships were scouring the seas for her, warships which should have been taking part in the blockade of Southern ports to strangle the Confederacy's trade and bottle up her navy. Now one of those Union warships had found their quarry. A sleek, dark shape had been prowling ominously offshore for several days, a Yankee cruiser, the U.S.S. KEARSAGE. Her crew prepared for the battle which they, and everyone else, knew must come. She was under the command of Captain John Winslow.

On that fateful Sunday morning the ALABAMA slipped her moorings and pointed her bows to the open sea. Word spread quickly. Some excited souls left their church services and rushed to the cliff tops to watch the battle. Many were already there. A flotilla of small boats followed the warship out past the breakwater. More vessels were arriving from England to claim their ringside

seats. As the ALABAMA emerged, the KEARSAGE withdrew, enticing her adversary outside the three mile limit so that she would not easily be able to return to port. The crowds on the cliff tops watched with bated breath as the two warships closed to a range of just a few hundred yards and began to circle each other like a pair of prize fighters.

The story of the ALABAMA had begun, cloaked in secrecy, at the John Laird shipyard, Birkenhead where she was simply known as Number 290 and claimed to be a merchant vessel. The reason for this was simple; it was illegal for Britain to build a warship for the Confederacy since that would violate international treaties governing neutrality. We might suppose that clandestine deals are a comparatively recent bit of commercial skulduggery but the ALABAMA clearly demonstrates that we were playing that dirty game a very long time ago.



Sketch by Brian Bull

Building a ship, however, can not be done overnight and as the months went by Union suspicions were aroused. Rumour has it that diplomats were on their way to investigate when Number 290 was hurriedly named the ENRICA and put to sea for trials. She never returned to the Mersey. Instead, she made her way to the Azores and took on her armament and her new captain, Raphael Semmes from Maryland. Her crew were mostly mercenaries, many of them from Liverpool and Birkenhead.

In the Azores, the ENRICA was renamed the ALABAMA and the band played 'Dixie' as she hoisted the Confederate flag. She attacked her first Yankee victim soon afterwards on September 5th 1862 and so began her infamous career terrorising the shipping lanes of the world as she ranged from the Gulf of Mexico to the East Indies.

Now, off Cherbourg, the ALABAMA faced a showdown. It was not the first time she had come face to face with an enemy warship. On January 7th 1863 she had fought the Union warship, U.S.S. HATTERAS in the Gulf of Mexico and sent her to the bottom within minutes. The KEARSAGE however was a different proposition, faster and better armed, she also had the advantage of heavy chains hung along her sides providing a kind of D.I.Y. armour cladding.

The watchers on the shore heard loud reports as both ships commenced their cannonade. Soon a heavy pall of gun smoke cloaked the two warships and they disappeared from view. An early hit on the rudder post of the KEARSAGE might have disabled her sufficiently for the ALABAMA to escape but the shell failed to explode. After almost two years at sea the Confederate ship's gunpowder and fuses were damp and unreliable. To make matters worse the KEARSAGE's D.I.Y. armour proved remarkably effective in deflecting many of the ALABAMA's hits.

As the damage to the ALABAMA escalated Captain Semmes had no option but to give the order to abandon ship. The stricken raider slipped stern first beneath the waves as the survivors, including Captain Semmes, were plucked from the water by the watching flotilla.

The controversy surrounding the ALABAMA rumbled on for years after the American Civil War was over and eventually, in 1872, an international court in Geneva found that Britain had violated its neutrality and should pay compensation to the United States of more than 15 million dollars.

A late postscript to the story occurred in 1984 when the wreck of the ALABAMA was discovered on the seabed and divers later brought up numerous interesting artefacts, including the ship's massive Blakely cannon. These now reside in the U.S.A. and in France but the bulk of the ship will stay forever in its last resting place, the shifting sands of the sea floor off Cherbourg Harbour.

ROLL ALABAMA ROLL

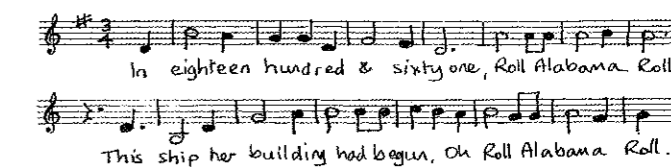
In his priceless book 'Shanties of the Seven Seas', Stan Hugill states that the most prolific period of shanty composition was from the 1820's to the 1860's. Clearly, given the date of the battle (1864), this shanty must have come into being at the end of that period. It was probably one of the last shanties to be added to the shanty man's repertoire. By this time the heyday of the sail was almost over and the steam age was dawning. The ALABAMA, like other ships of her time, hovered between two technologies, being equipped with both sails and coal fired steam boilers. Soon, the shanty man's art would no longer be needed as the great days of sail receded into history.

This shanty is interesting in giving such a coherent and accurate account of a historical event. Shanties were usually a ramshackle affair of barely related verse strung together in order to get a job done. The shanty man would improvise new verses and borrow verses from other shanties, singing just long enough to finish the work in hand. The genre did not lend itself to story telling. One can only surmise that the story of the ALABAMA exercised such a powerful grip on seafarer's imaginations that it became a shanty in spite of the general rule.

This version of the shanty is also interesting in that it was collected by Stan Hugill from the widow of a man who had been a seaman aboard the ALABAMA. By the time Stan met her in 1925 she was living in Gisborne, New Zealand.

I have been singing this shanty for some considerable time and when I referred back to Stan's version I discovered that I had changed the words over the years. The version below is the way I sing it but you can find the version as collected by Stan in his book, 'Shanties of The Seven Seas'.

Brian Bull



In eighteen hundred and sixty one,
Roll, Alabama, roll.
This ship her building had begun,
Oh, roll, Alabama, roll.

The Alabama was built in Birkenhead,
All in the yards of Jonathan Laird.

And down the Mersey she rolled one day,
And across the ocean she sailed away.

Against the North Captain Semmes did employ,
Every means he could to kill and destroy.

With British guns, oh, she was stocked.
In Cherbourg harbour one day she docked.

Off Cherbourg Harbour the Kearsage lay tight,
Cap'n Winslow spoiling for a fight.

Outside the three mile limit they fought,
Cap'n Semmes escaped on a fine British yacht.

Now the Kearsage beat the Alabama so brave,
The Alabama she sank to a watery grave.

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



Message boards

First of all apologies to people who have been looking at the message boards on the website. On occasion they have had additions made to them by various 'people' advertising sites for things other than folk music. Whilst I remove these when I see them, there may be times when I haven't looked for a few days and a plague of these 'messages' hijack the board. Unfortunately this is the way of the world and what I intend to do is make it so that contributions will be made via email to me as webmaster and I will add legitimate entries to the song request board or the message board. A word of warning - on no account click on any of the hyperlinks that get put on there if you are unsure of their origin.

Budding Folkies

Take a look at John Prentice's guide to the budding Folkie who is taking on bookings. Very sensible and interesting advice on there. You can find this article on <http://www.folknorthwest.co.uk/performanceworkshop.htm> You may have some advice or experiences of your own that you would like to share with everybody. Did you have a nightmare of a gig one night for whatever reason or do you have good experiences of a certain club? Let us know.

Happy Birthday Ali

A belated Happy Birthday to Ali O'Brien - well the Sounds of Folk show that she hosts on BBC GMR at 8-00 on a Monday night. The show has been going for over two years now from the end of May and is comfortably settled in between 'The Parlour' with Alan Keegan and 'GMR Country' with David Spencer.

Sam Smith's snub

Disturbing news that Sam Smith's brewery has decided to remove all forms of music and entertainment from its pubs. I understand the reason behind this is that brewery owner Humphrey Smith wants to revert his pubs back to the good old days before jukeboxes, big TV screens, and other forms of extraneous noise so that the customers can hear themselves

talk to one another - or indeed talk to one another! It is also possible that in order to lower his costs, he doesn't want to pay the various licence fees required in order to have music - live or otherwise.

This is obviously a blow to folk clubs based in Yorkshire where the majority of Sam Smith's pubs are situated but it would be interesting to know if any clubs on this side of the Pennines are meeting in a Smith's establishment and how they were informed that they had to leave. Two pubs that are affected are the Plough at Whitby and "Nellies" at Beverley. I gather the landlord at the Plough was made to sign an undertaking that he wouldn't permit any form of music or entertainment in the pub.

It remains to be seen whether or not the actions of Sam Smith's brewery has a knock on effect with other breweries especially in the light of the new licensing laws coming into play in November.

Any comments or other things you want to see on the website should be addressed to webmaster@folknorthwest.co.uk

Enjoy your festivals over the summer - I may see you at one or two.

Happy surfing

Mark Dowding
www.folknorthwest.co.uk

LETTERS



Ken

If you are a Folk Club Organiser, Folk Performer or member of a Folk Band then you can help with this (hopefully) Nation-wide (Ideally) World-wide initiative in an effort to relieve the suffering caused by famine in the third world.

HOW?

By: - Organising a collection or raffle at your club or running a concert for the cause - or (preferably) both.

WHEN?

Obviously the most important thing is to raise some money to help feed starving people or to buy them equipment to help grow/produce food for themselves - so choosing a time for your concert is entirely up to you. Personally I am aiming for September for three reasons -

1. It is the traditional time for the harvest;
2. It will give me time to organise things effectively; and
3. It's the time of year when things are 'picking-up' after everyone has had their summer holidays.

I am not a charity and I'm certainly not advocating that you send any money to me. I have set up a web site www.singforsomeoneellessupper.ukart.com and on it there are links to places where you can 'pay in' any donations e.g. - The Disasters Emergency Committee and Band Aid (Though I'm sure that there are many others) The Web Site also contains a Calendar where you can input the date/details of your function and a Forum where you can input ideas/anecdotes etc. I will add a link on the site to any organisation/person/band who pledges to do something When any money is raised please forward the information (NOT THE MONEY) to me so that I can add it to the

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total on the website

WHY I DECIDED TO START THIS?

In January I did some things for the Tsunami appeal and was amazed at peoples reaction and generosity. At Gregson Lane Folk Club we had a raffle - we only had a hundred quids-worth of tickets - miraculously the raffle made £240. Then we had a concert at a local pub - the Landlord put on a free supper - entry by donation - the evening made £500 The next Folk Club, our guest was Anthony John Clarke - at the end of the night the audience screamed for an encore - With AJCs permission, we agreed that he would do an encore if people tossed their change into a bucket - we collected £114

It struck me that we had never done much for the starving people in Africa and that they deserved our help just as much as the people who suffered in the Tsunami, so I thought that I would try and organise something. Obviously Bob Geldof has already proved that musicians and music lovers care - I thought that it would be nice to show that Grass-roots musicians care too.

Hopefully the Folk Community will respond in great numbers (Just like you all did last year but one when I organised the petition against the licensing bill.) Let's show the world that we care.

Graham Dixon

Too old to Rock & Roll, Too young to die

Dear Ken

On behalf of Redeem, the mobile phone and printer cartridge recycling company, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has given their support to our recent Tsunami Recycling Appeal. Your readers have helped us to raise over £5,000 for the Disasters Emergency Committee's Tsunami Earthquake Appeal. Those who donated were one of over 100 companies and more than 1,900 individuals who helped out the appeal.

We asked the public to send us their old mobile phones and empty printer cartridges to be recycled - and in return we pledged to give money to the DEC. We are delighted with the response so far, with our total currently standing at £4,300 - and as a company deeply committed to its charity work, we have contributed a further £700. This money will go to areas affected by the disaster via the DEC's member agencies, with the DEC ensuring it reaches those who need it most. The Disasters Emergency Committee is appealing for outstanding donations to be banked, so if you requested a freepost bag to donate a mobile or cartridge, please endeavour to return it as soon as possible.

Although the Tsunami Recycling Appeal is coming to a close, there's still plenty of opportunity to help charity and the environment through recycling. Why not recycle to raise funds for one of our other partner charities? Many of the UK's charities felt an impact on their funds when public attention was diverted to the tsunami disaster - so now's your chance to help them out. Our partners include Marie Curie Cancer Care, Royal National Institute of the Blind, Children's Hospice Association Scotland, Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation, Northern Ireland Hospice Care and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Whether you want to make a one-off mobile phone or cartridge donation, or you want to make regular donations from your workplace (which we collect free), we'd be delighted to hear from you. All you have to do is visit www.recyclingappeal.com and choose a charity, or call 08712 50 50 50. Thanks once again for your support. Kindest regards, **Rob Morton**
Corporate Responsibility Executive, Redeem Plc

Dear Ken

I am making contact with 100 folk clubs to see if they would consider buying two copies of the above book at a reduced price of £10 pounds per copy (normal price £15) plus £3 p&p. The books could be either sold to members or used for raffles etc and is a terrific keepsake. More books would of course be available for those who wished.

If with your help we can meet our target 2000 much needed pounds would be raised for The Teenage Cancer Trust. I do so much hope you can help out. To order 'A Gathering Of Folk' The Studio, Braeside, St Sampsons, Guernsey, GY2 4FF. Tel; 01481 249719 Fax; 01481 241123 With Kind Regards or visit www.museum.guernsey.net/Gathering_of_Folk.htm .

Mark Leightley

Dear Editor

Folk-group "DrevA" (Russia) www.drevafolk.narod.ru will be at the Bath Fringe festival on 3, 4 and 5 of June. From the 6 - 29 June and 27 July - 5 August we shall have some free dates for performances in Britain (festivals, theatre, club, exhibitions, restaurants...). If you'd like to book us we shall be glad to accept your offers. We wish you good luck! Hope to meet you soon!

Yours sincerely,

Yury Treskov

Director of folk-group "DrevA"
e-mail: dreva@ru.ru (or) etno@mnirti.ru Web/site: www.drevafolk.narod.ru

Dear Editor

I am a comedy singer songwriter based in Manchester. I am interested in playing some festivals or fringe events this year or maybe in 2006. You can hear a small sample of my material on my website including reviews etc on www.domcollins.co.uk

Dominic Collins

Hi all

Just to let you know that our website is up and running again: www.hisworshipandthepig.net

All the best

Jeff Parton

Hello

If you have a moment, please take a look at www.manxman.ch There are videos and mp3 files of our band. We are a folk and blues band from the Isle of Man, but we are sometimes around in the UK north-west/ midlands at certain times of the year. If you like any of the stuff I would be glad send a demo CD to you. Just let us know.

Best Regards

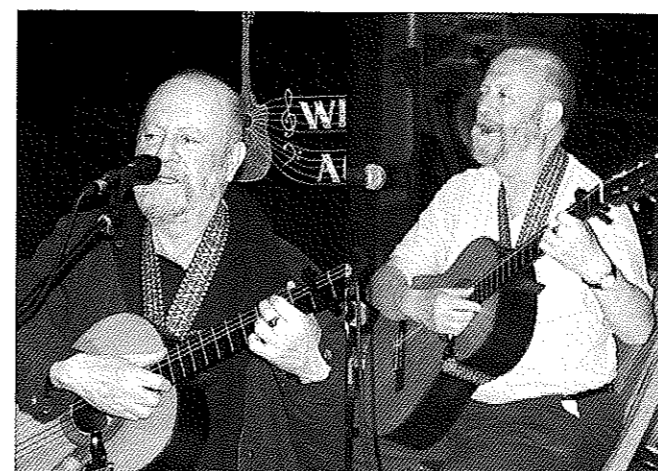
Alan Hess, Stationary Willberries

OBITUARIES

CYRIL TAWNEY

(October 12 1930 to April 21 2005)

Cyril Tawney - in my, and in many people's estimate, the greatest ever writer of nautical songs and ballads - died on Thursday 21 April after a long illness and the last nine months in hospital. He will be missed.



FAIR WINDS AND A FOLLOWING SEA

May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind ever be at your back,
May you find old friends waiting to greet you, there on the outside track
We're gathered together old times to remember, 'tis but for ourselves we would grieve,
So we'll sing you a chorus and bid you farewell,
fair winds and a following sea.

We'll sing of "The Leaf" and "The Parting Glass", we'll raise up our voices in song,
No sadness today for the one who has passed, celebrate with a voice glad and strong.
A catch in the throat, a tear in the eye, but no funeral dirge will this be,
We'll roar "Auld Lang Syne" as a victory song.
fair winds and a following sea.

And those of us left here will miss a true friend who shared with us good times and bad,
Raising a glass to your memory we'll say: "We've known you - why should be we sad?"
We honour a life that was lived to the full, we honour a spirit, now free.
You'll long be remembered, whenever we say: "Fair winds and a following sea!"
You'll long be remembered, whenever we say: "Fair winds and a following sea!"
Sing a song for Cyril and raise a glass in his honour. --
Fair winds - and a following sea!

My intention is to mount a sung recording of the song on my website, for anyone who wishes to access, download, sing, whatever. If you'd like to get some idea of the melody, I've got a rough version already on my website.
Tom Lewis <http://www.tomlewis.net>

FESTIVAL NEWS



22ND BEVERLEY FOLK FESTIVAL

The countdown begins to a landmark Beverley Folk Festival in the East Riding of Yorkshire, running from 17-19 June 2005. The main Festival site, based at Beverley Leisure Centre now

boasts some of the finest facilities on the folk scene. Following extensive refurbishment the Leisure Centre now has brand new mains showers and toilets alongside the main Festival site and this year's visitors will be some of the first to try them out. Over the weekend the Festival will bring the picturesque market town of Beverley alive with concerts, Ceilidhs, workshops, children's events, a specially developed youth programme, dance displays and more.

Just confirmed are Acoustic CHUMBAWAMBA gives us "Songs for the Common Man" in the beautiful setting of Beverley Minster on Saturday night. The front man from Squeeze, Glenn Tilbrook will be opening the Festival on Friday night sharing the bill with outstanding guitarist Martin Simpson. Multi-award winner Kate Rusby will be bringing the Festival to a close on Sunday night after a performance from the boys from Hull, Doghouse Skiffle Group.

Joining them over the weekend will be triple BBC Radio 2 Folk Award 2005 winner Karine Polwart; top Irish band Lunasa; the fantastic Flook, BBC Radio 3 Award 2005 winners Warsaw Village Band, Spanish virtuoso Eduardo Niebla Duo; the celebrated partnership of Chris Newman & Maire Ni Chathasaigh and one of Ireland's finest singer/songwriters Eleanor McEvoy.

Add to that young accomplished group Rachel Unthank and the Winterset; popular duo Tom Napper Tom Bliss plus local favourites Beverley Community Choir and Staithes Fisherman's Choir plus Bernard Wrigley, Les Barker and Steve Royle in the Festival Comedy Club and Beverley Folk Festival really comes alive.

Due to the success of Ceilidhs and global bops at past Festivals there is a brand new dance programme for 2005. Ceilidhs are headed up by BBC Radio 2 Folk Award 2005 winners Whapweasel with the world music scene led by Peatbog Faeries to get everyone up and dancing with their mix of Celtic, jazz, hip-hop and reggae.

The Shooting Roots (youth project) is the part of the Festival dedicated to young people between 12-25 years old. It is a great place to make new friends and learn new skills. The Children's Events, programmed by Sidmouth's Bev & Ray Langton provides creative crafts, workshops, family shows and stories in a specially dedicated marquee on the edge of the campsite.

As well as the Children's Marquee, the Festival's main site also houses a brand new World Trade Market and Music Café that is open to all and is a great place to relax, soak up the Festival atmosphere and shop at the eclectic market stalls.

On Saturday the Famous Festival Procession is the highlight of the ritual dance programme and throughout the Festival visitors can enjoy dance displays from Berkshire Bedlam, Sallyport Sword Dancers, Green Ginger Garland and lots more.

Beverley Folk Festival is the ideal place for the whole family to visit. All Festival venues are within easy walking distance of the Festival campsite and travel to Beverley is via the M62 and main line railway stations. Visitors can buy 9 tickets of any one type and get an extra one FREE and experience the new look Beverley Folk Festival. Full Weekend Season, Day Season and Individual Event tickets are on sale now.

For more details contact the Festival Office, PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU.
Box Office: 01629 827018
info@beverleyfestival.com www.beverleyfestival.com

LINE UP FOR THE WICKERMAN!

Alabama 3, The Stranglers, Dreadzone and the Crazy World of Arthur Brown are just a fraction of the entertainment laid on for this year's Wickerman Festival. The event takes place in deepest Galloway on the 22nd & 23rd of July 2005 all in a spacious 120 acre site. An amazing seven stages are on offer alongside late bars, trade stalls, children's area and of course the Torching of a giant Wickerman on the Saturday night. Tickets are a snip at £45 for the weekend with free camping and parking included. Children under the age of 14 are also admitted free as long as an adult accompanies them.

Described as "cutting edge", "the Glasto of the North" and "as retro as a mullet", the Wickerman offers a unique chance to enjoy everything from Psy Trance in the Eden tent, through to Celtic Rock, Reggae and Acoustic sounds on the other stages.

The festival's links to cult cinema - the 1973 film The Wicker Man was shot in the area - will culminate in the spectacular burning of a 2005 effigy at midnight on Saturday (look out Edward Woodward! - Ed). Tickets are now on sale - £45 for the weekend including camping, Saturday only day ticket £30. Children 14 and under accompanied by an adult go free. Check out the website for further updates: www.thewickermanfestival.co.uk

CAN YOU TELL WHO IT IS YET?

Rolf Harris Comes To Towersey!

The nation's favourite Australian, Rolf Harris, brings his unique concert to the little village of Towersey, nr Thame, Oxon on Thursday 25 August 2005. Rolf and his band will be performing on the brand new stage in the open-air Arena as a Pre-Festival Special before the 41st Towersey Village Festival (25-29 August 2005).

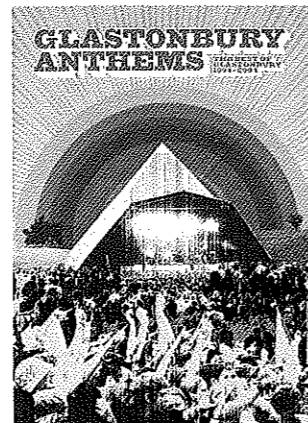
With a career spanning over 50 years. Rolf is well known for his television shows including Rolf's Cartoon Club, The Rolf Harris Show, Animal Hospital and more recently Rolf on Art. On the recording front he has had mammoth hits such as Stairway To Heaven, Two Little Boys, Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport and Sun Arise. He has travelled the globe with his live show performing to sell-out crowds and has been voted the most popular entertainer at Glastonbury.

Early bird tickets for this one-off concert are on sale for just £16 and £8 (5-17 yrs) until 30 June 2005 (usual price £25 & £12). This show will sell out so customers are advised to book as soon as possible. Season ticket holders for Towersey Village Festival can buy their Rolf Harris concert ticket at a special discounted rate until 30 June 2005. Book tickets for Rolf Harris online at www.towerseyfestival.com or call the Festival Box Office on 01629 827016.

Towersey is in within easy reach of the M40, main line railway stations and on The Phoenix Trail cycle route. There is a big free car park a short walk from the Arena. Visitors can buy 9 tickets of any one type, and get an extra one FREE so get a group of family and friends together and head to Towersey for a Rolf-tastic experience! For more details contact the Festival Office, PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU, Box Office: 01629 827016 info@towerseyfestival.com www.towerseyfestival.com

GLASTONBURY ANTHEMS THE BEST OF 1994 TO 2004 DVD

For the first time ever, live performances from the greatest festival on the planet have been brought together on one DVD. Buy it Here : <http://shop.glastonburyfestivals.co.uk/Store/DVD.html>



With a tracklisting chosen by fans on the official Glastonbury Festival site, the DVD includes seminal Glasto moments from the likes of RADIOHEAD, COLDPLAY, FRANZ FERDINAND, ROBBIE WILLIAMS and THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS. The best of the performances from the last ten years of Glastonbury are here, from Blur doing 'This Is A Low' in '94 to a majestic 'Hey Jude' from Paul McCartney in 2004.

PRESS RELEASES



HOBGOBLIN'S 14TH CATALOGUE IS HERE!

The long awaited 14th Hobgoblin Music catalogue is now available. The catalogue includes photos of hundreds of musical instruments, spares and books, with descriptions, prices, and a wealth of advice on choosing an instrument, and lots of helpful information.

The very first Hobgoblin catalogue was published in 1978, and since then, each new edition has been keenly awaited by a huge and loyal customer base. For the fourteenth edition, the catalogue has returned to a handy A5 size, and is currently being mailed out to thousands of folk music lovers across the country. The catalogue is available from all Hobgoblin shops, from the Hobgoblin festival stand throughout the summer, and by post (call 0845 130 9500 or e.mail catalogues@hobgoblin.co.uk)

YAMAHA ANNOUNCE FIRST 'PORTABLE' PA SYSTEM

New portable Public Address System (STAGEPAS 300) brings Yamaha's professional sound quality and features to new markets in a compact, easy to use, affordable package - totally self contained, the system is ideal for schools, places of worship, conference venues and small to mid sized entertainment venues-

Yamaha launched their first portable PA with the introduction of the STAGEPAS 300, designed to meet the increasing 'multi-use' demands of a variety of venues and institutions. Yamaha is a market leader in high level professional sound reinforcement products and STAGEPAS brings that technology into a convenient, portable system that can be set-up and operated by anyone with little or no technical knowledge.

STAGEPAS offers an ultra - compact design, 2-way speakers and an easy to use eight - channel stereo mixing console. The system is also ideal for multimedia corporate presentations. As you'd expect from Yamaha, technical specifications are impressive, each speaker contains an 8" woofer and 1" compression driver, driven by a 150-watt (x2) professional Yamaha power amplifier. The Mixing console features balanced XLR connectors, microphone / line switches and balanced 1/4 jacks. 2-band EQ provides flexible tone control and a 24-bit digital reverb further enhances sound fidelity. Connectors for tape recorders, CD players are conveniently located on the front



The Railway Folk & Acoustic Music Club LYMM FESTIVAL 2005

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30th June to 7th July 2005 inclusive

In the garden marquee every night

www.railwayfolkclub.co.uk

- 30 Jun (Thu) **Bernard Cromarty (£4/£5)**
01 Jul (Fri) **Nancy Kerr & James Fagan (£10/£12)**
02 Jul (Sat) **Chris While & Julie Matthews (£10/£12)**
03 Jul (Sun) **Back of the Moon (£6.50/£8)**
04 Jul (Mon) **Anthony John Clarke (£6/£7.50)**
05 Jul (Tue) **Tom McConville, Pauline Cato & Dave Wood (£6.50/£8)**
06 Jul (Wed) **Garva (£6.50/£8)**
07 Jul (Thur) **Ceilidh (£5.00/£6)**

Contact : Stewart Lever 07919 270 916

Whole week ticket for only £30; reduced prices for under 15's and advance tickets



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two aspects of Martin Graebe's ability to write great songs in traditional style and his research into the songs from the collection of Baring-Gould.



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Vicki's unique style of playing the Smallpipes is spellbindingly beautiful and is perfectly complimented by Jonny's driving guitar.

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Recycled and reclaimed verses from the English traditional repertoire that have been languishing in printed collections and rarely performed.



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English dance music at its most invigorating... wordless, intoxicating sounds. T'roots

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"Riveting with any song and unique his own as they approach the traditional repertoire" (Folk London)

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Available from all good record stores or on line at www.propermusic.com 020 8676 5141 or Musikfolk: www.musikfolk.com 01326 318085

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panel. For added convenience the high impact moulded cases include rear compartments that house the mixer, cabling and accessories. PRICE £399

BISMARCKS RELEASE JOANNA

The Bismarcks are three English musicians playing traditional tunes on three instruments: Ed Rennie on melodeon, Nina Hansell on fiddle and Gareth Kiddier on piano. This is their second album of dance-length tunes for ceilidh and English traditional dancing (their previous album was 'Upstream' EFDSS CD06 1999). Having performed at ceilidh clubs and festivals for nearly ten years, The Bismarcks have worked with some of the best callers in the country. They are themselves dancers and have all played for traditional and ritual dancing such as sword and Morris. During a ceilidh they continually study the dance floor and concentrate on providing just the right tempo to lift the dancers.

They also take great pains in their choice of tunes. On this album sources include 18th century Lincolnshire, 19th century Australia and 20th century Italy, as well as one of Nina and Ed's own compositions. Small but perfectly formed, The Bismarcks' sound is somehow greater than the sum of its parts. At times there's an almost mechanical, unstoppable energy to their playing. Exactly how this happens is probably not something that can or should be defined. Suffice to say that it's just three people doing what they love to do. That's what makes The Bismarcks' amongst the bounciest, most infectious and best music for English ceilidh dancing. JOANNA by the BISMARCKS IS AVAILABLE FROM EFDSS CD10 £13.50 (+ £2 p&p UK) Further Information: <http://www.efdss.org/vidcat.htm>; Rod Stradling's Musical Tradition review of 'Joanna': http://www.mustrad.org.uk/reviews/r_index.htm Or Visit <http://www.thebismarcks.com>

DEARMAN GAMMON & HARRISON

Annie Dearman, Vic Gammon & Steve Harrison perform traditional song in a robust and firmly rooted English style, accompanied on squeezeboxes, banjo and mouthorgan. The selection presented on this CD includes narrative songs (or ballads) and lyrical songs (which tend to express a mood or feeling). Three dance tunes are also included. Some of the songs and tunes show the smoothing action of age, as do pebbles in a stream. Others are as rough as old boots, dealing in themes common to much other art: love, marriage, seduction, sex, separation, fidelity, prostitution, loss, jealousy, parental disapproval, fantasy, death, murder and deception. They deal with recurring human experiences and still have the ability to speak to and move us today.

FURTHER INFORMATION: <http://www.efdss.org/vidcat.htm>
Annie & Steve are residents at the Ripponden Folk Club and active members of the Ryburn 3-Step community folk arts organisation <http://www.ryburn3step.org.uk>. ORDERS TO: info@efdss.org or 020 7 485 2206 Ext 29

DANU

When All Is Said & Done

Danu released 'When All is Said & Done' in early May on Shanachie (SHA 78061), distributed by Proper Music Distribution. The band has also announced its retirement from large scale touring with effect from March 2006. After 10 years constant touring they are taking a sabbatical, during those 10 years many of the band have got married and several young Danu's have arrived or are in the pipeline. Visit www.danu.net for further information.

CELTARABIA

Celtarabia play high-energy world fusion music. East meets West, ancient meets modern to create a spectacular musical weave. Human creativity greets the digital age to make a unique mix of archaic melodies, ancient instruments and global beats in a truly exhilarating and unforgettable musical experience. Storming instrumental dance tracks and stunning vocals combined with a deep understanding of ancient traditions and modern technology have allowed Celtarabia to create music of breath-taking vision and richly layered textural and rhythmic complexity. Amanda Lowe's stunning vocals Hurdy-Gurdy, Hammer Dulcimer, Low-Whistle, Cittern, Bag-pipes, Shawm and programmed beats contribute to the unique and exciting sound of Celtarabia.

CELTARABIA have been touring and playing their unique brand of world fusion music to packed houses since the early 1990's. The band is synonymous with a great night out and a chance to let your hair down and dance. Their first album 'THE LOST MUSIC OF CELTARABIA' (GRINCD941) was greeted with wide spread popular acclaim being reviewed favourably in Q; MOJO; MIX MAG and FOLK ROOTS. Their collaboration album CELTARABIA MEETS THE ROOTSMAN - UNION OF SOULS combined dub; Arabic and world music elements. CELTARABIA are: QUENTIN BUDWORTH - (HURDY-GURDY; SHAWM; BAG-PIPES; LOW-WHISTLE AND PROGRAMMING) AND AMANDA LOWE - (VOCALS; HARP; HAMMER DULCIMER AND PROGRAMMING). TO BOOK TO CELTARABIA OR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: (01964) 562073 or email: admin@soundworking.com

CLADDAGH RELEASES

Claddagh Records in Dublin has an on-line record store that features a catalogue of Irish music CDs. They have a massive selection of Irish traditional music available, ranging from the early traditional recordings of the 1960s to the most recent new releases. Whether it's solo albums, groups, traditional song or more recent contemporary music they have it all here for your listening pleasure. These are some of the recent releases:

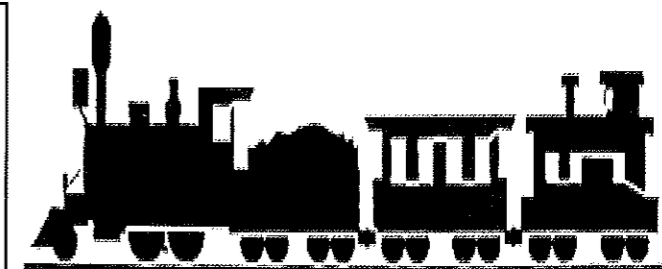
TONY O'CONNELL & ANDY MORROW with ARTY McGLYNN TOCAM 001. A truly engaging album, this presents concertina and fiddle music with guitar accompaniment. O'Connell from Kerry and Morrow from Leitrim have made as musical and enjoyable an album as we have heard in a long time. On thirteen tracks they play their hearts out with skill, feeling and panache. If you get this one, you'll be doing yourself a favour.

ROGUERY ROAD Jason O'Rourke & Ruadhraí O'Kane. WRCD 1404. Another recording of concertina and fiddle. O'Rourke has been a well-known frequenter of the Belfast session scene for quite a time and O'Kane, originally from Dungiven in Derry, has moved there in recent years. This is yet another excellent album, recorded live in County Antrim, albeit on a wider canvas, as they have brought in quite a few other musicians, including O'Kane's father, Séamus, the famous bodhran maker and player. Other well-known players from the Belfast sessions include Breandán O'Hare and Davy Maguire. The tunes are from a broad base, including Brittany, Wales and Orkney. Top class.

DUBLIN STREET SONGS/THROUGH DUBLIN CITY Frank Harte. HDCD 0042. These are Frank's first two albums, published originally on the Topic label, and unavailable for many years. There are twenty songs in all, with informative notes and texts. There is concertina accompaniment by Alf Edwards, and the singing is, as one would expect, excellent. BANJOED Dessie Kelliher. Dessie Kelliher is from Castlegregory in Kerry, and is an ace banjo player. He has surrounded himself

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16 JUN NELSON PEACH (£3)

23 JUN SINGERS NIGHT (£1)

LYMM FESTIVAL 2005 (week ticket price £30)

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01 JUL NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN (£10/£12)

02 JUL CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS £10/£12)

03 JUL BACK OF THE MOON (£6.50/£8)

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06 JUL GARVA (£6.50/£8)

07 JUL FESTIVAL CEILIDH (£5/£6)

21 JUL MARTYN WYNDHAM-READE (£6)

28 JUL BIG SPOT : PETER HOOD & LINDA EDWARDS (£1)

11 AUG BIG SPOT: STEWART LEVER (£1)

25 AUG KERFUFFLE (£6.50)

GRAND RE-OPENING 08 SEP VIN GARBUTT (£8/£9)

All other Thursdays are Singers Nights (£1)

Contact/Tickets: Stewart Lever 07919 270916

e-mail stewart_lever@yahoo.co.uk

		NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS	
SUNDAY			
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, Irwell 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, Runcom	Roger Hanslip 01928-731567
Four Fools	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 (club now closed)	8:30 PM	Fleece Inn, Penny Street, Blackburn	Brian Kirkham 01254-720745
Burnley (new location)	8:30 PM	Burnley Miners Social Club, 27a Plumbe Street, Burnley	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, Uppemill, 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 (new location)	7:30 PM	Station Hotel, Colne Road, Earby, BB18	Sharon Hobson 01282-841727
Fleetwood	8:30 PM	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood, FY7 6BT	Milke France 01253-776607
Folk in the Barn (+ new location)	8:15 PM	Rosehill Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven, Cumbria	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, WA13 9SQ	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, Walgate, 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	8:00 PM	The Sunset Suite, Carlisle Football Ground, Warwick Road	Myrna Rae 01697-72305
Hale & Hearty	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 Baty 01257-230508
SATURDAY			
Barnoldswick	8:00 PM	Fosters Arms, Gisburn Road, Barnoldswick, BB18	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

CLUB RESIDENTS (as on 22nd April, 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

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

BURNLEY – Korrigan, Wench All, Barbara, Mike and Steve

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

CROWN – Kieron Hartley, Jeff Monks, John Keithley, Dave Wild

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 IN THE BARN – The Occasional Three

FOUR FOOLS – Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Malcolm Gibbons, Geoff & Lindsey Smith, Gill Coyne, 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 WOODCOCK – 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)

MAY into JULY

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

SUNDAY	29TH MAY	5TH JUNE	12TH JUNE	19TH JUNE	26TH JUNE
Bothy	closed - Bank Holiday	ABBIE LATHE	Singers Night	Singers Night	TOM & BARBARA BROWN
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	BAKER'S FABULOUS BOYS ("Wirral Folk on the Coast")	FIDDLESTONE	Singers Night
Open Door	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	MARY HUMPHREYS & ANAHATA	Singaround
Walshaw	Singers Night	Singers Night	EDDIE MCGURK	Singers Night	Singaround
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	closed - Bank Holiday	CHARITY NIGHT	Singers Night	Singers Night	closed
MONDAY	30TH MAY	6TH JUNE	13TH JUNE	20TH JUNE	27TH JUNE
Bacup	JIM GANSLER & TOM O'GORMAN	Singaround	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE	Singaround	PELICAN BABIES
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	REDMAYNE	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Philharmonic Hall	DONOVAN	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	STEVE TURNER	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	PAT RYAN & KEN HOWARD	Singers Night
Swinton	Singers Night	JOE TOPPING	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	31ST MAY	7TH JUNE	14TH JUNE	21ST JUNE	28TH JUNE
Brewery Arts Centre	Ceilidh-FAGIN'S POCKET	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	SHANTY JACK	Singers Night	Singers Night
Everyman	Singers Night	Singers Night	BANDERSNATCH	Singers Night	CHILLY PILLS
Howcroft Inn	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	tba	Singers Night
Longridge	Singers Night	MUDDYHEAD	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	1ST JUNE	8TH JUNE	15TH JUNE	22ND JUNE	29TH JUNE
Alison Arms	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	ISAMBARDE	SAD PIG	ROSIE DOONAN & BEN MURRAY	DAVE WEBBER & ANNI FENTIMAN	TRIO THRELFALL
Cross Keys	Singers Night	BRAM TAYLOR	CHRIS JONES	PAUL DOWNES	KIMBERS MEN

WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	1ST JUNE	8TH JUNE	15TH JUNE	22ND JUNE	29TH JUNE
Falcon	Open Mic. - PA provided	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull		Music Session - English	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	2ND JUNE	9TH JUNE	16TH JUNE	23RD JUNE	30TH JUNE
Biddulph	JULIE MATTHEWS TRIO	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Earby	Singaround	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Fleetwood	PETE RYDER	Singers Night	Singers Night	LYNN & BARRIE HARDMAN	Singers Night
Gregson Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Pacific Arts Centre	TOMMY EMMANUEL				
Parkgate		"REAL TIME ("Wirral Folk on the Coast")			TANGLEFOOT
Railway (Lymm)	NANCY CUNLIFFE TOM KITCHING & PAUL SULLIVAN	BIG SPOT with GEOFF BIBBY	NELSON PEACH	Singers Night	Lymm Festival (day 1) BERNARD CROMARTY
South Lakes Music Prom.	EMILY DRUCE & STEVE JONES				
Southport Arts Centre	JILL FIELDING BAND	"MARINERS ALL"	Singers Night		
Upstairs at the Woodcock	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wigan (Seven Stars)	PETE GOE	closed until 02/09/05	closed		
Wrexham	3RD JUNE	10TH JUNE	17TH JUNE	24TH JUNE	1ST JULY
Bollington	Singers Night	REAL TIME	Singers Night	PHIL HARE	Singers Night
Carlisle Folk & Blues		WAKING THE WITCH		EMILY DRUCE & STEVE JONES	
Folk in the Barn	GRACE NOTES		TANIA OPLAND & MIKE FREEMAN		JOHN KIRKPATRICK
Hale & Hearty	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround		Singaround
Leigh	No programme available				
Mr Kite Benefits	JULIE MATTHEWS >@ (Worden Arts Centre)				
Northwich	Singers Night	VIN GARBUIT	Singers Night	Singers Night	TANGLEFOOT
Pacific Arts Centre	PEGGY SEEGER	SONGS OF THE 7 SEAS			
Porkles	BOB FOX	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	BANISTER/BARLOW Singers & Musicians
Preston	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	STEVE TILSTON	Singers Night
Rhyl			WARSAW VILLAGE BAND		
Southport Arts Centre	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton					

	SATURDAY	4TH JUNE	11TH JUNE	18TH JUNE	25TH JUNE	2ND JULY
Barnoldswick		Singaround				Singaround
Buffet Bar		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ The Met. Bury		CHRIS HILLMAN HERB PEDERSEN, + MICHAEL WESTON KING				
Pacific Arts Centre		"ALL AT SEA"			BLUE HARLEM	
Playhouse 2		JULIE MATTHEWS BAND	CHRIS JONES		MAURICE DICKSON	
Rattan and Rush						ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE
* South Lakes Music P. Standish					COLCANNON	

JULY into AUGUST

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

	SUNDAY	3RD JULY	10TH JULY	17TH JULY	24TH JULY	31ST JULY
Bothy		ROBB JOHNSON	Singers Night	BENJI KIRKPATRICK	closed until 11/09/05	closed
Folk at the Manor		Singers Night	Singers Night	THE WIYOS	Singers Night	MARJE FERRIER
Open Door		Singaround	JON BRINDLEY	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Walshaw			Singaround			
Walton		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse		TANGLEFOOT	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
MONDAY		4TH JULY	11TH JULY	18TH JULY	25TH JULY	1ST AUGUST
Bacup		Singaround	RIA BRIGHT	Singaround	PETE BENBOW	Singaround
Conwy		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect		Singers Night	PHIL MCGINITY	BLUEGRASS SPECIAL	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools		Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Red Bull		Singers Night	Singers Night	SANDRA KERR	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton		JON BRINDLEY	Singers Night	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM	Singers Night	PHIL ATKINSON
TUESDAY		5TH JULY	12TH JULY	19TH JULY	26TH JULY	2ND AUGUST
* & ** Biddulph @ Town Hall					LOUD MOUTH WOMEN	
Crown		Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman		closed until 06/09/05	closed	closed	closed	closed
Howcroft Inn			tba	tba	tba	Singers Night
Longridge		Singers Night		tba		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		6TH JULY	13TH JULY	20TH JULY	27TH JULY	3RD AUGUST
Alison Arms		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)	6TH JULY	13TH JULY	20TH JULY	27TH JULY	3RD AUGUST
Clarence		PETE ABBOTT	FYLDE COAST CLOGGERS and GUESTS	closed until 14/09/05	closed	closed
Cross Keys		KIERAN HALPIN	JILL FIELDING BAND	tba	DANGEROUS CURVES	tba
Falcon		Open Mic - PA provided	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic - PA provided
Folk at the Brindley			VALERIE SMITH & LIBERTY PIKE			
Red Bull			Music Session - English			
Walton		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY		7TH JULY	14TH JULY	21ST JULY	28TH JULY	4TH AUGUST
Biddulph		THE BOAT BAND		CHRIS WHILE		closed August
Earby		Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregson Lane		STANLEY ACCRINGTON + MELVYN & the VOLCANOES				Singers Night
Parkgate			*COLCANNON		KEN NICOL	
Playhouse 2		SLAKE DAVIS BAND	Singers Night			Singers Night
Railway (Lymm)		Festival CELIDH	Singers Night	MARTYN WYNDHAM-READ	BIG SPOT with PETER HOOD & LINDA EDWARDS	Singers Night
South Lakes Music Prom.						ROD CLEMENTS
Upstairs at the Woodcock		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wigan (Seven Stars)		Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham		closed until 02/09/05	closed	closed	closed	closed
FRIDAY		8TH JULY	15TH JULY	22ND JULY	29TH JULY	5TH AUGUST
* & ** Biddulph at Biddulph Town Hall					IRISH NIGHT featuring SHANNON DANCERS	
Bollington		CATH MUNDY & JAY TURNER	Singers Night	Singers Night	STEVE TURNER	Singers Night
Carlisle Folk & Blues		MICHAEL CHAPMAN				
Folk in the Barn			DANGEROUS CURVES		REAL TIME	Singaround
Hale & Hearty		No programme available	Singaround			
Leigh		Singers Night	JULIE EDLISON	Singers Night	Singers Night	BRASS TACKS
Northwich						JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE
Porkies						Singers and Musicians
Preston		Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers Night
Rhyl		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Southport Arts Centre		LUNASA				
Walton		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night

SATURDAY	9TH JULY	16TH JULY	23RD JULY	30TH JULY	6TH AUGUST
Barnoldswick					Singaround
* & ** Biddulph		"FOLK IN THE PARK"			
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Rattan and Rush	BEN & JOE BROUGHTON			DANGEROUS CURVES	

NB: * = Not usual night ** = Not usual venue

AUGUST into SEPTEMBER

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

SUNDAY	7TH AUGUST	14TH AUGUST	21ST AUGUST	28TH AUGUST	4TH SEPTEMBER
Bothy	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	BRASS TACKS	Singers Night	Singers Night
Open Door	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Philharmonic Hall	BILLY JOE SPEARS				
Walshaw		Singaround		Singaround	
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	closed	Singers Night
MONDAY	8TH AUGUST	15TH AUGUST	22ND AUGUST	29TH AUGUST	5TH SEPTEMBER
Bacup	TONY AUTON (tbc)	Singaround	PETE QUIN	Singaround	SAD PIG
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	COLLUM SANDS
Four Fools	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	JEFF WARNER (USA)
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Singers Night	BERNARD CROMARTY			
TUESDAY	9TH AUGUST	16TH AUGUST	23RD AUGUST	30TH AUGUST	6TH SEPTEMBER
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman	closed	closed	closed	closed	Singers Night
Howcroft	closed	closed	closed	closed	
Longridge		tba			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
Urnston Acoustics					Singers Night
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	10TH AUGUST	17TH AUGUST	24TH AUGUST	31ST AUGUST	7TH SEPTEMBER
Alison Arms	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	closed	closed	closed	closed	Reopens next week with PRELUDE

WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	10TH AUGUST	17TH AUGUST	24TH AUGUST	31ST AUGUST	7TH SEPTEMBER
Cross Keys	tba	CLOUDSTREET	PETE QUIN	tba	EDDIE MCGURK
Falcon	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Open Mic - PA provided
Red Bull	Music Session - English				
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	11TH AUGUST	18TH AUGUST	25TH AUGUST	1ST SEPTEMBER	8TH SEPTEMBER
Earby	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	DAVE RYAN MEMORIAL CONCERT	Singers Night
Gregson Lane				Singers Night (AGM)	
Parkgate			BERNARD WRIGLEY		
Railway (Lymm)	STEWART LEVER	Singers Night	KERFUFE	Singers Night	VIN GARBUTT
* & ** Rattan and Rush at Penrith Playhouse				ACOUSTIC STRAWBS	
Upstairs at the Woodcock				EDDIE MCGURK	
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singers Night	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham		closed		Club reopens next week	Singers Night
FRIDAY	12TH AUGUST	19TH AUGUST	26TH AUGUST	2ND SEPTEMBER	9TH SEPTEMBER
Bollington	BENJI KIRKPATRICK	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk in the Barn	KELLIE WHILE		JIM BAINBRIDGE		
Hale & Hearty		Singaround		Singaround	
Leigh	No programme available				
Northwich	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Porkies				ELBOW JANE	
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Rhyl	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SATURDAY	13TH AUGUST	20TH AUGUST	27TH AUGUST	3RD SEPTEMBER	10TH SEPTEMBER
Barnoldswick				Singaround	
Buffet Bar				Singers Night	Singers Night
* Folk in the Barn					NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN
Rattan and Rush		IAN BRUCE			
Accrington Town Hall	No folk music bookings this period				
Folk at the Forum	No folk music bookings this period				
Platform	No folk music bookings this period				
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 28TH AUGUST to SATURDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2005
TO BE INCLUDED IN THE CALENDAR INFORMATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY JOHN OWEN BY NO LATER THAN SUNDAY 17TH JULY 2005.

ADVANCE DATES FROM SEPTEMBER 2005

BACUP

Sept 5 Sad Pig Sept 19 The Animals
Oct 3 Redstart Oct 17 Bill Lloyd
Oct 31 Clive Leyland Nov 28 Redmayne

BIDDULPH

Sept 15 Mike Silver
Sept 24 Irish Night featuring Jug o' Punch at
Biddulph Town Hall Sept 29 Boo Hewerdine
Oct 6 Mundy and Turner Oct 13 Seth Lakeman trio
Oct 20 Tom McConville Nov 3 Mrs Ackroyd Band
Nov 17 Chris While and Julie Matthews
Dec 1 Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies
Dec 15 Queensbury Rules

BOLLINGTON

Sept 30 Stanley Accrington Nov 18 Steve Tilston

BOTHY

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 Witches of Elswick
Nov 6 Donal Maguire Nov 13 Singers Night
Nov 20 Damien Barber Nov 27 Singers Night
Dec 4 Brian Peters Dec 11 Wench All
Dec 18 Christmas Party
Jan 1 - 2006 Closed Dec 25 Closed
Jan 15 Singers Night Jan 8 Grace Notes
Jan 29 Singers Night Jan 22 Ed Rennie
Feb 12 Singers Night Feb 5 Martyn Wyndham-Read
Feb 26 Singers Night Feb 19 tba
Mar 12 Singers Night Mar 5 Lynne Heralud & Pat Turner
Mar 26 Singers Night Mar 19 Mike Silver
Apr 9 Singers Night Apr 2 Judy Cook
Apr 23 John Pearson Apr 16 Easter Eggstravaganza
 Apr 30 Singers Night

CARLISLE

Sept 2 Simon Haworth and Andy May
Sept 16 James Keelaghan - (tbc) Sept 30 Dangerous Curves
Oct 14 Chris While and Julie Matthews
Oct 28 Mick Ryan and Pete Harris Nov 11 Clive Gregson
Nov 25 Kristina Olsen Dec 9 Christmas Party - Guest tbc

CLARENCE

Sept 14 Prelude Sept 21 Bruce Molsky
Sept 28 Singers Night Oct 5 Boo Hewerdine
Oct 12 Mike Silver Oct 19 Ben & Joe Broughton
Oct 26 Quicksilver Nov 2 Tanglefoot
Nov 9 Scolds Bridle Nov 16 Iscador
Nov 23 Kristina Olsen Nov 30 Haines and Leighton
Dec 7 Pint and Dale Dec 14 Mrs Ackroyd Band

CROSS KEYS

Sept 7 Eddie McGurk Sept 14 Mike Agrinon
Sept 21 Phil Hare Sept 28 Steve and Christy Nebel
Oct 5 Mundy and Turner Oct 12 Pat Ryan and Ken Howard
Oct 19 Risky Business Oct 26 tba
Nov 2 Derek Gifford Nov 9 Mike Nicholson
Nov 16,17,18 Clive Gregson

FLEETWOOD

Oct 27 Jon Harvison

FOLK IN THE BAR

Sept 10 Nancy Kerr and James Fagan
Sept 16 Dana and Susan Robinson
Sept 22 Julie Felix (Theatre) Oct 7 Steve Tilston
Oct 21 Stephen Quigg Oct 24 SWAP (Theatre)
Nov 4 Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman
Nov 18 Tom McConville Dec 2 tba
Dec 16 tba

FOLK AT THE OLD MANOR

Sept 18 Julie Ellison Oct 16 Jez Lowe
Oct 30 George and Jill Peckham
Nov 20 Alan Bell Band (other nights - Singers Nights)

FOLK AT THE PROSPECT

Sept 5 Colum Sands Oct 3 Mark Dowding
Nov 21 Jez Lowe and Jake Walton
(other nights - Singers Nights)

GREGSON LANE

Sept 1 Singers Night Sept 15 Pelican Babies
Sept 29 'Sing for someone else's supper' - 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
Jan 5 - 2006 Singers Night Jan 19 Singers Night
Feb 2 Band from the Wood Feb 16 Singers Night (Irish)
Mar 2 Anthony John Clarke Mar 16 Keith Mitchell
Mar 30 Singers Night April 13 Captain Coopers Motley Crew
April 27 Singers Night May 11 Jill Fielding Band
May 25 Singers Night June 8 Pete Abbott
June 22 Singers Night July 6 Andrew Green
July 20 Singers Night

HOWCROFT

Sept 13 tba Sept 27 Anthony John Clarke

MAGHULL

Nov 11 Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies
Nov 12 Maghull Day of Music including:- Tanglefoot

MR KITE BENEFITS

Dates tba
Tom Russell Helen Watson and David Hughes
Carlos Guitarios John Tams and Barry Coope
Show of Hands St. Agnes Fountain

NORTHWICH

Sept 16 Cloudstreet Sept 23 Nancy Kerr and James Fagan
Oct 14 Wrigley Sisters Oct 21 Ben and Joe Broughton
Nov 4 John Spiers and Jon Boden
(other nights - Singers Nights)

OPEN DOOR

Sept 11 Stanley Accrington Sept 25 Geoff Higginbottom

PARKGATE

Sept 29 Allan Taylor
Oct 13 Chris While and Julie Matthews (extra night- ticket only)
Oct 27 Rod Clements and Ghosts of Electricity
Nov 24 John Wright Band (ticket only) Dec 15 Mrs Ackroyd Band

PLAYHOUSE 2

Sept 17 Lou Pride Oct 15 Christine Collister
Oct 22 John Howarth (Oldham Tinkers) and The LegPlaitters
Nov 19 Maurice Dickson Dec 18 St. Agnes Fountain

PHILHARMONIC HALL

Oct 21 & 22 Christy Moore Nov 6 Charlie Landsborough

PORKIES

Sept 2 Elbow Jane Oct 7 Garva
Nov 4 Tanglefoot Dec 2 Mike Silver

RAILWAY (LYMM)

Sept 1 Singers Night Sept 8 Vin Garbutt
Sept 15 Singers Night Sept 22 Pete Coe
Sept 29 Big Spot with Fiddlestone
Oct 6 Nicola Lyons & Jamie Sutcliffe's Big Band
Oct 13 Singers Night Oct 20 Ron Trueman-Border
Oct 27 Singers Night Nov 3 Witches of Elswick
Nov 10 John Spiers and Jon Boden
Nov 17 Robin Laing Nov 24 Singers Night
Dec 1 Clive Gregson Dec 8 Allan Taylor
Dec 15 Singers Night Dec 22 Christmas with Garva
Dec 27 Singers Night Christmas Party

RATTAN AND RUSH

Sept 1 Acoustic Strawbs (Penrith Playhouse)
Sept 10 Kieran Halpin (Meal & Music)
Sept 11 Kieran Halpin (Music only) Sept 24 Mundy and Turner
Oct 8 Steve Tilston Oct 22 Boo Hewerdine(Meal & Music)
Oct 23 Boo Hewerdine (Music only) Nov 12 Mike Silver
Nov 26 Rod Clements Dec 10 Christmas Party

RED BULL

Sept 19 Martin Carthy (ticket only) Oct 17 Mundy and Turner
Nov 14 Anthony John Clarke (other nights - Singers Nights)

SOUTH LAKES MUSIC PROMOTION

Sept 8 Nancy Kerr and James Fagan
Oct 6 Jed Grimes and Graham Wood
Nov 3 John Spiers and Jon Boden Dec 1 Les Barker

STANDISH

Sept 17 Dave Gibb Feb 15 - 06 Chris While and Julie Matthews

WESTHOUGHTON

Sept 23 Allan Taylor Sept 30 Eileen McGann
Oct 7 Nancy Kerr and James Fagan Oct 14 Shep Woolley
Oct 21 Real Time Oct 28 Anthony John Clarke
Nov 4 Garva Nov 11 Tanglefoot
Nov 18 Kieran Halpin Nov 25 John Wright Band (ticket only)
Dec 2 St. Agnes Fountain (ticket only)

WOODEN HORSE

Sept 4 Singers Night Sept 11 Singers Night
Sept 18 Singers Night Sept 25 Cloudstreet
Oct 2 Singers Night Oct 9 Singers Night
Oct 16 Singers Night Oct 23 Mick Ryan and Pete Harris
Oct 30 Singers Night Nov 6 Singers Night
Nov 13 Mike Nicholson Nov 20 Singers Night
Nov 27 Singers Night Dec 4 Singers Night
Dec 11 Guest - tba Dec 18 Christmas Party
Dec 25 Closed

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WALTZ OF THE BELLS Heather Breeze Ceili Band. HBCD 03. A record of 'popular couple dances', this is the music for a number of old dances that have fallen out of favour. Alongside 'Shoe the Donkey' and 'The Stack of Barley' there are dances such as 'The Gay Gordons', 'The Boston Two Step', 'The Palais Glide' and others that wouldn't have been possible to accommodate in country houses. They're the dances of the urban dance hall, of the Hunt Ball and the Agricultural Society's Annual Dinner Dance, and most of them wouldn't have been popularly danced since the 1930s, but if you feel like a glide this is just the music.

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TAKE FOLK SERIOUSLY!

Folk Arts Network Conference

58 Delegates representing 39 Folk organisations across Britain met at the Lord Leycester Hotel, Warwick on 4-5 February for the annual Folk Arts Network Conference. The over-riding feeling at the Conference was the importance of Folk, Roots and Traditional music in our heritage, and that it should feature in the National Curriculum for Education alongside other art forms. The Folk Arts Network Office will contact Ruth Kelly, Secretary of State for Education and Skills on behalf of its members and lobby for a higher profile in the system and the Music Manifesto.

The title of the Conference 'So Far, So Good . . . Lots More To Do!' highlighted that Folk Arts in England has raised its profile significantly in the last 10 years, but there is great deal more work that needs doing to further develop the Folk Arts agenda.

The Conference opened with a full house and a warm welcome from David Oliver, Chair. Steve Heap, Director of FolkArts England, then outlined how Folk Arts Network (FAN) started and where it is going, in particular focusing on the recent scoping exercise, commissioned by FolkArts England and funded by Arts Council England. The Folk Arts Network strives to do all it can with the resources available to bring Folk to the attention of the millions of people who think that 'I don't like folk music' because as Steve said "they either haven't heard any, or they have experienced our beautiful music, dance and tradition and just didn't know."

The speakers at Conference illustrated the wealth of folk development work that is thriving in Britain already and that there are a significant number of people working towards raising the profile of Folk, Roots and Traditional music. Sessions and speakers included Chris Harrison, the Conference Secretary of the National Association of Musical Educators (NAME).

David Oliver attended in his capacity as both Chair of FolkArts England Board and in his role at Folkworks, which has recently moved to the spectacular new arts development venue, The Sage Gateshead. Marilyn Tucker, Co-Director of Wren, talked about Wren's work as a music and community development project working mostly in the South West of England. Philip Butterworth, Music Officer at Arts Council England, ran two intensive sessions on how to make better applications to 'Grants for the Arts'. David Oliver and Emily Portman (student and artist) talked about the Newcastle Folk Degree Course.

Gordon Phillips and Nick Carpenter (Norfolk Multi-Cultural Services & Ouse Washers Molly Dancers) gave an informative talk about Traditional Dance in Schools. Their work has included some amazing successes in primary school projects and a very welcome opportunity to be showcased at the Lottery Funds 10th

Birthday. Scott Renken (Towersey Village Festival) introduced delegates to the basics on Health and Safety and Risk Assessment. Eddie Upton (Folk South West) and Sue Coe (Yorkshire Folk Arts / Ryburn 3 Step) described their experiences of taking Folk Arts into schools. Bev and Ray Langton (FolkArts England Children's Event advisors) shared their huge knowledge in 'Keeping Children Safe at Events and Activities'. And finally, Julia Payne, Director of the hub, gave the Conference the benefit of her vast experience in project evaluation.

In bringing the Conference to a close, David Oliver told delegates that Folk Development is about education, in all styles and at all levels and encouraged delegates to spread the word of the Folk Arts Network as much as possible. Steve Heap, FolkArts England Director restated that there had been some great successes over the year, that the Folk Arts Network is very proud of the work achieved so far, and encouraged professionalism, good planning and application of skills in all future work.

The next Folk Arts Network Conference will be held in February 2006. Date and venue TBC. The Folk Arts Network was established in 1990's and is a powerful networking organisation for all those involved with folk development across the country. It comes under the umbrella organisation FolkArts England, an Arts Council England funded national development agency. For more details about Folk Arts Network and FolkArts England contact PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU, Tel: 01629 827014 Fax: 01629 821874 info@folkarts-england.org Visit: www.folkarts-england.org

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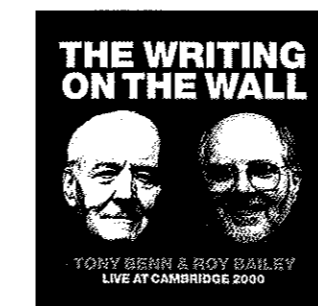
Do you believe music is more about quality than quantity? Are you sick of cover versions? If you aren't scared to free your audience from the limits of pre-packaged images and genre-driven categories, and if you really want to know what people think about your music, then come and visit mVine (<http://www.mvine.com/music>). It's a truly interactive independent record label for active artists and opinionated audiences.

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ROY BAILEY & TONY BENN Writing On The Wall - Live at the Cambridge Folk Festival (Fuse Records CFCD405)



What do you get when you put together the seemingly unlikely duo of a political folk song activist and one of the most prominent British left wing politicians of the modern era? Well when that pair is Roy Bailey and Tony Benn the result is a magical chemistry in the form of the long running and always dynamic stage project, 'The Writing On The Wall'. It's

previously been issued as a double cassette and video but this is the first CD version of the show and was recorded live at the Cambridge Folk Festival in 2000 in front of a large enthusiastic audience. It's also a show that is exceptionally popular all over the country and has been playing to sell out audiences for a number of years.

'The Writing On The Wall' combines song (Bailey) and prose (Benn) to produce a remarkable glimpse of the rich fertile and often hidden history of the development of radical ideas, often considered left wing and extreme at the time, that have helped to win political and social rights for working class people through the last several hundred years. It focuses on some key issues and eras, most notably the evolution of socialist thought from the time of the peasant revolt in the 1300s (the first Poll Tax) through to the English Civil War and the campaign for the vote and equal rights for women. It shows the parallels of the struggles in earlier century and those of today are remarkably similar and

demonstrate the adage that those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it (Margaret Thatcher second Poll Tax).

Bailey's songs dovetail perfectly with Benn's informal informative oratorical style. He uses several selections from two of the finest British political songwriters of the modern era, Leon Rosselson and Robb Johnson, to complement and enrich this anthology of political and social dissent. There's also Charlie King's priceless 'Corvette Stingray' from across the Atlantic, used to illustrate a wife's very practical and apposite revenge on her cheating husband.

The folk scene, and arguably the post war revival in particular, has been the focus of, and outlet for, radical ideas and dissent. It is therefore not surprising that someone like Tony Benn, who has been demonised so much in the press because he espouses different views to the mainstream, is accepted so readily by folk audiences. Given the result of the election and the hostility of the public to the war in Iraq and the discrediting of Blair, Benn's consistency and spot on analysis of the New Labour project has seen more and more people sharing his views.

This show is anything but a dull polemical rant. Bailey and Benn are consummate performers who both have a warm endearing sense of humour. If you've not seen 'The Writing On The Wall' then it's time to see it and buy the CD; if you have seen it you will, no doubt, want to be reminded of an unforgettable experience.

'Writing on the Wall' is available from www.roybailey.net and Bookmarks 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE; Tel: 020 7637 1848 **Lewis Jones**

THE MIV CAMERON BAND Live in Peace (MCB02)



I must admit to having had a sneak preview of this album last year when Kevin Hughes sent me a first mix of 4 tracks and, based on that alone, I was really looking forward to hearing the final CD. I was not disappointed when I played the 9 tracks. An unusual number you might think but there is still a good 50 minutes of music on the disc.

I first saw Miv Cameron and Kevin Hughes when they came along to Wrexham Folk &

Acoustic Music Club a couple of years ago to help us out at a charity night and they have certainly gone from strength to strength since then. I reviewed their first album, an unusual project of setting a Liverpool poet's works to music. The potential was there then and you felt that they needed to step up a gear, find some original material and/or good covers and carry it on.

This second album is proof that they have done just that and still retained their own original sound with Miv's lovely voice (both on lead and harmonies) being supplemented by some tasteful arrangements and solid backing from Kevin Hughes (guitar), Phil McGinity (piano, low whistle and harmonies), Phil Chisnall (guitar, mandolin and harmonies) and Gary Murphy (bass & percussion), the first four being "The Band" with Gary Murphy guesting.

Their remarkable affinity to Enya is apparent from track one, the traditional ballad, "I Once Loved A Lad", although Miv decided to sing the well-known words to her own tune in this instance. The next two tracks are penned by Miv, another brave step on

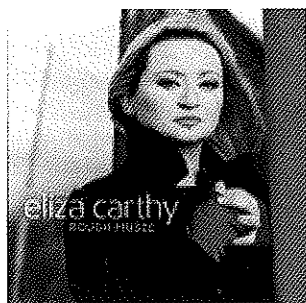
the road to progress with "How Can I Tell Her" & "The Soldier", both having a war theme. This is followed by "Loch Lomond", the song I never thought to hear on a progressive folk album. Yes, it is the, "You Take the High Road and I'll Take the Low Road", one! But how it comes off, a real winner this and performed so well it not only sits there quite happily alongside other traditional and contemporary songs but actually shines out like a beacon. As they say, "You can't keep a good song down".

Again Miv takes the bull by the horns and completes the album with 5 of her own songs from "Underneath the Apple Tree" and "Kieran", both love songs, to "Hush", dedicated to the Children of Chernobyl, and the moving "Annie McLellans Lament". A song written after a visit to the windswept and atmospheric Culloden Moor where so many of the Highland Clans of Scotland (including the Camerons) were massacred by the English Army in 1745.

The CD closes with the anthemic "Live in Peace" and as the final notes reverberate and echo through the speakers the impression left is one of a job well done and a very enjoyable listen. The album is not without flaws, it would not be human if it were, but they are only ones of musical preference. In the main what Miv and the boys do comes off extremely well. However, in order to step up yet again I would like to hear them sing more traditional songs and covers of some contemporary songs to add that wee bit of variety. They have come a long way in a very short time, already appearing on BBC Wales Radio Shows and supporting bands such as The Strawbs in concert. The next rung of the ladder beckons and I'd love to be there when they take that step. Visit their website at www.mivcameronband.co.uk to buy the CD.

Ian Chesterman

ELIZA CARTHY Rough Music (Topic Records TSCD554)



Well, at least, Eliza makes no bones about it. John Spiers and Jon Boden stumbled into her band some time back and she didn't want to let them go. You can hardly blame her. With her long time associate, Ben Ivitsky, along for the ride, this is a band that has grown together and 'Rough Music' is quite clearly the consequence of a tight working unit. The music reflects this at

various points where it has more of the feel of a good session rather than an album being constructed in the studio by musicians who've only just met. Add to this the fact that, as the days go by, Eliza seems to look and sound more like her mother, Norma Waterson. Then, you have a mix that has a truly traditional feel to it without losing its contemporary notions.

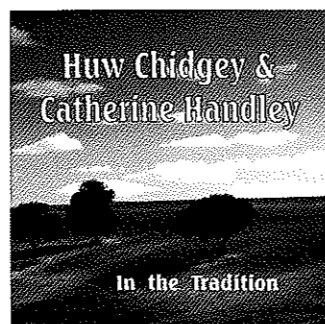
Eliza has chosen to use only one of her songs and dips into both the traditional material of years past or more recent sources. For the latter, Billy Bragg's 'King James Version' provides delightful fodder as does a medley of tunes from John McCusker and Michael McGoldrick. These more recent compositions slip effortlessly amongst traditional songs such as her examination of Dick Turpin's true character on 'Turpin Hero'. On the instrumental tunes such as 'Cobbler's Hornpipe' and 'Upside Down', you feel the energy of a bunch of pals just enjoying themselves which is a major plus for any record. Then, as part of the band effort, Jon Boden gets chance to let his almost manic warbling loose on 'Maid On The Shore' to add some spice to this Cyril Tawney song. Eliza's own composition, 'Mohair' is a delightful piece showing her maturing voice at its best.

All in all, it's quality from back to front. I have been heard to

mutter darkly that the folk world is dominated by the Carthy/Waterson dynasty but following this and her dad's recent record, you'll be finding me in the local pub ordering up the humble pie.

Steve Henderson

HUW CHIDGEY & CATHERINE HANDLEY In The Tradition (Raglan Records CH02)



Huw Chidgey and Catherine Handley are a South Wales based duo who have been performing together for over two years. Singer and guitarist, Huw, was born and brought up in the area, while Catherine hails from Harrogate, is a principal flautist with the Welsh Synfonia, and a highly regarded teacher at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff.

As the title suggests "In the Tradition", their debut CD, is a collection of traditional material combined with some fine modern contemporary songs that are performed in a manner that pays homage to the folk tradition. Chidgey's understated guitar playing is complemented by an ideal folk voice, interpreting and delivering lyrics with great appreciation, sensitivity and feeling, while Handley supplies throughout the CD what can only be described as virtuoso performances on flute.

The CD opens with a trilogy of very special traditional songs - the old and rousing 'All Along the Barley'; followed by 'The Parting Glass', a more reflective song that has been covered often but this duo does it more than a little justice; and 'Star of the County Down', another song from across the Irish Sea.

Catherine Handley produces some breathtaking - and in some cases, breathless - exertions on the flute, one an original from her and two Yorkshire hornpipes, the other a set of jigs - Banish misfortune/Morrisons/Fair Head boy.

There's an excellent version of 'Unicorns', one of Bill Caddick's best-known songs, 'Wings', a Brian Bedford song that has almost become an evergreen standard on the folk circuit. However, probably my two favourite tracks on the CD are Pete Coe's stirring ballad about Cheshire athlete, 'Joseph Baker', and Andy McKay's epic tale of injustice, in the form of a lesser-known folk hero, 'Richie Graham', a song about one of the foremost Riever families on the Scotland/England border in the 16th century. The album closes with a fine rendition of Kieran Halpin's 'Nothing to show'.

This is an accomplished debut from two formidable performers perfectly suited. Huw Chidgey and Catherine Handley demonstrate a great musical chemistry and sincerity and firmly put their own slant on traditional and modern contemporary songs and tunes. The result is a collection that flows seamlessly from one era to another and back and I eagerly look forward to the duo's next offering that is due out this year.

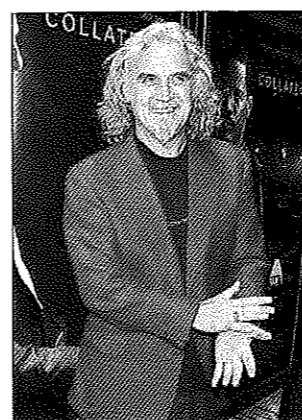
For more information visit: www.raglanrecords.co.uk

Lewis Jones

BILLY CONNOLLY AND JOHN McCUSKER Billy Connolly's Musical Tour of New Zealand (Pure Records PRCD016)

Tricky things are soundtracks. Of course, they aren't supposed to be intrusive as you watch the film or, in this case, TV series. Then, on the other hand, the record company hopes you'll be inspired by what you hear to want to go out and buy the soundtrack. As a result, I'm always amazed by how many

'soundtracks' appear to include material that I never heard in the film! Anyway, that's not the case with 'Billy Connolly's Musical Tour of New Zealand'. It is what it says on the tin.



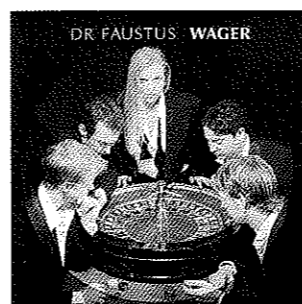
Some of you may not be aware that Billy has quite a musical history. He was once teamed up with Gerry Rafferty in The Humblebums and managed quite nicely solo playing banjo. So, Billy plays his part on the record but the mainstay of the music is the part played by the musicians that support Kate Rusby. Of course, that loveable rogue McCusker is in charge co-ordinating inputs from Andy Cutting, Ian Carr, Michael McGoldrick, Andy Seward, etc.

Indeed, it's quite a list of Folk's finest. The majority of the tunes played are titled in a rather uninspiring way - 'Billy's Reel', 'Billy's Waltz', 'Billy's Slow Air' - well, you get the picture.

It's all pleasant stuff without actually grabbing your attention. Perfect background music if you wish. In fact, exactly what was intended for the TV series. There's one exception to that rule. When Kate Rusby herself provides a vocal to the one song on the record, 'Wandering Soul', you will be stopped in your tracks. I feel a CD-R moment coming on if you get my drift.

Steve Henderson

DR FAUSTUS Wager (Fellside Recordings FECD189)



OK, the entry level period may be over for the lads but now that they're fully paid up members of the British folk circuit proper Dr Faustus can really get stuck in with what they do best - not that the first album was anything to be sniffed at. As well as their vocal prowess, Tim van Eyken (melodeon), Robert Harbron (concertina), Benji Kirkpatrick (bouzouki) and Paul Sartin (fiddle) are no mean tunesmiths either with flourishes of audio pleasure that are not dissimilar to that of the sadly missed Pyewackett this quartet prove they have really got to grips with their subject material.

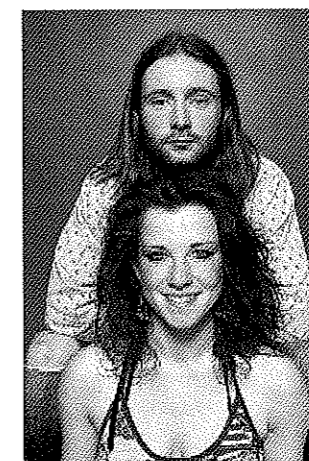
The opening gambit (sorry about that) 'The Broomfield Wager' comes in at an epic 8:20 and never once loses momentum maintaining the interest with tight harmonies and the addition of a cutting oboe that sets the fast waltz pace of the song in a kind of lusty drinking mode. You can just imagine the clinking of pewter tankards being raised in a health as they relate this story of lusty daring do. Or maybe that's just my imagination running away with me after watching Tommy Steele in the film "Where's Jack?" about the highwayman Jack Shepherd. Bringing to mind the Albion Country Band (of which Benji's mum Sue and dad John were members) the loving care and attention to detail that have been laboured in the pursuit of finding rousing chorus songs is where the pleasure of this recording really comes. On another track, the syncopated, laid-back energy behind the 'The Disdainful Lady' shows that the band know how to emphasise rhythms and again the use of oboe provides the listener with that doleful quintessential English-ness that makes Faustus so unique. I'm generally accustomed to hearing flashy finger flailing Celtic versions of the tune 'The Dawn' although I must admit

this squeezebox led melody (attributed here to the North West) has been injected with a wonderful sense of character by being more sedately paced. Come to think of it turning versions of songs and tunes that I had long felt established as part of the Irish music repertoire ('P Stands For Paddy becomes 'T Stands For Thomas' here) has re-awakened my interest in checking my own copy of Gardiner's Wanton Seed.

I'll wager a bet myself - having just returned from Cheltenham - that this CD will be on the wish list of every self respecting folk music enthusiast and I hope that these fine exponents of our rich culture will convince a wider audience to come along for the ride. Finally, and I've said it before, the art of presentation is all important in selling a product and the tongue-in-cheek cover photograph continues where their previous album sleeve left off - nice one chaps! Further information and copies of the CD are available from Fellside Recordings at www.fellside.com also www.drfaustus.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

ROSIE DOONAN & BEN MURRAY Mill Lane (Silvertop Records)



Many debut CD's are described as promising. Mill Lane is a notable exception and arrives perfectly formed and fully furnished. Much credit for this goes to Richard Evans for his 'less is more' approach to recording and production but mostly to the prodigious talent of Rosie and Ben. Their mature song writing skills, innate musical ability and joined at the hip harmonies have produced a handful of excellent songs that sit comfortably alongside the more familiar but superbly arranged traditional material.

Among the latter, 'Ramble Away' and 'The Lusty Smith' have been given full-band treatment but the sensitive arrangements should satisfy even the most ardent, dyed-in-the-wool, tankard toting traddy while the beautifully harmonised vocals and slightly more subdued backing, with keyboards prominent, breathe new life into 'Gypsy Davy'. Less familiar, at least to this writer, is 'Innishcarra' which again boasts impressive multi-tracked vocals and a melodic hook line that stays in the mind long after the music stops.

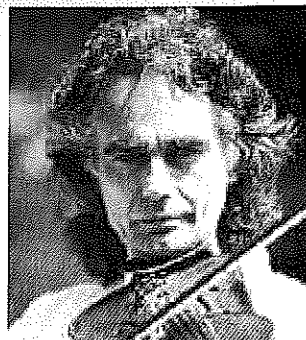
The newer material, largely written by Rosie and Ben, has a lyrical quality that many aspiring tunesmith would flog a couple of old Martin guitars for. Even so, 'The Hawthorn' and 'Dreaming Annie' both have a traditional feel as does Si Cowe's 'Seal Maiden'. If pushed, my current favourites are 'Need You Around' and 'Holding On' both written by Rosie, and Ben's 'Next Time' but these may change because they're all great songs, extremely well performed and recorded, and with noteworthy accompaniment from Richard Evans, Joss Clapp, Peter Tickell, Jed Lynch, Kevin Brown and Brett Simons.

This CD will appeal to everyone; from the boring muso (like me) to the normal folkie, if folkies could ever be described thus, and to those with an unhealthy interest in maidenheads, especially Nancy's (why is it always Nancy!?).

CD's may be obtained directly at their gigs or from Michael Doonan at 51 Jacob's Well Lane, WF1 3PB. Tel 01924 366126.

Tony Jenkinson 37

BARRY DRANSFIELD Unruly (Violin Workshop Records VW1CD)



The legendary folk artist that is Barry Dransfield has recently seen many young pretenders trying to vie for his crown. But why settle for the copyists when you can have the real thing? For many of you that already know his previous works this new recording is to be celebrated like a phoenix rising from the ashes. Never one to settle for the tried and tested his cross cultural influences infuse both folk and

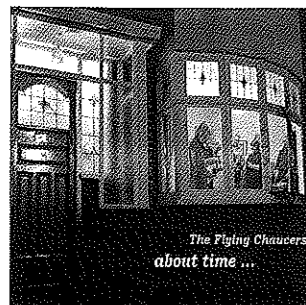
classical words and music in such a way that they appear seamless and you wonder why nobody had done it before? Why - well, because he can and because he wants to.

There are some tricky set pieces such as the tune 'Glory/Biber' which showcases his love of an English melody mixed with the sixteenth century composer Heinrich Ignas Franz von Biber. Funnily enough the second tune doesn't make for easy listening on the first time round (as I admit to not being cultured in the finer points of Classical music) but on repeated plays you wonder why this cross fertilisation of the different genres hadn't been more obvious until now. Dransfield has also found a kindred spirit in his adopted home-town of Hastings on the South Coast and as on some of his previous outings manages to pass reference to the area by including them in his lyrics (mind you, I don't think anybody could write a song about Croydon in the same eloquent terms!) as on 'Haul Away', an almost anthemic coupling with another of his heroes Telemann. He might well court controversy by daring to tamper with the more established folk tradition but it is this courageous, some would say brash technique (or to quote the man himself - "...unruly fashion") that sets him apart from artists of a similar ilk. One of my favourite songs on the CD is the interpretation of the beautiful 'Silent Worship (Did You Not Hear My Lady)' as I am unaccustomed to hearing it performed on guitar (with 2 cellos & 4 fiddles). You see what I mean.

This is an adventurous and richly rewarding album and I have played it several times whilst writing the review and I'm still finding plenty to interest and enthuse about. There appears to be an English folk revolution taking place at the moment what with Spiers & Boden, Jon Loomes, Dr Faustus and Bellowhead amongst those spearheading the campaign and if you want to hear where it all began then I suggest you add this to your collection. The CD will available direct from Barry on his new website: www.barrydransfield.com and also from Proper Music Distribution at www.propermusic.com who are hoping to have copies of the album in the shops from the end of April. The official launch is 16th May.

Pete Fyfe

FLYING CHAUCERS About Time... (Waterline Music Splash 11)



Not knowing too much about the Flying Chaucers I'd say they are a regular jobbing ceillidh band in the old school of English folk dance bands tradition - at least on the strength of this recording. A bit of Old Swan, Flowers & Frolics, Umps & Dumps et al... They doubtless kick up a storm at teacher's associations dances and corporate functions with tunes covering well

established favourites such as 'Mist Covered Mountain/Morrison's Jig' and 'Father Kelly's/Cooley's/The Earl's Chair' plus a new one 'Yvette's Tune' for good measure.

Although the album isn't trail blazing the music is well performed by members Mike Shakespeare, Les Elvin, Sarah Pavey, Chris Evans and Mel Wright on a variety of instruments including guitar, bass, fiddle, flute, melodeon and assorted percussion. Personally I was hoping for a couple of songs to be included but as a souvenir of a performance by the band this will do nicely. By the way leave the CD running after the final track there's another secret set of tunes that you may not expect. I certainly wasn't. For further details check out the band's website at www.folkicons.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

GARVA Sweet Liberty (RED CD008)



Let me say right from the outset that this is not a newly released CD, but it's timeless quality insists that it is reviewed and with four bonus tracks added it further enhances this fine recording. Kevin Webster, John Murphy, Tony Gibbons, Shay Black and Terry Coyne were the

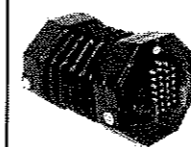
members of Garva at this time and their collective musicianship and voices blend effortlessly to bring out the very best on each individual item.

The names Dan Seals and Charlie McGettigan are synonymous with the very best songs written in Ireland over the past 30 years. 'Lullabye', more than adequately demonstrates that fact; it's led here by Shay Black's powerful voice. Terry Coyne takes the lead on 'My Old Man'; it tells how too much drink can destroy family values, a story that is all too prevalent. All five voices combine to give a rousing a cappella version of Ewan MacColl's, 'Tunnel Tigers', so many Irishmen left their homes to help build the London Underground system that it turned parts of the home country into fragmented communities. Canadian Rita McNeill wrote, 'Moonlight and Clover', sung poignantly by Terry Coyne, the words are allied to a fine tune.

Shay leads the up-tempo, 'Prayer of Shields', written by a 19th century Portadown linen weaver, it was written to promote harmony amongst peoples. One of my personal favourite tunes is 'The Eagles Feather', Terry plays it here in his own inimitable style. The most beautifully crafted track is 'Famine', with Tony Gibbons singing the words of Dominic Behan to a single note on the Uilleann Pipes, John Murphy then plays the slow air, 'Taimse im Chodhladh', on the pipes, literally translated it means, 'I am sleeping', the song tells of emigration caused by famine. Terry brings a little light relief with, 'Down Our Street', one of the many funny songs from the pen of Co. Clare's, Mick O'Russell. Shay sings, 'Suantraí', so beautifully, it's a traditional lullaby from Co. Donegal, still used today to rock the baby to sleep.

The first of the bonus tracks (featuring the vocals of Steve Higham) is, 'Keg of Brandy', sung with a smoothness that could be allied to the subject. 'Song for Life', is another fine offering enhanced by the mandolin playing of Dave Howard. 'Do Me Justice' follows and to round things off there's, 'Taglione' - Tony always enjoys performing this tongue in cheek song. Peppered throughout the recording are a number of tune sets beloved of musicians whenever and wherever a session breaks out. So if you are partial to jigs and reels this is definitely the CD for you.

This recording is packed (18 tracks) with quality, performed by six guys who have music flowing through their blood. They translate each track eloquently and take you on a journey of



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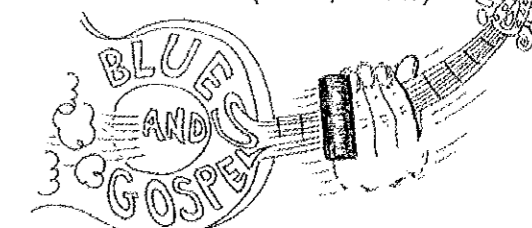
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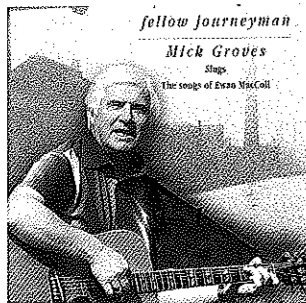
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peace and discovery. If you want to buy this CD, it costs £12 and you can either phone Tony Gibbons on 01744-607566 or e-mail gibbonstony@hotmail.com .

David Jones

MICK GROVES Fellow Journeyman (Own Label)



Well, Mick Groves might get his pleasure from rambling if the opening track of the CD is to be believed but I get mine from listening to his fine vocals. OK, so the halcyon days he spent with The Spinners may be over but here we have him re-invented as a solo performer. Maybe not quite a one-man show as he has surrounded himself with some guest

musicians including amongst others his record producer Phil Beer and the double bass of ex-colleague 'Count' John McCormick.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, The Spinners are where I came into this business and I wear my heart firmly on my sleeve when I say they are sadly missed. The reason I mention this is that here before me is testament to the fact that a good song well sung with little or no frills is always a pleasure to listen to. There's no need to indulge oneself with flashy instrumentals or quirky vocals when a good solid performance will do. For Mick this recording is obviously a labour of love as he traces the musical history of another Salford hero Ewan MacColl. In his informative sleeve notes Groves celebrates MacColl's contribution to the 'folk' canon by including such popular favourites as 'The Manchester Rambler', 'Dirty Old Town' and 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face' alongside traditional songs such as 'Row Bullies Row' and 'The Bonnie Shepherd Lad'. To me, nostalgia is no bad thing particularly if it prompts the listener to rekindle their interest in the singer and the song and trust me, you will be well rewarded if you purchase this album.

For those of you reading this review too young to remember when folk music was folk music and not driven by the latest fad then give this recording a spin and you'll be pleasantly surprised. Let's hope it isn't another sixteen years before the next project! I'm pleased to say that Mick is once again available for bookings and hopefully like Hughie Jones, his good humour and no nonsense approach will be filling a club or festival near you. For further information check out Mick's website at www.mickgroves.com

Pete Fyfe

LYNNE HERAUD & PAT TURNER The Moon Shines Bright (Wild Goose WGS321CD)



While Lynne Heraud will probably be well known to Northern folk followers as the 'Hertfordshire Nightingale' and as the 'better-half' of a duo with Keith Kendrick, Pat Turner, though none the lesser mortal, will perhaps be less familiar. Together Lynne and Pat make a delightful harmony duo with

their long experience of singing showing through every track.

Having established their pedigree and their obvious ability as seasoned performers it remains only to comment on the material. As might be expected from these two many of the songs are traditional but not all of them are particularly well known and it is good to hear something 'new' from the tradition including 'Fair

Maid of Islington' and 'Bright Fine Gold' which is from New Zealand. More familiar are 'Cupid's Garden' (gleaned from the Copper family), 'Bonny Labouring Boy', 'My Bonnie Bonnie Boy' and the title track.

There are also a number of songs written by the lasses themselves. Of Lynne's own songs I enjoyed the 'Odd Sock' with which, as this household's laundry chief, I can identify! In contrast 'Regret' is a melancholy rendition with an optimistic ending while 'I Just Want to be Like the Other Girls' is typical Herald comedy, its style firmly rooted in the Music Hall.

Not to be left out, Pat's 'Autumn is Down' sounds as though it has come straight from the tradition and the 'Man in Grey' is a wry comment on the state of.... well anything you want to think of really.

Lynne does a 'Giff' in adding a tune to one of Keith Scowcroft's fine poems 'Where the Seeds of Love Grew' which finds Scowrie in a romantic and reflective mood (yes - honestly!). The name Brenda Orrell from North Yorkshire will probably only be known to a handful of people but she writes some super songs and 'No More', an anti-war song, is a classic from her collection.

The majority of songs are unaccompanied but Pat plays an effective guitar to 'Spanish Dancer' by Patti Scialfa and to Robert Burns' 'There'll Never Be Peace Until Jamie Comes Home' which must also be one of the longest song titles I've ever come across! Finally, my only other comment is on the production - excellent! Well, it is from Wild Goose and I wouldn't expect anything less. If tight harmony singing is your thing then this CD is a must for your collection.

'Giff'

BRIAN KENNEDY On Song 2 - Red Sails in the Sunset (Curb Records CURCD 160)

BRIAN KENNEDY



Brian Kennedy is an artist with a track record of multi platinum albums in his native Ireland, including On Song 1, the predecessor to this CD. Although I'd not heard that CD, I had seen favourable reviews so I was looking forward to Kennedy's second outing where he tackles a number of popular and traditional songs, many of which originate from his home

land. My expectation was further raised when I saw the who's who of artists dueting and guesting on this album - namely Juliet Turner, Ralph McTell, Liam Clancy, Lulu, Moya Brennan, and Eddi Reader.

However, and it's a very big HOWEVER, my anticipation mostly turned to very big DISAPPOINTMENT with a production bathed in a gluepot of treacle, overdone by a glut of syrupy strings. It was redeemed in part by the two collaborations with McTell (From Clare to Here) and Turner (Paul Brady's The Island) who bring out the best in him or prevented him bringing the worst out in them.

Kennedy's unfortunate duet with Barry McGuigan on Jimmy McCarthy's great composition, 'The Contender' goes on one round too many and a fine song takes an undeserved battering! Listen to John Wright's wonderful rendition and you'll see what I mean.

For the most part this album veers too close to Daniel O'Donnell territory. On song? On this occasion I don't think so, Brian.

Lewis Jones

PETER KNIGHT Too Late For Shadows (Own Label PKCD 002)



After a brief introduction via the JSD Band some of the first 'fiddle' music I experienced emanated from the wonderful Steeleye Span album "Below The Salt". I don't know quite what it was but the warmth and joy of the performance was all encompassing. So much so that it was enough to make me want to immerse myself in this (at the time) un-hip style of music.

To say that Peter Knight's influence on my choice of career was a life changing experience would be an understatement for here was a musician who was not only brilliant in performance but also whose very soul seemed on display through his instrument of choice. With this latest recording he has unerringly hit the mark with his choice of material by including a rich mix of folk based tunes such as the brooding 'Lark In The Morning' and his own composition the impish 'Lisinsky'.

Like an artist working at his easel Mr Knight paints his canvas with positive brush strokes interspersed with splashes of colour that ignite the senses of the listener as if you were interloping on a private viewing of his best works. The almost medieval spirit (tambourine and labor like percussion) conveyed by another of his melodies 'Katrina Of Moorpark' will prove an inspiration to any aspiring musician with subtle use of dynamics and how to keep the interest in a single tune going for 7:10 minutes. The melody is similar in style to the classic 'Tam Lin' but is imbued with a sense of fun sometimes missing when performed by other artists. If you're looking for something a little different then check out the title track 'Too Late For Shadows' that features the lead line placed on top of a bed of pizzicato strings or the track 'Moulin Rogue' with it's Grapelli-esque bonhomie.

This is the kind of album that crosses genres without alienating the more traditional followers of this wonderful musician. If you are looking for inspiration then this CD is highly recommended! For further information check out the website at www.peterknight.net

Pete Fyfe

JON LOOMES Fearful Symmetry (Fellside Recordings FECD186)



Paul Adams must be feeling pretty chuffed at the moment for not only has he got Boden & Spiers and Dr Faustus on the books of Fellside but also he's just added young whippersnapper Loomes to swell that fine roster of "British" artists.

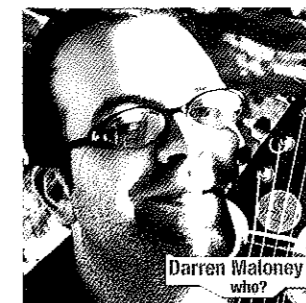
You enter the first track of the CD 'Jacky Tar' feeling comfortable with the vocal style (although possibly not so nasal mannered) and guitar accompaniment if you're into Martin Carthy and as much as comparisons are inevitable it's no bad thing when you're in such illustrious company. It may prove a cross to bear - it may not - but rest assured there is a bright future awaiting Jon. Aply assisted by the melodeon of Paul Scourfield, Michael Beeke (recorders and English pipes) and Philip G Martin (hurdy gurdy) his performance throughout the recording is very self-assured and whilst still only in his twenties he already wears the medallion of maturity as if

he was born to the tradition.

Having performed with numerous folk dance teams his grounding (much like Carthy's) lends to an understanding of guitar rhythms that articulate both the bass patterns and chordal structure together and are an essential element in underpinning Morris melodies. It's good to see from his sleeve notes he doesn't take himself too seriously proving a real plus in my books and although there's (as some would see it) liberal use of re-interpretation on standards such as 'All For Me Grog' this is a young man that will hopefully stay the course. Do yourselves a favour, if you want to see the future of folk in safe hands then buy this record. Further info from www.fellside.com

Pete Fyfe

DARREN MALONEY Who? (Own Label 001)



The first thing that strikes you about this recording is just how bright and well recorded the banjo is. There's also the fact that Darren Maloney can make the tenor banjo (4-string) sound uncannily like it's 5-string brother. So, for those of you who know about such things, we have an instrument being played by a professional and technically gifted musician. Now we can

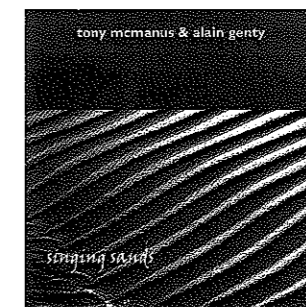
relax in the knowledge that we are going to be entertained handsomely if not astonished in much the same way as when we were first introduced to the delights of this unwieldy beast by that other grand master Gerry O'Connor.

With touches of Bella Fleck and Tommy MacManamon (The Popes) you can tell just by listening that a lot of time and energy has gone into this project and that the blood, sweat and tears were all worth it. There's much to be said for the man who can get his triplets and rolls (picked oh, so cleanly) in just the right place and trust me, Darren can. With subtle use of Richie Lyons bodhran, Joe Brennan's guitar and Brian Fleming's understated percussion the album drives along at a cracking pace just avoiding steering to close to the edge of over-indulgence.

For those looking for a statement in their music check out the track 'Kandy Girls' with tightly picked harmonies and chordal work that prove just how some people are born to be exponents of their chosen instrument. In answer to his own question from the title of the CD, music enthusiasts won't be asking so much who as when is his next album due for release? For further details check out the website at www.darrenmaloney.com

Pete Fyfe

TONY MCMANUS & ALAIN GENTY Singing Sands (Greentrax Recordings CDTRAX274)



I've long been a fan of both Tony and Alain but nothing could have prepared me for this. For 'this' is one of the most rewarding instrumental albums I've heard in ages. The marriage of Genty's provocative electric bass supporting McManus's intricately picked melodies has certainly distinguished itself above a raft of similar releases currently available. If you enjoy

tune playing in any style, form or shape then I urge you to purchase this recording, as you will undoubtedly find something here to savour.

I always remember the first time I heard guitar playing like this being Dick Gaughan's "Coppers & Brass" but this is in a different league played with such eloquent beauty and attention to detail that it will make the listener wonder how such a performance is possible. Like, how for instance does Tony manage those amazing triplets and rolls (sheer hard work - that's how) on the traditional Celtic tunes? Alain's floating bass lines are sometimes supplemented by holding the main melody as on 'The Last Dance' which (according to my sleeve notes anyway) is from the Geek tradition or on Genty's own composition 'Ton Ma Var' which brings to mind vintage Dave Pegg. This is an imaginative coupling of two astonishing musicians who are totally at ease in each others company it's also the kind of album that makes you wish it wouldn't end - a rare breed I think you'll agree. Sit back, listen and enjoy! Further info from www.tonymcmanus.com

Pete Fyfe

MARY McPARTLAN The Holland Handkerchief (Mac P Productions MCPRC001)



There are some singers that leave you gasping for breath when you first hear them sing. I was listening to a radio programme a couple of months ago and on came a female artist with an astounding interpretation of Shane McGowan's composition, "Rainy Night in Soho". Such was her interpretation she instantly made the song her own and has knocked spots of the formidable Pogues original. The artist in question was Mary McPartlan and I just had to get hold of the album.

Well I soon discovered she's certainly not a one-song wonder. The CD is a great collection of thirteen mainly traditional (such as "The Holland Handkerchief", "As I roved out", "Peat Bog Soldiers" and "Johnny Lovely Johnny" and modern contemporary songs (Tim O'Brien's "John Riley", Thom Moore's great song, "Saw You Running" loving rearranged by McPartlan with the help of the brilliant Sligo musician Shamie O'Dowd (who as well as vocally accompanying her plays a range of guitars fiddles and harmonicas). There's also "Aura Lee", the tune of which crossed the Atlantic and somehow got thrown back as "Love Me Tender". To add to her versatile singing talents she has gathered around her some of Ireland's finest musicians and producer, P J Curtis.

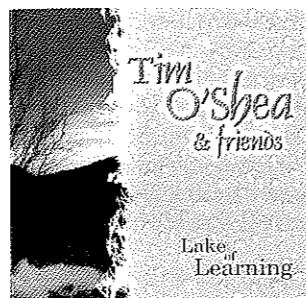
Mary McPartlan has lived in Galway since the mid 1980s and her singing career began in the 1970s. She has been a well-known figure on the Irish folk scene but surprisingly, 'The Holland Handkerchief' is her first CD. One thing is sure it won't be her last. Mary has won some ecstatic reviews for this album and it's easy to see why. Quite simply, she is one the best vocal talents to emerge from a country that is renowned for its strength in depth of singing talent and easily bears favourable comparisons with the likes of Dolores Keane and Maura O'Connell.

Lewis Jones

TIM O'SHEA Lake Of Learning (Lackeen Records LAKCD 001)

Tim O'Shea is from Killarney in the south west of Ireland and has been working solo, and in several bands since the late 1980's. He draws his influences from the dance music of his native Sliabh Luachra and West Kerry folk traditions and from

the singing of Irish and Scottish performers like Jimmy McCarthy, Paul Brady, Dick Gaughan and Andy M. Stewart. Six years ago Tim brought out his first independent CD, "Fair Dawning - Tim O'Shea & Friends" and the follow up album, launched last year, features Uilleann pipes, accordion concertina and clarinet.



The new album features four songs and Tim demonstrates his excellent versatile musical ability on a range of polkas, jigs, slow airs and varied paced reels. He's ably supported by Barry Magee (concertina), Paddy Jones (fiddle), Ger Culhane (accordion) and Matt Bashford (Uilleann pipes, clarinet and low whistle).

Tim is no mean slouch as a singer, performing the title track, 'Lake Of Learning', and exuding a suitable sense of injustice on 'Reconciliation', Ron Kavana's much travelled analogy for the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland, Andy M. Stewart's "Freedom Is Like Gold" and the traditional tale of "Willy Taylor".

"Lake of Learning" showcases the considerable talents of Tim and his talents friends. It will particularly appeal to those who love good Irish music played well with passion and fervour. For further information visit: www.timosheaadfriends.com

Lewis Jones

PLANET WOMAN Reeling In The Pacific (Ode Records CD Manu 2032)



Planet Woman is an exhilarating collaboration that brings together five artists from across the Northern and Southern hemispheres. From New Zealand is Ora Barlow - not only a singer and songwriter, but guitarist, ukulele player, and percussionist;

Mahina Kauhi - an accomplished singer, player and teacher of Taonga Puoro - koauau and nguru (Maori flutes), and Kim Halliday (NZ Scottish) - with her own style of guitar playing and versatile musicianship, featuring piano, ukulele, percussion and vocals.

Folk North West readers may already be familiar with at least one of the UK contingent. Lorraine Jordan, who is undoubtedly one of the finest and most talented folk singer-songwriters in Britain, wrote the wonderful 'Winds of Freedom' that appeared on her 1993 release 'Inspiration' and has subsequently become an essential part of John Wright's repertoire. Having been born in Wales to Irish parents, and now resident in Scotland, she has the perfect Celtic pedigree. Her Scottish compatriot in the band, Sarah Beattie, born in Aberdeenshire, is a sublime fiddle player who has - amongst other things - played with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and as part of the Ceilidh band, the Jiggers.

From the Irish influenced opening song 'A Blessing' to the closing track, 'Smile in your sleep', this album challenges the listener to set aside their preconceived ideas about musical prejudices and cultural differences. In a world where different cultures and languages are too often seen as a threat, Planet Woman proves that the similarities and sharing of cultures are more likely to bring about global harmony

Reeling In The Pacific is an excellent collection of songs that brings together the rich musical and cultural influences of the

North Atlantic and the Southern Pacific. On the face of it you wouldn't think that the Maori and Celtic music would fit well together but this proves not be the case. In many of the songs the English and Maori lyrics are juxtaposed to great effect against a backdrop of a unique blend of string, wind and percussive instruments to create an album of stunning quality. These highly talented performers have produced a rewarding listening experience that all at once caresses and cajoles your senses.

For further information visit: www.planetwoman.net

Lewis Jones

MARTIN SIMPSON Kind Letters (Topic Records TSCD533)



In my youth, pure energy was often good enough to stoke my musical juices. As the years go by, I find that I can absorb and enjoy musical sophistication as well as the rush of the big beat. Yes, no longer just lashing down ale, I'm ready for fine wines and malt whiskies. So, who better to slake my more sophisticated musical thirst than the marvellous Martin Simpson?

Just a couple of tracks in and the blistering guitar that opens 'Love Henry' meets my requirements of an energy rush and playing that tickles the musical senses. If I were a guitarist, I'd just be sat in astonishment at the playing on this - those keen to test themselves will find the tunings are laid out on the sleeve. This is typical of a man eager to share his music with others. Though it's not all down to Martin as some of the drive on the aforementioned 'Love Henry' track comes from the combined talents of Nancy Kerr and James Fagan. And, so it goes throughout the record with Martin picking up with other fine musicians such as Danu and Chris Parkinson where it fits. For example, his re-working of 'Here's Adieu Sweet Lovely Nancy' is turned into something special by the arrangement around Martin's guitar and singing delivered by Danu. Similarly, Nancy Kerr's fiddle and viola add just the right counterpoint to Martin's guitar to turn 'A Blacksmith Courted Me' (or the air of 'To Be A Pilgrim') into an atmospheric piece of note. There again, Martin's guitar alone is enough to adorn both 'Peggy And The Soldier' and the nine minutes long 'Clerk Sanders'. He says on the sleeve that he's tried not to be over influenced by his admiration of Martin Carthy's guitar playing but the latter's epic proportions do at least recall Carthy's 'Famous Flower Of Serving Men'.

As you may have guessed by the tracks that I've mentioned, this record finds Martin dipping back into the folk 'treasure chest'. So, those of you disappointed by the American leanings of 'Righteousness And Humidity' should fear not. We're back on English terra firma and though some may find this record is rather an acquitted taste, it's well worth your effort the sup. Drink deep.

Steve Henderson

HELEN SLATER Crossword (Landsleit Records 8362)



Maybe I'm just being over sentimental at the moment but thank goodness for Helen Slater for reawakening my musical objectivity and proving that there is life on the edge of 'folk' music whilst still remaining within that framework. Personally I look at this album

as my own particular therapy from an overdose of all things Celtic - and not a moment too soon I hear you say. I suppose in many respects we're veering more towards the jazz side of folk but for me it's refreshing and at least it floats my boat. There's no pretentiousness to any of the songs they're just delicately balanced slices of Helen's thoughts that have manifested themselves as prose. In the more than capable hands of musical director and producer Phil Swann, Slater's compositions are uplifted by the use of double bass and lightly brushed percussion plus the addition of Jim Hoke's harmonica with a touch of clarinet, sax and Jonathan Yudkin on violin.

A breath of fresh air may be a much used turn of phrase but it aptly sums up my feelings as the content of the lyrics prove light in feel although not in quality. In many ways the songs come across as mini theatrical extensions of Helen's everyday experiences in much the same way that Victoria Wood or perhaps Andrew Lloyd Webber with his production of Never On A Sunday would conjure from kitchen sink dramas. The simple pleasures of life as laid bare on the track 'Any Day Now' aren't always automatically achieved (this is a kind of woman's magazine article put to music...the ladies will know what I mean (!)) and by reading the lyrics you'll definitely be associating your own inner being with its composer. If, like me you can do with a change of pace and I suppose some of my folk friendly friends might call me radical in my departure from the norm then you'll love this album. So, pass me another glass of wine and my rocking chair...well, a man can dream can't he? For further information contact www.helenslater.com

Pete Fyfe

SOLAS Waiting For An Echo (Shanachie Records 78060)



From a folk music point of view you just know that from the opening bars of this stunning album that you're in for a treat. Let's get one thing straight from the start - some musicians

sound as if they were born with their instrument welded to their hands or in the case of Seamus Egan several instruments. Such is the power of the opening track "The Hanover Reel/John James' Reel/The Copperplate" that you feel things couldn't possibly get much better then you come onto the second track that hits you with its starkness. The beautiful (but somewhat sinister) "Silver Dagger" is achingly conveyed by the gorgeous tones of the band's lead vocalist Deirdre Scanlon. But let's not forget that this is a team effort and along with Eamon McElholm on guitar and keyboards, Mick McAuley (button accordion) and Winifred Horan's fiddle this combination couldn't get much better.

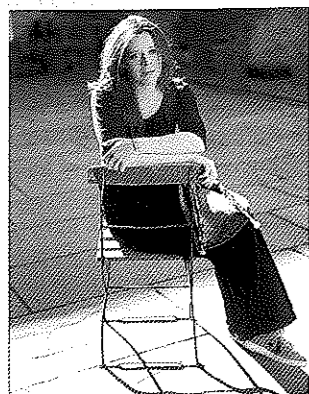
This is music that will seriously move you with some pretty wild performances leaving you open mouthed in awe one minute and then barrier crashing the next inspired by the simple majesty of "Doireann's Waltz" or the sumptuous "Little Star". Forsaking his trusty tenor banjo (apart from an unaccredited inclusion on "The Bag Of Beer") and taking up the more mellow-toned nylon stung guitar Egan has given this particular recording a 'warmer' feel than we are possibly used to and although still striking out with ostentatious flourishes it is guaranteed to leave the listener with a broad grin.

For those of you looking for a good up tempo groove then check out the Turkish sounding (at least it sounds like it to me!) arrangement given to the traditional "The Ploughman" it's a nice balance to the more subdued "Erin". At the end of the day providing a sound that is commercially viable whilst working within the framework of your preferred musical outlet then Solas have proved this is a more than viable prospect. Highly

recommended!

For further information check out the band's website
www.solasmusic.com **Pete Fyfe**

KATHRYN TICKELL BAND Air Dancing (Park Records PRKCD72)



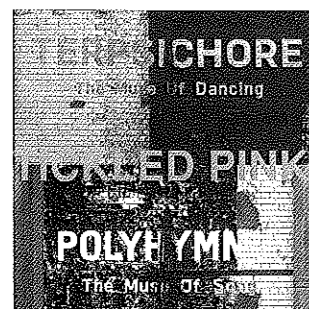
Gosh, I seem to have the lot this month. Elsewhere you'll find me dealing with the tricky topic of soundtracks and, then, there's the 'various artists' album. To round off this set, here's an instrumental album to consider. It's true that they're not everyone's cup of tea including myself. However, it's a different story when we're talking a class artist like Kathryn Tickell.

Kathryn seems to have taken on the mantle of Northumbrian piper from a whole host of great players from days gone by. The wonderfully named Billy Pigg being a fine example. These days, Kathryn is in full flight with rarely a look over the shoulder. 'Air Dancing' is packed with her own compositions and those of her contemporaries including 'Herbert The Sherbert' from local melodeon playing Lancashire lad, Martin Ellison. Once a member of Tarras and now a fixture in Kathryn's band, Joss Clapp also adds a number of tunes of his own.

For some of you, I know the thought of instrumentals based around the Northumbrian pipes will have you scattering to the hills. But before you do, you need to recognise that these arrangements include fiddle guitar, accordion and whistles. 'Rhymeside', for example, opens with a fiddle piece before moving into a variation on the tune that adds guitar as a rhythmic counterpoint. There are up-tempo jigs alongside slow airs and the tunes are all rather good. So, for the casual listener or untrained ear, there is plenty of variety and quality. If you fancy treating yourself to an album of fine instrumentals, you could do a lot worse and little better than 'Air Dancing'.

Steve Henderson

TICKLED PINK Terpsichore Polyhymnia (Talking Elephant Records TECD074)



For those of you who had it in your heads that Tickled Pink were just another folk dance band then how wrong could you be - or me for that matter? Starting with an arrangement of the traditional song "My Son John" (although you'd hardly recognise it here) this is serious folk-rock at its best. With outrageous guitar solos and a full on rock treatment this is the

kind of outfit that you perhaps might not feel comfortable taking your Granny to see but the kids would really get a blast from them. Even Jez Lowe's "Japs And English" isn't sacred in the hands of these guys although I'm sure Jez would thoroughly approve.

It's been a while since I heard a full blown folk-rock (9 minutes) work-out but "Need For Speed" with it's James Bond orchestral stabs courtesy of Rob Kay's keyboards bring a true sense of dynamics to the proceedings so much so that by the time you

get to "Speed The Plough" the melody almost pales alongside the introduction. I love a band that is willing to stick its neck out by taking chances and trust me Tickled Pink do it magnificently well. There's no slouching in the arrangements either with sources as diverse as Jimmy Shand (courtesy of Simon Care) in Hawaii or even touches of Lemon Jelly/Albion Band thrown in for good measure on "Let The Bullgine Run/Johnny Come Down To Hilo". Even politics gets a look in with the Bragg-esque 'Apathy' which takes the anthemic view of ...we don't like any party so stick it where the sun don't shine. Let's set the record straight that here is a band that knows how to have a seriously good time and if you're prepared to let your hair down along with them you'll be guaranteed to have a great time listening. If you like your music presented as a substantial smorgasbord instead of an insignificant salad then this is the album for you. More information from www.talkingelephant.com

Pete Fyfe

UNUSUAL SUSPECTS Live In Scotland (Footstompin' Records CDFSR1727)



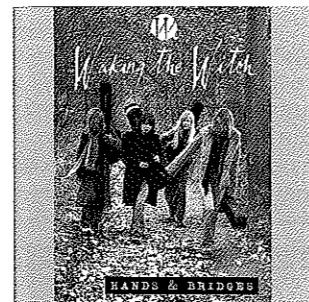
Catch this runaway train while you can! The Unusual Suspects rip it up from the opening track 'The Big Set' and hardly allow you to sit down for a moment after that. This really is an adrenalin rush featuring 22 of Scotland's finest

'folk' based musicians who perform with such passion and vigour that you get the feeling they've all got a point to prove. Maybe that point is that we're proud of our heritage and we want everyone to know it. The cast assembled under the guiding light of Corrina Hewat (harp & vocals) and David Milligan (piano) read like a who's who including Catriona MacDonald, Eilidh Shaw and Aidan O'Rourke on fiddles, Annie Grace and Rory Campbell on pipes and whistle a horn section and the percussive beats of James Mackintosh and Donald Hay.

This is real kick ass music that can leave you sweating one minute then astonish you the next with the subtlety of the song 'Sae Will We Yet' that has a touch of a George Michael track to sweeten all the energetic stuff. Given Hewat and Milligan's influence it isn't surprising that there is more than a touch of jazz sprinkled liberally throughout the recording and that's probably where the group will differ from say the English equivalent Bellowhead. Given the nightmare it must have taken for Dave Gray and live engineer Cammy Young to capture everything for posterity I can honestly say this album will sweep any cobwebs away and leave the listener refreshed and uplifted. Well, if you hadn't guessed it already I really enjoyed this recording and that, as the saying goes, is an understatement! More details from the band's website www.unusalsuspects.uk.com or the record company at www.footstompin.com

Pete Fyfe

WAKING THE WITCH - 'Hands and Bridges' (Witch Records WITCH01)



Sometimes, I wonder about fellow critics or, maybe, I'm just too critical. Whatever, these ladies have been claimed as 'a female Crosby, Stills and Nash and Young'. It certainly had me ripping open the CD packaging. I suppose the comparisons are about their harmonies.

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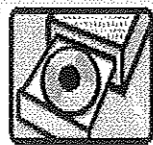
Certainly, Neil Young fans out there shouldn't be expecting any abrasive guitar or ten minute solos. Thankfully, I remembered enjoying seeing them perform at Trowbridge Festival last summer. So, those images of California were quickly dispelled and I was able to settle back and listen without prejudice.

The record is a fair representation of what you see live with four female vocalists accompanying themselves on their acoustic guitars. Vocally, they are sweet and the acoustic guitars tend to be gently strummed and plucked with the occasional solo breaking its way in. With a dominant style based around their harmonising, two issues arise in the same way that you'd have listening to barbers shop singers. Firstly, how appealing is that style and, secondly, are the songs good enough to carry you through the record. Tricky for me to answer the first one as you pays your money and takes your choice but, basically, expect to hear four females gently singing in harmony. It's not Coope, Boyes and Simpson or, even, Crosby, Stills and Nash in that you can pick out the individual voices within that harmony. Instead, the composer of the song takes the lead vocal whilst the others add their harmonies. My ears pricked up at Patsy's 'We Talk' and 'Through And Through' as well as 'Bluer Than This' from Jools.

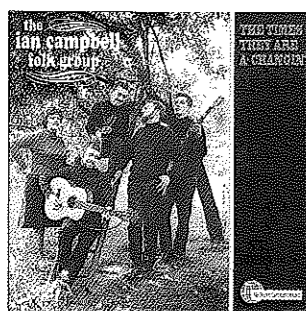
Though, on the whole, the songs were not strong enough to carry the record for my ears, there's certainly talent here but either stronger material is required or the arrangements need to have more variation. Without either, the record washes over you and away when not accompanied by the visual distraction of a live show.

Steve Henderson

CD RE-ISSUES & COLLECTIONS



IAN CAMPBELL FOLK GROUP The Times They Are A-Changin' (Castle Music CMDDD1072)



Going back over these old recordings of The Ian Campbell Folk Group has re-awakened my interest in some of the songs so much so that I'm currently learning a few to include in my own set list. Delving into the Transatlantic Records back catalogue of recordings from 1964-1972 the modern equivalent (Castle Music) has once again come up

trumps in their representation of a bygone age.

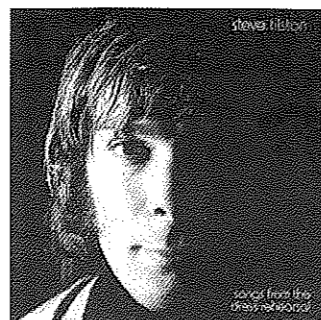
Maybe not as inspirational as The Dubliners, the Campbell folk group still pushed the folk movement forward with their lustily sung choruses and of course the legendary fiddle of Dave Swarbrick. Perhaps what held them back on reflection was the plinky plonk of the banjo. Now, those of you that know me know that I generally like and indeed play a (tenor) banjo but unfortunately the first disk sounds rather laboured on repeated listening. Take for instance 'The Unquiet Grave' where, although passably played it would surely have sounded better on the more mellow tones of a guitar - having said that the 5-string does sound somewhat more balanced as an accompaniment to the only tune based set 'Rocky Road To Dublin/Drops Of Brandy'.

Far better in my opinion are the full power of the group's vocal talents brought to the fore on 'The Bells Of Rhymney' - a real joy even though it is brutally short. The second disk features the group after Mr Swarbrick departed the fold and for me the material comes more to life utilising the flute and piccolo (possibly lending things a more English approach) provided by George Watts. The music flows far better and both Ian and Lorna's vocals somehow seem more assertive.

For those of a certain age (myself included) this double CD is well worth purchasing as it will not only act as a pleasant reminder of your distant past but the excellent and informative sleeve-notes by David Wells fill in the gaps you'd forgotten about. Further info from www.sanctuaryrecordsgroup.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

STEVE TILSTON Songs From The Dress Rehearsal (Market Square Records MSMCD 132)



Songs From The Dress Rehearsal is a welcome reissue of material Tilston wrote in the 1970s and recorded in 1976 at King Crimson drummer, Mike Giles' studio in the New Forest during that exceptionally hot summer. As well as the 11 tracks that formed the original recording, including the perennial 'The Greening Wind', there are an additional half

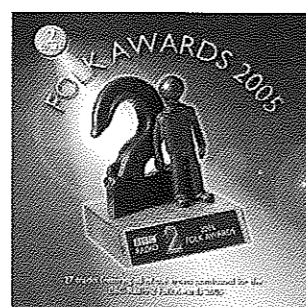
dozen extra tracks previously unreleased. Rupert Hine, who went on to record such artists as Kevin Ayers, Tina Turner, Steve Nicks and Chris De Burgh, produced it.

The inner 'sleeve' notes contains an introduction by Tilston himself and as well as the lyrics of all the songs, there's a short background note to each song as he reflects, for example, on how he came to write it and the circumstances of the recording. Steve Tilston has remained a constant force on the folk scene for over 30 years and this is a good opportunity to examine his roots and earlier influences, a) if your vinyl copy is worn out, b) you are too young to remember the 1970s or c) you think you were around the 1970s but can't for the life of you remember where you were or what you did at the time!

You can get this album by visiting: www.marketsquarerecords.co.uk

Lewis Jones

VARIOUS ARTISTS Folk Awards 2005 (Proper Records PROPERFOLK01)



There's a view out there that says the Folk world outside London lives in a 'media shadow'. If that's the case, the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards are definitely under the media spotlight. So, this double CD is the ideal way to see if the bright light reveals anything of interest. Like all albums by Various Artists, it's a personal choice as to what inspires and what

doesn't. Here, the nominations for awards at the 2005 event get laid out for all to hear. There are 27 tracks ranging from Polwart to Paxton. The best way to treat it is as a sampler for

artists that you may have never heard. So, it's true that I didn't need to hear the tracks by Chris While and Julie Matthews ('Westward') or Show of Hands ('Country Life'), as I'm already very familiar with them. But, amongst a number of others, it was interesting to hear Bellowhead, the Spiers and Boden big band, in full flight.

Needless to say, nominees for such awards are a guarantee of quality and it's really only a case of whether individual styles are your cup of tea. So, join the queue if you want to hear Martin Simpson, Brass Monkey, Kirsty McGee, Whapweasel, Steeleye Span, Seth Lakeman, Eddi Reader, Planxty, The Big Session, Martin Carthy and many more. Sample the delights as I suspect you'll make a discovery or two.

Steve Henderson

VARIOUS ARTISTS Men Folk (Fellside FESC1)



There are compilation albums and compilation albums but if you are going to do one then make sure you choose some good songs performed by some of the best artists available. That criteria has been met in full and more by the long established and much respected Fellside Records outfit. In fact this CD is one of three recently issued compilations of recordings made on Fellside

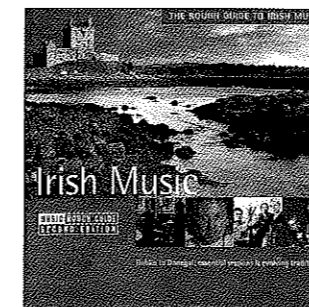
going right back to their early days.

The artistes roll call is like a who's who in the folk scene over the last 30 years or so with the much missed former Young Tradition singer Peter Bellamy heading the alphabetical listings with "Dockyard Gate" followed by another folk legend (this time very much alive thank goodness), Martin Carthy, with "Banks of Green Willow". In addition to traditional songs by Johnny Collins, Bob Davenport, Dr Faustus, John Kirkpatrick, Keith Kendrick and sea songs by Hughie Jones and Jolly Jack, there is also a fair sprinkling of contemporary material performed by Jez Lowe, Steve Tilston, Clive Gregson, John Wright and Bram Taylor. I am particularly humbled, pleased and indebted to Bram and Fellside for including my song "Next Time Around" on the album as there are so many of my own "folk heroes" on the 20 tracks.

As you would expect the recording quality is faultless and the value for money is outstanding with the 3 albums of Men Folk, Women Folk (including Maddy Prior, Nancy Kerr and Linda Adams) and Cutting Edge being available for little over £20. As a collection of music they are an excellent addition to your library but as a record of folk and acoustic music in the UK over the last 2 decades they are a must. Visit Fellside at www.fellside.com to order your copies.

Ian Chesterman

VARIOUS ARTISTS The Rough Guide To Irish Music [Second Edition] (World Music Network RGNET 1148 CD)



This recording does exactly what it says on the tin: provides the listener with a rough guide to Irish music. You can't fault the selection with inclusions from some of the leading players in the field including Flook, Dervish, Donal Lunny, Paddy Keenan, Paul Brady and Matt Molloy plus a spellbinding banjo set from Gerry O'Connor. These

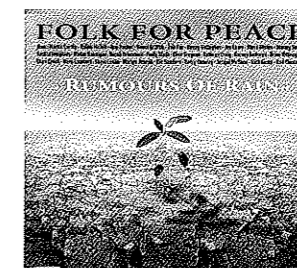
recordings are already available on various CDs but if you're just starting out on a voyage of Irish musical discovery and want to dip your toe in the water I couldn't recommend a finer sampler. Further info from www.worldmusic.net

Pete Fyfe

CD SINGLES



FOLK FOR PEACE Rumours of rain (Hypertension HYP 4231)



The idea for the song, 'Rumours of rain', came to Cathryn Craig in a dream on 6th February 2003. The vision of the group of artists came to Brian Willoughby on the 8th March 2003. In the Spring of that year the group gathered together in the Folk Tradition studios to record the song that was initially released about six months later. It

features almost everyone one who is anyone on the folk music scene from Martin Carthy, Ralph McTell, Jacqui McShee and Tom Paxton to Harvey Andrews, Nanci Griffith, Emily Slade and Clive Gregson. It's a remarkable feat in itself to have got them all involved. But a plea for peace is a worthy cause (rain being an analogy for war).

Although the war in Iraq went ahead, it do so in the teeth of strong and widespread popular opposition to the US/UK axis. Songs like this embody what many felt about the threat to international peace and takes its place as part of a long proud heritage of folk protest songs. The single includes the full six and a half minutes of the song, a shorter radio edit and a video that shows the artists putting together the finished product in the studio.

Rumours of rain is a suitable and chastening anthem for the times we live in. While it's a temptation to see it as a folk movement Band Aid, there's no question that the artists in this project have got involved out of genuine feeling and belief rather than a bid to raise their own professional profiles. Understandably, you don't get many folk single CDs but this one is definitely a bit special.

For further information and a list of places you can buy the CD visit: www.rumoursofrain.com

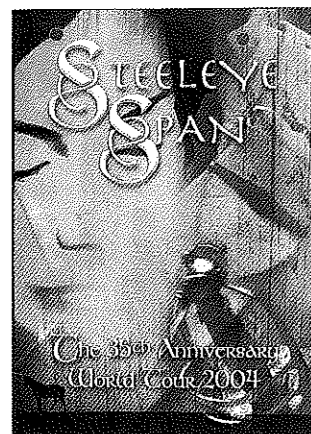
Lewis Jones

DVD REVIEW

STEELEYE SPAN 35th Anniversary World Tour 2004 (Park Records PRKDVD76)

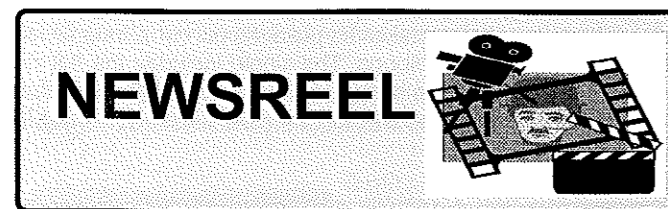
Due to ill health, unfortunately I had to forgo the pleasure of seeing Steeleye on the Winter leg of their 2004 tour still, I hadn't reckoned on the resourcefulness of John Dagnell at Park Records in producing this tremendous DVD. As a record of

Steeleye's current line-up I personally don't think they could better the filming. It has all the quality of a major production unlike some of their previous visual outings. Each shot is crystal clear and the sound is excellent. What with CGI and special effects etc visual art comes in many forms these days but by sticking to the tried and tested formula of good close-ups on the instrumental dexterity and swooping camera angles beloved of so many musical documentary makers this representation captures the band at their best. As has already been documented the band have found a new lease of life with Ken Nicol's sparkling guitar work standing alongside the established vocals of Maddy Prior, Peter Knight's violin and all underpinned by the rhythm section of Rick Kemp on bass and drums of Liam Genockey.



With obligatory 'hits' such as "King Henry", "All Around My Hat" and "Long Lankin" performed alongside the newer material including the beautiful "Mantle Of Green" and "Who Told The Butcher" there's a bit of something for everybody. As with most DVDs this one comes with a couple of extras including a short interview with each of the band members plus the inclusion of two encores (not included in the set list) a rather buoyant "Cam Ye O'er Frae France" featuring the duelling jig-a-jig of Knight and Nicol and what Steeleye set wouldn't be complete without "Gaudette"? All in all I'd say this is the best visual representation of Steeleye to date and if, like me you missed the actual tour this will do nicely as a runner-up prize! Further information from www.parkrecords.com

Pete Fyfe



MOST WANTED IRISH FOLK SONGS

PRS (the Performing Right Society) is celebrating St Patrick's Day by releasing details of the most popular Irish folk songs that have received the most performances in UK pubs and bars in the past year (2004). The Most Wanted chart is based on information gathered from PRS' market research survey of UK venues, which is conducted to ensure royalties are paid accurately to composers and songwriters.

Whiskey In The Jar is number one in the 10 Most Wanted folk songs list - a traditional song that has also been recorded by talents as diverse as the Dubliners, Smokie, Thin Lizzy and Metallica.

Title

1. Whiskey In The Jar
2. Wild Rover
3. Fields Of Athenry
4. Irish Rover
5. The Black Velvet Band
6. I'll Tell Me Ma

7. Star of The County Down
8. Ride On
9. Danny Boy
10. Galway Shawl

KARINE PERFORMS TREBLE AT FOLK AWARDS



Scottish singer/songwriter Karine Polwart scooped three awards at this year's Radio 2 Folk Awards, held tonight, Monday 14th February. Karine was presented with Best Album, for her highly acclaimed debut solo album Faultlines, by Charles Kennedy MP; Noddy

Holder presented Karine with the award for Best Original Song; and Roddy Woomble from Idlewild presented her with the Horizon Award, which acknowledged her outstanding achievements in the past year.

The Folk Singer of the Year Award went to legendary British folk singer Martin Carthy, who also performed at the ceremony. Actor Bernard Hill presented the award. Gerald Kaufman MP also presented Martin with the Best Traditional Track award. Two pioneers of folk music, Ramblin' Jack Elliot and Tom Paxton, received Lifetime Achievement awards. Radio 2 broadcaster Bob Harris presented Ramblin' Jack Elliot with the Lifetime Achievement Award and Tom Paxton was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Song Writing by fellow singer/songwriter Ralph McTell. Both Elliot and Paxton also performed

Author Terry Pratchett presented Steeleye Span with the Good Tradition Award. Northumberland piper Kathryn Tickell was presented with the Musician of the Year Award by previous Musician of the Year winner John McCusker.

The awards also featured performances from Steeleye Span, Karine Polwart, Martin Carthy with Martin Simpson, Kathryn Tickell, Oysterband Big Session, Eddi Reader and Bellowhead. The sixth annual BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards were co hosted by Mike Harding and Mary Ann Kennedy and took place at The Brewery in London

Results of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards 2005

- Best Duo: Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham. Award presented by Barbara Dickson
- Best Dance Act: Whapweasel. Award presented by Ashley Hutchings
- Musician of the Year: Kathryn Tickell. Award presented by John McCusker
- Best Live Act: Bellowhead. Award presented by The Archers' Buffy Davies
- Best Group: Oysterband Big Session. Award presented by Bruce Dickinson
- Horizon Award: Karine Polwart. Award presented by Roddy Woomble
- Best Traditional Track: Martin Carthy. Award presented by Gerald Kaufman MP
- Lifetime Achievement for Song Writing: Tom Paxton. Award presented by Ralph McTell
- Best Original Song: Karine Polwart. Award presented by Noddy Holder
- Folk Club of the Year: Hitchin Folk Club. Award presented by Chris White and Julie Matthews
- Good Tradition Award: Steeleye Span. Award presented by Terry Pratchett
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Ramblin' Jack Elliot. Award presented by Bob Harris
- Best Album: Karine Polwart. Award presented by Charles

Julie Ellison

"A terrific guitar player who writes great songs"

Ralph McTell



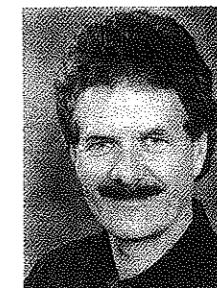
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24TH to 26TH JUNE 2005

Friday 24th June 8pm at Old Alwinians Rugby Club,
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1pm to 5pm Hosted by ROBERI and featuring

Local Artistes

Sunday 26th June EVENING CONCERT at

Droylsden Football Club, Market Street. Droylsden

8pm Stanley Accrington. Entrance £3

For more information and maps visit our website

www.droylsdenfolkfestival.org

Festival sponsored by Droylsden District Assembly

Kennedy MP

Folk Singer of the Year: Martin Carthy. Award presented by Bernard Hill

Further details at www.bbc.co.uk/

COOPE BOYES & SIMPSON'S 'TRIPLE ECHO'

In their first solo album for three years, Coope Boyes and Simpson bring their breath-taking acappella to traditional songs collected by a trio of composers - Ralph Vaughan Williams, Percy Grainger and George Butterworth. Returning to the source of English folksong, the new album takes in versions of classic traditional pieces like 'Bushes and Briars' and 'The Banks of Green Willow', but also brings to light many little known gems drawn from the composers' fieldwork undertaken across England in the early twentieth century, including carols and songs from Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, East Anglia, the South East and Sussex and shanties from South West coast.

Coope Boyes & Simpson will be launching their new, all traditional album with a special concert at Beverley & East Riding Folk Festival on the 19th June. The CD will be available on No Masters, NMCD22

CONTACT: Georgina Boyes NO MASTERS; email: georgina@nomasters.co.uk Tel: 01709 375 063 www.coopeboyesandsimpson.co.uk

LORRAINE JORDAN



Born in Wales to Irish parents, Lorraine Jordan has been resident in Scotland for many years. She was influenced from a young age by Irish traditional music: her father in his day being an All-Ireland flute champion and her uncle Frank Jordan a renowned flute player in Co. Roscommon to this day.

Her thoughtful, powerful and melodic songs reflect her Celtic heritage and embrace her

contemporary musical tastes. Many artists including Archie Fisher, Gill Bowman and John Wright have covered them. Previous musicians who have toured with Lorraine have included Niall O'Callanain (Deisal), Steafan Hannigan (Sin E), John Whelan (Mary Coughlan Band), Tony McManus, Neal Davey (Anam).

She has released 3 CDs to much critical acclaim, has toured Europe extensively and has a growing audience in the USA and Australia. She has played alongside great performers, including Capercaillie, Alan Stivel, Loudon Wainwright III, Dick Gaughan, and Richard Thompson.

Lorraine Jordan started her singing days in the folk clubs of South Wales. While still at school she joined the band Mooncoin, an Irish/Welsh combination with fiddler Mike Lease (Yr Hwytws) and piper Theo Schurmanns. On her first musical trip abroad she represented Wales in Paris and Lyon as a bouzouki player, accompanying Mike Lease and Heather Jones, a very fine Welsh singer. This gave Lorraine enough money to buy her very own bouzouki and marked the beginning of many musical adventures.

She left Wales for Scotland and joined the Irish/Scots band Malin Head, based in Edinburgh. The band toured extensively throughout Europe and Scandinavia playing self-penned and traditional tunes as well as a few of Lorraine's original songs. It

was in the latter stages of her time in the band that she met Niall O'Callanain, a wonderful bouzouki player and John Whelan, a great guitarist. The two encouraged Lorraine to go over to Ireland and record her debut CD Inspiration in 1991 at Starc Studio, Dublin. Thus, armed with a "Prince's Trust Loan" and some very kind-hearted and extremely talented musicians she embarked upon her solo career as a singer-songwriter.

Inspiration was released to much critical acclaim, as was her second CD, Crazy Guessing Games, which came out on the Scottish Label Lochshore. Most recently she produced This Big Feeling on her own label. The CD continues to receive rave reviews.

In 1996 Lorraine co-hosted a songwriting forum with Richard Thompson for the organisation Folkworks. In addition she was one of only a handful of songwriters in the UK to be asked to lead songwriting workshops that coincided with Richard Thompson's Tour in support of songwriting projects.

Lorraine has toured extensively in Germany, Italy, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, Scandinavia, Ireland and Scotland, and has a growing audience in Australia and the USA. She has recently been in Australia and New Zealand touring with Planet Woman. (See CD review in this edition).

Lorraine wants to do some gigs in and around the North West, so any organisers interested in booking her, contact her by email: lorraine@lorrainejordan.net On the evidence of her reviews you'll not be disappointed. Website: www.lorrainejordan.net

WILLIAMS RETURNS TO BREWERY

On 11 June Kathryn Williams returns to the Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal after her last gig totally enchanted a sold out Malt Room. Often compared to Joni Mitchell and Beth Orton, Kathryn actually has a sound and style that is all her own. Completely mesmerising, she delivers her songs with an effortless purity and gentle, playful humour that is completely beguiling. She first made an impact on the music scene with the release of her debut album Dog Leap Stairs, on her own Caw Records imprint (co-produced by P.J. Harvey) and later secured rave reviews and a Mercury Music Prize nomination for Little Black Numbers. Malt Room, Seated; Doors 8pm £12.50/£11.50conc/£11fob. Box Office 01539 725133

CONGRESS

Manchester's newest Irish traditional group, 'Congress' is to commence a monthly residency at Poynton British Legion, Georges Road West, Poynton on Friday 27th May, continuing on the last Friday of each month. The Poynton "Legion" is earning a name in the area as a live music venue with regular jazz and folk evenings. It has been nominated CAMRA club of the year 2005 and has a commitment to traditional values. A friendly, relaxed atmosphere, comfortable surroundings, real ale at reasonable prices and the best music around make it an ideal setting for entertainment. Tel: 01625 873120

The band are: Seamus Curley - vocal, guitars; Mat Walklate - flute, harmonica, whistle, vocal, uilleann pipes; Andrew Dinan - fiddle; Cormac Byrne - bodhran; and Anthony Haller - double bass.

Congress on the stage offer the fan of Irish traditional music all their heart desires; original and traditional songs performed and accompanied with passion and pride and original and traditional tunes featuring Andrew's virtuoso fiddle, Mat's forceful flute and fluid harmonica, Cormac's incredible technique and Seamus and Anthony's expert backing!

MAURICE DICKSON



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26 June Neidpath Inn, Peebles
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13 July Penpont, South Wales
with Al Cooper

16/17 July Stonehaven Festival
with Al Cooper 01569 767666

20 July Irvine Folk Club
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"A genius performer with amazing stage presence and personality".

Stonehaven Folk Festival

"If you only discover one singer songwriter this year make it

Maurice Dickson - you won't regret it".

Irish World

"Lifts you up throws you down spins you round in the way
only a seasoned pro can".

Scotland on Sunday

"Held the audience spellbound and made his guitar talk".

Arran Folk festival

"A CD that stopped the work and silenced the office babble".

Music Maker magazine

"Highly accomplished songs and inspired musicianship".

Folk Roots magazine

www.mauricedickson.com

EMILY DRUCE & STEVE JONES

Paul Jones, Radio2's blues guru, has been singing her praises and the late Lonnie Donegan loved her. She is Emily Druce and she is creating her very own blue wave with Steve Jones. The young Yorkshire blues/Americana duo released their 3rd album, "Songs from the Silver Band Room", to wide acclaim in February 2004. Regular live radio appearances include Paul Jones, Woman's Hour and special BBC Radio 2 Christmas Concert "A Celebration of British Blues". On 2 June 7.45 pm they appear at South Lakes Music Promotions, Ulverston Sports Club, Priory Road, Ulverston Tel 01229 582258 and 24 June 8.00 pm at Carlisle Folk & Blues Club, The Sunset Suite, Carlisle United Football Club, Warwick Rd, Carlisle Tel 01697 72305 For further details of the duo see <http://www.vixenrecords.com/foxyemusic/emilydruce.htm>

Homespun is the improbable union of one of Britain's most original songwriters with one of our most distinctive singers. Sam Brown and Dave Rotheray are both celebrated artists within their own right. Sam was made famous by her classic hit 'Stop' (which has recently been covered by Jamelia and features on the soundtrack to Bridget Jones, The Edge Of Reason) and Dave has enjoyed incredible success as the songwriter and guitarist in The Beautiful South.

NORTH YORKSHIRE FOLK

A new series of folk music programmes for North Yorkshire was launched on BBC Radio York on March 16. Michael Brothwell who has worked previously for the station and broadcasts on student radio at the University of York hosts the programmes. Managing editor of BBC Radio York, Matt Youdale, said:

"We have deliberately chosen this time and day to dovetail with Mike Harding on Radio 2. Our programme will be heavily music-based but we also hope to carry some interviews and live performances - and an events diary for North Yorkshire. Ever since Henry Ayrton's Thursday show finished in this region, I have said that I wanted to introduce a folk programme of our own. It has taken a while to find a suitable presenter, but at last we're there."

Michael, 22, who plays the classical piano and violin, has been interested in folk music from childhood and is looking forward to presenting the new show. He said:

"We want to highlight North Yorkshire artists and give them a new platform but we don't want to be cliquy so we'll also be playing well-known and national artists."

"North Yorkshire Folk" will be broadcast between 7-8pm on Wednesdays. Anyone with suggestions, feedback and information can contact Michael at: michael.brothwell@bbc.co.uk

HOMESPUN MUSIC

Homespun is the improbable union of one of Britain's most original songwriters with one of our most distinctive singers. Sam Brown and Dave Rotheray are both celebrated artists within their own right. Sam was made famous by her classic hit 'Stop' (which has recently been covered by Jamelia and features on the soundtrack to Bridget Jones, The Edge Of Reason) and Dave has enjoyed incredible success as the songwriter and guitarist in The Beautiful South.

The Homespun project initially started as an outlet for Dave's song writing whilst The Beautiful South were working on a 'covers' project, but as he wrote more, and more tracks it became obvious that the project would take on a more serious role and an album

release was imminent.

Dave began recording the album in his bedroom (hence the name Homespun). Sam became involved right at the beginning of the project as the first choice to take on the vocals. Dave then enlisted the help of his musician friends, all boasting impressive credentials; Tony Robinson took on keyboards, he had previously worked with the Super Furry Animals, Gary Hammond then came onboard as the percussionist, he had previously worked with the Nina Simone band. Clare Mactaggart the got involved, she had worked with Portishead, and Melvin Duffy, previously in Robbie Williams band, works the pedal steel.

Dave made a conscious decision to step away from the familiar sound of The Beautiful South, by loosing the drums and electric guitars and aiming for a folk-based framework (heavily influenced by the Grateful Dead's classic album 'American Beauty')

The first musical offering from Homespun, was a self-titled album released in 2003. The album received a lot of positive press, and after touring they generated a loyal fan base consisting of fans, both old and new.

Homespun are now set to release their second album, 'Effortless Cool'. The album is made up of personal situations experienced by Dave; 'I wasn't interested in writing about themes or issues' says Dave 'Just my own state of mind at the exact moment each song was written'. The intimate, introspective feel of the music reflects this. Touches of violin, sweeping pedal steel and delicate piano form the sound palette. Emotionally confessional, musically confident, 'Effortless Cool' succeeds in every department. Even the 'Grateful Dead circa 1971' would be proud. Effortless indeed. For further information on Homespun visit www.homespunrecordings.com

TILLER'S FOLLY TOURING UK

Tiller's Folly perform high-energy acoustic roots music with Pacific Northwest flair. Their unique blend of Celtic/folk/rock/pop/bluegrass is gaining popularity far and wide. Virtuosity, musicality and passion are the trademarks of Tiller's Folly music. American Grand Master fiddler Nolan Murray, and renowned Canadian songwriter Bruce Coughlan are just part of this award winning band.

The band has secured anchor dates in Scotland in late July / early August 2005. We are looking for consequent dates to flesh out tour. See www.donnacunningham.co.uk/Agency/TillersFolly.html or email: Fireflyproducts@aol.com for further information and bookings.

CHRIS AND KELLIE AT MECHANICS

David Lewis tells us that he's booked mother and daughter duo Chris and Kellie While for his next Charity Gig at Burnley Mechanics on the 11th June. Chris and Kellie played the Folk Rock for Good Concert at the end of January and were just superb. He's a number of requests to book them so he's done so!!

Please go along - you'll have a wonderful evening with these two brilliant singers/guitarists whilst supporting the excellent work of Help the Hospices. Visit <http://www.hospicerunners.org.uk/> for more info about the Charity and David's website <http://www.davidlewispromotions.com> to see more details about the Concert

LOWEDOWN

Tantobie Records plan to release of Jez Lowe's TENTERHOOKS

- THE ART EDITION on August 8th. There will be up to FIVE additional tracks on the CD, and the booklet will feature the work of celebrated North East England artist and former coal miner Tom McGuinness. An excellent book of McGuinness's work was published in the UK in 1999, which used lines from Jez's songs as by-lines and chapter-headings. The album will be launched at Bishop Auckland Town Hall in County Durham in August, to coincide with an exhibition of McGuinness's paintings.

The gig-list at www.jezlowe.com also has exclusive details of the UK club appearances in November, which will see the reunion of Jez Lowe and Jake Walton, fifteen years after the celebrated duo parted company. There are no plans for Jez and Jake to tour outside the UK, despite the fact that in their 1980's heyday, most of their work took them overseas to America and Europe. They have collaborated a lot in recent years of course, with Jake making a guest appearance on LIVE AT THE DAVY LAMP, and the pair recording bonus tracks for the reissue of their award-winning 1986 album TWO A ROUE, when it was reissued by Tantobie in 2001.

Gigs in or around the North West region over the next few months or so include: JUN 18-19 BAND - MIDDLEWICH FOLK & BOAT FESTIVAL Box Office: Phone 0709 239 0501 Email boxoffice@middlewichfestival.org www.middlewichfestival.org/; 13-14 AUG SOLO Bishop Auckland Town Hall, Launch for 'Tenterhooks' re-issue; NOV 11 BAND Maghull Day of Music; NOV 12 SOLO The Acoustic Cabaret, Wakefield Labour Club (The Red Shed), on Vicarage Street, Wakefield; DEC 1 BAND Biddulph Folk Club; DEC 3 BAND Border Folk, Hope Village Hall, Shropshire.

COLCANNON

Just in case you've been trying to look at Colcannon via their website, it's been shifted to www.colcannon.net. The old website address is not now functioning. They've still got spare dates and an earnest desire to fill gaps in the band's UK tour from June 24 to July 31 2005. Contact Stoneyport email: jb@stoneyport.demon.co.uk or heather@stoneyport.com (Heather MacLeod) <http://www.stoneyport.demon.co.uk/index.html>; t/mob ... 017968 131 737 or 031-539 8238 (Heather MacLeod; Tu-We-Th from 2-6pm)

JOHN McCORMICK

California-based John McCormick is an act to treasure - with a warm, rich voice, powerful yet mellow, he communicates every song he sings with feeling and with a gentle charm. As a musician he has been described as "America's finest English-style guitarist", possessing a style that compliments every song without sacrificing its meaning to guitar pyrotechnics. Another fine asset that John brings to his performances is his vast repertoire - material ranging from traditional English, Scottish, Irish and American through to songs by many other fine writers from both sides of the Atlantic.

He is also a fine audience communicator, his live performances infused with a warmth and touching humility. John's primary goal, always, is to entertain his audience. John has toured the UK more than fifteen times over the years, and counts both Steve Tilston and Maggie Boyle amongst his British friends, both of whom appeared on John's 1998 CD "Between Our Hearts". For more information about John check out his website at www.mccormickjohn.com or see also www.themusicstable.co.uk

CLUNIE MUSIC NEWS

Exciting events in the planning stages are a Celtic weekend in the Midlands for both Caim and Ciaran and Heather and a repeat

tour in Australia in 2005 or 2006 for Caim. Full gig details for all Clunie Music Musicians can be found at www.cluniemusic.com Please also check out their CD shop for the 5 Caim CDs, Ciaran and Heather's CD "Waiting for the Calm", and Dulaman and Seorise O Dochartaigh Irish Gaelic CDs. You can contact Heather Innes on 01250 884265 Fax 01250 884748; or email: cluniemusic@hotmail.com

LA BOUM!

With their new album 'Marionette', La Boum! is once again at the forefront of the boundary-crossing genre of World Roots music. La Boum! is one of the originators of the genre before the term was coined. La Boum!'s front man, Tom Salter, worked in Mali with Ali Farka Touré in the late 80s. Subsequently he performed with Ali in England at WOMAD, as well as in Scotland and Ireland. The new album has echoes of this work but continues to cross musical frontiers to include the Folk, Latin and Jazz influences of Scottish band members - Mary MacMaster of the Poozies on vocals and harp, Ben Ivitsky of the Eliza Carthy Band on guitar, Heather Macleod with her jazz inflections on vocals and Dougie Hudson of Salsa Celtica on percussion. The horn and vocal sections give the band a big sound live and this big sound has been boosted on Marionette by guests from the Indian band Mrigiya - Sharat Chandra Srivastava on violin and Athar Hussein on tablas, Peatbog Faeries Iain Copeland's percussion and the voice of Eliza Carthy.

For more information please contact Tom on 01968 676219 or silverburn1@btopenworld.com or Heather on 0131 539 8239 or heather@stoneyport.com Visit: www.laboum.co.uk

JACQUI McSHEE'S NEW ALBUM LAUNCHED



To coincide with the Easter Tour, Jacquie McShee's Pentangle released a brand new CD, FEOFFEE'S LANDS the band's first studio album since 1999.

The new album is titled FEOFFEE'S LANDS and it blends arrangements of traditional songs, standards and new material. The album line-up is Jacquie McShee (vocals), Gerry Conway (drums and percussion), Spencer Cozens (keyboards and vocals), Alan Thomson (bass and guitar), Gary Foote (saxes and flute), and Mark Tucker engineered the album. Guest artists include Martin Barre (electric and acoustic guitar), Miles Bould (percussion), Nathan Bray (trumpet and flugelhorn), Barnaby Dickinson (trombone), David Hughes (acoustic guitar and backing vocals), John Giblin (electric and acoustic bass), and Leah McShee Jackson (backing vocals).

The complete track listing is: Banks Of The Nile; Nothing Really Changes; Acrobat; Now's The Time; Hot Air - Hot Night; No Sweet Sorrow; Sovay; Two Magicians; You've Changed; Broomfield Hill.

FEOFFEE'S LANDS is available online from the new Pentangle website: <http://www.pentangle.info> You can also buy the CD by mail order. Send a cheque (payable to Jacquie McShee's Pentangle) or postal order for £13.50 (includes postage and packing) to: GJS Records PO Box 507 Redhill Surrey RH1 6WD

MAGNA CARTA

2004 was a very successful year for Magna Carta, both here

and abroad - yes, they are continuing to make great inroads back into the English music scene, with gigs in theatres and folk clubs alike across the UK, playing not only to old fans but also, enthralling whole new audiences. The word that Magna Carta are back is spreading very quickly.

With the young talented Dutch fiddle and mandolin player, Matt Barnhoorn, on board, Magna Carta have appeared in Italy and toured extensively in Holland, playing sell-out gigs everywhere. Matt, who is highly regarded by Fairport Convention and tours with them in Holland, has also appeared with Magna Carta at several British gigs, one of which has been recorded for release on CD in the near future.

2005 will see the release of 2 albums, a much requested debut CD from Linda, Chris Simpson's wife, and fellow band member, and the new and long waited Magna album entitled "The Fields of Eden", material from which has been included in all recent gigs and literally blown audiences away. The album, a very moving and relevant one, will be about the on-going destruction of the traditional rural ways of life in the Yorkshire Dales, anywhere, by the glib onslaught of the modern world that is affecting all of us.

Several record companies are also very interested in releasing a lot of Magna Carta's back catalogue - another treat, which will further high profile the band. Magna Carta are already booked to tour abroad in April and from October to the beginning of December 2005. To check availability for the UK for the rest of the year outside these months or to book them for 2006, give me a ring and we can discuss possible dates.

If you would like the new demo live CD taken from Magna Carta's very successful DVD "Ticket to the Moon" then contact me, Nigel Chainey, on 01359 252044 or e-mail: nigelchainey@tiscali.co.uk

VARIOSIA

On the 25th April 2005, Pronoia Records released 'Porous' - the stunning mini album from Variosa. Variosa were first formed 5 years ago, when the vision of singer-songwriter Richard Neuberger and violinist Josh Hillman (also a core member of Boston's acclaimed Willard Grant Conspiracy) began to take shape. Before long, they had drawn in the varied and experienced talents of fellow players Nick Simms (drums - also of Cornershop), Simon Alpin (guitars) Emma Seal (vocals), Rob McHardy (mandolin, banjo, lap steel) and Mick Young (electric and stand up bass).

The more this highly accomplished collection of musicians worked together, the more they developed what has become a powerful, mature and unique sound, combining the understated beauty of songs like 'Porous' and 'Call To Arms' with the expansive and layered textures of 'Where The Killers Run' and 'Blood From A Stone'. There are all sorts of rock and folk influences here, and the Celtic and Country strands lift the music to other dimensions; sweet mandolins, quirky banjos, musical saws, and Josh's violin cuts a raw and heart-wrenching through-line across many of the songs. There are beautiful harmonies too - Emma and Richard's deep tones melt effortlessly into each other, like mirrors of the same voice.

Richard's lead vocals bring to mind some heavyweights - Nick Cave, Johnny Cash, Jim Morrison. But there is a gentleness too, reminding one at times of the pained intensity of Jeff Buckley or Nick Drake. Indeed, Richard's song writing seems to come from a similar place to these last two - his personal sufferings only too apparent in the stark and uncompromising lyrics. Stories of loss, of battling with demons inside and out, and the figures in his songs, more often than not, seem to be stuck out on some lonesome limb as they flee from the hunt of the masses.

In the nineties, Richard could not help but be disillusioned by the whimsies of Britpop; not surprising, perhaps, when you discover that his relationship with Justine Frischmann (who later formed Elastica) ended when Brett Anderson from Suede came onto the scene. Richard, on the other hand, was to take a very different route. And when you sit down and listen to what Viarosa have become, you are only too aware that music of this depth, of this quality, of this power, does not arrive in front of you every day. For the music of Viarosa is something quite rare. A rare rose indeed.

Viarosa have been busy gathering quite a fan base on the London scene, regularly headlining at key venues like The Borderline, The Garage and The Spitz. They've also gigged right across the country, most recently supporting the great Robyn Hitchcock on his UK tour, with whom they'll be out on the road again in the spring. Their full debut album 'Where The Killers Run' is here in later this year.

For more information, contact Sandra Fontano or Lisa Burprich at Quite Great PR on 01223 830 111 or email sandra@quitegreat.co.uk departed.

FOOTSTOMPIN NEWS

The Caledonian Repository," a book of pipe music, was first published in 1848. In its collection of some 214 tunes this book is a treasure of piping precedent. It was re-issued in 1868 and is now in its ninth edition. It's exciting to see this wonderful book come back into print after an absence of some years. £17.99 (£19.99 for first time customers).

For more information visit: <http://www.footstompin.com/>

Elbow Jane



SUMMER DATES CONFIRMED SO FAR:

27th May	Chester Folk Festival	01352 762931
11th June	Floral Pavilion, New Brighton "Folk on the Coast"	0151 639 4360
8th July	Ely Folk Festival	01353 664706
16th July	Biddulph Folk In The Park	01782 514896
2nd Sept	Porkies Folk Club, Poynton	01625 874039
3rd Sept	Fylde Folk Festival	01253 872317

For booking information & dates please contact...
Mike Woods 0151 - 678 8713
www.elbowjane.com



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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) James Keelaghan & Hugh McMillan (Can), Sid Kipper (Fri), John Wright Band, Jeff Warner (USA), Oldham Tinkers, Ken Nicol, Cathryn Craig & Brian Willoughby, Shirley Collins, Eileen McGann & David K. (Can), Bernard Wrigley, Misé (Eire), Eric Roche, Gary & Vera Aspey, Trio Threlfall, Tom McConville, Steve & Kristi Nebel (USA), Rory Ellis (AUS), Steamchicken Dance Band, Dangerous Curves, Tich Frier, Strawhead, Sara Grey, Alan Bell Band, Keiron Means, Bryony, Stanley Accrington, Scolds Bridle, Brian Preston, Trouble at Mill, Capt. Cooper's Motley Crew, Andrew Green, Thistle, Moorland Folk, Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Quartz, Tom Walsh, Elbow Jane.

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