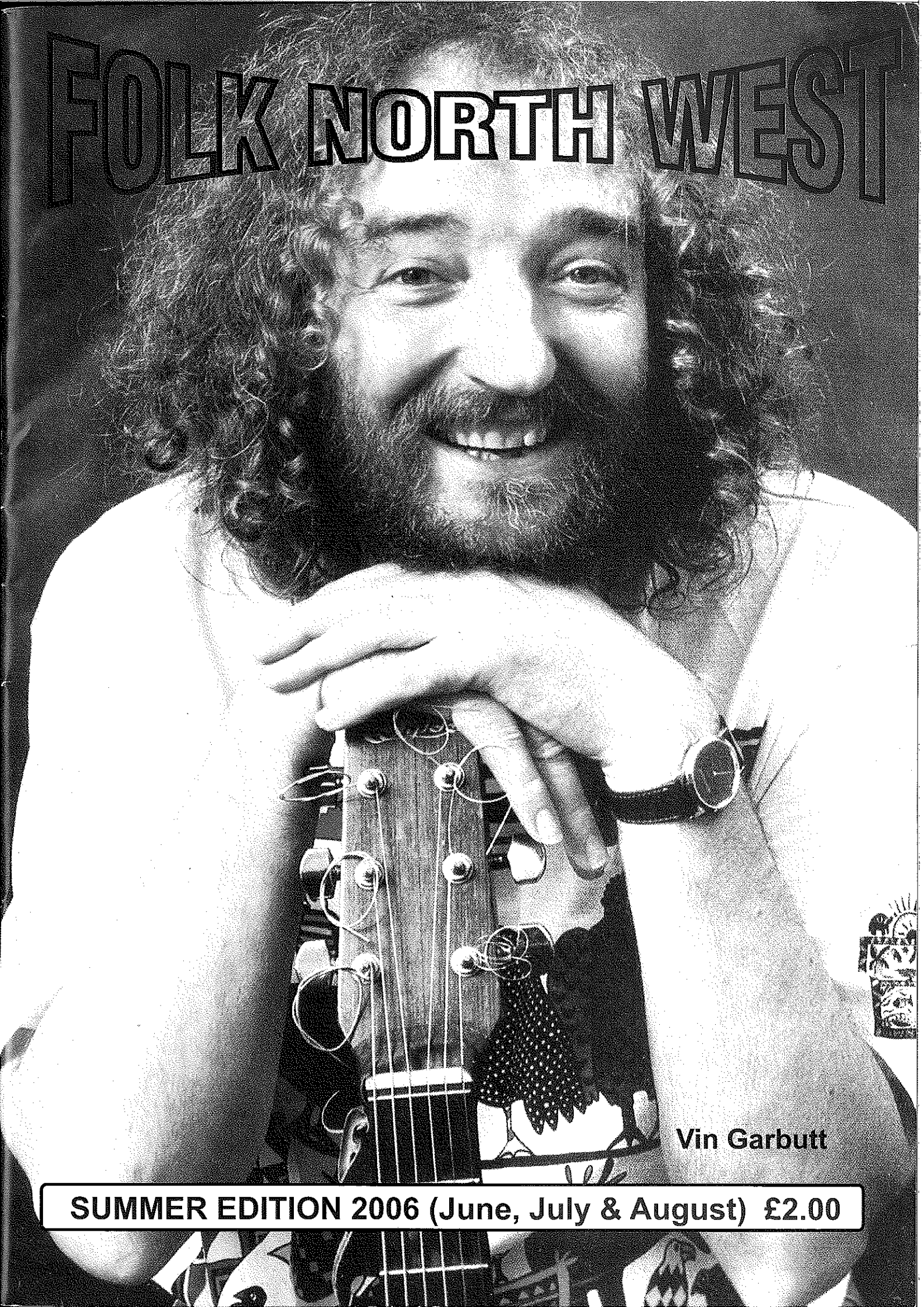


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Ken Bladen, 36 The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley, Lancs
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Lancs, WN2 2RE Tel. No. 01942 258 459
e.mail: holdenpaul@tiscali.co.uk

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

David Jones, 517 Pensby Road, Thingwall, Wirral, Merseyside,
CH61 7UQ. anneanddavejones@hotmail.co.uk or
Tel:- 0151 639 9350

Please note that the copy date for the next issue is July 10th 2006.



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EDITORIAL

I have struggled to include everything this time. In particular I have been planning to combine a review of Sid Calderbank's CD with an interview with the man himself. Time and the lack of an interpreter has deferred this to the next issue. I have also had to put back the start of a regular guitar tuition feature kindly provided by Jim Ronayne. I have also been sent a copy of Wesley Stace's (aka John Wesley Harding) novel for review. I have only just started to read it so again time is the enemy.

I enjoyed a day at Lancaster Maritime Festival and I hope that a way will be found to keep it going. Also visited the Open Door Folk Club Extravaganza 10 on Sunday 19th March and had a great day, good to see Steve Turner is going strong.

Ken Bladen
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CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS

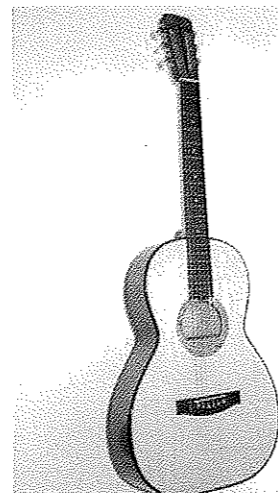
It was good to chat to Vin Garbutt recently following his lengthy stay in hospital last year. For six months Vin fought and conquered his health problems and is now back amongst us, albeit seated during performance and wearing a pair of spectacles but he is still the same performer we all know and love.

His new album 'Persona Grata' is selling well and his stay in hospital as you might imagine has given him a whole new fund of stories and anecdotes which he shares with the audience in between songs or should that be the other way round. One thing is for certain laughter at a certain Middlesbrough hospital will have been sadly missed since Vin has returned home.

The Festival season is beginning to hot up and once more this year organisers have opted for a mix of overseas names as well as our outstanding home grown talent. It's expected, weather permitting, that attendance records will continue to be broken thanks to the new mantra 'Folk Is Cool... Again'.

Wherever you go this summer enjoy the music and immerse yourself in the festival atmosphere.

Cheers for now
David Jones



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What Folk programmes are on the radio TODAY?

compiled by Rob Dunford

SUNDAY

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 - 9.00pm
8.00 - 10.00pm

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

BBC Radio Scotland - THE REEL BLEND presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
BBC Radio Scotland - GLOBAL GATHERING 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 Radio Derby - FOLKWAVES presented by MICK PEAT and LESTER SIMPSON
RADIO MALDWYN - THE FOLK PROGRAMME presented by YVONNE & JOHN HART

BBC Radio Scotland - GLOBAL GATHERING presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
MANX RADIO - THE FOLK SHOW presented by JOHN KANEEN

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

BBC Radio Shropshire - FRETWORK presented by NONNY JAMES
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 SIOBHAN SKATES
BBC Radio Wales - CELTIC HEARTBEAT presented by FRANK HENNESSY

RADIO FREQUENCIES

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

see below
MW 756

MW 810
MW 1368

FM 88 - 90.2

FM 96.0
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 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
BBC Radio Wales	FM 93.9 - 95.9, 103.7 - 103.9	MW 882	Tel:- 029203 22000
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, 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".

The North West remains a good region in which to hear folk music on the radio, despite the recent and unpardonable loss of GMR's "Sounds of Folk". Hearing comments from folkies in other areas and looking at the situation elsewhere, we've certainly got what many other regions have not (and envy) - It is all well worth nurturing, not least for regional flavour.

Rob Dunford

LIVE REVIEWS



WATERSON:CARTHY at the Southport Arts Centre on 16 December 2005



"Stir-up Sunday was when we started making the Christmas pudding - in the bath!" explains Norma Waterston part way through this 'Frost And Fire' tour gig at a time of year when we were all anticipating a helping of that heavy duff in the not too distant future. The assembly

laughs. Okay maybe most of us would be calling in Mr. Sainsbury rather than having to source a large spoon, but thanks to the intimacy of the theatre, we're treated to what at times seems like a private audience. A hushed and attentive crowd, barely shifting in its seats is treated to a rich variety of music and song, reflecting the spirit of the season.

The normal 4-piece W:C grouping is present and correct - Martin, Norma and Eliza with Tim van Eyken and their special guests - the estimable Devil's Interval comprising Jim Causley with Lauren McCormick and Emily Portman. Warm, witty and unselfconscious with all members of the collective throwing in self-deprecating anecdotes, they launch straight in with a wassail from the 1965 Waterstons' classic album after which this nationwide jaunt is named. We get 'Jolly Old Hawk' too from that seminal recording and you find yourself knowing every breath and every phrase, occasionally being caught unawares at deviations therefrom. There are some real jewels too - "Twelve Days Of Christmas" from the Coppers for instance, rattles along magnificently, whilst a stately and moving reading of 'Please To Remember The Poor' from Frank Kidson's collection followed by the old Methodist hymn 'Gloryland' is utterly gorgeous.

The 'Interval' set embraces a stunning 'Lulay My Liking' sung with a touching expressiveness, and somewhere in your brain, long-quiescent protoplasm seems to trigger a reminder of why you got into all this in the first place! To be sharing the stage as equals with the 'first family of Folk' (sic) is probably more than they ever imagined and nothing less than they deserve. Engaged and engaging, this grouping is impressive - very impressive. That these three early-twenty-somethings can segue seamlessly in and out of such esteemed company speaks volumes. The playing shines throughout. With Martin's guitar acting as a rhythm and bass anchor to Eliza's energetic fiddle and with boxes (Tim and Jim) push 'n' pulling they're clearly having a ball whilst underpinning the emotional pitch of the songs. These are people who know and care where their music comes from.

An enterprising arts policy is at work in this venue and tonight Waterston:Carthy and friends do it proud. The finale: the entire cast singing 'While Shepherds Watched' encored with 'Shepherds Arise' and 'The Holly And The Ivy.' "Thank you Southport, goodnight and Merry Christmas" says Norma. I can't say that I didn't enjoy every minute - and the lingering applause would suggest I wasn't alone.

Clive Pownceby

BAND FROM THE WOOD, supported by Caroline Lovett, at Gregson Lane Folk Club on 2 February, 2006

Band From The Wood are Albert Risely on guitar and bass, Keith Beardmore on bouzouki and guitar, and Tony Wilson on bass and classical guitar. They've been together for about six or seven years and specialise in good songs from a range of contemporary songwriters who are perhaps undeservedly to be found amongst the lesser performed.

Thus we got John Sebastian's 'Darling Companion', some Alan Taylor songs including 'Calling On' and 'Only a Few' and a couple by Steve Tilston, including 'Foolish Me'. Most interestingly, on this occasion, we heard several songs by Martin Carter. Albert tells me that he wrote and recorded in the early 1970's, but that he knows little of him, which is a pity because there are some good songs here, like 'Gypsy Girl', 'Purely By Chance', and 'Where are You Tonight'.

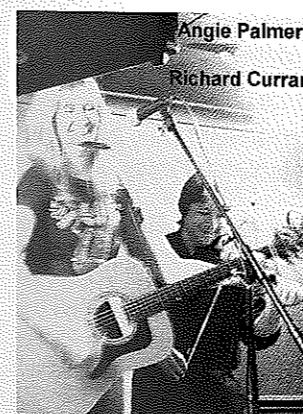
The performance is quintessentially English in style. It's tuneful, gentle and pleasant on the ear - and that's not a criticism. The songs are always interesting; they never hesitate, and never falter. The instruments are clear, as are the voices. In their own arrangements, Tony Wilson's bass takes the lead in several songs, driving the melody forward. It's an accomplished and varied performance. They even included 'The Hangman and the Papist' by Dave Cousins - a hanging song for a folk club.

Support and host for the evening was Caroline Lovett. The first set included her own 'Winds of Change', whilst her set to open the second part of the evening went from Mary Chapin Carpenter's 'Never Had It So Good' through her own 'Single Red Rose' to the Eric Maschwitz standard, 'These Foolish Things'; a song which until I heard it, seemed almost impossible for a solo singer and guitarist to perform. Andrew Green on the sound desk deserved his round of applause for an excellent mix.

Sadly for Gregson Lane Sports and Social Club, this seemed a poor evening for the bar. The near capacity audience were the most attentive I have seen for a long time. They listened, and stayed in their seats. Band From The Wood kept them to the end, with a diverse and accomplished performance. We almost had to switch them off to go home.

Don Moore

ANGIE PALMER with Richard Curran, supported by Cast Of Thousands, at Garstang Unplugged, the Kenlis Arms, Barancre on 9 February, 2006



If you're only a fan of traditional music, don't read any further. If you like well crafted contemporary songs, performed by one of the country's emerging talents, read on. This was a captivating performance, full of energy, wit and good music.

Angie Palmer has been compared to several of 'the greats' and it's not fair to do so again. She's not a reflection of anyone else, but an accomplished performer in her own right with quality material. If she hasn't attracted the attention of the fashionable, it may be because she's based up here. Those who form fashionable opinions in our country are usually down there.

She has rich tone, backed by a solid guitar style. Her 'Guild' guitar is mainly in standard tuning; a strong and rhythmic right hand, with the precision of a metronome is the essence of her style. Richard Curran is an important talent in his own right. He's appeared on CDs by many of our favourite singers and songwriters. Here on mandolin, fiddle and lead guitar, he fills out the sound, completing and complementing, never intrusive or harsh.

The songs are all originals written by Angie and partner Paul Mason, and what songs they are. We had a selection from her 'Road' CD, including 'Footprints in the Snow', 'Satellites' and the fascinating 'Down the Street of the Cat Who Fished' in a longer version than I have heard live before. It was wonderful stuff. Then there were the songs from the forthcoming CD, 'Tales of Light and Darkness' including 'Rose of Sharon' and the stunning 'Michaelangelo', and then an encore, including Townes Van Zandt's 'White Freight Liner'.

Support group 'Cast of Thousands' from South Manchester opened the evening. They have a set of original songs, with Helen Bee on vocals, Rob Bee's lead guitar, and Dave Hardman taking the rhythm. Helen's voice is strong and open, and forward in the mix, with the words clear. Their songs take in current issues, as well as emotional matters that keep us listening and thinking after they have ended.

This was Garstang Unplugged's first venture into promoting a concert, after some months of successful singer's nights. The room was full, the audience saw a great performance, and Angie Palmer demonstrated why she deserves the rave reviews wherever she appears.

Don Moore

AMY WADGE at the Citadel, St Helens on 11 February 2006



Amy Wadge is better known around Wales and her native Bristol but her reputation is rapidly spreading. This was a rare and welcome opportunity to see her in the North West, complete with an excellent band of musicians. Wadge's career

has gone from strength to strength since the release of her last album, *Woj* (2004). No Sudden Moves, the follow up CD released in April, features tracks she has co-written with Henry Priestman (The Christians) and Guy Batson (St. Etienne).

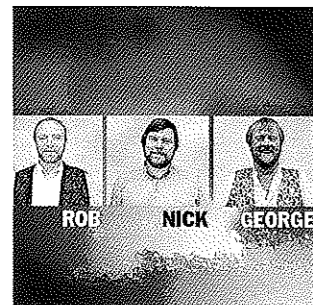
Since graduating, Amy has stayed in Wales and has - according to her - now officially 'gone native', marrying a Welshman and learning Welsh; her previous single, 'USA? We'll wait and see...' taken from the new album, was released in English and Welsh. There was an enthusiastic reception for her at The Citadel. It's a two-tier local arts venue that, for music events, usually has standing only downstairs and seating upstairs. Unsurprisingly, Amy featured a number of tracks from her new CD, including the powerful opening number, 'Here in my hands', the title track and 'This is you, this is me', recorded for her mini DVD at Peter Gabriel's studio.

Her backing band included co-writer Henry Priestman, who penned most of the hits by The Christians and featured prominently on piano/keyboards and backing vocals in this set. Many of the tracks from the new album have formed part of her live repertoire for sometime prior to recording the new CD. There are no better songs than 'Shattered', which brings out evocative gut wrenching emotion, and 'USA? We'll wait and see...', a song that demonstrates Amy Wadge's talent for matching fine lyrics with instantly memorable tunes.

There was also a selection of relatively older material, featured mainly on Waj, including my personal favourite, the exuberant 'Valley Boy', which reminds me of my South Wales origins, and 'Paris', the first of two outstanding encores. Wadge finished the evening with a fine solo performance of the Manic Street Preachers moving song, 'Design For Life', with an accompanying backing track. This is her next single from No Sudden Moves and, on the evidence of the quality of this performance, it promises to raise her profile by leaps and bounds. If you get a chance to see Amy Wadge solo or with her band, don't miss it. You won't be disappointed. Visit www.amywadge.com for further information.

Lewis Jones

TH'ANTIQUES' ROAD SHOW at the Wooden Horse Folk Club on 19 February 2006



A few years ago there was a popular song called "Breaking up is Hard to do". I was reminded of those words when contemplating Th'Antiques' last year together. Whereas the old song was rather doleful and sentimental, the mood of the evening at the Wooden Horse was anything but that. It was not so much a wake but more of a celebration.

The proceedings were set in motion by club resident singer Mark Dowding who gave support for the guests and his contribution both heightened the Lancashire content and contributed to the quality of the occasion in no small measure. Mark did excellent opening sets for each half of the evening. He is always open to requests and responded to several made by members of the audience. There was "Normandy Orchards" by Keith Marsden, Harvey Andrews' "Margarita", which he sings so well, Mike Harding's "Jimmy Spoons" and Paul Metzger's "Farewell to the Gold", to mention just a few. Look out for Mark's latest CD, which is now available. It's entitled "Travelling Tales" and contains some of these songs.

Th'Antiques are friends of mine and of the Wooden Horse Folk Club, which makes it difficult to write an objective account of the occasion; so I won't even try! Let's just call this piece an appreciation of them for the pleasure they have given to many during their time together. Nick Caffery, George Critchley and Rob Malaney have a lot to answer for, but it's all on the credit side. There was a warm and welcoming atmosphere at the club to which the guests responded by giving us unpretentious, honest folk music performed with skill and a generosity of spirit.

They have many fine traditional songs in their repertoire and with "Who Liveth so Merry", "Hark the little Ploughboy" and "The Ugthorpe Wedding Song", they were into their stride. Rob and George sometimes tease Nick for his dissertations on the songs, but I enjoy this aspect of their gigs. To listen to someone talking on a subject about which they have a real understanding, is an enjoyable experience and something to be valued. Nick is so knowledgeable in his field.

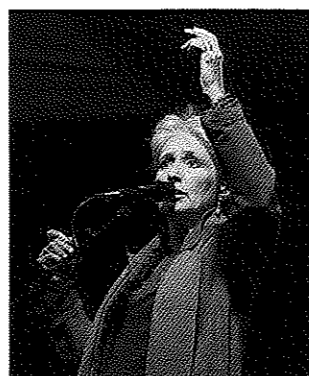
Because of the diverse nature of the members of this group they are able to present a programme of considerable variety. The three part harmony singing in songs such as "Bonny at Morn" and Bob Copper's "The Old Songs" makes an interesting contrast to Rob's solo on his own song about the highland clearances, "Strathpeffer". Nick and George dueted on "The Servingman and the Husbandman". This so reminded me of

the Robert Burns poem "The Twa Dogs", it's the same story. The sound of Rob's concertina characterises much of Th'Antiques music, particularly so when coupled with George's twelve string guitar work. Now that is a combination I just love to hear! When Rob plays "The Downfall of Paris" and his own composition "Chicken Run" (see Rob for explanation of the title), the twelve string is played with the delicacy and precision of a sensitive musician. I was extremely chuffed when George sang "Jamie Raeburn" because he knows it is a favourite of mine.

We, the punters were given our chance to sing on "Sweet Thyme" and "Icy Acres" and so we did right heartily. But all good things must come to an end and as the evening drew to a close, there was no sense of sadness. We'd all had a good time and anyway, they're not going far away. This was not their final gig together as a group: that is not until November so there is still time to book them! Th'Antiques have given much pleasure and fun to many during their seventeen years together, so thank you Nick, Rob and George and roll on the first reunion tour.

Norman Wilson

JOAN BAEZ at the Bridgewater Hall, on 13 March 2006



In contrast to the visit of Bob Dylan to the largely impersonal MEN Arena, Joan Baez played the smaller far more intimate - and most acoustic friendly - Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. If ever there was a venue that chimes perfectly in harmony with an artist's voice, it is this one. In contrast to her previous visit to the UK two years earlier, Baez replaced the sometimes overwhelming sound of her electric band with two primarily acoustic sidekicks; the wonderful musical talents of Graham Maby (bass, guitar) and Erik Della Penna (guitar, dobro, mandolin, slide steel) - both joined in on backing vocals throughout her set.

Baez selection of songs for this performance reflected the length and breadth of influences and her expansive career. The evening, however, was most memorable for her inclusion of a number of songs from the magic folk era of the 1960s, a time she first rose to prominence and paved the illustrious path of success for Bob Dylan. The message that ran through the evening is that Baez has lost none of her commitment to, and passion for, worthy causes; and mainly ones that are unpopular with the American Republican administration and the Christian Right.

Launching into the opening number 'The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down', featuring a vocal solo by Della Penna, she had the audience in the palm of her hand. This was followed by Elvis Costello's chilling anti war song, 'Scarlet Tide,' and the more traditional 'Fennario'. Then one of the many highlights of the evening - her first foray into Dylan territory. 'With God On Our Side' is still a song that resonates with meaning at the best (or should that be worst) of times. And never moreso than in the current climate, as religion continues to play a fundamentalist role in so many national and global conflicts, fuelled by Bush in the West Wing and Blair in the West End. Later in the evening she was to perform her unique rendition of 'Love is just a four letter word' and the stirring 'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall'.

There was a Johnny Cash tribute in the form of 'Long Black



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Veil' before showing her diverse music capability with a stunning version of 'Stand By Me' which took on a political undertone in the context of this performance. 'Joe Hill', one of Baez's trademark songs, was a prelude to her performing Steve Earle's splendid 'Christmas in Washington', a modern homage to the sung (of which Baez is one) and unsung heroes of American radicalism, and an inspiration for the progressive elements in American society and beyond.

While there were occasions when she forgot the words of one or two songs, that's not surprising given the depth and extent of her treasure trove repertoire. More amazing, in response to audience requests, was her flawless performance of the traditional 'Geordie', which she hadn't sung in about 30 years, and 'Last Night I Had The Strangest Dream'. "Oh great" she responded "I haven't sung that one in about 35 years!"

For good measure we also heard her perform the excellent 'Diamonds and Rust' and 'Jerusalem' - not Blake's timeless clarion call this time but another of Steve Earle's hard edged modern vignettes. Then we had a series of encores. For the first, 'Gracias a la Vida', Baez broke with tradition by announcing, tongue firmly in cheek: "I don't even have the decency to leave the stage" for this one. But she did before the second, third and fourth encores that included Phil Ochs' poignant classic, 'There But For Fortune' - a song that even now still sends the body into convulsions of expectation, - the inevitable 'Farewell Angelina', and finally a magnificent unaccompanied (apart from the audience joining in) version of 'Amazing Grace'.

Some artists have that indefinable quality called 'stage presence' - that ability to metaphorically fill the stage and focus the audience attention on them and everything they do. Baez goes way beyond mundane stage presence and captivates the audience with an aura exemplified through expressive but unexaggerated hand and arm movements and facial expressions. She is an artist who has gone through many trials and tribulations but now seems at ease with herself. Undoubtedly she is one of the all time great icons of the international folk scene whose torch shines as bright as ever.

Lewis Jones

CHRIS WOOD at Southport Arts Centre 20th March 2006



There's something encouraging about being in the presence of a class act, and right now Chris Wood is a very classy act indeed, as his nomination in no less than four categories for this year's Folk Awards makes abundantly clear. Of course he's no newcomer - as Tony Rose once said, "it seems no time since I was up and coming, now I'm a pillar of the Folk community!" - he self-deprecatingly quips tonight.

His 2005 ascent was due to, well er, a descent of the titular Lark in the CD that could well have won the best album award by the time you read this, but I can't ever see Wood becoming precious or letting it all go to his head if he sweeps the board - he's the sort of performer who looks like he could've just stepped out of his own audience! A diverse crowd in the Studio theatre of this north west venue, appropriately then, warms to his wry asides and the direct contact that he quickly establishes.

This is the first date on the 'Lark tour' and Chris soon displays his confidence, launching in with the immediacy of 'The Brisk Couple' followed by a measured yet chilling version of Charlie and Ira Louvin's 'Silver Dagger', usually featuring in the repertory

of a C&W band with which he moonlights. Accompaniment, when it's used - and there is a fair sprinkling of acapella material, is from his peerless guitar, the two on-stage fiddles apparently only hopping out of Kent for the ride! A worthy version of 'The Cruel Mother' learned from Lauren McCormick (these young ones are "shaking things up a bit for us old lags") acquits itself well and then there's 'One In A Million' written with storyteller Hugh Lupton and nominated for Best Original Song. Of course it's a far-fetched narrative but aren't all the best ones? Sung quietly and reflectively, Wood makes this fishy tale moving and entirely credible and demonstrates the way he communicates a lyric rather than simply delivering a memorised set of words.

The second half sees the pace quicken with tune sets and Kevin Mitchell's 'The Mickey Dam' followed by a gorgeous take on 'Colour Of Amber' from the southern English traveller, Mary Ann Haynes. For sure, Chris Wood is in a winning frame of mind tonight. Steeped in the tradition, he's earnest but never po-faced, displaying a genuine relish when talking about old songs and old singers. This affection for old ways translates well into 'Christmas Champions' commissioned by Radio 3's Late Junction programme (following on from the plaudits for 'The Horses' also in tonight's set) conjuring the essence of Kent Mummers' plays gone by, but with additional, biting allegory. Wood did plenty of groundwork for this, researching old interviews and memories of the times when the plays were a true living tradition in his neck of the south-east. Encoring with an atmospheric 'Bleary Winter' and ambling off the tiny club-style stage, it's somewhat refreshing to find him not manning a merchandising desk. Back to basics approach Chris? Bemused look - "No mate, forgot to bring 'em" is the reply.

There you go then - even in these media-dominated, brand-positioned days, the good guys get to win through now and then. Hearing is believing.

Clive Pownceby

FESTIVAL & EVENTS REVIEWS



A LANCASHIRE NIGHT at the Stanley Institute, Burscough on 18 February 2006

I was born in Liverpool at a time when we knew that the seaport on the Mersey was part of the County of Lancashire and, despite the bureaucratic manipulation of boundaries in the 1970's, there are many folk who feel that it still is. I am one of those and as a Lancastrian, was looking forward to this occasion. It was a grand night; or as our excellent Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Sid Calderbank insisted, a grand "neet".

The words, music and dancing were arranged, presented and performed in a manner that made for a very entertaining evening. The informality, which created such an inclusive atmosphere, added to everyone's enjoyment.

Sid Calderbank, Mark Dowding and John McAlister performed the songs and poems with accompaniment on fiddle by Maureen Cole. John McAlister's singing of the favourites "A Mon Like Thee", "Manchester Rambler" and "Dirty Old Town" was well received by the audience who happily sang along on the choruses. As if to support my 'Liverpool is part of Lancashire'

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assertion, John included the song of "Old Seth Davy", very much a Liverpool song. Lovely!

Mark Dowding has such an extensive repertoire that I believe you could listen to him singing for a month and not hear the same song twice. But in the time available he regaled the company with a few of his gems. "The Bolinder Boatman" was appropriate because of the adjacent Leeds - Liverpool canal. "John Willie's Ferret" raised some laughs and he also sang one of my particular favourites, "Bowton's Yard".

Sid's songs, poems and narrative in addition to giving considerable amusement, also caused bemusement on the faces of some listeners, but his user-friendly didacticism about the dialect and the background is both enlightening and entertaining. I do so enjoy Sid's rendition of such Lancashire classics as "A Potato Pie" (or "Prayer Pie" as Sid sings it), "Jone o' Grinfilt" and the oldest known Lancashire song, "Warrikin Fair". You certainly need a translation for that one! He also obliged the company with a lovely poem from the Saddleworth area, "An Owd Frieslonder".

The singing and reciting were interspersed with dancing by Newburgh Ladies Morris and their musicians. The dancers blue skirts and flower bedecked straw hats brought a lovely splash of colour to the proceedings. The hall fairly echoed to the assertive stamp of their clogs on the wooden floor. It sounds quite different on the car park! There was also solo Lancashire clog dancing from Miss Elizabeth (our Lizzie) Calderbank. A talented young woman that! It must be in the genes.

Congratulations to the caterers who served up a tasty Hot Pot in the interval. It was very good and the queue for seconds formed in no time at all. The Stanley Institute at Burscough proved to be an excellent venue for this event - comfortable and welcoming.

In conclusion, a big "well done" must go to the organisers, in particular, Maggi Huyton and Sue Halton; no doubt there are others whose names I do not have. The Belarus Fund is clearly a worthy cause and deserves support. There were 180 people present and nearly £1000 was raised. They all - organisers and performers - gave us a "grand neet" and deserve a round of applause.

Norman Wilson

HOME GROWN at the Playhouse 2, Shaw on 11 March 2006

The Playhouse 2 Theatre in Shaw near Oldham, known locally as the 'Hidden Gem', played friendly host to a fundraising concert in aid of the 9th Saddleworth Folk Festival. The concert featured a wealth of local talent that was very definitely homegrown and what talent there proved to be.

The well-supported evening kicked off with the MC for the first half, Geoff Miller. Well known for his singing in the acapella group, 'Roaring Forties'. His fine strong unaccompanied bass voice filled the theatre, setting the tone for what was to come.

Ann English a well known local singer-songwriter whose beautifully expressive songs deserve a far wider audience followed Geoff. Her rendition of her song 'Paradise Street' allowed us to share the fond memories she has of her parent's lives. She accompanied her delicate singing voice with polished guitar accompaniments that matched the songs beautifully.

The unaccompanied atmospheric whistle playing of John Courtman captured the imagination of the audience building ethereal pictures in the minds of his listeners. This was

particularly so in his own compositions 'Solstice' and 'Alphin'. His later tunes were ably accompanied on guitar by Kevin Clarke from the Hometowners of which more later.

The first half was brought to a close by Ken Powell and Ruth Fuga, formerly of the recently disbanded and very popular group 'Risky Business'. Dick Gaughan's 'Both Sides the Tweed' and the haunting Julie Gold number 'South Bound Train', were movingly sung by Ruth using the full range of her powerfully expressive voice. With Ken's sensitive accompaniment, it made us glad to know that we will still have the pleasure of hearing them as a duo.

The second half of the concert began with the now legendary Jim Schofield who has been a prime mover in the local and wider folk scene for more years than I think he cares to remember. His choice of songs, 'Free Man' and the Ewan Carruthers' song 'In The Course of Business', were performed with a sensitivity that gave us pause to think about the unchanging nature of conflicts, and our seeming inability to learn from our mistakes.

Jim became our MC for the second half introducing us first to the well known singer-songwriter Martin Stimson whose own songs, 'March to a different Drum' and 'An Ordinary Man' (a song in praise his own father and other men just like him), reflect the efforts of the common man in our society. His skilled vocal delivery and original guitar accompaniments lent weight and power to these two original songs.

The newly re-formed duo 'BetterLate', or as they are otherwise known Pete and Jan Shevlin, sang three songs ranging through the tradition. Jan's warm, clear as a bell voice beautifully complemented by Pete's understated guitar playing. The set began with the gentle Irish song 'Do You Love an Apple', instantly recognised by the audience, followed by the lesser known but even better received narrative song, 'John C. Clarke' by the excellent Scottish singer-songwriter Karine Polwart. What a great song! Their too short programme ended with Huw Williams' song, 'Rosemary's Sister', another opportunity for the audience (surely sung out by now!) to join in.

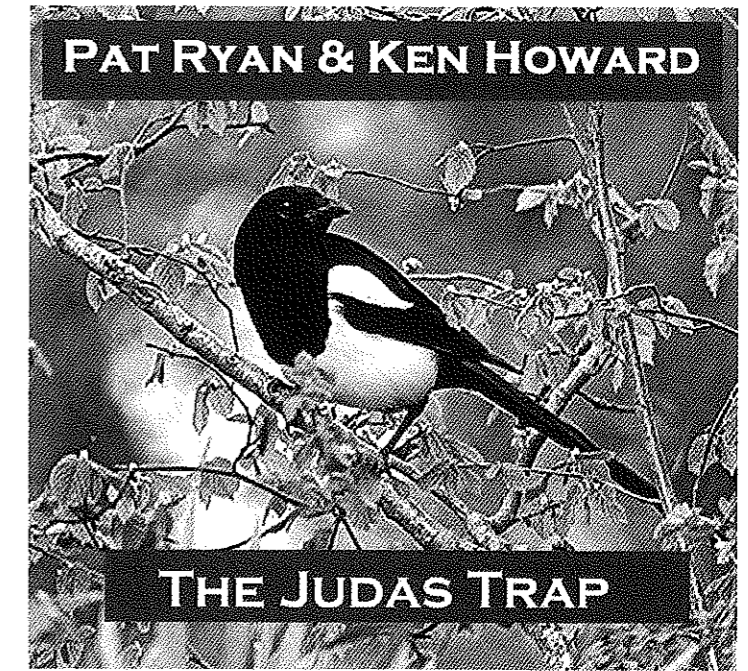
We were then treated to a surprise act in the guise of the talented Clive Gregson, over here from his home in Nashville. Clive was a powerful presence in the music scene over here for many years before making Nashville his home but we are fortunate to be able to hear him still during his frequent trips over here. Clive sang 'Footsteps Fall' by Annette Bjergsfeld and Boo Hewardine, incorporating a vivid demonstration of his extraordinary guitar technique.

The final act in the concert was the extremely popular group the 'Hometowners' with another well loved performer, Tony Downes. Their performance of favourites like 'Durham Jail' hit the mark with the audience allowing everyone to join in. 'Dirty Old Town', 'Never Be The Sun' and 'Brendan' showed the group's ability to deliver more thoughtful songs is undiminished. These songs interspersed with their trademark anecdotes and jokes brought the concert to a more than happy conclusion.

In its entirety the programme was extremely varied and was an excellent showcase for just a few of the local artists in the area. It clearly showed that it is not always necessary to have big names to put on a crowd-pleasing show. It is indeed a shame that support for the live music folk scene is not more in evidence. Judging by the reactions and enthusiasm of the audience on the night more of the same would be very welcome.

Barry Cottam

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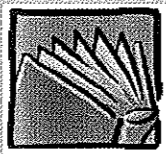


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JOHN'S DIARY CHAT



Hello once again and welcome to this my retrospect of the past quarter and review of the forthcoming months of folk in the north west.

Since I last spoke to you Angela and I have had a wonderful time at various folk events around the region. We began by visiting the Chester Folk Survivors' Day, which is a fund-raiser for the Chester Festival, which takes place over the full Whit Weekend. Vocal Point and myself were given the opportunity of hosting a very high quality two-hour singaround. A packed house at the afternoon concert followed this, which although a bit too traditional for our taste, was most entertaining nevertheless with Les Barker being the 'star'.

A rapid decision at teatime saw us hurry back home to Wirral and attempt to get in at Birkenhead's Pacific Arts Centre where the Tom Topping (family) band was appearing. This 300 + venue was a sell out as it always seems to be when Tom and Co. are on. Tom, Colin Henderson and Brian Jones occupied the first half of the evening as the original TTB trio. This took us back to the great days of the Black Horse Folk Club at West Kirby. The second half then commenced with all seven on stage with surprisingly young Samantha taking her place behind a set of drums. We were to find out at the very end of the night from Dave Jones the compere that this had been Sam's public debut as a drummer with the band, and, as Bruce would say "Didn't she do well"? She really did. We were treated to contemporary folk music par excellence laced with Tom's inimitable sense of humour and anecdotal expertise. It was a delightful three hours of 'all that is best in folk, country and shanty music'. I must say I am proud to be associated with such superb local talent on Wirral.

We attended at Greasby Methodist Church where Fiona Simpson performed to the highest standard, along with her band, Andy James, Graham Jackson, and Brian Adams. What a voice Fiona has? Absolutely outstanding. One of the best. I strongly commend Fiona to any folk club and festival organisers who may be looking to level out the imbalance in their forthcoming guest lists in respect of the male/female ratio of artistes.

Back of the Moon, Mike Silver and Harvey Andrews have been the performers at my local club and, as expected they did not let us down - just brilliant. I even had to do my bouncer bit at one point in Harvey's set as a drunk managed to infiltrate proceedings to such an extent that he disturbed our guest's concentration. Now that is a first, whenever have you seen a drunk at a folk music concert?

Now, some bad news and then some good. Regretfully, Brass Tacks has folded in its present form, which means that I will no longer be a part of the residency at Parkgate Folk Club. I would just like to thank all those people who have listened to what we have had to offer over the years. I wish Buddy and Mike Woods and Eddie Morris all the very best in their future development of the club

On a much lighter note, I must announce that on 2nd April Angela and I celebrated our Ruby Wedding Anniversary and we went to the Blacksmith's shop at Gretna to renew our vows.

We were accompanied by 30 + guests most of whom are folk musicians and singers. A session in the Crossways pub on the Saturday night was simply superb followed by the wonderful formal proceedings at the Smithy and dinner party at the excellent Garden House Hotel half a mile away. With Tony Gibbons and Lesley McGough our special guests, this 'Gretna Day of Music' went down exceeding well, even with another wedding party group who were also in the hotel. The photo album of our 'second wedding' is now doing the rounds to our friends and relatives. I would like to thank everyone for making it such a memorable occasion for us both. When we processed into the Smithy for the service, the roar of applause from our wonderful close friends and relatives made us feel like monarchy. Fantastic!! What wonderful memories!!

Anyway, enough about us. Here is the information I have been asked to convey to you from our very dedicated club and venue organisers.

Club News

'Room at the Top' are back in the listings having had a rejig of their organisation. Mark Dowding (the excellent webmaster of the 'Folk North West' website) is the club organiser and Maggi Huyton is the treasurer. You can find out more about Mark on his own website at www.markdowding.co.uk and you can contact him on mark@markdowding.co.uk The club welcomes singers, poets and readers and any form of acoustic music. It runs every Monday, except Bank Holidays, with the occasional special evening such as recently when 'Lancashire Garland' was recorded by Mark and Sid Calderbank. The CD is now available from Mark by the way.

At St Anne's Acoustic Roots club Sue and John have recently stood down and the new organisers are Mike Black and Dave Alderman. Held every Tuesday with open mic provided on the last Tuesday of the month. All types of music at all levels of ability are most welcome. The club website is www.acousticroots.org

The club list is 'swelled' this quarter by the introduction of a new club to the membership, which is - 'Garstang Unplugged'. Mainly singers' nights on the last Wednesday of every month, the club has occasional guests who recently have been Angie Palmer in February and Julie Ellison in May. Held at the Kenlis Arms, Ray Lane, Barnacre, the organiser is Don Moore. The resident solo performers are Pete Hardman and Caroline Lovett. The club is hosting a 'Music and Beer Festival' on Saturday 24th June with free camping available on the adjacent field. Give Don a ring on 01995-602795 for more information or visit the club website at www.garstangunplugged.com

A new club I am sure you will be hearing more of has recently re-opened after many years absence of folk music. It is located at the Birkenhead Rugby Club in Park Road North, Birkenhead. The organisers are Dave and Anne Jones who have great experience of running such venues as they also still run the Standish Folk Club at Shevington. Dave, surely the most knowledgeable and eloquent compere in the region is, as you should know, the Chairman of the North West Federation of Folk Clubs. The first special guest at the club on 28th April was Colin Henderson from the Tom Topping Band. Colin did a brilliant job with his mix of self-penned songs, blues and Bob Dylan numbers. Colin was supported superbly by Vocal Point who are a close harmony trio who just for the record are Sue Farley, Patricia Ward, and myself (Yes me!) accompanied magnificently I must say by my wife Angela on bodhran, (on the fast ones!). You can catch this new band at the Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival on the 11th June at Vale Park, Wallasey and at Ormskirk Comes Alive on 11th July at the Bar du Fay. vocal.point@btinternet.com

Skipton FC has moved to a new location at the Royal Oak, Water Street, Skipton, www.skiptonfolkclub.co.uk Email: leon@skiptonfolkclub.co.uk

Joseph Roberts at Chorlton FC tells me that due to the increasing popularity of singers' nights the number of guest nights has had to be reduced. These guest nights will feature more local performers, which has the added attraction of minimising the cost of admission on these evenings. The club website is - www.chorltonfolkclub.co.uk

Pauline Westall at 'Open Door' tells me that the act, Angelcynn, due to appear at the club on 20th August is a Worcester-based father and son duo which features an 11 year old melodeon player called Patrick who is described as being, 'a bit special'. www.opendoorfolkclub.co.uk

Friends of Folk FC organiser, Jim Minall informs me that on 9th June at the Kirsty McGee/Mat Martin gig, support will be provided by Gren Bartley. This event takes place at Fox Lane Sports and Social club, Leyland. I also notice that one of my most favourite duos who have not played together for some time are getting together on 9th September at Leyland Civic Centre, West Paddock. They are the brilliant Ken Nicol and Chris While. Well-done Jim on getting this collaboration back together again. It's in my diary already. I hope they have good B & B around there!!

And now a request. Christine Jones, (Hughie's wife) and the organiser of the Everyman FC in Hope Street, Liverpool is looking for a singer/instrumentalist to join 'the management' and help run the club. Such a person should preferably be able to play either fiddle, concertina, or whistle as these types of instrument would help compliment the many guitarists that abound there. Give Christine a ring on 0151-709-3336 or drop her an email on christine.jones@merseymail.com

On Saturday 3rd June, Folk at the Prospect FC is, for the first time, organising a concert at the superb Brindley Arts Centre, High Street, Runcorn that will feature Kenny Spear's band Real Time. If this event proves to be a success Roger Hanslip tells me that further folk concerts will follow. So get along there and support Roger if you can. www.folkattheprospect.co.uk Email: roger@folkattheprospect.co.uk

John Booth at Northwich FC wishes to draw to attention that on 16th June at the Boar's Head, Middlewich, Jonathan Kelly will be the guest. This is part of the absolutely brilliant MFAB, i.e. the Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival. If you have never been to this festival before then I thoroughly recommend you take time out to do so. The mix of canal 'narrow boat people' and 'folkies' are made for each other. John also reminds regulars that on September 8th and October 20th the club nights will take place at the Davenham Players Theatre instead of at the Harlequin Theatre, the normal venue. www.northwichfolk.co.uk Email: john.and.aisa@tinyworld.co.uk

Referring to MFAB again, Dave Thompson the former director of this festival is involved helping and advising festival organisers and organising song and dance events whenever he can. The Boars Head Hotel close to the canal at Middlewich is still 'home' for sessions/singarounds at the 'Live and Local' Folk and Roots music nights on the second Saturday of the month. If you are into poetry Dave is also organising a series of poetry related 'Friday Night Specials' with local trio Salt Town Poets featuring. Les Barker and Stanley Accrington appeared in April and May and on 4th August Bernard Wrigley is the special guest and His Worship and the Pig on 8th December. In his new job, Dave is the event organiser and town centre manager for Middlewich and he tells me that it is a challenging post which

involves dealing with such events as Farmers Markets, over 70's parties, Chamber of Trade matters and Mayor's balls. No there's a thought. Interestingly, Middlewich has a relatively new amphitheatre alongside the local town centre church and it is there that Dave focuses many of his public events. Dave regularly includes a variety of folk elements to such occasions. All the best Dave and keep up the good work. If you have anything for Dave that you would wish to discuss you can find him on 01606-834726 daytime and email: dave.middlewich.events@btconnect.com www.middlewich.org.uk

At Folk in the Barn FC there will be three dates for your diaries when proceedings will be moved into the theatre. They are 28th July - Chris While and Julie Matthews, 29th October - Altan. 17th November - Clive Gregson and Jacqueline Sharp. www.folkinthebarn.net Email: terry@folkinthebarn.net

Another club who regularly relocate to larger premises to accommodate extra demand is Westhoughton FC where in June Pat Batty has James Keelaghan and Eric Bogle performing at the Douglas Valley Golf Club, Blackrod on the 2nd and 9th respectively. The club reopens later than normal after the summer break commencing with The Doonan Family at the normal venue on 20th October.

At Leigh FC Pauline Dowsett reports that their annual charity night 'Joe's Night', in memory of Joe Roberts, was yet again a complete sell out and the artistes who gave their time and amazing talents to the event helped to raise a total of £1776. The cause this year was for the MacMillan Nurses. Pauline would like to register her thanks to Calico, Anthony John Clarke, Pennygate (Kath and Paul Holden), Bram Taylor and everyone who supported and attended the event. Also at Leigh, on 29th July Eric Bogle and John Munro will appear at an alternative venue, the X11 Apostles Church Hall, Westleigh Lane, Westleigh. Tickets can be obtained from Pauline on 01942-604603 or Des on 01942-674868.

The Acoustic Tearoom announces that on 19th June The Strawbs (full electric band) concert at Penrith Playhouse will be supported by a six-piece band called Dead Like Harry. So that sounds like 'a bit of do' www.acoustictearoom.co.uk Email: acoustictearoom@aol.com

A change of format at Biddulph FC will take place from September when the normal club will come under the control of Liz Holland. The club will operate twice a month on the first and third Thursdays and it will have a traditional bias to it. Eric Cox is standing down from this venture but he is not retiring all together. Eric tells me that on the second Wednesday of each month (and for the occasional extra night) he will be running 'Biddulph Up In Arms' concerts. These events will also be staged at the Biddulph Arms and have a contemporary feel to them with singer/songwriters featuring strongly. Dates for this venture are listed in the Advanced Dates column but the artistes booked so far are, Christine Collister, Johnny Dickinson, Chris While and Julie Matthews, Jonathan Kelly, Les Barker and Keith Donnelly (as a duo).

Jim Coan at the Wooden Horse FC informed me of an interesting website called 'Woven Wheat Whispers'. The site is a legal music download service based in the UK and dedicated to the broad area of folk music. Established in 2005, it works with artistes and labels to distribute their music as albums for paid download. They incur no costs or deductions and receive 50% or more of the purchase revenue. The managers of the site stress that it is not a file sharing peer-to-peer network. It is a legal service that enables performers and listeners to find each other in a supportive

communally oriented service. They welcome artistes, established and new, for any folk based music and try to make the service a place to return to which has wider value than being a store. I recommend a visit to the website at www.wovenwheatwhispers.com

I received a lengthy email outlining a sequence of acoustic music concerts entitled Acoustic Music at The Marsden. This venue is located at Worden Arts Centre and began on 20th April with an evening of 'Folk and Fun' with Graham Dixon's Trouble at Mill. Two concerts took place in May with Smithereen and Pelican Babies. The future sees the following impressive list, which I was unable to include in the centre pages:- 1st June - Brian Preston and Phil Wignall, 15th June - Mooncoyn, 29th June - Alan Bell Band, 13th July - Stanley Accrington, 27th July - Pedigree Chums, 10th August - Penny Black, 7th September - Chris Layhe, 21st September - Anthony John Clarke. Admission to each night is £4-00 on the door or £3-50 if you ring 01772-421109 and book in advance. Season tickets can be purchased as well.

Performers

On 2nd April, Swarb's Lazarus should have played the Worden Arts Centre, Leyland for Steve Henderson (Mr Kite Benefits) but unfortunately that gig was postponed due to Dave's ill health. It is now rescheduled to take place on Sunday 18th June. Swarb's Lazarus is the great Dave Swarbrick, Kevin Dempsey and Maartin Allcock. What quality? What musicianship? The concert will be in aid of Vision Aid. The excellent and upcoming Andrew Green of the Alan Bell band will provide support. There are some options for those who possess tickets from the earlier schedule date. They are - your tickets will be honoured on the new date or, if you require a refund you will need to send your tickets back to 24 Acorn Close, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 3AF including a SAE and details of who the refund cheque should be made out to. Please note that this option is only available up to and including 30th April. Thereafter, the organiser will attempt to sell your tickets on and refund the monies to you but this cannot be guaranteed.

Still talking charity and fund-raising, I received some grand news about the band Penny Black who, at Easter handed over a bumper cheque to the value of £3,100-00 to ARC (Arthritis Research Campaign). That was last year's efforts. Already they are off again and on 23rd May they began a series of fund-raising events including their popular Tuesday lunchtime concert (11-30am to 2-30pm) at The Steamer Hotel, near to Fleetwood Market. The concerts contain Lancashire themed music, song and poetry and will continue throughout the year until 31st October. You don't only have to visit the concerts to contribute to this worthy charity though. You can also submit your donations on line and you can find out how by visiting www.justgiving.com/PennyBlack or by ringing 01253-594616. Email clansfolk@blueyonder.co.uk

I received a new CD from Joe Grant, former member and founder of the fantastic Canadian band Tanglefoot. Joe is part of the trio Gopher Baroque who have been performing for 16 years and the CD title is Shipwrecked Whisky (c/o Summit Sound - info@summitsound.com). Lots of maritime influence on this one as the title suggests. Interestingly, one of the tracks is called 'Hold your Fiddle Low, Joe' which is indeed indicative of Joe's unusual fiddle playing style.

Festivals

The second 'Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival' will take place over an eight-day period from 4th to 11th June and will feature as the headliner, the Kate Rusby Band supported by the superb local band Elbow Jane. This takes place on 10th at the Floral Pavilion theatre, New Brighton.

Mark Radcliffe (BBC Radio DJ) and Family Mahone team up with The Lifeboat Band to create an evening of music and ceilidh dancing at the Pacific Arts Centre, Birkenhead on Friday 9th. Uiscedwr, Cream of the Barley, Eric Bogle/John Munro, and Bob Fox are also featured artistes on the evenings of the 6th, 7th, 8th and 11th respectively. The whole event is commenced in Arrowse Park on the afternoon of Sunday 4th when the performers will be Joe Topping and Joe Wright, the Miv Cameron Band and Fiddlestone. A week later at Vale Park, Wallasey, during the afternoon of Sunday 11th the performers will be Garva, Vocal Point, Tanskey and the Neil Speers Band. The park events are free as will be the "Jam and Butties" singers and musicians session on the evening of Monday 5th when a free buffet will be available to performers and audience alike at the Farmers Arms, Frankby - first come first served. Alison Parker and the Third Man will be hosting this enticing event. Music sessions will also take place on the evening of Sunday 4th at The Manor, Withens Lane, Wallasey and Thursday 8th at The Magazine, Magazine Lane, Wallasey.

With late night music sessions scheduled for Rinty Monaghan's, Woodside on Friday 9th and Fort Perch Rock pub on 10th it all promises to be a very exciting and folk-filled week for Wirralians and Merseysiders. Get your B & B booked now!! A full advertisement appears on page 13 in this edition. Why not also visit? - http://www.visitwirral.com/displayProduct.asp?product_key=72541&page_key=12

Dent Festival takes place over the weekend of 23rd to 25th June where the major guests will be the Peatbog Faeries, Lunasa, Martin Simpson, Nancy Kerr and James Fagan, Sarah Grey and Keith Donnelly. www.dentfolkfestival.co.uk

Ormskirk Comes Alive Festival will this year be staged over a number of dates commencing on May 25th at The Ship, Haskayne when a "pass the hat around" folk night will take place among whom the performers will be Vocal Point. Aughton Village Hall, Bar Du Fay, Ormskirk Library, Skelmersdale Library and Ormskirk Civic Hall are the main venues and some of the guests to look out for are Martin Carthy on 30th June, Nick Hennessey (singer and story teller) on June 30th and July 1st, Tony Gibbons on July 3rd, Jill Fielding Band and Vocal Point on 11th July, Pete Rimmer with his songs of Donovan on 12th July, Acoustic Blues with Blue C on the 13th and Gallimaufry and Odd at Ease on the following day. You can even get a bit of jazz on July 7th conveyed by the Merseyside Jazz Band. Tickets can be obtained by ringing 01695-585400 or visit - www.ormskirkcomesalive.co.uk

Droylsden Festival takes place over the weekend - 30th June to 2nd July. John Tams and Barry Coope are the principal guests on 1st July at Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club, Booth Road, Audenshaw. On the previous evening the John Green Memorial Singaround will be held at the club venue, Old Aldwinians Rugby Club. The final day of this festival will consist of a free open-air concert featuring local artistes at which all singers and entertainers are welcome. The venue is the Bush Inn, Moorside Street, Droylsden. Ring Brenda Judge on 0161-432-4830 for further details or visit <http://www.droylsdenfolkfestival.org/programme.php>

The 9th Saddleworth Festival weekend is 28th to 30th July when the principal guests will be Eric Bogle and John Munro, Roy Bailey, Colvin Quarmby, Uiscedwr, Tom Napper/Tom Bliss, Tom McConville/Pauline Cato, Brian Peters, Stanley Accrington, Quartz and many more. Give Ali O'Brien a ring on 01457-870391 or visit www.safra.org.uk

Finally on the subject of festivals, I must congratulate the directors, stewards and committee for laying on what for me was one of the most fantastic festivals Angela and I have ever

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been too. I mean Poynton Folk Festival 2006. This was only the festival's second year at its new location, Woodford. The lessons learned from last year's feedback set the festival up in an exciting position with big attendances anticipated. The 'house full' signs were up on the Saturday and Sunday evenings, even though it was Easter Saturday and Easter day itself.

With the Doonan Family Band, Dougie Maclean and Bellowhead appearing on consecutive evenings (for the first time in each case), it was a bit of a financial gamble but nowadays organisers have to 'pay' if they want the best and on this occasion - they did and success was the result. The Alan Bell Band, whose choice of songs and performance technique was simply superb, provided most excellent support. Alan is a master craftsman in singing, song writing and story telling. Mrs Ackroyd Band, was the support for Dougie Mac who, surprisingly went on before the break after the excellent warm up spot by the festival directors, Judy Hancock and Dave Hughes. The Fiona Simpson Band conveyed some wonderful messages in song on Easter Sunday morning in the small hall and Bernard Cromarty entertained in his inimitable style to a very appreciative audience the day before.

That's what I like to see on a festival flyer - a very strong 'batting order' where those in the smaller print can entertain and be received equally well in their own style compared with their illustrious better-known performing colleagues. Focus workshops were received very well and the singer/songwriter competition (won by Phil Chisnall from Wirral with his song My Comfort) were essential parts of the festival programme. With stewards who were efficient and effective but not officious and 'always smiling' the patrons were very well served. A varied selection of Morris dance teams, plus childrens' entertainment from Panic Circus and importantly, free camping and caravan pitches, made the whole weekend just brilliant. Well done to you all.

Radio GMR - "Sounds of Folk"

In February, it was with a sad heart that I learned of the impending demise of Ali O'Brien's excellent 'Sounds of Folk' programme. The programme was an important part of BBC GMR's schedules and has given so much opportunity, satisfaction and enjoyment to folk lovers throughout the region. With a stroke of a pen the Managing Editor, a certain John Ryan decided that he would take 'S of F' off the air to be replaced by 'talk-based programming'. Despite my protestations to him in emails and hopefully similar communications from others, I received the following reply:- "Thanks for your comments concerning Sounds of Folk. This programme is coming to an end as the station is withdrawing from all specialist music shows to concentrate on our core talk-based programming. Plans are being made to ensure a weekly slot elsewhere in our programming with news of folk performance in Greater Manchester, and some live acoustic performances. Thanks again for taking the trouble to email". I sent 'the man' an email by return asking him for specific detail of Where? When? and How? one could find this 'weekly slot' but to date I have not yet received a reply. I thought local radio's remit was to provide a comprehensive service to all sections of the general public, including the folk fraternity? Clearly Mr Ryan does not. I would be interested in your views on this issue.

On behalf of all the performers who attended the Radio GMR studio I would like to conclude by thanking Ali O'Brien for all her diligence in making 'Sounds of Folk' so interesting and informative a programme.

That's it for now. Have a happy 'folkie' summer. We'll speak again in September. **John Owen**

ARTICLES



FOLK BRITANNIA - BBC4

Those of you fortunate enough to have seen the BBC4 presentation of Folk Britannia will probably agree with me when I congratulate the BBC for a quite excellent production. It was presented in three one hourly slots, with plenty of re-runs for those like me who were sometimes stupid or careless enough to miss the original, and it took the viewer from the mid nineteen fifties through to present day. What we saw was very good. But what did we miss? Well some of the old film in the first two chapters was absolutely wonderful, and for someone like me who was visiting folk clubs in the 1950's very romantic bringing back many wonderful nostalgic memories.

I remember the Skiffle Cellar in Greek Street, and if meeting Paul Robeson personally at a garden party in Kidbrooke in 1958 did not turn me on to folk music, then Robin Hall, Jimmie McGregor, Margaret Barry, Michael Gorman and Ramblin' Jack Elliott along with Pete and Marion Gray certainly did on those dreamy Tuesday nights; and all for half a crown. If you were not around in those halcyon days you were probably surprised by the split in the folk scene that occurred when bands went electric, a period that coincided with MacColl's pragmatism towards the genre.

But I do have reservations about some of the exposure certain performers were given in the first three BBC4 programmes and the incredible omissions of others. The first two chapters gave us glimpses of Anne Briggs, and then Anne Briggs, and then Anne Briggs yet again. Martin Carthy might have been impressed the first time he saw her as a 15 year old singer, but surely Anne Briggs had very little to do with the evolution of the British folk scene. I have to confess the one time I dashed off some 40 years ago to see her that I found her incredibly boring and her quick departure from the folk scene leads me to believe that a lot of folk club organizers thought likewise. Her comeback some twenty-five years later was littered with cruel criticism too. Enough of Anne Briggs; it was not her fault that the BBC were guided to her back door; the fault lies with the consultants and researchers who took them there.

I suppose lack of existing documentary film (remember Sir David Frost, when head of ITV, is responsible for the re-use of thousands of hours of film in the 1970's when many gems were lost) could be some explanation for the absence of Alex Campbell, Steve Benbow, Stan Hugill, Alexis Korner, Cyril Tawney, Wizz Jones, Sydney Carter, Long John Baldry, Leon Rosselson, Ralph McTell, Dave and Toni Arthur, Johnny Silvo (although there was a glimpse of him with Sandy Denny in a photograph), Diz Disley, John Foreman, Don Partridge, The Dransfield's, John Pearce, Tony Rose, Nic Jones, Vera Johnson, Pete and Chris Coe, Johnny Handle, Mike Absalom, Malcolm Price, Brenda Woolton, John the Fish, Johnny Collins, Martin Wyndham Read, The McCalmans and many, many more who were singing then and either performed for many years up until their deaths or are still singing today.

And where were the folk comedians - Jasper Carrott, Billy Connolly, Bernard Wrigley (considered traditional enough to be on Topic in the early days), Derek Brimstone, Jeremy Taylor,

Jon Isherwood, Stan Arnold, Shep Woolley, Noel Murphy etc? Were they not too a part of the folk scene and responsible for the upkeep thereof. I suppose Colin Irwin the main consultant decided to not include them. (I think Irwin always did consider the comedians a bit of a misnomer and the short derisory comment of them in chapter three was both unnecessary and totally unwarranted).

Well I realize of course that Alex Campbell and Co listed above couldn't all be in the programmes - someone had to be left out; but thank you for showing us Weston Gavin - he certainly influenced the British folk scene. (Sorry sarcasm is a poor form of journalism). Other than that it was a delight in the first two chapters to see Karl Dallas who worked for a decade or two for the Melody Maker and links such as Carthy, Jansch, Harper, Martyn, all of whom spoke eloquently and mostly made sense. Joe Boyd, the entrepreneurial American, unfortunately appeared more than once and one is left to ponder if the first two programmes were actually no more than a publicity exercise for him as we went through a roster of the British artistes he managed. The inclusion of those not under his management and guidance might somewhat disprove this theory, although they mostly came in the earlier sequences before he arrived on our shores. Surely Bill Leader had more to do with the evolution of the folk scene than Joe Boyd, but of Bill there was not even a whimper.

Then suddenly we had Donovan, pretending he knew nothing of Bob Dylan until he was already in the charts himself and the similarity between dress wear and song content was merely a coincidence. What was Donovan doing in the programme at all? Come on Donovan you were always a very poor excuse for a folk singer and still you hide behind pretence today, and your one song (or was it two) could never stand up against some of

Dylan's even poorest poetry. If you knew nothing of Dylan you were either stuck with your head in the sand like an ostrich, or you had your head stuck in another proverbial hole. Chapter three was excellent, but again incredible omissions. I suppose Downes, Beer, Knightly (latter two - Show of Hands) Robb Johnson have had absolutely nothing to do with the folk scene getting where it is today.

Plenty of the Pogues though. Far too much in fact. If ever folk music was bastardized they were the culprits, far more so than the folk comedians and if they were so damned important then the comedians who lasted for a far longer period and still appear at folk festivals today should have had a respectful mention. And remember of those listed Connolly, Wrigley, Brimstone, Isherwood, Woolley, Murphy and others, also included traditional material within their performances and still do today; and frankly I consider the Kipper's to be just as important in the folk tradition as the Copper's. I never did approve of performers on stage singing from books, and if it's classified as an artistic abnormality in their case then it's taking it to a ridiculous level of pretentiousness. Perhaps coming from a rustic background their memories aren't so good. So why so much of Donovan, Boyd and Briggs when there were so many others who could and should have been included? Answers on a postcard please, I don't want too many rambling speeches!

But as February rolls slowly into March BBC4 appears to be continuing with a series of up to date concerts. The first entitled 'Which side are you on' was compered by Billy Bragg and featured Martin Carthy, Dick Gaughan, Andy Irvine, Robb Johnson, Callum and Neill MacColl and, amongst others who deserved to be there, suddenly we again saw Donovan who appeared to be heading the bill. What is it with the BBC that

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they have this incredible obsession with a singer who had very little to do with folk music and now rides on the back of Woody Guthrie? I suppose Carthy, Gaughan, Irvine, Johnson, Bragg and MacColl simply aren't big enough names to pull in the audience! Donovan bounced his way through his songs as if he was still singing Puff the Magic Dragon. He really showed his sincerity though in 'Hard Travelling' when he forgot his words. Strange the word he forgot should be 'vagrancy'. Ironic in a way, don't you think? Anyway, who cares about the words, let's bounce through it, nobodies going to notice! Wrong Donovan, wrong!

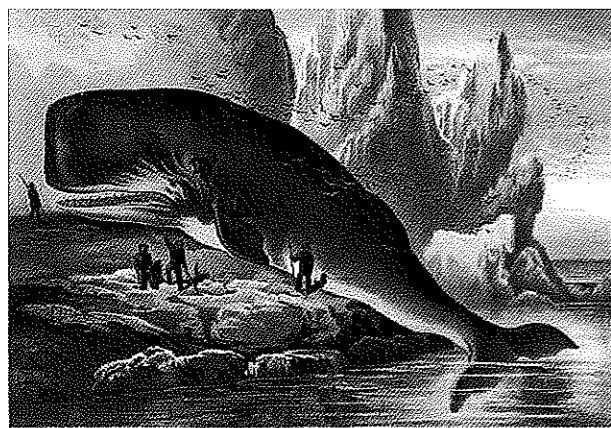
I have to admit I was slightly amused (but pleased at the same time especially as his son's were featured) to find that Ewan MacColl's determination to stop English performers singing American music, especially that of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, has at last been ignored. Ewan MacColl did many fine things for folk music, his public abhorrence of English singers performing American compositions was not however one of them.

By the way for uninitiated the title 'Which side are you on' is the name of a song written by Florence Reece around about 1932 when gun thugs broke into her house looking for her husband who was trying to organize the coal workers. Florence wrote the original words on the back of a calendar she took off the wall after they had left. She took the tune from an old Baptist hymn tune although originally it was an old English ballad. Now can you tell me is the title synonymous with Martin Carthy? I think so. Does it fit Gaughan, Irvine, Johnson, MacColl, Billy Bragg? I think so. But does the name of Donovan spring to mind? Again; answers on a post card please!

So again full marks to the BBC for bringing folk music back onto our screens after so many years in the wilderness. But please can we have folk singers; not worn out pop stars who have done nothing in the last 40 years to help the movement? And can we have a few of the names I've listed above? Can we see the Brimstones, the Silvos, the Woolleys, the Handles, the Coes, the Beers and the Downes and all the other true folk performers of this world who have kept the movement alive. Can we please remember that every fine building in this country has strong foundations and the foundations are actually more important than the penthouse suites that sit above them. And please, please, please can we not see Donovan again?

Joe Stead

THE GREENLAND WHALE



Twos eighteen hundred and twenty four,
On March the eighteenth day,
We hoisted our colours to the top of the mast,
And to Greenland bore away, brave boys,
And to Greenland bore away.

Oh! The lookout on the mainmast stood,
With a spyglass in his hand.
'There's a whale, there's a whale, there's a whale fish' he cried,
'And she blows at every span, brave boys,
And she blows at every span.'

Oh! The captain stood on the quarter deck,
And the ice was in his eye,
'Overhaul, overhaul let your jib sheet fall,
And put your boats to sea, brave boys,
And put your boats to sea.'

Well the boats got down with the men aboard,
And the whale was full in view.
Resolved, resolved was each whalerman bold
To steer where the whale fish blew brave boys,
To steer where the whale fish blew.

The harpoon struck and the line played out,
But she gave such a flourish with her tail,
That she upset the boat and we lost five men,
And we never did catch that whale, brave boys,
And we never did catch that whale.

Well, the losing of those five jolly tars,
Grieved our captain sore.
But the losing of that bloody sperm whale,
Oh! It grieved him ten times more, brave boys,
Oh! It grieved him ten times more.

'Up anchor now,' the captain cries,
'For the winter's star do appear.
And its time for to leave this cold country,
And for England we will steer, brave boys,
And for England we will steer.'

Oh! Greenland is a terrible place,
A place which bears no green,
Where there's ice and snow and the whale fish blow,
And the daylight's seldom seen, brave boys,
And the daylight's seldom seen.

They regarded themselves as the finest mariners on the ocean and probably they were, those men who sailed for months on end in small, cramped ships; who hunted the great whales from open boats with hand held harpoons, following their quarry far out on the deep ocean, far from land and often far from the shipping lanes. They set off from the English ports of London, Hull and Whitby. In North America likewise, they departed from Nantucket and New Bedford. English and American ships homed in on the whaling grounds off Greenland's icy shores. They knew about the Gulf Stream long before anyone else did and, like the whales themselves, avoided it. They were driven by profit, hunting the whales, not for their meat but for their oil.

To early man, a whale carcass freshly washed up on shore would have been a food bonanza rivalling a herd of mammoth. It is easy to see how our ancestors would have been tempted to go actively looking for the sea's bounty rather than sitting back and waiting for the occasional free lunch. The earliest whaling would have been from small open boats or canoes hunting just offshore when whales were sighted. We see remnants of this style of hunting still practiced amongst some remote communities.

Soon, it became apparent that the blubber of a whale was as valuable as the meat, perhaps more so. Whales are, of course, air breathing mammals and like all mammals they maintain a more or less constant body temperature. In deep, cold water the whale could not survive without that generous jacket of

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insulating blubber beneath its skin. Unfortunately, the blubber itself would soon decay into a putrefying mess when cut from the whale (a process called flensing). However, piling chunks of blubber into a large pot and cooking it over a fire (trying out) released a high-energy oil which could be stored in wooden casks for long periods until required. The oil could be used as a fuel for cooking or for oil lamps. In the days before the invention of the electric light bulb, oil lamps banished the darkness in many a home around the world.

In the early days, with whales still plentiful, the whaling trips could be very short and the blubber was brought back to be tried out on shore but as the whales became scarcer the trips became longer and it became necessary to try out at sea. This necessitated building a brick hearth on deck to contain the fire and mounting a large iron pot above the fire to contain the blubber. It takes a certain amount of nerve, one supposes, to deliberately light a large fire on the deck of a wooden ship. Then the stinking, smoky process of trying out would continue interminably as each successful kill was made. Gradually the hold would fill with barrels of the precious oil. Once the hold was full, or the winter weather arrived (as the song puts it, 'the winter's star do appear'), the whaling ship turned for home.

It required considerable nerve and skill to hunt these huge creatures from open boats. Our song describes the lookout high on the mainmast spotting his quarry and giving out the cry 'there she blows'. Whales, being air breathers, have to return to the surface periodically and when they do they vent the stale air from their lungs via the blowhole in the top of their heads. The cloud of condensation and mucus droplets can be seen from miles away. Once the whale's spouting has given away its position the boats are launched and the chase is on. The men would strain every fibre, rowing hard to gain on their distant quarry, urged on by the officer in the stern who also steered the boat.

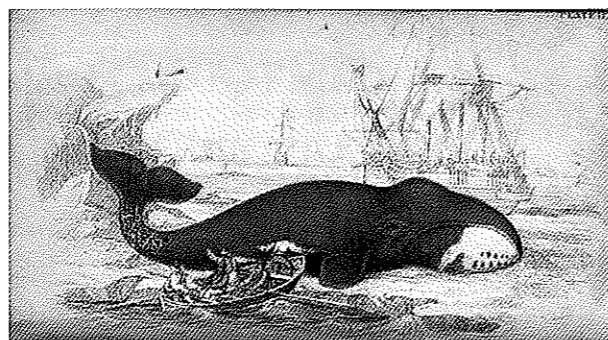
There are, of course, different species of whale. The easiest to catch in a chase was the right whale, so called because its slow progress and relatively brief dives made it the right whale to go after. Such was the success of the 18th and 19th century whalers in hunting the right whale that by 1830 the species was close to extinction on the whaling grounds off Greenland. The whaling ships turned increasingly to other species and other oceans; to Baffin Bay, to the South Atlantic, to the Pacific and eventually to the frozen seas off Antarctica. Voyages became longer and longer, months turning into years.

Turning to other species could be just as dangerous as voyaging further and further from home. At the other end of the spectrum to the right whale was the sperm whale, the only species of large whale which is carnivorous. The right whale, the humpback, the sei, the fin whale and even the mighty blue whale, all strain minute creatures called krill (crustaceans) and tiny plants called plankton (algae) from the sea through their baleen plates, large cartilaginous sieves in their jaws. The sperm whale, however, has a mouth full of huge teeth with which to attack its preferred food, the giant squid which live at great depth. Like most predators it is fast and aggressive, able to swim for sustained periods at the remarkable speed of twelve knots, dive to depths of over three thousand feet and stay down for well over an hour. If the right whale is the pussycat of the ocean the sperm whale is undoubtedly the tiger.

The whalers in our song find themselves up against a sperm whale and the lethal outcome described was not unusual. In his epic novel 'Moby Dick', Herman Melville brings the story to its climax with the elusive white whale ramming the whaler 'Pequod', staving in her sides and sending her to the bottom. This was not Melville's imagination running wild. He based it

on a real incident in the Pacific when an enraged sperm whale turned on the pursuing whaler and did exactly that. The small rowing boats which took up the chase would be an even easier target than the mother ship and often it took a great deal of skill and quick thinking to avoid being smashed to pieces by a blow from the whale's flukes (tail). The whalers in our song ran out of luck that day and the captain, though sorry to lose them, was allegedly even sorer to lose a valuable whale. Some versions of the song, however, are less cynical, reversing the order of grief.

Once the boats were close enough, the responsibility for the kill was in the hands of the harpooner, crouched at the ready in the bow. As the boat drew alongside the whale he would stand



and launch his weapon which was attached to a long line. The stricken whale would take off dragging the boat behind it and streaming blood; no need for rowing now. Or the whale might sound, diving down deep to escape its tormentors. Sadly, there is no quick and easy way to kill such a huge animal. Its death would be a slow, agonising, exhausting affair. Small wonder that, in modern times, we have turned against such carnage, or at least most of us have.

We no longer need to hunt whales and there is no excuse for its continuance. However, I think it is foolish to sit in judgement on the whalers of earlier times. It was a different world with different needs and a different morality. We should be generous enough to see the bravery and skill of the whalers of old. We should be able to appreciate their humanity and their creativity which is more than evident in the songs they have left us, in their scrimshaws (engraved pictures on sperm whale teeth) and in their personal journals and diaries. They were flesh and blood men, earning a living and earning it the hard way. To my mind they deserve our respect and admiration and I hope their songs will be sung for generations to come when, hopefully, hunting the great whales will be history.... even for Japan.

Brian Bull

PEL NEWS HOW CAN WE KEEP FROM SINGING?

Tessa's 'illegal' singing

On 8th March, Tessa Jowell and other women MPs celebrated International Women's Day with a song, performed for the media's benefit in Victoria Tower Gardens, a public park next to the Houses of Parliament.

Earlier, the MPs had placed a bouquet of flowers beneath the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst, a campaigner for women's suffrage in the early 20th century. While the cause was undeniably just, it is worth noting that Mrs Pankhurst and her supporters pursued their cause through violent means including arson and attacks on politicians. It is tempting to speculate whether supporting such tactics today would amount to the 'glorification of terrorism'...

Anyway, according to Westminster City Council, Tessa's singing was a licensable performance and no licence was in force. It would seem that a criminal offence has been committed. MPs will be relieved, however, that Westminster council has already decided not to prosecute.

When questioned about Tessa's singing by the BBC and The Times on 16 March, the Department for Culture Media and Sports (DCMS) initially claimed that the Act was about the application of 'common sense' and that no licence was required for 'live music that is incidental to a memorial service'. Later that afternoon, DCMS added another excuse: the event was private and not for profit.

But MPs had organised the performance well in advance and invited the press to record it. As such it was an event in itself, not incidental. The BBC did not report any 'memorial service'; they reported a 'celebration' and the singing. Indeed, in a Westminster Hall debate the next day, Linda Gilroy MP thanked the organisers, and called it 'a very celebratory event'. She made no reference to a 'memorial service'. In any case, it is hard to see that the laying of a bouquet beneath Emmeline Pankhurst's statue would qualify as such.

As for the private event claim, Victoria Tower Gardens is open to the public, and the new Licensing Act explicitly counts spectators as an audience. Royal Parks had already submitted an application for a premises licence authorising entertainment, and this covers Victoria Tower Gardens. The application has been and continues to be advertised on the park railings, even though the closing date for representations was 1 March, a week before the MPs performance.

We understand 10 objections have been made, and these will have to be considered at public hearing. This was due to take place on 23 March. Westminster City Councillor Audrey Lewis implies that advertising a musical event is one of the legal reasons for licensing. In fact it is not a requirement under the Licensing Act. However, it appears to be one of the factors councils are using to assess whether a performance qualifies for the 'incidental music' exemption. It would also appear that Westminster City Council is operating a policy of risk-based enforcement: no complaint, no action.

If this is possible, why is the pre-emptive criminalisation of unlicensed performances of this nature necessary at all?

A Landlady's response to Feargal

Following Feargal Sharkey's recent claims about not being able to find live music problems (quoted in The Publican, 20 February 2006), the landlady of a north London pub contacted me. Here is an extract from her email. The 'two in a bar' gigs she used to provide were cancelled from 24 November last year following confused advice from her local authority. She has since submitted a variation application to restore live music, but as this is ongoing she asked not to be named:

"Live music will be curtailed without question. It already has. Post 24th November we have not hired anyone. We previously booked live entertainment three times each week at an average cost of £150 per act. That's around £5,500 in lost wages to musicians and an average of £1500 per week in lost revenue to us not to mention the customers that have gone that we have to try to recover in the event we are successful in our application.

"Feargal Sharkey reports "having looked at around 7000 applications we can find no examples where conditions have been imposed by local authorities". I beg to differ. A co-licensee

in [location deleted] has just had to engage the services of sound engineers to take readings inside and outside his premises and in the sitting rooms of his immediate neighbours. Also he will have to put a sound limiter in place - as I write the jury is still out as to whether he will be granted his variation."

Feargal also claims that, of over 7,000 licence applications examined by the LMF, no examples of licence conditions imposed were found. Licensing lawyers immediately dismissed this claim. Applications as submitted to the local authority would not show licence conditions. These are only imposed once the application has been processed by the local authority.

Hamish Birchall

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No doubt by now you have heard about the axing of all the specialist music programmes on BBC GMR - or as it is now called - BBC Radio Manchester. Of course the programme that affects all folk fans is Ali O'Brien's show "Sounds of Folk" that has been running for three years building up a listener base as it went along. Other programmes affected are the Irish magazine programme, "The Parlour", hosted by Alan Keegan, "GMR Country" with David Spencer. All three of these programmes ran on a Monday night from 7-00 until 10-00 and many people listened to all three programmes through the evening.

The programme "GMR Brass" has also gone along with the pre Rock and Roll music programme "A String of Pearls" hosted by Christine Prentice. All these programmes had a big following but BBC Radio Manchester's Managing Editor, John Ryan, has decreed that the station will concentrate on talk-based programmes from now on. I for one cannot see the logic behind this decision - all the programmes that have gone had a large following - maybe not huge in terms of prime time listening figures but substantial considering competition from TV programmes available to watch at that time.

There is good news though. By now Ali should be doing a fortnightly show on Radio Britfolk and will be starting a folk show on Oldham Community Radio when they start broadcasting in the autumn. We wish her all the best with these new shows and I hope you will give her the same support that she had when she ran "Sounds of Folk". It is possible that the Oldham Community Radio show will be streamed on the web and will have a listen again facility but that will be decided nearer the time. I'll keep you informed on the website's "Wireless Waves" pages.

Any comments you may have regarding the new programming schedule on BBC Radio Manchester can be directed to john.ryan@bbc.co.uk

In recent years the BBC has dropped Henry Ayrtton's folk show and now Ali O'Brien's show. John Ryan was the man behind both of these decisions although he may have been acting on decisions from higher up. The worrying thing is that this may not be the last time that the axe will fall on BBC local radio folk programmes.

Elsewhere in this edition there is a review of the Lancashire Night that I was involved with supporting the Belarus Aid projects. I would like to thank everybody from the various folk clubs in the area who gave their support and made the night a success with a full house and benefited the charity to the tune of well over £900.

Until then, Happy Surfing.
Mark Dowding
 Email webmaster@folknorthwest.co.uk
www.folknorthwest.co.uk

LETTERS



Dear Ken

To all those readers of Folk North West who so kindly supported the recent Lancashire Night, held at the Stanley Institute, Burscough in aid of Belarus Aid, I would like to extend a huge vote of thanks. The evening was a great success, with the venue packed to capacity. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful evening, thanks to the talents of Mark Dowding, John McAlister, Liz Calderbank, Newburgh Morris and of course the inimitable Sid Calderbank as master of ceremonies!! The hot pot at half time was cooked, delivered and efficiently served by the Hot Pot Supper Company and eaten with relish (or should I say red cabbage!), by those present!

The generosity of those who came, in buying both event and raffle tickets, coupled with a donation of £100 from the Christmas raffle at the Railway Folk Club, Lymm, ensured that we raised the magnificent sum of £920 towards the cost of this year's project in Belarus. This will involve the refurbishment of an elderly people's day care centre at the hospital in Mir. 2006 sees the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster (on April 26th) and the country continues to suffer from the catastrophic effects of the radiation contamination it left, though people in unaffected countries seem to have largely forgotten this disaster. However, it will continue to affect lives for up to 5,000 years. Living conditions for the majority of the Belarusian people fall far below what we in Britain would call acceptable in even the most basic sense and hospital care and conditions would be condemned here as unsanitary at best. This in a country where hospital care is vitally necessary to treat the many (and rising number of) people affected by radiation related illness. The work of Belarus Aid is needed more than ever, to help these people face and cope with an incredibly difficult life.

So, may I once again say a heartfelt thanks on behalf of myself and the Belarus Aid committee to all those readers and their friends who supported us and to Sid, Mark, John, Liz and the ladies of Newburgh Morris for giving their time and energy free, to help us.

If anyone is interested in further information about this year's project or any other aspect of our work, please contact me on 01257 464215 or email maggihuyton@yahoo.com. (We are still looking for a few volunteers to help on this year's project - between 22nd July and 12th August this year, including an electrician and possibly an HGV driver.)

Yours sincerely
Maggi Huyton (vice chair - Belarus Aid)
 10 April 2006

Dear Editor,

As a regular subscriber to Folk North West, I enjoy the magazine and read the article in "John's Diary Chat" concerning his visit to a folk music session in Windermere and his disappointment at not being invited to join in. This is something that we have come across before. If he (or anyone else for that matter) should ever be visiting the Isle of Man, they can find a very friendly music session on a Friday night all year round at the Tynwald Inn St Johns. The Manx traditional music group, "Phynnodderee", runs it, and visiting musicians are invited to join in and play or sing to their hearts' content. The session starts at approximately 8:30pm and finishes around 11:00pm, so bring an instrument and come along and join us.

See you there
Clive Kneale

Dear Ken

With regards to "John's Diary Chat" from the last Folk North West magazine, being ignored at a folk club in Windermere. I would like to sing the praises of the Folk At The Manor Folk Club in Wallasey which is the complete antithesis of the one in Windermere. My wife and I have been to many clubs over the years, and we found the residents and the members of that club very welcoming, polite and very friendly, and we enjoyed an excellent night being entertained by the multi-talented Pete Coe. Thus I would recommend this club as being first class, providing you can find it, that is.

Regards
Rod Evans

Dear Ken

I have just taken over as the secretary of the Spring Terrace WMC, 211, Haslingden Road, Rawtenstall, East Lancs. The club is a friendly society, in other words run basically not for profit but for the benefit of its members.

The club has not exactly fallen on hard times but it is under used and I am trying to make more use of the club. Being previously interested in folk music I thought it would be worth seeing if there was an interest in this area for a folk music venue and is it possible to get this into your magazine?

The club is basically two terraced houses that are 120 years old this year, the ground floor is one room and is capable of seating 60 persons quite comfortably. It's like stepping back in time when you walk through the doors but it has a very welcoming atmosphere. Any musicians are welcome any Thursday or Sunday night; just contact me to make sure there is nothing else on.

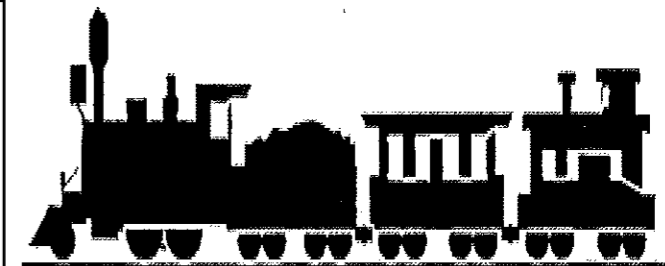
At some stage I would like to advertise this a regular event but need to get people interested first. Any support would be greatly appreciated. Or if any one has any ideas or suggestions all are welcome. If you are in the area and want to have a look please feel free to do so.

Paul Haworth

Hello Ken,

I've had numerous enquiries as a result of 'Chinese Whisper Syndrome'. Rather than news seep in and around slowly, please rest assured. Rumours of my demise (to paraphrase) have been greatly exaggerated. Yes, I did crash our car in a frozen valley up in Bonny Scotland, after finding out the hard

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SAT 01 JUL MARMALDE CLUB (11.30 - 14.30)

SAT 01 JUL LES BARKER (£7)

SUN 02 JUL LAST NIGHT'S FUN (£10)

TUE 04 JUL FESTIVAL CEILIDH (£5) Statham Lodge

WED 05 JUL GARVA (£7) Statham Lodge

THU 06 JUL BERNARD CROMARTY (£4)

13 JUL SINGERS NIGHT (£1)

20 JUL MAGGIE & GARY BOYLE (£7)

27 JUL FIDDLESTONE (£4)

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 21 SEP VIN GARBUTT (£9); 28 SEP BIG SPOT: JEAN FINNEY (£1);
 05 OCT COLUM SANDS (£6.50); 12 OCT MARTIN SIMPSON (£10);

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

CLUB RESIDENTS (as on 21st April, 2006)

BACUP -- Brian Eastwood, Boo Long, Dave Dawes, Helen Lancashire, Joe Caswell, Keith Winfield, Mark Almond, Martin Willingham, Paul Morris, Pete Benbow, Tom Winstanley

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

BOTHY -- Clive Pownceby, Steve Freedham, Pete Rimmer, Bill Hackney, Alison Younger, Chris & Siobhan Nelson, Ray Rooney, Nev Grundy, Bev Sanders, Kevin Littlewood

BURNLEY -- Korrigan, Wenchall, Barbara, Mike & Steve

CASTLE -- Tony & Anne, Wench All, Dave & Cheryl, Paul Roberts

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

EVERYMAN -- Chris & Hughie Jones, Shirley Peden

FLEETWOOD -- Spitting on a Roast

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

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

FOLK AT THE RUGBY CLUB - Lynn/Barrie Hardman, Dave Jones, Crumbly Fruit Cake, David South

FOLK IN THE BARN -- The Occasional Three

FOUR FOOLS -- Pat Ryan & Ken Howard, Mal Gibbons, Geoff & Lindsey Smith, Gill Coyne, Tom & Ann, Angie Bladen

GARSTANG UNPLUGGED -- Pete Hardman, Caroline Lovett

GREGSON LANE -- Trouble at Mill, Celtic Fringe, Smithereen, Caroline Lovett

HALE & HEARTY -- Frank & Sheila Lewis, Steve Black, Bob Hellon, Dave Summers, Ken Lawson, Roy Wilcock & Bridget Guest, John Hodgson, Roy Adams

HOWCROFT INN -- Micron (Mick Unsworth & Ron Callow)

LEIGH - (Calico) Pauline Dowsett, Des Cooney, Julie Houlton, Steve Eckersley, Jim & Bernadette Heaton

LONGRIDGE -- Ron Flanagan, Brian Preston

MAGHULL -- Tony Gibbons, Loctuptogether, Back in Business, Joe Ryan, Clover, Jane Day, Bob Tyrer, Paul Robinson, Kate Bradbury, Jill Fielding

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

PARKGATE -- Eddie Morris

PORKIES -- Sad Pig (Dave Hughes & Judy Hancock)

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

RAILWAY -- 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, Helen Kennedy, John Ashurst (poet)

RHYL -- Rum, Bum & Concertina

ROOM AT THE TOP -- Mark Dowding and others

ST ANNE'S ACOUSTIC ROOTS -- Mike Black, Dave Alderman

URMSTON ACOUSTICS -- Keith Northover, Joe & John, 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 at - johnowenbtacks@aol.com)

SUNDAY		NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS	
Accrington Town Hall	7:30 PM	Blackburn Road, Accrington, BB5 1LA	Box Office
Bothy	8:00 PM	Shelbourne Hotel, 1 Lord Street West, Southport, PR8 2BH	Clive Pownceby
Folk at the Manor	8:30 PM	The Old Manor Club, Withens Lane, Wallasey, CH45 7NF	Roger Parker
Mr Kite Benefits	8:00 PM	Worden Arts Centre, Worden Park, Leyland, PR25 1DJ	Steve Henderson
Open Door	8:45 PM	Royal Oak, 172 Manchester Road, Werneth, OL9 6BN	Pauline Westall
Walshaw	9:00 PM	Sports Club, Sycamore Road, Tottington, Bury, BL8 3EG	Frank Brough
Walton (and Fridays)	8:30 PM	County Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool, L4 3RL	Lilian French
Wooden Horse	8:30 PM	The Junction, News Lane, Rainford, WA11 7JU	Jim Coan
MONDAY			
Bacup	8:30 PM	Bacup Conservative Club, Irwell Terrace, Bacup, OL13 9AW	Helen Slater
Conwy	8:30 PM	Malt Loaf, Rosehill Street, Conwy,	Denis Bennett
Folk at the Prospect	8:30 PM	Prospect Inn, Weston Road, Weston Village, Runcorn, WA7 4LD	Roger Hanslip
Four Fools	8:15 PM	Spinners Arms, Church Street, Adlington, Chorley, PR7 4EX	Ken & Angie Bladen
Red Bull	8:30 PM	Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3AY	Peter Hood
Room at the Top	8:30 PM	Red Lion Hotel, Ashbrow, Newburgh, WN8 7NF	Mark Dowding
Swinton	8:30 PM	White Lion, 242 Manchester Road, Swinton, M27 4TS	Ged Todd
TUESDAY			
Brindley Arts Centre	8:00 PM	High Street, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 1BG	Box Office
Crown	8:30 PM	Crown, 154 Heaton Lane, Stockport, SK4 1AR	Kieron Hartley
Everyman	8:30 PM	Everyman Bistro, 5-9 Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BH	Christine Jones
Folk at the Forum	7:30 PM	Forum 28, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1HH	Box Office
Howcroft Inn	8:30 PM	Howcroft Inn, 36 Pool Street, Vernon St, Bolton, BL12JU	Ron Callow
Longridge	8:30 PM	British Legion, Townley Road, Longridge, Nr. Preston PR3 3EA	Ron Flanagan
Maghull	8:30 PM	Maghull Community Ass'n, 604 Green Lane, Maghull, L31 2JH	Tony Gibbons
Skipton	8:30 PM	Royal Oak, Water Street, Skipton, BD23 1PB	Sheila A. Kelsall
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	8:30 PM	Conservative Club, 353 Clifton Drive North, L/ST Annes, FY8 2NA	Mike Black
Urmston Acoustics	8:30 PM	Nags Head Hotel, 1 Lostock Road, Urmston, M41 0SU	Martin Kavanagh
Wigan (Fox & Goose)	9:00 PM	Fox & Goose, 37-39 Wigan Lane, Wigan, WN1 1XR	Joan Blackburn
WEDNESDAY			
Allison Arms	9:00 PM	Allison Arms, Preston Road, Coppull, Chorley, PR7 5CQ	Derek Docherty
Burnley	8:30 PM	Hare and Hounds, 58 West Street, Padinhm, BB12 8JD	Phyl Watson
Castle	8:30 PM	Castle Hotel, Castle Road, Halton Village, Runcorn, WA7 2BE	Dave Newton
Clarence	8:30 PM	Clarence, 88 Preston New Road, Blackpool, FY4 4HG	Ann Green
Cross Keys	9:00 PM	Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Near Oldham, OL3 6LW	Jim Schofield
Folk at the Rugby Club	9:00 PM	Old Aldwinians Rugby Club, Manchester Rd, Droydsden, M34 5SN	Brenda Judge
Garstang Unplugged (n.m.)	8:30 PM	Kenlis Arms, Ray Lane, Barnacre, Garstang, PR3 1GD	Don Moore
Red Bull	8:30 PM	Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3AY	Peter Hood
Walton	8:30 PM	County Ward Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, L4 3RL	Lilian French
THURSDAY			
All Acoustic at Worden (n.m.)	8:00 PM	Worden Arts Centre, Worden Park, Leyland, PR25 1DJ	Michelle Allsopp
Biddulph	8:30 PM	Biddulph Arms, 171 Congleton Road, Biddulph, ST8 6QJ	Eric Cox
Chorlton	9:00 PM	SW Manchester Cricket Club, Ellesmere Road, Chorlton M21 05G	Jozeph Roberts
Earby	7:30 PM	Station Hotel, 123 Colne Road, Earby, Barnoldswick, BB18 6XL	Sharon Hobson
Fleetwood	8:30 PM	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood, FY7 6BT	Mike France
Gregson Lane	8:30 PM	Sports & Social Club, Gregson Lane, Hoghton, PR5 0FD	Graham Dixon
Parkgate	8:15 PM	Boathouse Pub/Restaurant, 1 The Parade, Parkgate, CH64 6RN	Eddie Morris
Railway	8:30 PM	Railway Hotel, 42 Mill Lane, Heatley, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9SQ	Stewart Lever
South Lakes Music Promotion	8:30 PM	Sports & Social Club, Priory Road, Ulverston,	Nick McDermott
South Ribble Arts Forum	8:00 PM	Marsden Theatre, Worden Arts Centre, Leyland, PR25 1DJ	Graham Dixon
Wigan (7 Stars)	9:00 PM	Seven Stars Hotel, 262 Walgate, Wigan, WN3 5AR	Joan Blackburn
Wrexham	8:30 PM	Nags Head Inn, Mount Street, Wrexham, LL13 8DW	Ian Chesterman
FRIDAY			
Bollington	8:30 PM	Dog & Partridge, 97 Palmerston Street, Bollington, SK10 5JX	Arthur Wakefield
Carlisle Folk & Blues	8:00 PM	Sunset Suite, Carlisle Football Ground, Warwick Road, CA1 1LL	Myrna Rae
Folk in the Barn	8:15 PM	Rosehill Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 6SE	Terry Haworth
Friends of Folk	8:00 PM	Leyland Fox Lane Sports Club, Fox Lane, Leyland, PR25 1HB	Jim Minall
Hale & Hearty	8:30 PM	Kings Arms Hotel, Hale, Milnethorpe, Cumbria, LA7 7BH	Frank Lewis
Leigh	8:00 PM	Conservative Club, Railway Road, Leigh, WN7 4AX	Pauline Dowsett
Northwich	8:30 PM	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich, CW9 5JN	John Booth
Pacific Arts/Exhibition Centre	8:00 PM	Pacific Road, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 1LJ	Box Office
Playhouse 2	8:30 PM	Newtown Street, Shaw, Oldham OL2 8NX	Barrie Cottam
Porkies	8:30 PM	Royal British Legion, Georges Road West, Poynton, SK12 1JY	Dave Hughes
Preston	8:30 PM	Moorbrook Inn, 370 North Road, Preston, PR1 1RU	Rob Malaney
Rhyl	9:00 PM	Costigan's Pub, 40 Bodfor Street, Rhyl, LL18 1AT	Jeff Blythin
Southport Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Lord Street, Southport, PR8 1DB	John Sprackland
Westhoughton	8:15 PM	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton, BL5 2BR	Pat Baty
SATURDAY			
Barnoldswick	8:00 PM	Fosters Arms, Gisburn Road, Barnoldswick, BB18	Sharon Hobson
Buffet Bar	9:00 PM	Platform 1, Stalybridge Rail Station, Stalybridge, SK15 1RF	Jim Schofield
Brewery Arts Centre	8:00 PM	122a Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4HE	Box Office
Burnley Mechanics	8:00 PM	Manchester Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 1JA	Box Office
Citadel Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Waterloo Street, St Helens, WA10 1PX	Aby Jeffers
Ormskirk Comes Alive (n.m.)	—	Various venues and dates in West Lancashire	Pete Rimmer
Philharmonic Hall	7:30 PM	Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BP	Box Office
Platform	8:00 PM	Station Buildings, Central Promenade, Morecambe, LA4 4DB	Glynis Johnson
Rush Acoustic	7:45 PM	R & R Tearoom, Market Street, Kirby Stephen, CA17 4QN	Penny & Paul
Standish	8:15 PM	St Ann's Parish Hall, Church Lane, Shevington, WN6 8BD	David Jones
			01254-380293
			0151-924-5078
			0151-678-1962
			01772-621411
			0161-681-3618
			01204-413909
			0151-474-0979
			01772-452782
			01706-873063
			01492-877324
			01528-731567
			01257-263678
			0161-432-4142
			0151-632-8283
			01942-811527
			0151-907-8360
			0161-291-8243
			0151-709-3336
			01229-820000
			01606-863283
			01772-785179
			01744-607566
			01535-665889
			01253-781448
			0161-748-5497
			01942-321223
			01257-791262
			01282-774077
			01928-771776
			01772-683027
			01457-833897
			0161-432-4830
			01995-602795
			0161-432-4142
			0151-474-0979
			01772-421109
			01782-514896
			07833-735-729
			01282-841727
			01253-776607
			01254-853929
			0151-677-1840
			07919-270-916
			07743-555227
			01772-421109
			01942-321223
			01978-357307
			01625-573596
			01697-72305
			01900-604765
			01772-422416
			01524-734440
			01942-604603
			01606-79356
			0151-647-0752
			01706-663117
			01625-430149
			01257-231463
			01745-588072
			01704-540011
			01257-230508
			01282-841727
			01457-833897
			01539-725133
			01282-664400
			01744-762305
			01695-585400
			0151-210-2895
			01524-586823
			017683-72123
			0151-639-9350

28th May to 1st July, 2006

(NB: Always check with organisers before travelling)

SUNDAY	28th May	4th June	11th June	18th June	25th June
Bothy	Singers Night	BANDERSNATCH Singers Night	Singers Night	SMITH & HEWSON	Singers Night
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	WIRRAL FOLK ON THE COAST JOE WRIGHT & JOE TOPPING	BOB FOX WIRRAL FOLK ON THE COAST GARVA, VOCAL POINT, TANSKEY, NEIL SPIERS BAND	RUM, BUM & CONCERTINA	Singers Night
Wirral Folk on the Coast Arrowe Park - Birkenhead 4th Vafe Park - Wallasey 11th		FIDDLESTONE MIV CAMERON BAND Singers & Musicians			
Kings Lock				SWARB'S LAZARUS	Singaround
Mr Kite Benefits				KATH READE	
Open Door		SARA GREY & K. MEANS	Singaround		
* Rattan and Rush		PAUL TIERNAN with JOHN LESTER			
Walshaw	Singers Night		Singers Night		Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night		Singers Night		Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Closed - Bank Holiday w/e		JOE TOPPING & JOE WRIGHT		Closed - 4 Fools Festival
MONDAY	29th May	5th June	12th June	19th June	26th June
Bacup	JIVA Singers Night	DAVE GIBB Singers Night	MARTIN WLLINGHAM Singers Night	Singaround	DEREK GIFFORD Singers Night
Conwy		"Jam and Butties" session Singers & Musicians Night		Singers Night	
Farmers Arms - Frankby (Wirral Folk on the Coast)		JOE TOPPING & JOE WRIGHT Singers & Musicians		Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Folk at the Prospect				THE STRAWBS	
Four Fools				JOHN KIRKPATRICK	HARRIET BARTLETT Singers Night
* & ** Rattan and Rush				Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull				Singers Night	
Room at the Top		ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE Singers Night		Singers Night	SHANTY NIGHT Singers Night
SWINTON	30th May	6th June	13th June	20th June	27th June
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	SHEP WOOLLEY MICRON
Howcroft Inn				SAGGY BOTTOM GIRLS with AMAZING DICK	
Longridge				Singers Night	
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	KEITH HANCOCK "Sing for someone else's Supper" - Charity Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Skipton	Singers Night	Singers Night		CHRIS DINSDALE	Singers Night
St Anne's Acoustic Roots					
Urmston Acoustics				Singers Night	Singers Night
West Cheshire Sailing Club (Wirral Folk on the Coast)		UISCEDWR & RECKLESS ELBOW Singers Night			
Wigan (Fox & Goose)					
WEDNESDAY	31st May	7th June	14th June	21st June	28th June
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Bromborough (Wirral Folk on the Coast)		CREAM OF THE BARLEY JOHN DOWLING BLUEGRASS BAND JOHN O'CONNELL, PAUL CHISNALL			

WEDNESDAY (cont'd)	31st May	7th June	14th June	21st June	28th June
Burnley	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Castle	Singers Night	BRAM TAYLOR	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Clarence	Singers Night	LES BARKER	CLOUDSTREET	MAGHULL FOLK CLUB	JOHN CONNOLLY
Cross Keys	ED RENNIE	JOE STEAD Singers Night	BRAM TAYLOR	VALERIE VAUGHAN	YOUNG NO MORE
Folk at the Rugby Club Garstang Unplugged					Singers Night
Philharmonic Hall					
Red Bull	Singers Night	MARY BLACK			
Walton	Singers Night		Music session - English Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY	1st June	8th June	15th June	22nd June	29th June
Biddulph	ALLAN TAYLOR		Club closed		
Chorlton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Earby	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregson Lane		PETE ABBOTT			tba
Parkgate	ERIC BOGLE & JOHN MUNRO Dominic Collins - BIG SPOT				NELSON PEACH
Railway	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE		PETE ABBOTT		
South Lakes Music Pr'm Wigan	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Wrexham	CLIVE GREGSON			MICK RYAN & PEJE HARRIS	Now closed until 22nd Sept.
FRIDAY	2nd June	9th June	16th June	23rd June	30th June
Bollington	Singers Night	IAN BRUCE	SOLAN	JOHN KELLY	Singers Night
Carlisle Folk & Blues	ARROGANT WORMS		Singers Night		EDDIE MORTON TRIO John Green Memorial Singard
* Folk at the Rugby Club					
Folk in the Barn		CLOUDSTREET		STEF WHITE & KERSTEN DE LIGNY	
Friends of Folk		KIRSTY MCGEE & MAT MARTIN	Singaround		
Hale & Hearty			Singaround	VANGEL	
Leigh				** JONATHAN KELLY	
Northwich				SALSA NIGHT	
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Aughton Village Hall)		CROSSCURRENT		Singers Night	New Songs - Singers Night
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Skelmersdale Library)					MARTIN CARTHAY
Pacific Arts Centre - (Wirral Folk on the Coast)		MARK RADCLIFFE & FAMILY MAHONE plus LIFEBOAT CEILIDH BAND			NICK HENNESSEY Afternoon Storytelling - Free
Porkies		JULIE FELIX			
Preston	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
* Railway					ALLAN TAYLOR Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Westthroughton	** JAMES KEELAGHAN	** ERIC BOGLE & JOHN MUNRO	Club re-opens October 20th		
SATURDAY	3rd June	10th June	17th June	24th June	1st July
Barnoldswick	Singaround				Singaround
Buffet Bar	Singers Night				Singers Night
Burnley Mechanics	LUNASA				

	3rd June	10th June	17th June	24th June	1st July
SATURDAY (cont'd)					
Floral Pavilion - New Brighton (Wirral Folk on the Coast)		KATE RUSBY BAND and ELBOW JANE			
* & ** Folk at the Prospect (The Brindley, Runcorn)	REAL TIME & TOM BROWNE				JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE
* & ** Folk at the Rugby Club (Droylsden Folk Festival)				Music & Beer Festival	NICK HENNESSY
* Garstang Unplugged					
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Aughton Village Hall)		BLUE HARLEM			
Playhouse 2	JOE TOPPING & JOE WRIGHT TOM TOPPING/COLIN HENDERSON				LES BARKER
* Railway			JOE TOPPING & JOE WRIGHT		
Rattan and Rush	PAUL TIERNAN & JOHN LESTER				
Note: * = Not the usual club night	** = Different venue				

2nd July to 5th August, 2006

(NB: Always check with organisers before travelling)

	2nd July	9th July	16th July	23rd July	30th July
SUNDAY					
Bothy	KEN NICOL	Singers Night	GINA LE FAUX & JAMES RAYNARD BANDERSNATCH	Closed until Sept 10th	GEORGE & GILL PECKHAM
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
* & ** Folk at the Rugby Club	DROYLSDEN FESTIVAL				
Kings Lock	Singers & Musicians				
Open Door	Singaround	JOE KERINS	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
* Railway	LAST NIGHT'S FUN				
* Rattan and Rush			KIERAN HALPIN		SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL
* & ** SAFRA		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walshaw	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	ROBIN LAING	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
MONDAY					
Bacup	JO STEAD	BRIAN EASTWOOD GEORGE BOROWSKI	Summer Surprise	FREE SANDWICHES	Singaround
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	BRACKENRIGG	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Bar Du Fay)	Open Mic - Night with TONY GIBBONS	Open Mic Night			
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	FIONA SIMPSON	Singers Night	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM	Singers Night	Singers Night
* & ** Biddulph		11th July	18th July	25th July	1st August
Brewery Arts Centre			KRISTINA OLSEN & LOUD MOUTH WOMEN	WILLOUGHBY & CRAIG HIS WORSHIP & the PIG	
Crown	Singaround	Singers Night	Singers Night	JIGBUSTERS Ceilidh	Singaround
Everyman	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Closed until 5th September

	4th July	11th July	18th July	25th July	1st August
TUESDAY (cont'd)					
Howcroft Inn		11th July	18th July	25th July	1st August
Longridge	Singers Night	tba	MARIE LITTLE	CHILL PILLS	closed until 12th Sept. Singers Night
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Bar Du Fay)		VOCAL POINT & JILL FIELDING BAND			
Maghull	Singers Night	MARIE LITTLE	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
* & ** Railway	LYMM FESTIVAL CEILIDH		Singers Night	ANDY HILL	"A Bit of a Do" Anniversary Party Night
Skipton	Singers Night - (American)	CHRIS EMMETT & PAUL READE	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					
Allison Arms	5th July	12th July	19th July	26th July	2nd August
Burnley	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Castle	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Clarence	ALAN BELL BAND	AMAZING MR SMITH	JOHN KELLY	Singers Night	Singers Night
Cross Keys	Singers Night	BANDERSNATCH	MARIE LITTLE	Singers Night	closed until 13th Sept.
Folk at the Rugby Club		Singers Night	tba	tba	tba
Garstang Unplugged				Singers Night	closed until 13th Sept.
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Bar Du Fay)		PETE RIMMER "Donovan Songs"			
* & ** Railway		Music session - English			
Red Bull	GARVA - Irish Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY					
** Biddulph	6th July	13th July	20th July	27th July	3rd August
Chorlton	CHRIS WHILE	ARCHIE FISHER		ERIC BOGLE & JOHN MUNRO	Singers Night
Earby	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Fleetwood	Singaround	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregson Lane	ANDREW GREEN	Acoustic Blues Night with BLUE C	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Bar Du Fay)					
Parkgate					
Railway	BERNARD CROMARTY	Singers Night	MAGGIE & GARY BOYLE	JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE	Singers Night
South Lakes Music Pr'm	Singaround	JENNY MCCORMICK		FIDDLESTONE	DAVE GIBB
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
FRIDAY					
Bollington	7th July	14th July	21st July	28th July	4th August
Carlisle Folk & Blues	ROBIN LAING	BRIAN PETERS	ZINGARI SWING	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk in the Barn	Singers and Musicians	CHRIS JAMES		** CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS	
Hale & Hearty	Singaround				
Northwich	NELSON PEACH	Singers Night	HOWDEN JONES	Singers Night	Singers Night
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Ormskirk Civic Hall)	MERSEYSSIPPI JAZZ BAND	WAYFARERS CHORUS			

	7th July	14th July	21st July	28th July	4th August
FRIDAY (cont'd)					
Ormskirk Comes Alive - (Bar Du Fay)		GALLIMAUFRY & ODD AT EASE			
Playhouse 2	Snake Davis				ZINGHARI SWING
Porkies	MAD JOCKS & ENGLISHMAN				
Preston	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL	Singers & Musicians
SAFRA		Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	15th July	22nd July	29th July	5th August
SATURDAY					
Barnoldswick					
* & ** Biddulph		FOLK IN THE PARK			
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	ERIC BOGLE & JOHN MUNRO	Singers Night
* & ** Leigh					
Ormskirk Comes Alive (Ormskirk Library)	NICK HENNESSEY				
Rattan and Rush	All day storytelling - free				
* & ** SAFRA		KIERAN HALPIN		DARDEN SMITH	
				SADDLEWORTH FESTIVAL	
Note: * = Not the usual club night ** = Different venue					
6th August to 9th September, 2006					
(NB: Always check with organisers before travelling)					
SUNDAY					
Folk at the Manor	6th August	13th August	20th August	27th August	3rd September
Kings Lock	Singers Night	Singers Night	THE BOG TROTTERS	Singers Night	Singers Night
Open Door	Singers & Musicians	Singaround	ANGELCYN	Singaround	Singaround
* Rattan and Rush			HANK WANGFORD & REG MEUROSS		
Walshaw	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Closed - Shrewsbury Festival	Singers Night
MONDAY					
Bacup	7th August	14th August	21st August	28th August	4th September
	BOO LONG	LYNN & BARRY HARDMAN	DREISSER EGG	Summer Special	Singaround
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE
Four Fools	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	TH'ANTIQUES	Singers Night	JON POOLE	Singers Night	CLAIRE MOONEY
	ROADSHOW				
TUESDAY					
Crown	8th August	15th August	22nd August	29th August	5th September
Everyman	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Longridge	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	ALISTAIR HULETT	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Skipton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	KEVIN LOUGHRAN

	8th August	15th August	22nd August	29th August	5th September
TUESDAY (cont'd)					
St Annes Acoustic Roots	8th August	15th August	22nd August	29th August	5th September
Urnston 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					
Alison Arms	9th August	16th August	23rd August	30th August	6th September
Burnley	Singers & Musicians	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Castle	Singers Night	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Clarence	Closed until 13th Sept	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Cross Keys	STEVE TURNER	tba	tba	JEFF DAVIES	EDDIE MCGUIRK
Garstang Unplugged(n.m.)				Singers Night	
Red Bull	Music session - English	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
THURSDAY					
Earby	10th August	17th August	24th August	31st August	7th September
Chorlton	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Fleetwood	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Gregson Lane	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Parkgate	STEWART LEVER	Richard, Anne & Jenny - BIG SPOT	KERFUFFLE	tba	MARTIN CARTHY
Railway				Singers Night	
South Lakes Music Pr'm					EMMA & the PROFESSOR
Wigan (Seven Stars)	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
FRIDAY					
Bollington	11th August	18th August	25th August	1st September	8th September
	Singers Night	QUEENSBERY RULES	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Carlisle Folk & Blues					
Folk in the Barn	EMILY SMITH BAND		ROSIE DOONAN & BEN MURRAY	Singers Night	HEIDI TALBOT BAND
Hale & Hearty		Singaround			
Northwich	BERNARD CROMARTY			SHOWCASE NIGHT with RIA BRIGHT	
Porkies				TANGLEFOOT	
Preston	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
SATURDAY					
Barnoldswick	12th August	19th August	26th August	2nd September	9th September
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singaround	Singers Night
Friends of Folk @ Leyland Civic Centre					KEN NICOL & CHRIS WHILE
Rattan and Rush		HELEN WATSON			ALLAN TAYLOR
Note: * = Not the usual club night ** = Different venue					
TO BE INCLUDED IN THIS CALENDAR INFORMATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY JOHN OWEN BY NO LATER THAN SUNDAY 8TH OCTOBER, 2006					
THE NEXT CALENDAR IN THIS MAGAZINE WILL COVER THE DATES - 27TH AUGUST TO 9TH DECEMBER					

ADVANCE DATES FROM SEPTEMBER 2006

BACUP

Sept 4 Singaround
Sept 11 Bill Lloyd
Sept 18 Singaround
Sept 25 Eddie McGuirk

BIDDULPH UP IN ARMS

Sept 13 Christine Collister
Oct 11 Johnny Dickinson
Oct 25 Chris White & Julie Matthews
Nov 8 Jonathan Kelly
Dec 13 Les Barker & Keith Donnelly

BOLLINGTON

Sept 15 Paul & Cristine Neubal
(Other dates - Singers Nights)

BOTHY

Sept 10 Hoover the Dog
Sept 17 Singers Night
Sept 24 Jazz Hall
Oct 1 Singers Night
Oct 8 Steve Gillette & Cindy Mangsen (USA)
Oct 15 Singers Night
Oct 22 Tom Lewis
Oct 29 Singers Night
Nov 5 Dana & Susan Robinson (USA)
Nov 12 Singers Night
Nov 19 Dave Arthur Band Rattle on the Stovepipe
Nov 26 Singers Night
Dec 3 tba
Dec 10 Three Sheets to the Wind
Dec 17 Hot Pot Supper
Dec 24 Closed

CARLISLE FOLK & BLUES

Sept 1 Singers Night
Sept 15 Helen Watson and David Hughes
Sept 29 Back of the Moon
Oct 13 Michael Marra
Oct 27 tba
Nov 10 Dana & Susan Robinson
Nov 24 Dick Gaughan (tbc)
Dec 8 Xmas Party with Mrs Ackroyd Band

CLARENCE

Sept 13 Ken Nicol & Chris White
Sept 20 Singers Night
Sept 27 Niamh Parsons & Graham Dunne
Oct 4 Colum Sands
Oct 11 Brian Preston
Oct 18 Haines & Leighton
Oct 25 Singers Night
Nov 1 Last Night's Fun
Nov 8 Pat Ryan & Ken Howard
Nov 15 Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman
Nov 22 Singers Night
Nov 29 Andrew Green
Dec 6 Scolds Bridle
Dec 13 Bernard Wrigley
Dec 20 John Scarlett Band

CROSS KEYS

Sept 6 Eddie McGuirk
Sept 13 Steve & Christi Nebel
Sept 20 Kieran Halpin
Sept 27 Kimbers Men
Oct 4 Donal O'Connor
Oct 11 Cath Mundy & Jay Turner
Oct 18 Anthony John Clarke's 50th birthday gig
Oct 25 Mike Silver

FOLK AT THE MANOR

Sept 17 Arthur Marshall
Oct 15 Last Night's Fun
Oct 29 Phil McGinity
Nov 19 Joe Topping
Dec 17 Fiddlestone
(other dates - Singers Nights)

FOLK AT THE PROSPECT

Sept 4 Anthony John Clarke
(other dates - Singers Nights)
Nov 6 Debra Cowan (USA)

FOLK IN THE BARN

Sept 8 Heidi Talbot Band
Sept 22 Allan Taylor
Oct 6 Colum Sands
Oct 20 Singers & Musicians Night
Oct 29 Altan (theatre) **
Nov 3 Eddie Walker
Nov 17 Clive Gregson with Jacqueline Sharp (theatre)
** = extra night

FOLK AT THE RUGBY CLUB

Sept 13 1st Anniversary Party with Lynn & Barrie Hardman

FRIENDS OF FOLK

Sept 9 Ken Nicol & Chris White
@ Leyland Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland

GARSTANG UNPLUGGED

Sept 27 Singers Night
Oct 25 Singers Night
Nov 29 Singers Night
Dec 27 Singers Night

GREGSON LANE

Sept 14 Tom Bliss
Sept 28 Singers Night
Oct 12 Penny Black
Oct 26 Singers Night
Nov 9 Angie Palmer
Nov 23 Singers Night (Lancashire)
Dec 7 Jon Harvison
Dec 21 Singers Night (Christmas Special)

HOWCROFT

Sept 12 tba
Sept 26 Bandersnatch

LEIGH

Sept 22 Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies
Oct 20 Anthony John Clarke
Nov 24 Christmas Special with Dangerous Curves

LONGRIDGE

Sept 5 Singers Night
Sept 19 Guest tba
Oct 3 Singers Night
Oct 17 Brian Preston's 60th birthday gig
Nov 7 Singers Night
Nov 21 Guest tba
Dec 5 Hard Times Band
Dec 19 Singers Night - Christmas Party
Jan 2 2007 Singers Night
Jan 15 Guest tba

MAGHULL

Sept 26 Niamh Parsons & Graham Dunne
Oct 10 Bram Taylor
(other dates - Singers Nights)

MR KITE BENEFITS

Sept 16 Tom Russell (Bury Met)
Oct 21 Kristina Olsen & Peter Grayling (in aid of the Jennifer Trust for Spinal Muscular Atrophy)
@ Worden Arts Centre, Leyland
Nov 10 Tony Benn & Roy Bailey present
"Writing on the Wall"
an Anthology of Dissent in Words and Music
@ City Varieties, Leeds

Nov 11 Tony Benn & Roy Bailey present
"Writing on the Wall"
an Anthology of Dissent in Words and Music
@ The Lowry, Salford Quays

NORTHWICH

Sept 1 Showcase Night with Ria Bright and one other (tbc)
Sept 8 Singers Night (theatre)
Sept 15 Tanglefoot
Sept 22 Singers Night
Sept 29 Singers Night
Oct 6 Singers Night
Oct 13 Faustus
Oct 20 Pigyn Clust (theatre)
Oct 27 Singers Night
Nov 3 Witches of Elswick

PARKGATE

** = extra night
Tao = ticket admission only
Sept 28 Tanglefoot (Tao)
Oct 26 tba
Nov 9 The McCalmans** (Tao)
Nov 30 Allan Taylor & John Wright (Tao)

PHILHARMONIC HALL

Oct 29 Charlie Landsborough

PLATFORM

Oct 27 Fernhill
Nov 4 Kristina Olsen & Peter Grayling
Nov 11 Blazin' Fiddles

PLAYHOUSE 2

Oct 6 Last Night's Fun
Oct 29 Homegrown II
(Saddleworth Folk Festival fund-raiser)

Nov 25 Deitra Farr

Dec 15 John Wright

Dec 22 St Agnes Fountain

Dec 29 Mike Sanchez

PORKIES

Sept 1 Tanglefoot
Oct 6 Paul Millnes Band
Nov 3 Chris White & Julie Matthews
Dec 1 Kieran Halpin & Anth Kaley
Dec 15 Christmas Party

RATTAN & RUSH

Sept 13 Ben & Joe Broughton
Sept 23 Kellie White
Oct 7 Cathryn Craig & Brian Willoughby
Oct 21 Stony

RAILWAY

Sept 7 Martin Carthy
Sept 14 Singers Night
Sept 21 Vin Garbutt
Sept 28 Jean Finney - Big Spot
Oct 5 Colum Sands
Oct 12 Martin Simpson
Oct 19 Claude Bourbob
Oct 26 Singers Night
Nov 2 Jamie Schofield & Nicola Lyons Big Band
Nov 9 Bernice Carters - Big Spot
Nov 16 John Wright Band
Nov 23 Singers Night
Nov 30 Boo Hewardine

RED BULL

Sept 7 Jeff Davies
Oct 30 Debra Cowan
Nov 20 Bill Whaley & Dave Fletcher
Dec 11 Brian Peters
Dec 18 Christmas Party

SKIPTON

Sept 5 Kevin Loughran
Sept 12 Singers Night

Sept 19 Jon Harvison
Sept 26 Singers Night
Nov 21 Bob Fox
Dec 5 Tom McConville

SOUTH RIBBLE ARTS FORUM

Sept 7 Chris Layhe
Sept 21 Anthony John Clarke

SOUTH LAKES MUSIC PROMOTION

Oct 5 Angie Palmer Band
Nov 2 Christine Collister
Dec 7 Vin Garbutt

STANDISH

Sept 23 Tanglefoot

SWINTON

Sept 4 Claire Mooney
Sept 11 Singers Night
Sept 18 Gary & Vera Aspey
Sept 25 Singers Night
Oct 2 Stanley Accrington
Oct 9 Singers Night
Oct 16 Bandersnatch
Oct 20 to 22 Swinton Folk Festival
Oct 23 Phil Atkinson
Oct 30 Singers Night
Nov 6 Pete Ryder
Nov 13 Singers Night
Nov 20 Micron
Nov 27 Singers Night
Dec 4 Eddie McGuirk
Dec 11 Singers Night
Dec 18 Christmas Party
Dec 25 Closed

WESTHOUGHTON * = ticket only

Oct 20 Doonan Family Band *
Oct 27 Chris White & Julie Matthews *
Nov 3 Clive Gregson & Jacqueline Sharp
Nov 10 The McCalmans
Nov 17 Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies
Nov 24 Nancy Kerr & James Fagan
Dec 1 John Wright & Allan Taylor *
Dec 8 St Agnes Fountain *
@ Douglas Valley GC

WOODEN HORSE

Sept 3 Singers Night
Sept 10 Singers Night
Sept 17 Singers Night
Sept 24 tbc
Oct 1 Singers Night
Oct 8 Singers Night
Oct 15 Singers Night
Oct 22 tbc
Oct 29 Singers Night
Nov 5 Singers Night
Nov 12 Singers Night
Nov 19 Bill Whalley & Dave Fletcher
Nov 26 Singers Night
Dec 3 Singers Night
Dec 10 Mrs Ackroyd Band
Dec 17 Christmas Party
Dec 24 Closed
Dec 31 Closed

WREXHAM

Sept 22 Colin Henderson
Oct 5 Michael Chapman
Oct 19 Tom Lewis
Nov 2 Pete Coe
Nov 16 Singers Night
Dec 7 Dangerous Curves Christmas Show
Dec 21 Yardarm Charity Christmas Night

way how difficult it is to control a car on black ice.

The view down the steep slope from our final resting position overlooking the totally frozen-over Loch way below was, for a brief moment or two, most invigorating!! (Think 'Italian Job' but without the overhanging and swaying). But apart from very minor injuries (all sustained by poor Lady Pamela) we walked away scared but relieved. The car though is written off though, a small price in the scheme of things. Many thanks to those that have contacted us since; your concern is most appreciated.

And so let's GIG ON!!!! Do watch the website; there are festivals (such as Sidmouth Folk Week - for a second year in succession!) and club gigs for us all through 2006. Do try and come if there's one near enough - cheers!

All the very best
Duncan McFarlane
www.duncanmcfarlane.co.uk

Dear Ken

Thank you for your recent email about programming on BBC GMR Greater Manchester Radio. All our programmes are currently under review pending a new schedule on 3 April.

This programme (GMR Folk) is coming to an end as the station is withdrawing from all specialist music shows to concentrate on our core talk-based programming. Plans are being made to ensure a weekly slot elsewhere in our programming with news of folk performance in Greater Manchester, and some live acoustic performances.

Further announcements will be made in the next month. Your comments will of course be taken on board. Thanks again for taking the time and trouble to email.

John Ryan Managing Editor
Manchester's Changing. And So Are We. BBC GMR. 3 April 2006. New Broadcasting House Oxford Road Manchester M60 1SD

-----Original Message-----

From: Ken & Angie Bladen [mailto:four.fools@virgin.net]
Sent: 22 February 2006 13:52
To: John Ryan
Subject: Sounds Of Folk Programme
Dear Mr Ryan.

I am concerned to hear the rumour that the 'Sounds of Folk' programme on GMR may be discontinued. It does not seem too much to ask to have one hour of week devoted to folk music. I am the editor of Folk North West and would be interested to hear your views so that I may pass them on to our readers. Also as one of the organisers of the Four Fools Folk Festival I rely on such programmes to spread the word and to hear new artists and CD's that I might otherwise overlook. I hope that the rumour proves unfounded or you will be able to reconsider the proposal to terminate this excellent programme.

Many thanks
Yours sincerely
Ken Bladen.

Dear Editor

May I through the pages of your magazine say a big thank you to all those who took part in our Sing For Cyril on Saturday 22nd April at The Crown, Platt Lane, Worthington. We started singing at 11am and continued without a break until 11pm.

During that time only two songs were repeated, we left Liverpool twice and Sally was Free and Easy once too often. A special thank you to Scold's Bridle, Cockersdale, Quartz, Dave Fletcher & Bill Whaley, Hughie Jones, Dave Webber & Anni Fentiman and Stormalong John who made the day extra special. Thanks also to Daniel and Tracy and their staff for looking after us so well. With money still to come in, it looks as though the final total will be around £1400 raised in aid of R.N.L.I. Once again thanks to all who attended, those who raised money through sponsorship and those who donated raffle prizes.

Yours sincerely
Angie Bladen

Dear Ken

The loss of GMR's "Sounds of Folk" programme cannot pass without a word of appreciation to those involved with its on-air presentation, and the pages of Folk North West are a most appropriate medium.

Therefore many thanks to Ali O'Brien and her production team, led by Bernard Cromarty. For the best part of three years - it seems longer, such was the amount of material packed into the shows - we have been treated to the best of local, national and international, from the big name artistes to stalwart performers on the local folk scene. The policy of encouraging a younger generation to develop an interest in - and progress through - folk music and related arts was also appreciated.

The content of diary dates and events listings could never be faulted: mention of major events such as festivals and concerts both within and without Greater Manchester was inevitably complemented by a comprehensive coverage of a local "What's On", where no occasion was too small to be publicised, even if it was just the weekly "Warp and Weft" singaround in the Weavers Arms, Slovenley. Such services to the grass roots of Folk are what keeps the whole thing going.

GMR has now become Radio Manchester, through "inspired" re-branding which sees the resurrection of the station's name from a couple of decades ago, when Mike Billington presented its folk programme. So things can go full circle: perhaps the deluded decision makers will see the error of their ways and, sometime not too far off, will reinstate the show. It will need lobbying and pressure from the folk community of course.

But for now, it's simply "thanks and best wishes, Ali".

Yours in folk,
Rob Dunford

OBITUARIES

DOUGLAS SHARPE 1924-2006

Sadly we announce the death of Douglas (Dougie) Sharpe after a long illness. For over twenty years Dougie travelled throughout the area, visiting many clubs including the Red Bull in Stockport, the Railway at Lymm, and many others. The Dog and Partridge in Bollington became his home club, coming every week whether a Guest Night or a Singers Night and whatever the weather.

Dougie was an unaccompanied singer of rare talent with an ease of delivery, superb voice and a sense of performance, a delight to all who saw him. The songs of Robert Burns were his delight and his rendition of 'Ae Fond Kiss' was a joy. Equally at home with Irish, English or Scottish songs, Dougie also had a liking for comic material such as Jake Thackeray's 'Bantam Cock'.



Dougie will be missed by all who came into contact with him, and at this time our thoughts are with his wife, his three children and the rest of his family. Douglas was a multi talented man whose skills included engineering, art and writing.

A memorial concert was held at the Dog and Partridge on Saturday the 6th of May, between 2 and 11.30 pm, with sessions during the afternoon and guests in the evening. All proceeds will go to Douglas' dedicated charity, the St Francis Children's Hospice.

Arthur Wakefield and The Dog and Partridge Folk Club.

HOWARD EVANS

It is with great sadness that we received the news that Howard Evans has lost his long battle with cancer. He died on 17 March. The Folk scene has lost the best trumpeter and brass arranger it has ever had. The music world has lost a great friend, musician, negotiator (his MU day job) and all round good bloke. Our deepest sympathy goes to his family.

Officials at the Musicians Union will publicise details of funeral and/or memorial if that is what Howard's family wishes. Please spread the word to anyone who knew Howard.

Steve Heap, Director, Folk Arts England

FESTIVAL NEWS AND MUSIC EVENTS



BOOK QUICKLY FOR MIDDLEWICH'S FAB 2006

Tickets are already selling fast for this year's Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival, held from the 16th to 19th of June; seats are still available for most concerts, but you'll have to be quick or you'll miss them.

Among the headline acts are Jonathan Kelly, the Dylan Project, PJ Wright, Mark Radcliffe and the Family Mahone, Karine Polwart, Mike McGoldrick, Hazel O'Connor and, back by popular demand, Levellers Acoustic.

A Woman's Word, comprising Kirsty McGee, Abbie Lathe, Kelly White and Karine Polwart, will perform for the second time only at the Festival, and there will also be many old favourites and new bands taking to the various fringe stages, including Aidan Jolly, Tom Doughty, the Middlewich Paddies, The Purple Gang, Dominic Collins, Darren Poyzer, The Salt Town Poets, Ann English, Breeze and Wilson, and Keepers Lock.

There's also the Boat Festival, with many Heritage Boats and

demonstrations of canal craft, children's entertainment, stalls from around the world, Morris dancing, the popular Ceilidh, and much, much, more.

Full information about the Festival, including ticket prices, can be found on www.midfest.org, where you can also book tickets on line or download a booking form.

ACOUSTIC MUSIC AT THE MARSDEN

South Ribble Arts Forum in association with Worden Arts Centre began presenting a series of 12 concerts in April that run through to the end of September, featuring some of the best live traditional and contemporary northern music for your entertainment. The ambience of an arts centre/theatre combined with the friendly atmosphere of your favourite folk club.

The venue is The Marsden Theatre at Worden Arts Centre in Leyland and take place on alternate Thursdays at 8 p.m. from 20 April throughout the summer. The ones planned for June onwards are: June 1 - Brian Preston & Phil Wignall; 15 - Mooncoyn; 29 - The Alan Bell Band; July 13 - Stanley Accrington; 27 - The Pedigree Chums; August 10 - Penny Black; 24 - Julie Ellison; September 7 - Chris Layhe; 21 - Anthony John Clarke.

Preston's very own Ken Kershaw will be Master of Ceremonies at all twelve evenings. Ken has a vast repertoire of songs, some serious - mostly humorous - usually unaccompanied but occasionally sung with ukulele or guitar.

Admission to each night is £4:00 on the door - £3-50 if you phone 01772 421109* and book in advance. Season tickets You could have got the First six concerts £18:00 but failing this you can get the last six concerts £18:00 There will be an interval raffle during each of the twelve shows with the proceeds going to Sing For Someone Else's Supper www.singforsomeoneelssupper.ukart.com

GARSTANG UNPLUGGED FESTIVAL

The Kenlis Arms, home of Garstang Unplugged, are having a beer festival over the weekend 23rd - 25th June, 2006. There will also be a mini music festival on Saturday, 24th June, 2006.

There will be free camping on the field adjacent to the pub, and if the weather is unsuitable, they shall be hosting the music indoors - otherwise it's an outdoor event.

There's no budget for a big name, so if you want to come and play, or if you just want to drink in the atmosphere, go and join them. Details, as well as directions to the pub, will be on the website at www.garstangunplugged.com or by telephone on 01995 602795.

WIRRAL FOLK ON THE COAST FESTIVAL RETURNS

The cream of the nation's folk music talent will return to Wirral this summer for the second Folk on the Coast Festival. Thousands of live music fans are expected to descend on the region during the week-long festival - successful piloted in 2005.

Kate Rusby, winner of the BBC Radio 2 2006 Folk Awards Best Live Act, will perform at the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton on Saturday June 10. Other famous names on the line-up include The Family Mahone, featuring BBC Radio 2's Mark Radcliffe, Eric Bogle and Bob Fox. This year also sees the return of artists Elbow Jane, Cream of the Barley, Fiddlestone, Alison Parker and The Third Man, Brass Tacks and Tanskey.

A number of pubs will host bands throughout the week (Sunday June 4 - Sunday June 11) and other venues, including Arrowse Park, Pacific Road Arts Centre, The Floral Pavilion and Vale Park, will host events at the weekends. This festival is supported by Wirral Council and European Regional Development Funds and staged with the assistance of local folk club organisers.

For further information about the Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival, or any event happening in the borough, please contact the Birkenhead Tourist Information Centre on 0151 647 6780. Tickets for Pacific Road Arts Centre and The Floral Pavilion are now on sale. Please contact 0151 647 0752 or 0151 639 4360.

PLANT HEADS CORNBURY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Organisers of The Cornbury Oxford Music Festival 2006 have announced their line up, which boasts such rock heavyweights as Led Zeppelin's legendary frontman Robert Plant. The festival will take place on the 8th and 9th of July on the spectacular grounds of Cornbury Park near Oxford. The site has a long-held tradition of holding festivals since the mid-19th century and now in its third year.

Also on the Saturday's Main Stage a variety of distinguished artists and bands, including festival favourites The Waterboys and Deacon Blue. Psycho-folk artist, Robyn Hitchcock will be joining REM's Peter Buck and his side project, The Minus 3. The joining of these varying musical forces on the Cornbury stage is sure to be one of the pinnacle moments of the weekend. British singer songwriter Nerina Pallot will also be joining the Sunday Main stage. She has toured the country many times as the support act to Sheryl Crow, Suzanne Vega and Joseph Arthur and will embark on a full headlining tour in May.

The much-respected Oxford Folk festival will sponsor Sunday's second stage. Tim Healey, festival director, states: Artists confirmed to play Sunday's Oxford Folk Festival stage are Kate Rusby, Spiers & Boden, Martin Simpson and Circulus.

Tickets, which are on sale now, cost £40 for Saturday or Sunday and £70 for the weekend and can be purchased via the website www.cornburyfestival.com or by calling the ticket hotline on 0870118 1636. There is free admittance for children under 10. There are a variety of camping packages to choose. Full information will be available on www.cornburyfestival.com

BRADFORD'S BIG SUMMER

On 2 July Martin Simpson, Rory McLeod, & Sketch (Maggie Boyle/Gary Boyle/Dave Bowie) will appear at Alhambra Studio, Bradford. This is a 3's Company/Love Apple Café presentation as part of Bradford's Big Summer, and replaces the final Demon Barbers Session of the season. The Sessions resume after the launch of the new Roadshow in the autumn.

The Demon Barber Roadshow has a new home at The Regal in Worksop where they are rehearsing intensely for the new show. The Regal is also preparing to host our first Clog School - scheduled to open later in the year. Date for your diaries - The Demon Barber Roadshow unveils its new Spectacular at The Priestley, Bradford, on 14th September. More news and dates www.threescompany.org.uk

"MUSIC TO DIE FOR" AT BEVERLEY

As leading crime writers reveal their tastes in music in the BBC Radio 4 series "Music To Die For", the Beverley Folk

Festival announces the visit of top crime writer, Peter Robinson to its event in June. Robinson, creator of the character Detective Chief Inspector Alan Banks from the quiet country town of Eastvale in Yorkshire, has himself a great interest in music which is reflected in his detective hero. Banks is no novice when it comes to his knowledge of folk music, as his regular visits to the local hostelrys and folk club demonstrate.

Peter Robinson is a natural choice therefore to visit the folk festival on Sunday 18th June, to read one of his short stories, along with Yorkshire folk diva, Eliza Carthy, who will be providing fitting songs and music to add to the drama. Robinson said of his interest in folk music and his visit to the festival "This is really exciting event for me. I've been a folk fan ever since the late sixties, when I started hanging out in the Leeds folk club scene, and Eliza Carthy is one of the finest folk singers around today. The stories and emotions of folk ballads are never far from my mind when I'm writing. There's plenty of inspiration there for the crime writer!"

Following his performance he will be signing copies of his new novel "Piece of my Heart" which is due for release in the UK on 19th June. He will then be heading off on a tour of the country to promote the book.

This year's festival has adopted a special theme based on Words, - spoken, written and sung, as it presents leading song writers John Tams, Si Kahn (USA), Chumbawamba Acoustic and Coope, Boyes and Simpson, along with story tellers and poets.

Tickets (Weekend, Day and Individual Event) and further information can be obtained from: Festival Office, Tel: 01377 217569 email: info@beverleyfestival.com or visit the festival website www.beverleyfestival.com

FOUR FOOLS FOLK FESTIVAL 23 - 25 JUNE 2005

If you've not been before, do come and experience the unique atmosphere of the 'Four Fools' at this our 18th Festival. You won't find anywhere friendlier than this well-established one-site singers' festival. Come and join us in a celebration of the best in traditional folk music, song and dance. Don't just take our word for it, we list below, a very small selection of the wonderful feedback we had from last year's Festival.

Mary Wilson - "I love the idea of having smaller, more informal events - I think it is what Four Fools does so well - it is what makes Four Fools special. So many people said that they like Four Fools because it is a small festival, people can move quickly from one event to another, they are able to pack a great deal into a small space of time, so that apart from seeing a number of artists they are able to catch up with all the other people attending the festival, which is great. Sometimes when attending an event at Four Fools the hairs on my spine stand on end and I have the sense I am sharing in something very special; it's to do with quality, integrity, mutual respect and the sense that everyone wants to offer their very best. It's to do with the way Four Fools works, there is little distinction between artistes and 'punters', everyone is there to share the music and the craic - the artistes of one event become the audience of the next and so on throughout the Festival".

Lorna Davies - "Could we please have 48 hours in a day to allow time to see what we want, do what we want and eat, sleep and breathe!!! Programming superb. Made us choose - left us wanting more and ensured no venue over full".

An 'enthusiastic listener' - "Selection and mix of artistes complemented each other perfectly. Programme timings and

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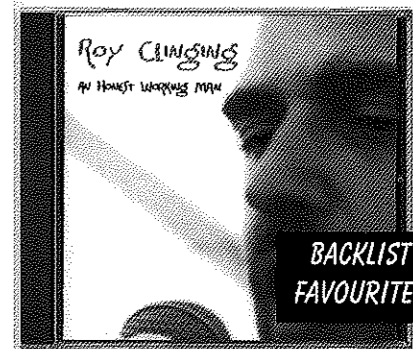
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ANOTHER ROUND, Roy Clinging & Neil Brookes, WGS 331 CD, Wild Goose Records, May Cottage, Wherwell, Hants SP11 7JS; £12.

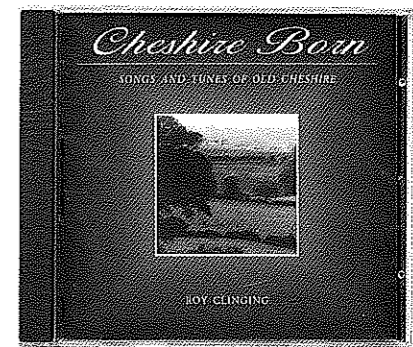


Roy and Neil are seasoned campaigners who have achieved substantial recognition in their relative fields. Roy has appeared at clubs and festivals in all parts of the UK performing ballads and songs from all over the British Isles, but especially from his home county of Cheshire.

Neil, another Cheshire man, is an experienced dance musician with an unashamedly English fiddle style who has amassed a huge repertoire of tunes, many from lesser-known collections from the North West. Roy's singing and concertina (and occasional guitar) playing are enhanced by Neil's musicianship as he complements the songs and inspires the tunes on fiddle and octave fiddle.



AN HONEST WORKING MAN, and CHESHIRE BORN, Roy Clinging, 101 Records, £12 each



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occasional breathers excellent. Everything ran to plan. How could anyone not be fully satisfied with this Festival?"

Martin Ellison - "Great room for a Ceilidh".

Carole Bull "This Festival is a good dieter's festival because there is so much to listen to, all great, you don't really want to waste time eating".

So, have a look at our guest list and the wealth of performers appearing over the weekend and if you think that a weekend full of small informal events is for you then come and join us. The choice is yours. Everything under one roof with the campsite 'at the back door'. The School is ideally suited to the small informal sessions, which makes this Festival unique. The Four Fools is very much a participation festival with a wide selection of workshops and presentations as well as the intimate 'Meet the Artiste' sessions, plus a variety of singarounds, folk clubs, music sessions etc. You'll be spoilt for choice and the longest it will take you to get from one venue to another is two minutes.

If you are interested in songwriting then during the weekend there will be various 'Songsmiths' workshops and also at various times there will be a 'songwriter's café' where you can drop in and share your skills and pick up some tips and maybe ideas from other like minded individuals.

A warm welcome awaits you at 'The small Festival with the Big Heart'. Come make the rafters roar with us. We look forward to seeing you.

For further details please check out our website www.fourfools.co.uk or telephone Angie on 01257 263678.

CAMPER VAN HIRE

With the festival season just around the corner now's the time to be making your plans so why not enhance your festival experience and do it in style with a classic VW camper van. Kamper Hire UK offer classic camper van hire for any occasion, from a mad weekend at a festival to a family holiday in Cornwall.

Their vans are all classic VW type 2's - although some slightly vary in age, specification and colour, all have been restored and maintained to a very high standard and come fully equipped with all the essentials to make your festival experience the best yet!

Special weekend rate for some specific festivals - with pick up Friday, drop back Monday - cost £380.

Price includes fully comprehensive insurance (for one named driver), 500 free miles (15p per mile thereafter), road side recovery and a welcome pack. Vans come fully equipped with the following - Stove, fridge, sink, pots/pans, awning, outside table & chairs, pots/pans and cooking utensils. Visit www.kamperhire.co.uk for full details.

ARTIST ROUNDUP



RAB NOAKES

Rab has been at the cutting edge of contemporary songwriting for over 30 years. From his first album in 1970 to 'Standing Up'

in 2004, he has firmly established himself at the forefront of Scottish pop music as both a gifted writer of hook-laden songs and an original and affectionate interpreter of the American popular music back-catalogue. His material ranges from blues to country, from early Motown to Beck, from Sam Cooke to Radiohead, and from Felice Bryant to the inimitable Rab himself.

A lover of pop music from his youth he has enjoyed the rock 'n' roll life span. He's experienced a lot, from the joys of 'Buttons and Bows' from 'Paleface' to playing on the Left Field stage at Glastonbury with Fraser Speirs in 2005 alongside Babyshambles.



With a career spanning over fifteen albums and major collaborations with Lindisfarne, Gerry Rafferty, Stealers Wheel and early Dylan producer Bob Johnston, Rab displays "the expertise of someone who's done it all" (Living Tradition). In the

1990s Rab formed the Varafames, whose members have included such luminaries as Rod Clements (Lindisfarne), guitar wizard Jerry Donahue, Ewen Vernal (Deacon Blue), Pick Withers (Dire Straits) and harmonica ace, Fraser Speirs, with whom Rab still occasionally performs.

After working for some years as Head of Entertainment at BBC Radio Scotland, he left to form his own successful media production company, Neon, with his wife Stephanie Portage. Rab's production skills have been much in demand and his portfolio includes albums by John Watt, MacAlias, Karen Dunbar and the award-winning Karine Polwart, whose Neon Records-released CD 'Faultlines' won the Best Album Category at the BBC Folk Awards in 2005.

For Rab, gigging has always been the lifeblood of his music. Venues now have the opportunity to hear an artist who has honed his stagecraft to perfection and really puts that extra indefinable something into a performance that makes an audience feel they have seen and heard something extraordinary. Rab is available solo, in a duo with Fraser Speirs, or with his band the Varafames. For bookings contact Allie Fox (tel 01750-720538) who is putting together a national tour for October 2006 and Spring 2007.

RUNRIG MAKE AMERICAN DEBUT FOR CHARITY



Iconic Scottish folk band, Runrig performed its debut US concert in Time Square on Tuesday 4 April, thanks to two British international aid charities. The benefit concert, which was expected to attract around 1600 fans, was one of the highlights of the Tartan Week celebrations in New York. It had been organised in association with aid charities World Emergency Relief (WER) and Glasgow the Caring City (GtCC).

It was hoped the concert would raise in the region of \$50,000. Two thirds of the concert proceeds will be donated to the Fire Department of New York (FDNY) Goods in Kind network to fund additional support to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The final third will be donated to the British Memorial Garden under construction in New York's Hanover Square, Lower Manhattan, to pay tribute to British victims of September 11th.

Calum MacDonald of Runrig said before the event: "Playing

New York for the first time in our 30 year history will be a very significant moment in the career of the band, and our sense of anticipation and excitement for the show is heightened by the nature of the event. Glasgow the Caring City and WER are engaged in sterling humanitarian work all over the world, and they are organisations we are extremely proud and honoured to be associated with".

BRIAN PRESTON CELEBRATES...



Over the past thirty years or so, Brian Preston has performed innumerable gigs at folk clubs, concerts, festivals and all manner of 'live music' venues in twenty-one countries. He has made ten albums, eight cassettes and one single, made over fifty-guest appearances as a session musician and vocalist on other artiste's albums and projects, as well as over one hundred appearances on Local, National and International Radio and Television.

On 14th October 2006 Brian reaches the big 60 and celebrates 40 years performing his beloved folk music, 35 of those as a professional musician. To celebrate these milestones Brian will be touring the UK, Europe and Internationally both solo and as a duo with multi instrumentalist/vocalist, Phil Wignall.

A retrospective CD - 'The Best Of' - his last ten albums, as well as a new CD and a 'Live' DVD will be released. Brian still helps run and is a resident at Longridge Folk Club on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month with his friend of 40 years Ron Flanagan. Always encouraging the young guns to 'come through' and enjoys putting something back into the music he loves so much and that has been so rewarding to him.

So 2006 is a big year for Brian Preston as he celebrates the Big 60 Birthday; 40 years Performing Folk Music; 35 years as a Professional Musician; a new CD and DVD; a retrospective CD 'The Best Of' his last Ten Albums; and a new duo with multi instrumentalist and vocalist, Phil Wignall. We wish him well. Visit: www.brianpreston.co.uk & www.brianandphil.webeden.co.uk for further information

GRACE NOTES

Grace Notes will be making their annual pilgrimage to Whitby Festival where they will launch their new Fellside CD, "Northern Tide"; also they will appear at Stainsby, Hardraw, Sidmouth & Haworth Arts Festivals, where they will team up with The Witches for a brilliant blast of WitchNotes - the 7-part a cappella extravaganza.

DANA & SUSAN ROBINSON



Traditional and contemporary singers/musicians from the US, Dana and Susan Robinson will be making UK tours in Oct/Nov 2006 and June/July 2007. If you'd like to book them or check their availability (or receive a demo) contact Vivienne Bloomfield at The Other Agency, email: vivienne@jvmb.powernet.co.uk; tel: 01908 542894 or visit www.otheragency.co.uk. Dana and Susan are also able to

give workshops in southern Appalachian fiddle style and clawhammer banjo respectively. In the north west so far they will play the Bothy in Southport on 5 November and visit the Carlisle Folk Club on 10 November.

Dana and Susan Robinson are based in Asheville, North Carolina. Dana was raised in California, then moved to the Northeast; Susan was raised in the Northeast, then moved to California. They spent most of their lives crisscrossing paths until on Saint Patrick's Day, 2002, Susan attended a house concert Dana was giving in California.

In the early 80's, Dana settled in northern Vermont and built a house - sans electricity and phone - on 30 acres near the Canadian border. There he founded a popular bakery and café where the folk concerts he presented became a valued cultural staple of the community. Dana launched into full-time touring after the release of his debut album Elemental Lullabye in 1994, encouraged by the request to perform at Carnegie Hall for Putumayo's Shelter benefit concert. Since then, Dana has been performing more than 150 concerts each year across the US, Canada, and United Kingdom.

A multi-instrumentalist (guitar, fiddle, mandolin, banjo), Dana brings traditional music values into his contemporary songwriting. He integrates guitar styles from influences as diverse as America's Norman Blake and Tim O'Brien to England's Nic Jones and John Martyn. Dana's songwriting has been likened to that of Steve Goodman and Dougie MacLean, and he sings with a warm and reedy tenor.

Susan brings her rich harmonies and the clawhammer-style banjo into Dana's music. In 2002, Susan had been working as an environmental grantwriter in California and studying Scottish fiddle. A natural musician, having played piano and oboe in addition to the fiddle, Susan took instantly to the guitar and banjo when she and Dana met. Together they complete a circle that allows them to more fully explore their passion for merging traditional and contemporary music. Check out their website: www.robinsongs.com

PATRICK STREET

Taking to the road once again with their new live recording tucked under their arms, come legendary Irish group Patrick Street. Featuring the magnificent fiddle playing of Kevin Burke (ex Bothy Band, Open House) and button accordion wizardry from Jackie Daly (ex De Dannan); haunting vocals and multi-instrumental playing of Andy Irvine (ex Planxty) and inventive guitar licks and vocals from Ged Foley (formerly of Battlefield Band and the House Band). Patrick Street's most recent addition is John Carthy; John was born in London but moved to Ireland in early 1990's. He is a rarity amongst musicians as plays the fiddle left-handed with a right-handed instrument. Not only is he highly accomplished on the fiddle but he is also an excellent banjo and flute player. The tour dates are from 1-18 September. Contact Andy Cooper at 01377 217662 or 07971 478 979 mob. Visit www.adastra-music.co.uk/patrick.html

ROD CLEMENTS

Recording of the new Rod Clements album 'Odd Man Out', featuring ten brand new songs written by Rod and Nigel Stonier, has now been completed. The sessions took place during the first two weeks of January 2006 at the Old Chapel in Lincolnshire with Nigel producing, and featured a core team of Rod (vocal, guitars and mandolin), Dave Hull-Denholm (guitars and backing vocals), Ian Thomson (bass and backing vocals) and Paul Burgess (drums), with guest appearances by Nigel (guitars, keyboards and backing vocals), Thea Gilmore (vocals)

and Dave 'Munch' Moore (Hammond organ).



Early reports indicate that 'Odd Man Out' displays a wider, more dynamic musical palette than its predecessor 'Stamping Ground'. Anyone who has already heard any of these songs played live will have an idea of the material's strength and diversity. Sources suggest that the as-yet-unheard songs could be among Rod & Nigel's best to date. 'Odd Man Out' is available on Market Square Records.

If you would like to book Rod, either solo or with his band the Ghosts of Electricity, get in touch with Allie Fox on 01750-720538. Visit www.vixenrecords.com/foxy/music/rodclements.htm for further details

RORY MCLEOD

Rory McLeod - ex-circus clown and fire-eater. A one-man soulband, poet and storyteller, singing his own unique upbeat dance stories. A modern travelling troubadour using tap shoes, acappella, harmonica, guitar, trombone, spoons, finger cymbals, bandorea, djembe and various percussion instruments!

Rory has travelled the globe for different reasons at different times, from Asia to the Middle East from Gambia to Cuba, Central America, Australia, North America, Canada, Europe and other nooks and crannies of the earth. He's touring the UK between April and September this year, including the Nantwich Acoustic Festival on 29 & 30 July. Visit www.rorymcleod.com For UK bookings contact Andy Cooper at ADASTRA; 01377 217662; 07971 478 979 mob; email: adastramusic@hotmail.com

JOHN WESLEY HARDING TURNS NOVELIST...

When Wesley Stace, better known as the bestselling folk musician John Wesley Harding, sat down to work on a new track, he had little idea just what he was getting himself into. The song detailed the life of a transvestite, but as Harding developed his idea it soon became clear that this story couldn't be sufficiently told in ballad form. So he began a novel.

Six years later and Misfortune was complete. Gothic and grotesque in flavour, it tells the story of an orphan boy brought up, for various reasons, as a girl in a large country house by an English Lord, referencing English folk music, the ballad trade of 1830s London, transvestism, class and gender. Fanciful, whimsical and wry, it is also a moving meditation on the agony of adolescence and the universal difficulty of determining one's identity.

Misfortune was published by Vintage in paperback on 4 May 2006, priced £7.99. For further details visit: www.wesleystace.com

CHRISTIE HENNESSY

Irish singer songwriter Christie Hennessy (now 60 years old) released his latest CD, "Stories for Sale", in the UK on 6th March. Iconic Irish singer & songwriter Christie Hennessy has five double, triple and quadruple platinum albums behind him, and returned to recording after a break of six years. Extraordinarily, Christie is unable to read or write due to severe

dyslexia. He 'writes' his songs by recording ideas onto scores of cassette tapes and gradually pieces the bits together.

Despite, or perhaps because of this, his songs are always memorable and sing-able. The JCB Song by Nizlopi quotes Christie's song, 'Don't Forget Your Shovel', which has been dubbed the 'alternative Irish National Anthem'. Many Irish number 1's have been Christie covers: Christie Moore, Francis Black and Maire Brennan from Clannad all achieved their first number 1 with a Christie Hennessy song. He's particularly known in this region for 'All the lies that you told me' recorded by John Wright and Auld Triangle amongst others.

Christie's first record, "The Green Album", was released in 1972 as a limited edition of only 500 copies which now sell for £150 each, if you're lucky enough to find one. Championed by the late John Peel, he recorded The Rehearsal in 1992 with U2's Mother Records, which then went on to outsell U2 that year in Ireland, eventually going triple platinum. Christie then went on to have four further triple platinum albums on Warners, before dropping out of the limelight for his choice of a quiet and easy life.

His new album, his 8th so far, is released on independent label MVine founded by Calum MacColl, son of Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. Praised by the Irish press on its limited release in September last year, Stories For Sale is an acoustic fusion of old school R 'n' B and melodic folk music with a laid back Irish twist.

Visit www.mvine.com and www.christiehennessy.com for further information.

DERVISH

One of the most sought after acts on the live music circuit, Irish band, Dervish (www.dervish.ie) have spent the much of early 2006 touring in Canada and the United States where they garnered rapturous responses from packed houses, bolstered by the airplay of their re-working of the Bob Dylan classic, 'Boots of Spanish Leather'.

With return trips to both Canada and the United States scheduled for later in 2006 as well as trips to Greece, Japan, France and Germany, the globetrotting seven piece - which has shared stages with acts of the stature of James Brown, The Buena Vista Social Club, Oasis, Sting, REM, Beck and Neil Young - will scarcely have time to draw breath.

On Tuesday 11 May, Sligo Borough Council honoured the band by granting them the Freedom of Sligo, an honour previously bestowed on WB Yeats, Tommie Gorman, Ray McSharry and Westlife. It is a fitting honour for the group which was formed as the Boys Of Sligo in 1989, before morphing into Dervish with the addition of Cathy Jordan two years later.

The band will be appearing in England in the summer 2006 at the Cambridge and Cropredy festivals and a UK tour is being planned for October 2006. Email John Barrow: jb@stoneypart.demon.co.uk for further details or phone 0131 208 0003.

MALINKY

Malinky, Scotland's top folksong act, is back with a quality new line-up, a great new album and a live performance second to none. Their current line-up features founding members Steve Byrne and Mark Dunlop, together with later arrival Jon Bews (fiddle/vocals), and new members from 2005, rising star Fiona Hunter (vocals/cello), along with multi-instrumentalist Ewan MacPherson (mandolin/guitar/mandola/tenor banjo/vocals).

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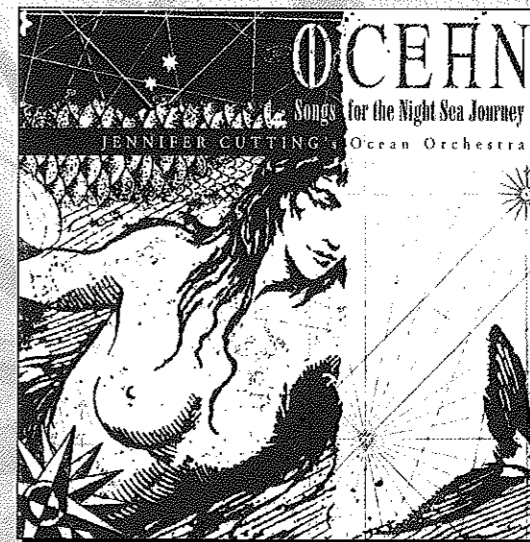
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With three of the five sharing lead vocal duties, and the entire group contributing backing vocals, the richness and breadth of their song palette is second to none, leaving listeners spoilt for choice between Fiona's cool lyrical clarity, Byrne's Angus-accented resonance and Mark's soulful, Ulster-style delivery.



Malinky has recently recorded a live DVD that was available from March. Interest in the new line-up is growing, the new album 'The Unseen Hours' and recent live performances have been receiving great reviews (see

below) both in the UK and abroad. Forthcoming tours of UK / Germany / Holland / Sweden and Canada in 2006/7 should see the band growing further in stature internationally. They are available for UK dates between 24th August and 3rd September and generally available for other bookings 2006 and on. For information, mp3s and more, visit: www.malinky.com Contact Martin Coull MartiCoull@aol.com. Tel: 0131 557 5330 for bookings.

SAVOURNA STEVENSON



Savorna Stevenson boldly takes the clarsach where no clarsach has gone before. In her hands, the Celtic harp has voyaged into the territory of bluegrass banjos, sitar-style cascades, Indian ragas and African beats.

A sell out concert at Celtic Connections in Glasgow earlier this year previewed tracks from her forthcoming album, her ninth, which has a distinctly Middle Eastern flavour.

Savorna Stevenson releases the new album through Cooking Vinyl in June. Entitled "Persian Knight Celtic Dawn", featuring masters of Iranian percussion, "The Chemiranis" and acclaimed singer Alyth McCormack.

She has a few available dates for the five piece band in June and August 2006 and also limited availability for later in the year. Please contact Martin Coull at Stoneport Agency for details of availability; tel 0131 557 5330; mob 07803 137 509 or visit www.stoneyport.demon.co.uk.

A SUMMER WITH THE IRISH



Some of the best artists of the Irish music scene tour this summer, including the Supergroup Mozaik featuring Donal Lunny and Andy Irvine of Planxty, with fellow musicians Bruce Molsky (USA), Nikola Parov (Bulgaria) and Rens van de Zalm (Netherlands); Grada, and Lunasa also plan tours.

Mozaik - Touring July, Festivals on request; Lunasa - Touring June and 5 - 23 August 2006; Grada - Touring 22 - 27 June 2006. Contact Chris Wade for more details, chris@adastra-music.co.uk; tel: 01377 217662; www.adastra-music.co.uk

JAMES CHADWICK

At just nineteen years old, James Chadwick, who lives on the Cambridgeshire / Lincolnshire border, is an astonishingly accomplished singer-songwriter and guitarist. He is seeking bookings for 2006-7 and hopes you will consider him for your festival.

He was a finalist in this year's prestigious BBC RADIO 2 Young Folk Awards, which was held on December 9th in Hall One at the Sage, in Gateshead. He has a loyal fan base (and an established mailing list), which is spreading nationwide as a result of his UK Tour in November, playing at venues as widespread as The Troubador in London, Cabaret in Nottingham and the Little Civic in Wolverhampton.

During February, he supported Rachel Unthank & the Winterset on their "Cruel Sister" Tour. You can follow the link below to listen to some of James's songs and to read more about him. For bookings and information contact Lisa Neal on 01780 740893 or visit www.thejameschadwick.co.uk.

GUY MAILE

Guy Maile (Dylan-esque gritty singer/songwriter/guitarist Guy Maile has just had a very successful 2005, and looks sure to follow in the footsteps of his fellow former Welsh busker, David Gray. After supporting Lonnie Donegan (2002) & Sir Bob Geldof's (2003-2005) UK tours, acoustic guitar supremo and 21st century blues master Guy then supported Johnny Winter at the Vienna International Blues Festival, even outselling him on the merchandise stall!!!)

As well as main stage appearances at several UK festivals, including, Guildford and Derby R+B, Weymouth, Hastings Black Horse Festival, The Wessex Fayre, The Real Music Festival near Colchester, The Paignton 'Kick up the Arts' Festival, and The Wombwell Music and Arts Fair. Guy has also been tour support for Selecter, Kiki Dee, Ed Tudor Pole and done further shows with Bob Geldof. With a wealth of his own material to play, Guy is also comfortable covering such diverse material as Dylan, Howlin' Wolf, Nickelback and John Prine. For more information visit: www.artists2events.co.uk/artists/guymaile.html

MARTIN FUREY

Martin Furey writes oddly haunting songs already showcased in some style with Bohinta, the band he still fronts with his sister Aine, but here he takes a further step into the ethereal. Its not easy - the songs don't leap up and bite you - but there's something about his anguished voice, the percussive edge and spookily sparse arrangements that gets under your skin. He combines deep knowledge of the Irish traveller tradition with an original and contemporary take on his singer/songwriter material.

On the music scene for long enough to have established the kind of reputation that makes him stand out, Martin is well used to accolades for his song writing and amazing voice. His vocal style has the resonance and ornamentation of the 19th century, yet the melodies and instrumentation are futuristic. A singer with the technique and the nerve to be right out in front.

Highlights when touring solo and with his band 'Bohinta' include playing Glastonbury, recording at Real World Studios, 2 tours of Oz, soundtracks for Independent films and BBC documentaries, plus being included on numerous compilations and projects. No mean guitar player, he also plays low whistles and Uilleann pipes. Further information visit www.artists2events.co.uk/artists/MartinFurey.html

RALLION

New young Scottish traditional band Rallion released their first CD in the Spring and are looking to perform extensively throughout the year to promote the album. Rallion are a four piece traditional folk group, hailing from Edinburgh and



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Glasgow. The current line-up is Marieke Smegen (vocals, bodhran, djembe, guitar), Stevie Lawrence (guitar, bouzouki), Andrew Lyons (fiddle, cittern) and Fiona Cuthill (fiddle, whistles, recorder). Rallion has been playing together since early 2003.

If you would like to know more about the band, or hear their music, you can check out Rallion at www.tapselteeriemusic.com or visit www.rallion.co.uk or, for booking information, contact Duncan Wilson on 01414 550 8410; 07811 289 684 (Mob).

DRAIOCHT

Irish music group Draiocht are trying to arrange a UK/Scottish tour for May/June 2006. They play traditional Irish music on Irish-Harp and Flute and have toured extensively throughout the world. Land's End is the duo's second recording. Draiocht comprises flute player June McCormack from Co. Sligo, and Co. Monaghan harpist, Michael Rooney. The pair married in the summer of 2004 and have toured extensively as Draiocht during the past two years, having performed throughout the States, Australia and New Zealand.



Both are veterans of the traditional Irish music scene and they have substantial music credentials. This young couple have already achieved great things individually, including major awards and acclaimed recordings.

Michael is widely regarded as one of the finest exponents of the Irish harp in traditional Irish music. He grew up in Scotstown, County Monaghan and has played harp and concertina from an early age. He has composed several suites of music over the past ten years, including an Aifreann na Gaeilge for the Sligo Choral festival in 1999. He was commissioned to write a suite of music by the History of Ireland Performance Company to commemorate The Great Famine in 1997. His recording credits include appearances with Michael O Raghailigh, Brian McNamara, Oisín Mac Diarmada, Brian Fitzgerald and James Keane.

June, from Ballintogher, Co. Sligo, was named Young Traditional Musician of the Year in 1998 by TG4 and performed with the band Siona, which released the CD "Launching the Boat" in that year.

A powerhouse recording, Land's End documents the fiery musicianship Michael and June have honed in live concerts over the last several years. Together the harp and flute form a fine and rare union. This album presents to listeners, 21 beautiful tunes, including five penned by Michael himself. Further details can be found on their website www.draiochtmusic.com; Email: draiochtmusic@yahoo.com Anyone interested in having them play at your festival or club, check out their website at www.draiochtmusic.com

EIGHTEENTH DAY OF MAY

The Eighteenth Day Of May are a five-piece, London based group. Originally formed as an acoustic trio comprising American singer and flautist Alison Brice, Swedish-born

Richard Olson (acoustic guitar, harmonica and sitar) and Oxfordshire-based guitarist and mandolin player Ben Phillipson; the group's original intention was to combine elements of traditional and contemporary folk stylings with a psychedelic "underground" rock sound.



Part of what separates The Eighteenth Day Of May from their peers in the world of indie rock is a deep-rooted love for the pioneers of the folk revival. The group has little in common with the folk-scene of today, however, mainly due to their inability to "play it safe". Still relatively young (the group members are all in their late twenties and early thirties), the group has an experimental, musically ambitious edge- equally inspired by the Velvet Underground's drone and feedback and the more dreamy qualities of psychedelia. The group's own material is inspired partly by this approach and partly by the storytelling aspect of traditional songs and murder ballads.

Following a support slot on the Robyn Hitchcock tour in January, the band recently played at the SXSW Festival in Austin, Texas. In April they undertook their first UK tour and released 'Hide & Seek', a CD single and download. Further details of the band can be found at www.theeighteenthdayofmay.com

BAGAS DEGOL



From Penwith in the far west of Cornwall, Bagas Degol are trio and a prominent force on the Cornish music scene. Their distinctive and stirring sound, delivered with a powerful raw edge, is not easy to categorise but has been described as 'the musical embodiment of a Breugel painting' and 'the dark side of folk'. The band themselves call it simply 'feast-day music' meaning music for celebration, ritual and dance - recognisable in all cultures across the world.

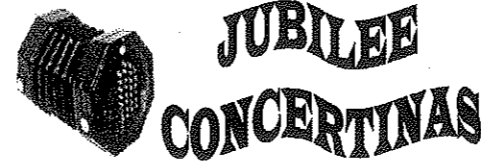
The trio - David Twomlow (various bagpipes, duduk), Rick Williams (clarinet) and Dave Trahair (drums, percussion) - are experienced musicians across a range of musical styles. In 2001 they came together to provide the traditional processional music to accompany the famous Tom Bawcocks Lantern Procession in Mousehole, Cornwall. From this event Bagas Degol emerged, the name in Cornish meaning literally 'Feast Day Band' in recognition of their first performance.

This band is particularly suited to festival and smaller stages, and can be fully self-contained with a big sound for on and around site performance and processions. Take a look at their new website. www.bagasdegol.com

CHRIS & THOMAS

L.A.'s finest ultimate intimate duo, Chris & Thomas, release their new album at The Larmer Tree Festival, the first gig of their 2006 summer UK tour. (15th July - 13th August 2006)

The duo has recently won high praise from Norah Jones, Bill



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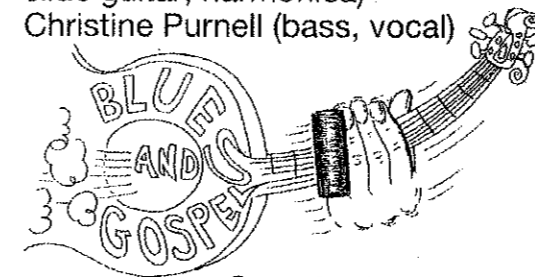
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Wyman, George Clinton and all who judged their track 'Take These Thoughts' to be a winner at the recent US independent music awards. Gigs in or around the north west include 21 July - Southport Arts Centre; 30 July - Preston (venue tbc) and 2 August - New Vic at Newcastle-Under-Lyme. Visit: www.chrisandthomas.com



There are still a few vacant dates left on their tour so please contact Ewan MacPherson email: ewan@stoneport.com tel: 0131-557 1050; mob 07766-004026 if you are interested in booking them.

GREEN MACHINE

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Accordionist Martin Green put together The Green Machine, bringing together various musical friends he had met, to play his original compositions. The formation was cemented when Martin was commissioned to write some music for the Celtic Connections festival in Glasgow. The piece "First Sighting" premiered in Jan 2006. The Green Machine are now available for bookings internationally. Contact Martin Coull for details of availability; tel 0131 557 5330; mob 07803 137 509 or visit www.stoneyport.demon.co.uk.

MADDIE SOUTHORN



Bristol based Maddie is new to the folk scene and recorded her first folk album "A Pilgrim Soul" at Fellside Records in May 2005. She has a voice to die for and plays great piano. Janet Martin accompanies her on cello, which adds the perfect touch to songs both traditional and self penned. Reviews for both the album and live performance have been wonderful:

Hailing from Bristol in the South West of England, Maddie began writing music at an early age. She was inspired by a broad cross section of music, but, whether it was traditional folk or 60's psychedelic, melody was the common thread that always appealed. Her lyrics, some drawn from personal experience and observation, tell touching stories and the music evokes moods and feelings as powerfully as a particular scent can trigger the memory of another time and place. Maddie's extraordinary voice blends like another instrument to create songs that stay with you for days afterward.

Maddie's debut album, 'Unlikely Prom Queen', attracted favourable reviews not only from the local media but also from critics across the Atlantic. Her live performances have delighted audiences, not only at home, where she has secured a reputation as a sensitive and charismatic artist, but also in London and as far afield as New York.

Her second release, the EP 'Hollow', was extremely well received. It saw her move in a more definite folk direction,

including several traditional songs alongside her own material. Maddie is continuing to explore this new area and is currently writing and rehearsing both new material and reinterpretations of her favourite traditional music. Visit: www.maddiesouthorn.com for further information or Sue Bradburn; tel: 01237 451933 sue@emerging.demon.co.uk for booking information.

ONE GLASS EYE

A new sound is emerging from the same thriving acoustic music scene of the upper Tweed valley that brought the folk world the talents of Eric Bogle, Karine Polwart and The Incredible String Band. It is the sound of One Glass Eye, four local musicians who have won glowing praise and a fast-growing audience for their compelling and eclectic mix of East European rhythms and melodies.

Formed around 18 months ago, One Glass Eye features virtuoso musicianship on fiddle, guitar, bouzouki and accordion, and their high-energy performances have thrilled festival-goers at Celtic Connections, Both Sides the Tweed and Traquair Fair as well as folk club audiences across Scotland.

The release of the band's eponymous debut album marks another stage in the development of their exotic, colourful sound. Sound clips from the album can be accessed through the band's website www.oneglasseye.co.uk or you can contact Lewis Powell-Reid on 01721 730206; 07818 248057 (Mob) or email: oneglasseye@hotmail.co.uk

SALTFISHFORTY



Sensational Orcadian duo, Saltfishforty, have just released their second album - Orkney Twister. Douglas Montgomery (fiddle) and Brian Cromarty (guitar/mandola/vocals) are the Orkney duo - Saltfishforty. Combining the traditional music of Orkney with original compositions, they released their

debut album, goose music, to critical acclaim in May 2003. Their second album, Orkney twister, was released in December 2005. Building on the success of the albums, their reputation as a fresh and dynamic live act is blossoming.

Saltfishforty have toured the UK and travelled to Europe for gigs at the 2005 Cannes film festival, and open-air stages in Spain and Ireland. Festival appearances include Celtic connections, rootin about, the Hebridean Celtic festival, the St Magnus festival and County Down's Celtic fusion. They have recorded live sessions for travelling folk and BBC Radio Ulster. Their albums have received regular airplay in the UK, with radio coverage across USA, Canada, Australia and Spain. In 2004 the duo were nominated in the "best up and coming act" category at the BBC Scottish traditional music awards. The sheer dynamism of their live performances make them an excellent act for festivals, art centres, venues & folk clubs. They are generally available throughout 2006. Contact Martin Coull for details of availability; tel 0131 557 5330; mob 07803 137 509 or visit www.stoneyport.demon.co.uk

SPENCER BOHREN

A devout Baptist upbringing gave Spencer Bohren a strong musical foundation. He came of age musically during the folk boom of the mid-60s, when he started playing guitar and became aware of the folk traditions of America. Guided by his

gospel past, Spencer naturally gravitated to the music of the South, and he became a passionate student of the blues - both the cotton field variety of the early Black musicians, and the hillbilly blues of the Appalachians.

He moved to New Orleans to develop his musical career where surrounded by the sights, sounds and smells of a previously unimagined cultural gumbo, Spencer found a spiritual and musical home. A spectacular cycle of city-wide musical creativity and activity was just beginning, one which generated the formation of the Neville Brothers, Beausoleil, and the Radiators. As his reputation grew, Spencer began travelling throughout the South, farther and farther from home. Finally, in 1983, Spencer and his wife made a decision to move into an Airstream trailer and travel, with their three children, along Spencer's performance itinerary. The journey lasted seven incredible years. Spencer performed coast to coast in a series of one-nighters, bringing his bluesy music to people in all parts of the country.

In addition, Spencer recorded the first through fourth of his seven current albums and began to tour extensively in Europe and Japan, where his recordings are often released on major labels (Virgin and SONY) and enjoy strong airplay. In late 1997, Spencer returned to New Orleans where he immersed himself once again in its rich musical culture. He released "Carry the Word" in April 2000, and continues to tour nationally and internationally. He's available for bookings between 16 June and 3 July 2006. Contact Chris on 01377 217662 or email him at chris@adastra-music.co.uk Visit www.adastra-music.co.uk for details.

FRIBO

Fronted by the pure, beautiful vocal tones of native Norwegian Anne Sofie Linge Valdal, ably complemented by the rich Scottish Highland fiddle style of Sarah-Jane Fifield, supported and driven by the guitar and mandola of Ewan MacPherson. Fribo find a natural meeting point, which will find the listener at once sailing the Fjords of western Norway or walking in the Cuillins of Skye without noticing where one meets the other.

These top level musicians have worked with artists such as: Malinky, Jim Sutherland, The Grand Union Orchestra, Emily Smith, Alasdair White (Battlefield Band), John Spiers (& Boden), Daimh and Fine Friday. Fresh out of the studio with a groundbreaking new album; Fribo are generally available for concerts, but the band are currently looking at touring in September and November 2006. For further information contact: Ewan MacPherson on 07766 004 026 or email: ewan@stoneport.com. You can also visit the band website at www.fribo.co.uk

PRESS RELEASES

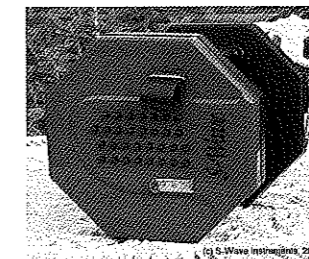


MIDI - MOVING THE CONCERTINA FORWARD

For years, it seems, concertina players have looked enviously at the range of sounds and effects available to keyboard players who have direct access to the vast range of MIDI devices available on the market. Well, S-Wave Instruments is now able to offer an instrument that does just that for the concertina player.

The S-Wave Instruments E64 English Concertina is an instrument that has been designed to give the concertina player access to the vast range of sounds and effects offered by MIDI devices available on the market today.

The instrument is rather radical in its design approach but the thinking has always been to use the available technology to enhance the musical performance and so move the instrument forward. For instance the buttons are electrical switches that have a short stroke of only 0.25mm. This gives them the feel of being almost touch sensitive and allows for a much quicker playing action than the traditional button mechanism.

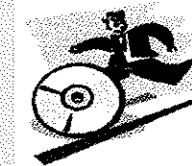


The other main outcome of the design process was to replace the bellows with an electronic force sensor. I'm sorry but there was no way to break it to you gently, there are no bellows on this instrument. The advantage of this, particularly to the English player, is that it can play 'forever' in one direction before having to reverse. This allows the

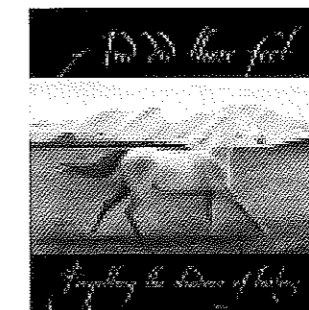
instrument to be given different sound settings depending on whether the player is pushing or pulling. The player can now choose when to change direction to bring in the alternate sound settings based on the musical requirement rather than running out of air. How useful is it to be able to lift a chorus, middle eight or last verse? Equally, of course, it could just as easily be used to add a bit of colour to a set of tunes.

If you wish to find out more then visit www.s-wave.co.uk. For those without internet access please write to: Dean Onyon, S-Wave Instruments, 20 Beacon Road, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 2BQ or phone 01509 568375 for a printout of the website text and images.

CD REVIEWS



AND DID THOSE FEET Forgetting The Shadows of History (Osmosys OSMOCD 031)



Forgetting The Shadows of History is the third CD by the trio And Did Those Feet. As you can probably guess, the group derives its name from 'Jerusalem', Blake's poem that remains, in the form of the popularised hymn, an anthemic clarion call. The group consists of its founder, composer and instrumentalist, Richard Ellin and vocalists Ina Williams and

Cecelia Jones. They all reside in Wales although Ina Williams is the only native Welsh person; the others migrated from London (Ellin) and Canada (Jones).

The CD consists of 14 tracks and most of the songs reflect a spiritual and pastoral undertone. The spiritual often spills over into religious reflection - not to my particular taste - that

sometimes give you the feel that they would not be out of place on one those side of a hill performances that seems so integral to any Songs of Praise programme. That leaves them falling somewhere in between the Bermuda Triangle of twee folk, National Eisteddfod and Classic FM audiences.

There's no doubting the technical ability of either the musicianship of Richard Ellin or the vocal talents, clarity of voice and enunciation of the two women singers. There are some songs off the CD that I found going around my head incessantly - particularly 'Who fills these eyes?' However, clinical excellence has to be combined with passion and feeling to produce music that moves the listener. Unfortunately, it's the absence of passion and feeling that fails to lift this CD above a pleasant backdrop.

Lewis Jones

TOM & BARBARA BROWN Tide of Change (Wild Goose WGS 332 CD)

There are some CDs that come up for review, which you know from the very first track that you are going to enjoy. This is one such. I've known Tom and Barbara for over 25 years having met them at an early Song & Ale in Wiltshire. Eric Bogle's opening song, Sound of Singing, illustrates exactly what they are about and what their long running Song & Ales were about (they still go on in Northamptonshire but under new management!) which is enjoyment of and participation in our wonderful folk song heritage.

This is their third CD and is as diverse in material as their previous ones. We have everything from grand chorus songs like the first track and In Friendship's Name through to classic ballads such as Barbara Allen and Lowlands of Holland, including also humorous ditties like Cluster of Nuts and Rusty Ol' Knife.

There are also songs of controversy including the title track Tide of Change a realistic and poignant work basically about rural de-population written by Hilary Bix and Tom's own Ex, Barle and Bray, which he developed from the chorus of an Exmoor hunting song. This latter's pro-hunting stance is one that I have to disagree with but it still makes a good song!

The more 'obscure' material includes Song of the Flail, which is obviously a rhythmic work song. All are sung with the usual professionalism and enthusiasm from these two with close harmonies, intelligent arrangements, lots of accompaniments from Tom's wide repertoire of instruments and occasional help from Joan and Keith Holloway, Anahata, Lynne Heraud, Ralph Jordan, Barry Lister and Paul Sartin - in fact a large percentage of the Wild Goose mafia!

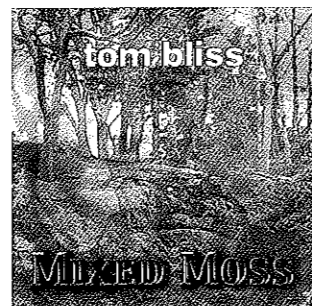
Erudite, attractively illustrated and sometimes highly amusing sleeve notes give a full account of the songs rounding off another super album in good style.

O.K. I know the sceptics among you will say, 'Well of course it's a good review they're Giff's mates', and indeed that is true but when you are reviewing an album like this anything other than overall praise would not be justified. Yes, there are blemishes like a couple of the songs feel o'er long and there are a few occurrences when Barbara's voice sounds a little strained but to dwell on these would be petty and pernickety. So there!

If you're already a fan of the Browns then I'm sure it won't be long before this CD is on your shelf and if you aren't then go and see them when they are in our area again and by the end of another good night you'll want to take one home with you! If you can't wait, then they are available from Wild Goose direct www.wildgoose.co.uk or phone 01264 860569.

Derek Gifford

TOM BLISS - Mixed Moss (Slip Jig Music SLIP 009)



Tom Bliss much like Jez Lowe is blessed with a writing skill that manages to keep to the traditional style. If, as is often the case many other artists who aurally absorb the lyrics and melody of say the opening track 'Gentle Maids Ashore' - a bodice ripper of sorts - will wrongly credit it as "trad.arr:" when they come to record it themselves. This of course can be rather annoying for the

composer and like Hughie Jones (Ellen Vannin and Marco Polo) their songwriting skills go mostly unnoticed. On the other hand the artists themselves can, I suppose gain some comfort in the knowledge that in a back-handed way they will be forever immortalised and, let's face it, even the titles of some of his own songs; 'Pendle Hill' and 'Dead Men Bear No Witness' conjure a sense of the tradition. Tom is nothing if not only too happy to pass on his reference sources and if you check the informative notes which are available on his website it all makes fascinating reading. The attention to detail required to give a song substance is only too apparent and he must be applauded for providing a reference for future generations of writers in the tradition. Of course, by nature of comparison Tom includes a couple of Trad Arr: songs himself with the 'Unquiet Grave' and 'Jack Hall'. The recording features many fine performances from special guests Tom Napper, Chris Parkinson and Maggie Boyle amongst others and being no mean musician himself Tom's multi-tracked rendition of 'St Pierre Lihou/The Sark Dance' is a delight. Further details are available on the website www.tombliss.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

CALICO Songdogs (Lochshore CDLDL 1306)

Their black and white insert photo - a 'here we are' intensity - may fool you into thinking (they did me) that Calico's second album had led them away from their traditional roots to an over-produced, over-played mainstream. Wrong.

This Cork City-based 5 piece, gets it just right with tune sets largely composed by uilleann piper and whistle player Diarmid Moynihan, formerly of Croabh Rua and songs with a lyrical intelligence such as 'Small Sacrifice' ("many talking mouths, with so little to say and all the golden rules lose meaning day by day") penned by vocalist/fiddler, Deirdre Moynihan. 'Metal Drums' too, though vocally understated, is a tight-lipped, harsh, literally toxic tale that hits home.

That first CD, Celanova Square, had been an object lesson in less being more but this one hardly puts a foot wrong either. It's more focused and downright musical with a deeper ambition whilst remaining ego-less. Not a million miles from early Dervish this remains at heart a warm yet haunting collection. The title set has a pervasive sense of quiet turmoil whilst 'The Duchess' closes with subtle gentle picking. It's hard to fault the musicianship throughout and the 'Hooversville' set is a particularly simmering piece. This is a strong and compelling work - a satisfying end-to-end listening experience. A band to watch? No, a band to get behind now!

Clive Pownceby

ROSANNE CASH Black Cadillac (Capitol Records 0946 3 48738 0 2)

Every dark cloud has its silver lining, as they say. So, it is that the death of Johnny Cash has inspired his daughter to produce



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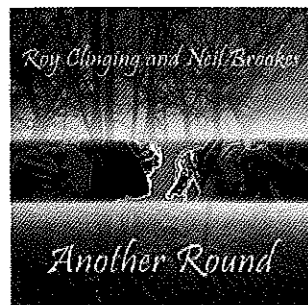
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one of her best records to date. The offspring of famous parents always seem to struggle to get out of the publicity spotlight of their elders - no matter what their talent. As you might gather from the title, this record is partly inspired by her father's death and its power suggests that it has been almost therapeutic in nature. It's to be hoped that this puts her on a different footing in the eyes of the music world - no longer just a daddy's girl.

Though the record starts with the driving beat of the title track, it's the ballads that are really inspiring on this record. On 'I Was Watching You' she sings of the love that extends after life and her father's message that he'd watch her from above. For me, the outstanding moment of the record is 'God Is In The Roses' with its added note that God is in the thorns, too. A barely hidden reference to the fact that her father had some prickly moments - best summed up by his one time son-in-law, Nick Lowe, in the song 'The Beast In Me'. Yet, 'The World Unseen' has her looking in mirrors and dreams as she hankers after the company of her father to listen to her songs and provide a wise counsel. This may all sound a little morbid but she also finds time to have a go at the music business who circle around on 'Like Fugitives' to scavenge at the pickings of her father's career. It's a record that is told from the heart but 'Dreams Are Not My Home' lets us know that she's a survivor. All in all, it's a great record charting the roller coaster of emotions that followed her father's sad demise. Classic song writing by the daughter of a classic songwriter.

Steve Henderson

ROY CLINGING & NEIL BROOKES Another Round (Wild Goose Records)



I have been bumping into Roy Clinging from time to time around festivals and clubs for many years and have always enjoyed his singing and concertina playing. Teaming up with veteran fiddle player Neil Brookes is what I think we used to call 'a good career move'. So many possibilities open up when two gifted musicians click and the result in this case is

pure synergy. The emphasis is very much on traditional English songs and dance tunes so they are pushing an open door as far as I'm concerned.

Their new CD showcases their talent perfectly. It opens at a brisk pace with a May song from Cheshire where, according to Roy, they have tended to get their May celebrations in early (rather like the rest of us celebrate Christmas these days, perhaps). This song and one or two others on the album are featured in Roy's recent book, 'Cheshire Folk Songs and Associated Traditions'. The songs exhibit plenty of variety and there are several fine instrumental tracks too, including the title track 'Another Round' which is one of Neil's own compositions, as is 'The Unicycle'.

Neil's fiddle playing is particularly impressive on his accompaniment to 'Bold Lovell', driving along Roy's vocal in a manner which reminded me of the great Dave Swarbrick accompanying Martin Carthy (and you can't give higher praise than that in my view). Another stand-out track is 'All Smiles Tonight' which to my ears has a slightly music hall flavour and an irresistible chorus which you'd have to be very determined (and downright miserable) not to join in.

Roy tends to be somewhat modest about his guitar playing and I suspect he feels much more at home on his main

instrument, the English concertina. The guitar comes out of its case only once for this album, on 'River Days', a song about the end of shipbuilding on Tyneside written by Barrie Temple. When I first heard it I thought it might be a Jez Lowe song (and I mean that as a compliment Barrie).

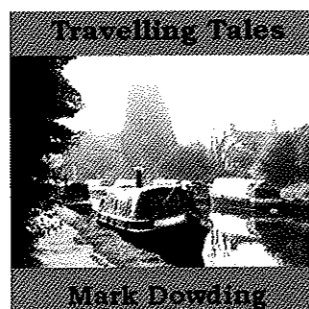
The only track I struggled to listen to was 'Andrew Rose', not due to any flaw in performance let me hasten to add but just because it's a bit of a stomach churner, recounting a true story of brutality and murder on the high seas. Roy uses this song in his excellent stage presentation (with friends) entitled 'Off to Sea Once More' and it is a valid part of this snapshot of life in the old days of sail. I think perhaps it comes across more starkly in the middle of a CD like this.

The album ends in fine style with another sea song, 'Mister Stormalong' which is given exactly the right air of melancholy as an 'old salt' pays tribute to a respected and well loved (and now deceased) skipper. Stormalong is clearly at the opposite end of the spectrum to the psychopathic skipper with whom Andrew Rose had the misfortune to ship.

In summary, here is an excellent CD, which anyone with even half an interest in traditional music should add to their collection. Roy and Neil demonstrate that English folk music is alive and well in the 21st century and they are quietly getting on with the job of sharing their mutual enjoyment of it with the wider world.

You can get further information on the CD, which costs £12 (plus £2 p&p), at www.folkmusic.net/royclinging
Brian Bull

MARK DOWDING Travelling Tales (Cock Robin Music CRM 139)



There are so many good things I have to say about this album. I hardly know where to begin. As someone who is familiar with Mark Dowding's work I can say that "Travelling Tales" is an accurate exposition of his talent. The collection of songs on this CD enabled me to enjoy the wide variety of his material, which his characteristic of his work and also the different skills he has to

perform them. The content of the songs ranges from humorous, social comment, historical and plaintive to feel good sing along. He accompanies himself on guitar, banjo and both English and Anglo concertinas.

Singing Jake Thackeray songs is an art form in itself, but Mark's verbal dexterity is certainly up to the job. Funny songs, when they have been written by other than the performer are difficult to cover but "Sister Josephine" and "On again, On again" are handled with such aplomb that they lose none of their hilarity. Was there ever an opening line to match "I love a good bum on a woman, it makes my day"? As a contrast to the humorous there are songs of serious social comment in this collection: those that you don't often hear like "Peterloo", "Lloyd George", "The Tommy Note" and one of my personal favourites "July Wakes". This is an absolute gem! Although the words were written by Richard Pomfret, it sounds like it is coming to the listener directly from the mouth of the weaver himself, this, and the manner in which Mark delivers the song gives it the power to move you.

The inclusion of songs from the Music Hall cannon is another ingredient in this rich mixture. "With Her Head Tucked

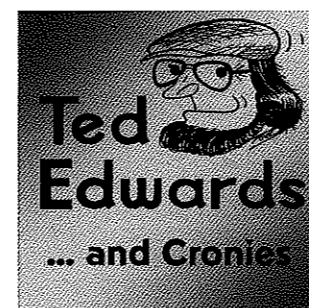
Underneath Her Arm" and "The Spaniard Who Blighted My Life" are excellent standards from Mark's repertoire but I was particularly taken with "Brothers Malone / Ashton Mashers" on which he duets with Chris Harvey.

In the acknowledgements there are several to "Trad" but also included are Ian Woods, Harry Boardman and Keith Marsden. Keith Marsden's "St. Aubin - sur - mer" is on the album, but when listening to the track of Ralph McTell's "Maginot Waltz" I was reminded of a line from "Normandy Orchards" (which is not on the album) about "grey ghostly couples" waltzing around the floor to the sound of the "village hall band". The sound of Chris Harvey's keyboard on "Maginot Waltz" is ethereally atmospheric. Both songs tell the same story: young men about to go to war. Lovely touch!

A track worthy of individual mention is Paul Metsers' "Farewell to the Gold". This is a fine song, which stands the test of time, particularly when sung as well as this. Another well-loved contemporary song is Harvey Andrew's "Margarita". No one I know sings this poignant song as well as Mark and that includes the songwriter himself. I could go on, but I am reluctant for this review to become just a song list because there are actually 22 tracks on the CD, which is great value at £10.00. Mention must be made of the brief but excellent cover notes. These are always a big plus for me. Attention to detail is one of the hallmarks of Mark Dowding's work and this is well illustrated in the notes on tracks "At Rawtenstall Fair", "The Tommy Note", "The Curse of Croyland" and "Lloyd George". Although this is a solo album I know that Mark Dowding would be the first to agree that Chris Harvey's and Alison Younger's collaboration is to be commended, as are Chris's production skills through his own Cock Robin Music. Mark works hard at what he does and deserves success with this eclectic offering, which I thoroughly recommend.

Travelling Tales is available directly from Mark Dowding for £10 (includes p&p) Website www.markdowding.co.uk; Email mark@markdowding.co.uk; Phone 07981 442134 for more details.
Norman Wilson

TED EDWARDS ... AND CRONIES The Songs and Poems of Ted Edwards (Cock Robin Music CRM 147)



I knew of Ted Edwards, whilst still living in Redditch because of 'The Coal and Albert Berry' which Bob Matthews (one of the other two original Four Fools) sang. Having subsequently met Ted at Limbrick I was delighted to intercept this CD on its way to Dave Jones. In addition to the aforementioned and the universally acclaimed "Coal-hole Cavalry" this CD contains other gems which may

otherwise have lain undiscovered. Chris Harvey Pollington is therefore to be applauded for presenting this selection of the works of Ted Edwards after obtaining planning permission from the clerk of the works himself.

It has both light and shade - light in the humorous "Henry VIII" (shorter than Shakespeare and much funnier) and "Alfred The Grate" both performed with relish by Brian Armstrong, and shade - mainly in the depths of the mine, where according to the sleeve notes, over 53,000 men, women and children perished in the 20th Century. "Ladybird", composed in 1975 received the ultimate acknowledgement of quality, being recorded by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. Performed ably on this CD by Bernard Cromarty it tells of the plight of millions

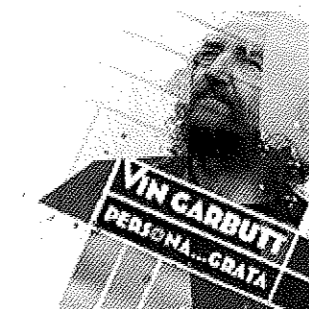
of latch-key kids in the 70's.

The variety over the 17 tracks is good with songs about the hardships of mining interspersed with songs from the hardships of teaching (not in the same class I hear you say, undermining my argument) and a variety of performers. The blend of archive recordings of Ted and a selected group of friends and performers is thoughtfully compiled to provide contrast. Also included is "A Silver Song" performed by Ted in what he describes as a decrepit voice, which is the only voice he still possesses yet he succeeds in conveying the beauty of this secular carol.

I have tried listening to this CD whilst working on the magazine but with little success as I had to keep stopping to listen properly and enjoy the quality of the works of Ted Edwards. Chris concludes the sleeve notes with "I hope you enjoy this album, which as Ted once said, will make you 'Laff, Think, Feel and Sing'. Well it delivered on all those promises in spades (more mining puns) You can, and really ought to, obtain your copy from Ted by contacting him at thegarret@tesco.net.

Ken Bladen

VIN GARBUTT Persona Grata (HRCD018)



Persona Grata the new CD from Vin Garbutt is informative as it is reflective and as always brings out the best of Vin's considerable talent. To add to the enjoyment the CD was recorded live at a number of venues in his native North East to the obvious enjoyment of all those present.

'Morning Informs', is one of my personal favourites, a song that deals with a broken marriage as seen through the eyes of the family members left behind. Birmingham's Bryn Phillips wrote this song about a redundant coal miner who turned his hand to dress making to eke out a living. 'Silver and Gold', brings a lump to the throat with the analogy between both jobs absolutely fascinating.

The Falklands War of 1982 is the setting for 'Storm Around Tumbledown' and the poignancy of so many young lives cut short. 'It Couldn't Be Done', is a poem by Edgar Guest and the triumph of optimism over pessimism. Vin added the catchy melody.

So much has changed for those who were teenagers in the 60's with exploitation replacing idealism. 'The Flowers and the Guns' by prolific songwriter George Papavgeris goes some way to explaining what has since transpired. Vin's whistle playing has long been an integral part of his act and 'John Doonan's Hornpipe/Tinkers Alley Reel' demonstrates his devotion to the instrument.

Vin has never been slow to champion a cause; sometimes they are less palatable than others. All the more reason they should be heard, 'For An Explanation', is one such that will move even the hardest heart. Written by Shep Woolley for the 40th anniversary of D Day this song of the sea, 'Down by the Dockyard Wall', demands audience participation with its catchy tune and jaunty lyrics. 'Punjabi Girl', tells the love story of a boy and girl from vastly different backgrounds and how they struggled to be accepted. Does love really conquer all? To leave your home and those you love in the pursuit of work can be truly traumatic. Teeside is certainly not on its own in this regard. Vin is truly sympathetic to those who find themselves

in this plight with the tale of 'The Loftus Immigrant'. 'The Kilburn Horse', is a landmark carved into the hillside near Thirsk on the edge of the North York Moors. For Vin it has always signified that home is not far away at the end of a tour.

Stuart Hardy on fiddle and Sean Taylor on fretless Bass add much to the recording, but it's Vin's unmistakable voice that captures the real essence of the songs. When I hear Vin in full flow, I always think, all is well with the world and God is in his heaven. Welcome back, you were really missed.

David Jones

COLIN HENDERSON - "Shifting Sands" (Open House CSHCDOT)

I first met Colin when, as a young and enthusiastic singer and bass and guitar player he teamed up with Brian Jones and Tom Topping to form The Tom Topping Band. That was many years ago and, although the Band officially retired a while back, their annual Pacific Road Art Centre gigs in Birkenhead played to sell out houses still bring back some great memories. However, time and music moves on and Colin also moved on forging other musical partnerships, notably with Tom Baker, before emerging as a fine singer songwriter in his own right. Those years of apprenticeship with TTB were a learning curve and the budding writer of "Cold on the Road", "Single Handed Sailor" & "Swan Song", amongst others, has now become the finished article if this CD is anything to go by.

Although 8 out of the 11 tracks are self penned the whole album dovetails beautifully into the bluesy laid back theme that Colin had obviously tried to achieve. A good test of any album is it's ability to hold the listener not once but on repeated plays. This one actually gets better as I have now played it 3 times, an unheard of thing for a "critic"! The production, as I would only expect from any Open House release, is crisp yet smooth and Andrew Jones, following in father Brian's footsteps, must be congratulated here.

The album starts with "Damascus Road" written after a trip to America where Colin saw a country full of contradictions with the neon lit multi million dollar Las Vegas Casinos while Vietnam Veterans begged on the streets. My personal favourite, "Sausolito Calling" follows. This song was written after a ferry trip across the bay from San Francisco to Sausolito, passing Alcatraz Island on the way, the latter being mentioned in the first verse. The song is a real winner with a chorus that just keeps going round and round in your head. Colin writes and sings the blues extremely well on songs like, "Sometimes I Just Get the Blues", "Rely on the Blues", "Blue Condition" and the classic, "How Long Blues".

The Spanish/Mexican based, "Es Tiempo, Mi Querida" ("It is time my beloved") is another favourite of mine with some excellent Spanish guitar playing by Jerry Frost and tells the tale of a couple on the run across the Mexican/USA border although we never learn what becomes of them - maybe that will be on the next album!. Another great track is one of Colin's own personal favourites, "Pearl's A Singer" and he makes a great job of it too with the repeat of the middle 8 in the song adding to the original version. Finally the album closes with a song by one of Colin's all time musical heroes, George Harrison. His song "Isn't it a Pity", complete with "Hey Jude" fade out brings this CD to a very fitting end with the acknowledgment by one songwriter to the inspiration given by another.

Colin also wished me to mention the big part played by his backing musicians and singers Andrew Jones, Joe Topping, Mal Mitchell, Jerry Frost, Tom Baker, Mike Aspinall and The J D Temperance Choir who all helped to make this the complete

album that it is. Colin has come a long way since those early TTB days and with his songs already covered by TTB, The McCalmans and The John Wright Band he still has a lot to offer on his travels and I can see more exciting times ahead along the musical road. The CD can be bought by phoning Colin on 0784 799678 or at his gigs of course.

Ian Chesterman

LEHTO & WRIGHT A Game Of Chess (New Folk Records, 2004)



Nearly four years ago, I was more than suitably impressed by Lehto & Wright's previous album 'Further Adventures of Darling Cory'. I thought at the time that they would be hard pressed follow that one up. Well, the little beggars have done it! A Game of Chess is one of the best folk rock

albums I have slapped in my CD player for a long time, and the result is outstanding. With all the right moves it firmly plants Lehto & Wright in the marketplace with their own brand and sound of folk rock. Considering they come from the Minneapolis area, Minnesota in the USA, they do sound remarkably English. I find it hard to believe that they are still relatively undiscovered on this side of the pond!

In case you have never heard of 'Lehto & Wright', let me introduce you. The band is actually a trio. Steve Lehto on vocals, electric guitar, acoustic guitar, mandolin and accordion; John Wright on vocals, bass guitar, 8-string bass, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass pedal and loops; and Matt Jacobs, who should take a bow for the solid work he does on the drums.

From the minute you put the album on to play, it holds your attention with some really good arrangements, even on songs you may have heard before. On the quieter numbers, the acoustic guitars really sound acoustic but when Steve Lehto lets fly with the electric guitar, the playing is razor sharp, with riffs even Albert Lee or Richard Thompson would be proud of.

On the play list, I found a lot of songs and tunes I have heard many times before -- traditional material such as 'The Long Peg and Awl', 'I Wish I Was Single Again', 'Siege of Delhi', 'The Curragh of Kildare', 'Four Drunken Nights', and 'Ten Long Years'. I wondered if the songs might be a bit 'stale' these days, even the more contemporary works, 'I Wish I Was in England' by Christy Moore, and Martin Carthy's tune, 'McVeagh', but Lehto and Wright have that uncanny knack of breathing new life into them with their exciting arrangements. Throughout the album, the arrangements gently tease you. One minute you are listening to a jig or a reel or an air played acoustically, then your senses are zapped by the next tune on the strat. The effect is intoxicating.

Picking a favourite track from this album is very difficult. I think the song 'Long Peg and Awl' is neck-and-neck with 'Of Time and Rivers Flowing' (Pete Seeger) on my list. My only tiny criticism of the album is that the extended guitar solo in 'Ten Long Years' did go on for just a little too long. But if that's the only thing I could find wrong, it's got to be good.

This is obviously a very well thought out album. Plenty of light and shade and variation to keep you entertained at the cutting edge of folk rock. I liked it, and if folk rock is your bag, I'm damn sure you will too.

When it comes to real folk rock bands, there is no doubt about it, Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span, Little Johnny England

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and The Oyster Band, all have laid down the ground rules. Each band has its own sound that is instantly recognisable. Now, just when it seems that the boundaries couldn't be pushed out any further -- enter the new kids on the block in the guise of Lehto & Wright. Believe me, this is the bands third album, and it is blisteringly good. For more information visit www.lehtoandwright.com

Peter Massey

GRAHAM METCALFE Songs From Yorkshire and other civilisations (Wild Goose WGS279CD)

Graham Metcalfe (A.K.A. 'Yorkshire Graham') is the epitome of that select race of folk from the wrong side of the Pennines! He is also a relaxed and confident vocalist that takes you along on the waves of his rich and melodic voice. It's almost impossible not to join in the choruses with him and his wide repertoire keeps the listener's attention throughout the album. This is no mean feat considering it is an entirely a capella performance. Admittedly he is helped in some of the choruses by the fine harmonies of Moira Craig and Ian Giles but this is essentially Graham in the raw - but, thankfully, not in the altogether!

To say his style is idiosyncratic would be an understatement and some people will certainly have the occasional problem with the dialect but without it, it simply wouldn't be the true Graham. Some of the better known songs are sometimes hidden under Yorkshire titles too. For example, The White Hare of Howden becomes Howden Town; Rose of Allendale is edited to Allendale; Rout of the Blues changes to Scarborough Sands and Fine Old English Gentleman turns into Wensleydale Lad! And why not?

Among the songs new to me, two stand out. One is The Immigrant, which is about a Canadian in this country, and the other, Nellie O'Bobs of Crowtrees, is a delicate love song sincerely sung and showing a less brash side to Graham's nature. The sleeve notes are predictably terse, Graham isn't a man to waste words unnecessarily, but sufficiently informative. If you have met Graham at one of the song and ale type sessions he regularly attends or have caught one of his too infrequent folk club appearances you'll certainly want to include this album in your collection. If you haven't but you enjoy genuine and down to earth singing then don't miss out. **Derek Gifford**

ALASTAIR MOOCK Let It Go (Corazong 255085)

It's doubtful if many - or perhaps any - of you will have heard of Alastair Moock, unless of course he may be a distant relative. Moock is a Boston based singer songwriter whose voice has that raw rough diamond quality normally associated with the type of throats meted out to Steve Forbert and Tom Waits. He's not far behind in his song writing ability and, although that may have brought favourable comparisons with John Prine, make no mistake his style and delivery are very much of his own making.

Let It Go is Moock's third CD release (and this edition contains 3 bonus tracks in addition to the 10 originals) but it's the first on his new label CoraZong, a label that is already building a strong portfolio of new and rejuvenated talent, having recently signed Kim Carnes. He's joined on this album by some impressive backing singers and musicians including Kris Delmhorst, Mark Erelli and Kevin Barry.

Moock defies categorisation, as there's an eclectic mix that seamlessly cross the Folk Rock Blues and Roots boundaries yet there's also a distinct Americana Midwestern feel about the CD. That's already guaranteed him success in the Americana Top 40 album charts earlier this year. So if you like you your singers smooth anodyne and soulless, you'd best steer clear

of Alastair Moock. What Moock provides as a singer songwriter is articulate songs delivered with a committed, barbed and passionate voice. **Lewis Jones**

EDDY MORTON The Singing Tree (NMM2005)

There was a gnashing of teeth in various quarters when The Bushberry Mountain Daredevils appeared to have hung up their musical boots. In reality, their central figure, Eddy Morton, has kept himself active variously as Eddy Morton and The Bushberrys and, well, Eddy Morton. That's despite the other Bushberry Mountain Daredevils with Brian Bannister, their other central figure. But, then, what's in a name!

If that's just left you confused, don't worry. At the end of the day, it's the music that counts. With 'The Singing Tree', Eddy shows off his gentle acoustic style on 10 self-penned songs. 'Before The Morning Comes' is something of an anthemic start to the record with a lively chorus and gently driving rhythm. 'Father's Son', the next track, has a similar feel and therein lies something of a problem in that the record is fairly one paced. Having said that the record has a familiar soft-rock feel to it and the tunes are pleasant in their own way. It's also reminiscent of 60's and 70's styles, with all sorts of echoes. Though I can't quite catch them all, the 'child of god' lyric on 'Travelling Man' reminds you of Joni Mitchell's 'Woodstock' and the opening guitar licks of 'Hey Joe' (no, not that one) are pure Bert Jansch. In that sense, it's a very nostalgic record in feel but, for my ears, it's one pace means that there is little in terms of light and shade. To be truthful, there are two styles on show with a mix of band backing and simple acoustic and vocal to give a semblance of variation but not enough to make it my cup of tea. However, if you're a fan of the gentler side of folk/rock, it could well be just what you want. **Steve Henderson**

MUDDYHEAD - "Land and Sea" (Word is Out Records W10R001)

Muddyhead may not be familiar to many of you but I suspect, if outright talent and endeavour stand for anything, they will become so in quite a short time though it may not be in the narrow confines of the folk scene.

The acoustic line up (that is as a five-piece without the drummer) first came to my notice during a stunning 30 minute floor set at a Wrexham Folk Club showcase night early in 2005. They just blew everyone away with their lively, energetic and melodic and catchy songs, nearly all self penned. We booked them immediately for a full gig last December and once again they took the club by storm and I came away clutching a pre-released copy of their CD album, "Land and Sea".

This is not a "folk album", if there is such a definitive thing, but it is a hugely enjoyable listen and a fine example of a modern day young writer harnessing the talents of extremely experienced musicians to provide a great vehicle for his songs. Andy Steele is the young man in question and, with bass player Gary Daly, a former member of China Crisis (the hit band of the 1980's) he found a great ally. Add to that the slide guitar and electric guitar of Colin Lambert, the superb mandolin of Russ Williams (also of Johnny Plank and the Planktones), the driving beat of drummer Graham Chesters and added female harmonies from Laura Campbell and the whole rich and varied tapestry is complete.

Their music has a familiarity about it that is comforting and yet it is refreshingly different. If people insist on giving labels to things I suppose this is a cross between contemporary pop with a dash of country and blues. However, labels don't particularly interest me so throw your blinkers away, open your

mind and your ears and enjoy. The CD starts with 2 tracks that, quite frankly, could knock the spots of most of the songs that enter (and top) the so called pop charts today. "She Moves Me" and "Miracle Cure" are bouncy, rhythmic and, like all good singable songs, have great hook lines. Andy Steele's lyrics are not of the usual moon & June boy meets girl, banality either.

He sings of real people caught in everyday events yet with a poetry and sometimes fantasy that transports us into his own world. "All Manor of Men" and "Blameless Life" are followed by "Good Friends" before my favourite track, the strangely titled "The Theatre List". This one must surely go much further and is a track I simply could not stop playing or singing, or thinking about. "Call Me", "Sensible Living", "Style it Takes" and "Land and Sea" complete an immensely enjoyable album and one that may well prove to be the catalyst that takes Muddyhead on to greater things. Most of this record was recorded at Brynderwen in the mountains of Snowdonia, North Wales with additional recording and mixing work done at APE Studios, Little Neston and at Word is Out, Runcorn and Little Sutton, so this really has, you could say, its roots on our local patch. If you want a copy visit their website and look out for them in your area because they are also a fantastic live band.

Ian Chesterman

PIPEDREAMS Kick Out The Ghosts (Off Beat Scotland OSO 10 CD)



Formed originally in February 2003, under the auspices of the Jim McRae Band, Pipedreams is a four-piece band that was renamed under its current title last year. The band revolves around the Scottish (big rather than bag according to Jim) pipe playing of its founder member, Jim McRae, a former street busker. The other members of the band are bass player and producer, Iain McKinna, Kirsty Anderson on electric violin, and Dave Haswell playing drums and percussion. In the centre of the Kick Out The Ghosts CD pullout sheet, the band poses with McRae at the forefront in a kind of Mel Gibson plays Braveheart plays the bagpipes pose.

Kick Out The Ghosts is essentially an instrumental album (there's one track with vocals but even then Kirsty Anderson's voice sounds more like an extra instrument). The band relies more on its rock routes rather than its folk leanings although the sound is essentially Scottish. Their music could easily form a backdrop to a Scotland the Brave blockbuster and their big electric sound would easily drown out a whole platoon of bagpipe playing Scots guards.

It's easy to see why their appeal is at grandstand stadium type events and the Edinburgh fringe, as you can imagine their performances being high octane and dynamic. However, it is very difficult to replicate that kind of atmosphere on a CD recording - that feeling of listening with thousands of others (probably with a few drinks inside to keep you going) in the open air to the uplifting sounds of a Runrig type band. There's no doubt that Pipedreams are a highly competent band and put all their energy into their performances but I suspect they are one of those bands that needs to be seen and heard to get a true impression of their capabilities. **Lewis Jones**

KARINE POLWART Scribbled In Chalk (Spit and Polish SPIT028)

Last year, darling of the folk world. This year, following K.T.Tunstall, likely to cross over to the pop world from folk. You have to chuckle as folk has always been a fine source of songs

which can be popular for years! Anyway, let's put the hyperbole to one side. Folk followers will have seen Karine's talent blossom in Malinky who always impressed when they headed south of the border of their Scottish homeland. So, what does the new record offer?

Now, ploughing a solo furrow, Karine is developing her own style drawing upon numerous influences though still remaining a folk flavoured singer songwriter at the end of it. Like all good contemporary folk artists she raises the issues of the day. So, 'Maybe There's A Road' does draw our attention to the trafficking of young women for the sex trade and its attendant problems. Whilst she can also address a song to a child on 'Daisy (There Are People In This World Who Don't Think Like You Do)' to gently remind us of childlike innocence. Such philosophical thoughts occur regularly in Karine's lyrics which is hardly a surprise given her formal training in this subject. For the listener, it adds another dimension to songs as it allows repetitive listening and reflection on the themes.

But enough of this philosophy, the music is here to be enjoyed and Karine produces some fine tunes and wonderful lyrical images. Just check out 'Don't Know Why' with its pictures of 'linking the daisies' and watching the 'clouds form and disperse'. Then, there's the delicately picked tale of Jane Haining who lost her life in Auschwitz, 'Baleerie Baloo'. Yes, you will hear the odd electric guitar and drum kit but the folk fans that know her need not worry that the furore surrounding her has dimmed the quality of her work. It's another record that will enhance her growing reputation. **Steve Henderson**

REAL TIME Home Thoughts (BS124)

Real Time's third CD release is their best yet with a mixture of songs and tunes, which are a true reflection of what you hear when you see them live at a gig.

'High Germany' and 'Gallawa' Hills' are two traditional songs given a fresh and vital feel both through the musicianship and vocals. Judy Dinning's voice continues to be one of the finest on the folk circuit today. Judy along with Kenny Speirs collaborated together to write the beautiful title track 'Home Thoughts'. Wherever we are across the world our thoughts always turn towards our true home. Former Scottish fiddle player of the year, Iain Anderson, displays his boundless talent on a four-tune set.

Next a song from Judy, whose title would suggest a raunchy up-tempo number, but 'Rock n' Roll Slave', is a gentle song of love. Kenny is nothing if not patriotic, which he never tires of telling anyone who will listen, so it's no surprise that he wrote 'A Saltire in the Sky', all I can say is he must have a wonderful imagination or was it too much of the hard stuff!!!

The traditional ballad 'Bonnie Glenshee', is given a new lease of life with Judy's vocals blending seamlessly with the sympathetic accordion accompaniment from Gary Forrest. 'This Love', followed, a song penned by Judy. Another traditional song that benefits from being given a fresh perspective is 'The Trees They Do Grow High'.

Another fine tune set preceded 'Haughs O Cromdale', the final traditional track on the CD sung by Kenny. The overall musical feel of the recording is displayed on 'Safe Home'. The Gallagher and Lyle classic, 'Stay Young', is an inspired choice for the final track of a CD that demands you listen from first note to last.

Recorded at Big Sky Studios in the Borders by Tommy Roseburgh, the fourth member of the band, who plays a mean

keyboard, 'Home Thoughts' is a real body of work to be proud of and further enhances the credentials of Real Time.

David Jones

JOSH ROUSE Subtítulo (Bedroom Classics 5 037703 047723)

Josh Rouse is one of a new breed of singer songwriter that is steadfastly treading an individual path. Breaking with his corporate record company to set up his own label and disappearing from his Nashville home to pitch up in southern Spain make for some rather drastic changes. However, fans of his music will find that continuity in his recording is maintained by the use of Brad Jones as producer. Josh claims that by virtue of his new location, the strong set of local Nashville musicians has had to take a back seat and that this time it's all down to 'nylon string guitar and voice'. Not exactly a fair description of the music but this record is certainly less lush than its immediate predecessors.

His songs have been sliding steadily towards memorable hook lines over the last few records. Here, not surprisingly, his move seems to have injected a Latin feel that makes it sound like he's spent some time listening to the bossa nova! Tracks like 'Summertime' have the sort of sunny feel that you might expect from their place of recording. 'It Looks Like Love' also gives some continuity as its strident beat and chorus certainly make it sound like an outtake from the '1972' album. Josh manages to keep the quality up high with this new record but I have some reservations. Firstly, there's the inclusion of 'La Costa Blanca' that sounds more like 'work in progress' than an instrumental of worth. It suggests some filler and, furthermore, this 33 minute CD is pretty short by today's standards. Don't let me put you off Josh, he's a great songwriter but this isn't your best starting point if you're new to his music,

Steve Henderson

KATHRYN TICKELL & CORRINA HEWAT The Sky Didn't Fall (Park Records PRKCD88)

Do you remember the days of "Listen with Mother"? Well, I do - just about. Possibly because I hanker for that bygone era of innocence and watching the time drift by with a dreamy sense of what the future would hold I can associate with Kathleen Tickell's words on the spoken passage 'Favourite Place' that opens this charming recording. Read by Kathryn, it makes me feel that maybe (just, maybe) I'll revert to listening to the radio and use my imagination instead of watching the box.

Anyhow before I get too carried away with too much imagery let's concentrate on the recording at hand which, coming from Tickell and harpist Corrina Hewat is as you'd expect pretty impressive. On the track 'Brose' the effective use of unaccompanied vocal harmony picked up by delicately rippling harp is just one example of how to add textural depth to a song creating a sense of unease which is lightened only by the inclusion of the popular tune 'Drops of Brandy'.

Corrina's background in jazz (particularly the rhythmic chords backing the more up-tempo numbers) proves that cultural clashes can add splashes of colour that may not seem obvious to those more acquainted with the tradition although something that doesn't sit quite so comfortably is the use of only a few words from the original title of a song (i.e. My Love instead of My Love Is Like A Red Red Rose) as if this makes it more accessible to the general public. Mind you, it's a minor quibble for which I'm sure both ladies will be forgiven by their legions of fans. Perhaps this is a more melancholy offering than we're used to from these fine musicians but I'd like to point out that it is also one of this reviewer's favourites! Details from www.parkrecords.com

Pete Fyfe

CD COLLECTIONS, LIVE ALBUMS & RE-ISSUES



FAIRPORT CONVENTION Off The Desk (Matty Grooves MG2CD043)

It's always a nice surprise to receive a new Fairport recording - like welcoming an old friend home. OK, so it might not be a studio album but then again with the quality of sound captured for posterity by the band's tremendous engineer (and agent!) Rob Braviner it might as well be.

The material features the band at their best from their 2004/2005 shows and runs the course of trusted favourites such as 'Walk Awhile' and 'The Hiring Fair' to newer songs including 'Over The Falls' and 'The Fossil Hunter'. As required listening, ever since the days of Flatback Capers, the sparring three mandolins of Dave Pegg, Chris Leslie and Ric Sanders on the instrumental 'Canny Capers' highlight the band's digital dexterity, whilst Simon Nicol's rich, dark vocals recount the poignant 'Rosemary's Sister'.

As ever, the band prove just how good folk music can be and when it's in the hands of caretakers such as these the great British public will always be well served. Many of you reading this article will already have a majority of Fairport's work but for the completists amongst you this will be a must have purchase. Check out the website at www.fairportconvention.com

Pete Fyfe

RICHARD THOMPSON RT: The Life And Music Of Richard Thompson (Free Reed Records FRQCD 55)

Folk followers will already know that Free Reed deserve a gold medal for their efforts in trawling long lost rarities to help put together definitive box set collections. There have been sets from Sandy Denny, Dave Swarbrick, Ashley Hutchings and Martin Carthy. This collection of Richard Thompson is, by Free Reed's own admission, 'a holy grail'. With four CDs and a bonus fifth, plus, in initial copies, the chance to write in for a sixth CD, Andy Kershaw was correct when he recently suggested that it seems like they're breeding in the box. Hardly unexpected from such a prolific artist.

It is, of course, futile to attempt to describe this box set in any depth. So, let's get some facts going. The CDs contain over 90 songs and are themed around real events and people (Walking the Long Miles Home), the essential fan favourites (Finding Better Words), classic live tracks (Shine in the Dark), cover versions (Songs pour Down like Silver), unrecorded material on the bonus CD (Something Here Worth More Than Gold) and for the lucky early purchasers Richard's appearances on Free Reed with the write-in Freebee (RT on FR). Mind you the 170 or more pages of the book detailing the tracks and his career are a marvellous distraction, too. If you haven't had enough you can peruse the 1952 Vincent Black Lightning brochure - fans will get that reference.

I could go on but you'll basically find something to surprise from all across his career. Whether it's his unreleased poke of fun at Janet Jackson, cover of the French punk Plastic Bertrand's 'Ca Plane Pour Moi' or a live Richard and Linda tour de force. They are all here and more. Naturally, if your taste doesn't extend to RT, there is no need to bother with this box. On the other hand, and that's a lot of hands, it's only a question as to whether you rush out now or the price tag of £45 or so means that you add it to your 'wanted list' for Christmas.

Steve Henderson

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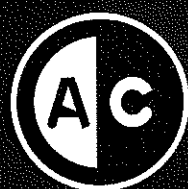
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