



FOLK NORTH WEST

Cara Dillon

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Please note that the copy date for the next issue is October 10th 2007.



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EDITORIAL

The festival season is well and truly upon us but it seems that the ones with the right idea to cope with the unseasonal weather are the Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival - forward thinking, plenty of moorings for caravans. I have only managed to visit two festivals so far this year, Cleckheaton on a fine sunny Saturday and Saddleworth where again I managed to avoid the rain (did have to go into a second hand book shop to avoid a shower and came across some early issues of the EFDSS magazine). As is my custom I visited the Hiring Fair at Saddleworth and was a little disappointed that every single act played guitar. Some good club singers but the best by far was Zoe Mulford. I'm off to Whitby, also to catch the Hiring Fair (hopefully with more variety of instruments), as it is important to support such endeavours.

In the clear air of the day - now made possible by the ban on smoking in public places - I hear that all bellows instruments are saying ta(r) and wheezing to a lesser extent. Just a shame that those smoking musicians probably need a licence to play outside under the proliferation of gazebo's and assorted patio sets that have sprung up outside pubs.

I recall, whilst living in London and frequenting the Favourite (a small pub in North London now demolished to make way for Arsenal's new stadium, taking part of the history of two generations of Irish migrants and musicians with it) that a smoke filled room was part of the "atmosphere" of the place. Most of the woodwind and whistle section presumably required frequent "chimney sweeping" to retain the purity of the sound and maintain the internal diameter.

Seriously though it is great to be free of smoke, though it is a shame that the original pub layout which included a smoking room cannot be restored. Much better to have downstairs rooms to provide access to all for folk music activities.

Maybe all that smoking explains why sailors had tarry trousers and how kippers were invented. Sir Walter Raleigh has a lot to answer for - but where are the songs about him, perhaps they are cloaked in secrecy. Any ideas?

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CHAIRMAN'S JOTTINGS

I don't know if you've noticed but looking around this summer there seems to be a number of new festivals having sprung into life. Big, however doesn't in this case mean beautiful. For me it smacks of "jumping on the band wagon", for I feel there just isn't the depth and quality to sustain all these events. Add in the soggy summer weather and you have a situation where no one wins, least of all the organisers, due to lost revenue, and the festival goer who, if camping, could probably have floated home on occasions.

I feel it would be better to strengthen those well-established festivals rather than go for a number of "embryonic" gatherings that suffer from bad weather and spiralling costs in both infrastructure and artists' fees.

Cheers for now

David Jones



What Folk programmes are on the radio TODAY?

compiled by Rob Dunford

SUNDAY

1.00 - 3.00pm BBC Radio Scotland - THE REEL BLEND presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
3.00 - 6.00pm Chorley FM - CHORLEY FOLK presented by JAMES BLATCHLEY
6.00 - 8.00pm (Rpt) BBC Radio Scotland - GLOBAL GATHERING presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
8.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Shropshire - SUNDAY FOLK presented by GENEVIEVE TUDOR
also on BBC Radio Stoke
10.00 - 11.00pm RTE - THE LATE SESSION presented by AINE HENSEY

MONDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm Oldham Community Radio - SOUNDS OF FOLK presented by ALI O'BRIEN
7.00 - 9.00pm (via) BBC Radio Derby - FOLKWAVES presented by MICK PEAT and LESTER SIMPSON
2nd & 4th in month Radio Britfolk - SOUNDS OF FOLK presented by Ali O'Brien, via www.radiobritfolk.co.uk

TUESDAY

8.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Scotland - GLOBAL GATHERING presented by MARY ANN KENNEDY
9.00 - 10.00pm (Rpt) BBC Radio Merseyside - FOLKSCENE presented by STAN AMBROSE/GEOFF SPEED
9.00 - 10.00pm MANX RADIO - THE FOLK SHOW presented by JOHN KANEEN

WEDNESDAY

7.00 - 8.00pm BBC Radio 2 - FOLK ROOTS & ACOUSTIC MUSIC presented by MIKE HARDING
9.00 - 9.50pm RTE - THE ROLLING WAVE presented by PETER BROWNE

THURSDAY

8.00 - 9.00pm BBC Radio Lancashire - THE DRIFT presented by PHIL BROWN
8.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER
9.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Merseyside - FOLKSCENE presented by STAN AMBROSE/GEOFF SPEED

SATURDAY

7.00 - 8.30pm BBC Radio Scotland - TAKE THE FLOOR presented by ROBBIE SHEPHERD
7.30 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Wales - CELTIC HEARTBEAT presented by FRANK HENNESSY
8.00 - 9.00pm RTE - THE SOUTH WIND BLOWS presented by PHILIP KING
8.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Ulster - FOLK CLUB presented by COLUM SANDS/SIOBHAN SKATES
9.00 - 10.00pm BBC Radio Scotland - PIPELINE presented by GARY WEST
9.00 - 10.00pm RTE - CEILIDH HOUSE presented by KIERAN HANRAHAN
10.00 - 11.00pm Downtown Radio - COUNTRY CEILIDH presented by TOMMY SANDS
10.00 - 12.00pm (Rpt) BBC Radio Scotland - TRAVELLING FOLK presented by ARCHIE FISHER

RADIO FREQUENCIES

FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
FM 102.8
FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
FM 96.0
FM 94.6
MW 567/LW 252

FM 99.7
see below

FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
FM 95.8/MW 1485
MW 1368

FM 88 - 90.2
MW 567/LW 252

FM 95.5
FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
FM 95.8/MW 1485

FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
MW 882
MW 567/LW 252
MW 1341
FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810
MW 567
MW 1026
FM 92.4-94.7/MW 810

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

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
BBC Radio Wales	FM 93.9 - 95.9, 103.7 - 103.9	MW 882	Tel:- 029203 22000
Chorley FM	FM 102.8		Tel:- 01257 262661
Downtown Radio		MW 1026	Tel:- 02891 815255
Manx Radio	FM 89.0, 97.2, 103.7	MW 1386	Tel:- 01624 682600
Oldham Community Radio	FM 99.7		Tel:- 0161 6244004
RTE (Radio Teilis Eirann)	via ASTRA Satellite, LW 252	MW 567	Tel:- 003531 2083111

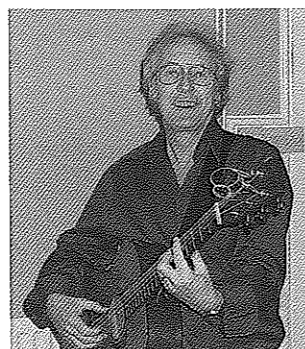


RADIO XTRA

LIVE REVIEWS



Fred Wedlock at The Hungry Horse Acoustic Folk Club on 3 May 2007



No doubt you have some musical memories of something past that you treasure? Perhaps a particular performance, a festival or a session you regularly went to, or an artist you used to follow. When chance threatens to take you back to that place or bring that performer back in front of you, there is a nagging worry that the present reality will not only fail to equal your memories but somehow devalue them in the process.

Well, a very long time ago, before some of my readers were born, I used to go each Sunday evening to a folk club in Liverpool where two regular visitors from other parts of the country used to regularly send me home with tears of joy rolling down my cheeks after an evening of great songs and humour. One of these was the late and absolutely wonderful Hamish Imlach and the other was that son of Somerset, Fred Wedlock.

Well, I've been meaning to visit the Hungry Horse Acoustic Folk Club in Little Stanney for some months now and on Thursday 3rd May, I finally made it. By coincidence, Fred Wedlock was topping the bill and I'm delighted to say that he was just as entertaining as I ever remembered him. We had a great evening.

The club meets every Thursday at the Hungry Horse pub at Rake Lane on Rake Lane in Little Stanney, just a stone's throw from the Cheshire Oaks Outlet Village. This is just off the M53 motorway near to Ellesmere Port.

Stephen and Patty Quinn have recently taken over the running of this popular pub and the folk club is hosted by John and Angela Owen. The club is in an upstairs function room that is both spacious and comfortable and does not suffer from any particular acoustic oddities. Unusual for these sorts of places. John and Angie are extremely welcoming and the feeling of the place is relaxed and friendly. They book a good selection of acts with some well-known names just about every month. I was disappointed I'd missed Tanglefoot the previous month, but it was a sell-out by the time I came to book tickets. I must mention that they have regular Singers' and Musicians' nights for those who prefer to play themselves rather than watch others.

Anyhow, the evening opened with John O'Connell from Liverpool. A young man I haven't come across before. John is a very accomplished finger style guitarist and singer/songwriter. Accompanied by Jimmy on bass, he explored a varied selection of songs from the folk-pop music border. Music by the likes of Gordon Lightfoot, Donovan, Art Garfunkel, Cat Stevens and others. Switching to classical guitar he played a stunning version of Scott Joplin's 'The Entertainer'. Enormously accomplished and sometimes quite breathtaking. I would predict that we will be hearing more of John.

When John and Jimmy finished, Fred Wedlock, a man with entertainment in his blood, could not wait for the interval but immediately came on stage. Fred is one of those performers who love to perform. Born and brought up in a pub, Fred has a great knowledge of all manner of things from his native West Country, but he does however 'speak English'.

About three quarters of an hour later we did eventually have an interval and then the raffle before Fred bounced back with his collection of stories, jokes and songs. Some were serious. For instance a moving rendition of the late Cyril Tawney's 'Oggie Man' and some ranged from the frivolous to the deeply comic. Personally, as we have family who have settled down in Bristol, his jokes shed light on a number of peculiarities I have been puzzling over.

And in-between the songs, there were some fabulous jokes, if only I could remember one or two which would be suitable for publication. Finally, the evening concluded with Fred's one mainstream hit 'The Oldest Swinger in Town', which he has updated appropriately. Then after an enthusiastically requested encore, we giggled our way to the car park and home. I am glad to say that after all these years Fred Wedlock has not lost his touch. I'll see him next time I am given the chance.

Positively, this Thursday evening proved to me that my memories of those Sunday evenings a long time back are true and not at all rose tinted. At the same time, there are fresh new acts like John O'Connell who are a delight to listen to. The club at the Hungry Horse is friendly and somewhere I'll be visiting again soon.

On the night, Fred Wedlock proved to be a member of that humorous, good natured and humane side of folk, happy to be a member of the human race. Speaking of which, I notice that they have Vin Garbutt booked in early July. By the time you read this, I am sure we will have had another wonderful evening at the Hungry Horse Acoustic with Vinny. Yes I found that while memories are not necessarily fragile, the 'here and now' is best.
Didge Lewis

Anthony John Clarke at Worden Arts Centre on 31 May 2007



Anthony John Clarke is one of several artistes I have attempted to see on several occasions recently, but for whatever reason have failed to do so.

Almost everyone I met at folk clubs raved about him and I was ashamed to admit that I knew nothing of him. My dad and I seemed to be one of the few people who wasn't word perfect on most of his songs, but instead of shunning us they were keen to tell us what a great evening was in store.

As he shuffled onto the stage I couldn't quite match the image the fans had created, with the man on stage. However it didn't take long for us to realise that big things come in small packages and we were soon regretting how long it had taken us to see him.

Songs such as "Tuesday Night Is Always Karaoke" and "The Broken Years" had us spellbound and we raced over to the merch stall to purchase his 'best of' at half time.

A family of carrion crows nesting in the ancient beams of Worden

Arts Centre added to the ambience of the evening with their raucous appreciation.

A fine second half opening by covers artist Jim Smith got everybody ready for a set that included some new tracks from AJC alongside some more crowd favourites.

I may have missed out on this gem for many years, but he is definitely now a artist when deciding who to go and see.

James Blatchley

SCOLDS BRIDLE & DAVE WALMISLEY at Gregson Lane Folk Club on 7 June 2007



It was one of those last minute panic things - every organiser's nightmare! Our regulars were expecting an evening with Jon Brindley who, due to a very nasty dose of Chickenpox (Hope your feeling better when you read this

Jon!) had to cancel with only four days to go. The question was - who could fill this slot and satisfy the audience's high expectations', not only of excellent music but with some warm entertaining chat as well.

My first thought was Scolds Bridle - Having had them at the club and at Worden Arts Centre before, I knew that they were extremely good and if they were available, I could guarantee a first class evening that would not only delight our regulars but would also appeal to those who may have travelled a distance to see Jon.

We'd had a bad couple of weeks at Gregson Lane due to the fact that some thieves had walked off with our PA speakers and bass amplifier. So you can imagine how relieved I was when Sue Bousfield said that Scolds Bridle (she and Liz Moore) were free on the night and would be delighted to come and play for us.

I was feeling quite pleased with myself for pulling off this coup at the last minute - Scolds Bridle booked and Trouble at' Mill's PA in place to ensure a great sound, I wasn't expecting 'Icing on the cake' but I certainly got some. Liz & Sue arrived accompanied by Dave Walmisley (Ex Risky Business - now performing solo) and he walked up the stairs carrying his Martin guitar and mandolin - and obviously in the mood to perform.

We (T at' M) started the evening off with a 15-minute spot, which allowed the packed audience to get their drinks in and re-arrange the furniture.

Sue had said that Dave would like to do some on his own and that he would also be providing accompaniment on one or two of their songs. (Dave plays on Scolds Bridle's latest album - 'Horizons' he also produced it - if you haven't already got it, I suggest that you go to a Scolds Bridle Concert or to www.scoldsbridle.co.uk and get a copy right away.) I told them to just do what they thought would be right and run the rest of the evening's proceedings between them. This turned out to be a good call - the whole evening then took on a festival type atmosphere - you know what I mean - if you could bottle it and re-produce it at will - you'd make a million.

Dave started the (now almost impromptu) show with a few of his own songs including 'The Raven', 'When the Fat Lady Sings' and 'Count on you'. I'd previously seen Dave with Risky Business & about 15 or so years ago I'd seen him in a duo 'Plan B'- performing at Preston Arts Centre as support to Ken Nicol in a

concert that I had arranged. I knew that he was a first class instrumentalist and singer and I was keen to see how he would go down as a solo singer/songwriter. He was fabulous - the feedback I got from our audience was more than just positive it was an overwhelming vote for more in the future.

Then Sue and Liz took the stage - the Scolds Bridle magic started (most of us had seen them before and knew what to expect). The two ladies just stand for several moments and say nothing - Sue then slightly changes her facial expression and the crowd go into fits of laughter - I have to put this down to nothing but the charisma generated by this pair who have been wowing club and festival audiences for over 30 years. The way that they work together and feed off each other during the whole of their performance is the hallmark of a very professional partnership - after all they are both serious performers who can stand on their musical ability alone- the comedy is just a bonus.

The girls sang some old favourites - I particularly love their versions of 'I'm tired of sleeping alone' and 'The OMO song' plus some off the new album - 'Horizons' my personal favourites being 'Sounds of the night', 'The Menopause' and 'Come home safely to me'. Every song that they perform has the whole audience spellbound - two voices in perfect harmony and superb guitar and bouzouki playing from Liz (must mention Sue's Drum on one song because it's easier to spell than 'bouzouki'). The also played some songs from their recent Radio 4 show, 'We are the Women'.

Like other folk clubs the tables at Gregson Lane are filled with flyers from all and sundry - Sue and Liz use these to their advantage when they sing Lynn Heralds' The Menopause - every woman in the audience promptly followed Sue's lead by picking up a flyer and using it to fan off a hot flush. (I thought that all our Gregson Lane ladies were well past that sort of thing - GD)

As well as accompanying Sue and Liz, on several songs, Dave did some more on his own during the second half. When James came up from the bar downstairs to say "It's quarter past eleven please announce 'last orders'" I don't think that anyone in either crowd or on stage could believe how fast this evening of top class entertainment had gone.

In case anyone doesn't know, a Scolds Bridle is a very useful device that shuts women up - I sincerely hope that no one ever decides to shut Sue and Liz up they are an absolute delight to see and hear - hopefully we will see them carry on for another 30 years. ("I love this music and intend to keep singing and playing it until I get bored with it! And that will be never - Liz Moore).

I'm glad to say that I have them booked at Worden Arts centre on September 20th - Dave Walmisley is performing there on November 1st and Jon Brindley (Hopefully his spots will have gone by then) is there on November 15th www.worden.ukart.com

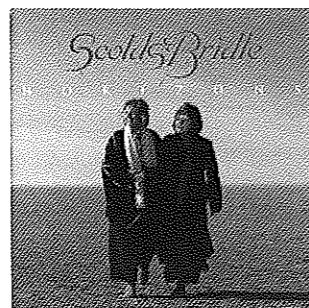
Graham Dixon

Scolds Bridle at Gregson Lane Folk Club on 7 June 2007

We turned up at Gregson Lane Folk Club in eager anticipation of an evening with Jon Brindley, but unfortunately he had been struck down with a dose of chicken pox.

At short notice Graham Dixon had managed to book 'Scolds Bridle' in Jon's place. Never having seen Scolds Bridle before I didn't know what to expect but the friendly nature of the duo as they set up, suggested we were in for an intimate, yet interesting evening. The duo proved their 32 year pedigree with an evening

of great performances helped by their friend, guitarist David Walmisley.



Singing songs from their new album 'Horizons' as well as songs from the award-winning radio ballad 'We Are The Women Left On The Shore'. Which was part of their broadcast on BBC Radio 4's Archive Hour last year, they educated and entertain the audience for the price of a daily bus ticket. This is what live music is all about.

They then popped in for an chat and a sing-song on Chorley FM during July.

James Blatchley (Chorley FM)

CARA DILLON at Southport Arts Centre on 8 June 2007



This gig heralded a return to touring for Cara, following the birth of her twin boys and it proved a real triumph as she showed she had lost none of her stage craft and if anything her voice was even sweeter than before, but surely that is not possible!!! The oft-performed "She Moved Through the Fair", confirmed my preceding remark as she gave a faultless rendition.

At this point I must mention her band, husband Sam Lakeman on keyboards and guitar, Ed Boyd from Flook, also on guitar, and the redoubtable James O'Grady on Uilleann pipes and whistles.

"Craige Hill", followed, it's a poignant love song about a couple who plan to make a new life in America, but the girl gets cold feet and calls it off. Cara gives fresh impetus to the traditional songs she performs, which is certainly the case in "Black is the Colour". Two jigs, one written by James, "The Knotted Handkerchief" preceded Sam's offering "The Huntsman". A traditional love song from Scotland, "False, False", again displayed Cara's great vocal range, it's a song with a superb melody.

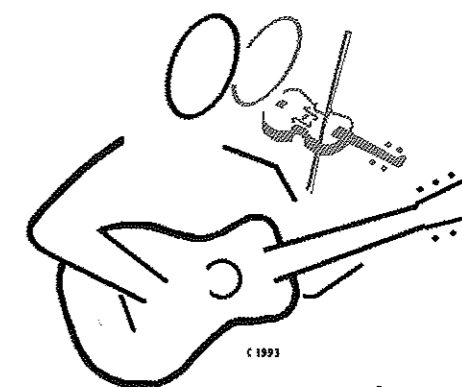
"There Were Roses", tells of two friends born either side of the divide in Northumberland, a ballad par excellence. There were smiles all round on stage as the quartet enjoyed performing the light hearted, "P Stands for Paddy". The mood changed once again with a traditional Irish hornpipe adapted as a slow air, "The Rights of Man". From Cara's new CD, "After the Morning", came "Garden Valley", with the band having flown out to Prague to record this track with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra.

Cara hails from Co. Derry in Northern Ireland and sang a Gaelic hymn, "An Criost Siol", telling of a coming together of people in God's barn to share the harvest. The penultimate offering was a song of emigration, "The Maid of Culmore", with "Where are You", bringing the evening to it's climax.

The appreciative audience bayed for more and were rewarded with a tune set featuring Cara on fiddle in a superb display of dexterity; she really should play more. It was a memorable evening with one of the most distinctive voices on the scene today, a treat too good to miss.

David Jones

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RORY McLEOD at the Rose Theatre, Edge Hill University, Ormskirk on 14 June 2006



Rory McLeod is a remarkable performer. He's been a fixture on the folk circuit for well over 20 years. About a month earlier I'd had the pleasure of catching his gig at the intimate Lewes Folk Club near Brighton, so it was with great anticipation as I looked forward to an early reunion nearer home soil at the very welcoming and friendly Rose Theatre. The venue is part of the very inclusive Edge Hill University campus at Ormskirk. There was a healthy turnout for the

one time street performer who exudes stage presence, passion and commitment about people and causes but with a good deal of humour added in.

His songs cover issues and people from those about family and love to travellers and exploited workers. Very often those themes are inextricably linked. Interspersed with his songs are a number of invigorating tunes. His music draws on a range of musical influences including Eastern European and Mediterranean Klezmer, Middle Eastern, South American and Caribbean rhythms, not to mention English and Celtic folk influences. These are drawn not only from different family traditions but his extensive work and life experiences as a frequent and adventurous traveller across several continents.

Rory McLeod is an exceptional award winning harmonica player and some of his tunes are reminiscent of the wonderful genius of the late Larry Adler. He can make the harmonica talk and do somersaults at the same time. He's also an accomplished guitarist, spoons player and, among a variety of other instruments, allegedly not bad with the trombone. I say allegedly because on both occasions I saw him play it represented a stage prop - but I've no doubt he can play it as well as everything else! Rory uses a footboard to provide percussion, which requires considerable coordination when you are playing another instrument and singing at the same time.

Shortly following his entrance to the stage he performed 'Baksheesh Dance', an ideal vehicle to demonstrate Rory's virtuoso harmonica playing, percussive foot board and wide ranging vocal talent. This was followed by the tender ballad, 'The Dreams We Breathe Through' which shows that it's easier to ask for forgiveness rather than permission. Rory wrote 'Shirley's her name' (but I call her my mum) for his mother and 'When Mum and Daddy Made Me' was written for one of his sons, Solly. The latter refers to the night Solly's mother and father's conceived him. The conception may not have been exactly immaculate but was obviously deeply satisfying for those involved! It also worked as a lullaby for the crying baby in the audience.

On a more political level we had 'Huge Sky', the story of a Turkish refugee who was about to be deported from Germany to Turkey. He killed himself by jumping out the window rather than being prepared to go back to his homeland to face torture and almost certain death. While the superb 'The Emperor's New Clothes' shows how there's always been spin. Very few of us recognise soon enough but most are fooled until it's too late and the damage has been done. We also had 'Miner's Picket Dance', written and performed on picket lines at the time of the 1984 strike, which once again had Rory excelling on harmonica.

which he preceded with a very apposite analysis of the duplicity and hypocrisy of western governments in supporting dictatorial regimes, including Saddam Hussein and the Taliban, carrying out military invasions and coups including Vietnam, the CIA backed overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile (on 11 September 1973 - the first 9/11) and the more recent illegal war in Iraq

In a similar but more personal vein was Rory's rendition of 'When you were born', a yet unrecorded song, about a young woman in mental torment having decided to safely abandon her new born baby but immediately regretting it in the aftermath of publicity. A sad song that is emotionally gut wrenching but with a happy conclusion. On a lighter but no less passionate note the first half ended with the breathless and breathtaking 'London Kisses' exploring the different types of kissing that goes on in such a cosmopolitan and often vibrant city.

Rory's maternal grandmother, who was born in Russia, loved dancing and that's how she met her future husband. She remained active into her 80s and 'The Wind is Getting Stronger' is about her zest for life. This was followed by one of Rory's rare versions of songs by other artists. Ewan MacColl's 'The Joy of Living' was sung in memory of good friends. The evening continued with a song about Charlie Bogarde, a character who worked as a market porter in the hubbub of London's Spitalfields market in London. A great set concluded with the excellent 'Hug You Like a Mountain'.

Rory McLeod is an exceptional and unique performer, combining personal experiences and situations within a social and political ethos that knows no national boundaries. His wide vocal range and his exceptional musical ability, most notably on the harmonica, match his talent as a songwriter. He is also able to capture and absorb into his music the moods, rhythms and influences gained from his extensive travels. Rory McLeod clearly has a genuine respect, love, empathy and affection for family, friends and acquaintances he comes into contact with. He's a performer who gives his all generously and his audiences recognise it. That explains his popularity and longevity as a mainstay of the UK folk scene. If you want an introduction to his music, the more recent 'Brave Faces' and the double collection, 'Mouth to Mouth', are good places to start. Visit www.rorymcleod.com for further information.

Lewis Jones

CHRIS AND SIOBHAN NELSON Live at the Worden Arts Centre, Leyland on 14 June 2007



This fifth in a second series of concerts live at Worden Arts Centre sponsored by The South Ribble Arts Forum and supporting famine relief via Sing for Someone Else's Supper. Graham Dixon said a few words re the charity and then Chris introduced Pete Rimmer who was going to open the night.

There was a good crowd in and when Pete started with 'I Bid you Goodnight' it was nearly all over before it had begun. There was a good response from the audience and his second song 'Wandering' was also well received. During the third song 'The Cuckoo' I couldn't help thinking we are used to birds (nesting jackdaws) accompanying the songs at Worden. The fourth song 'Mersey River' (one of PR's own compositions) was a fictional story with an easy Chorus that had everyone joining in. Then all too soon Pete was finishing with his last song 'Try for the Sun' a

Donovan cover.

Chris and Siobhan Nelson then took the floor for their first song an unaccompanied number 'Saturday Rolling Around', written by Richard Thompson, it got a good audience reaction. Their second song 'The False Knight on the Road' featured Chris on tenor guitar, a lively tune that encouraged the audience to join in. Next on the list was 'Winter Winds' I particularly liked their arrangement on this song, Siobhan's voice had the audience spellbound while Chris weaved in and out with a fine fiddle. The next song 'Cathy Shaw' made me smile I couldn't help feeling I had heard the story before (Woman as Man).

When Pete returned on guitar with Chris on fiddle for the Mark Knopfler song 'Daddy's Gone to Knoxville', I felt the need to tap my feet, and 'City Lights', a song penned by Barry Wake (a friend from Southampton) followed. Pete left the stage again with thanks from Chris and Siobhan. A couple of very lively fiddle tunes followed.

Next came a Joni Mitchell song 'Care' about red haired man who drank red wine I don't think I know him but I think I'd probably get on with him well, Chris played Mandola on this number and the audience again warmed to Siobhan's brilliant vocals. 'Tomorrow's Sun' made us think about friends who wouldn't return and the story about the prayer book being thumbed through many times gave a sad feel to the song.

'The Bold Dragoon' gave us another story to concentrate on. We had some American visitors in the audience and the last song of this half was appropriately an American song 'Chased Old Sata' with Chris on fiddle this time.

The second half started with '10 Long Years' an unaccompanied Peter Knight song about miscarriage of justice Then a song about the death of an outlaw 'Streets of Forbes' with Chris playing viola. The next tune, again on viola, was the 'Bone Lace Weaver', certainly well received by the audience. Another American song 'Stars Fall' by Jenny Benford from North Carolina. Then the mood changed with 'The Widow Maker' another Barry Wake song (about a pneumatic drill used for hewing copper) with a chorus about the men killed through use of this tool.

Another Richard Thompson song, 'Outside Of The Inside', with Chris on vocals and Mandola and Siobhan providing harmonious backing vocals. The audience joined in on the 'Mole in a Hole' with Siobhan back on lead vocals. 'Song of the Artesian Water' was a memory test, a story to listen to, with an invite to sing like a didgeridoo.

Alan Hull's 'Winter Song', had the audience singing along, then sadly 'If I Lose, Let Me Lose', the final song of the set, came round too fast. This was a fun ending to an evening of songs, tunes and stories delivered in a very professional and entertaining way.

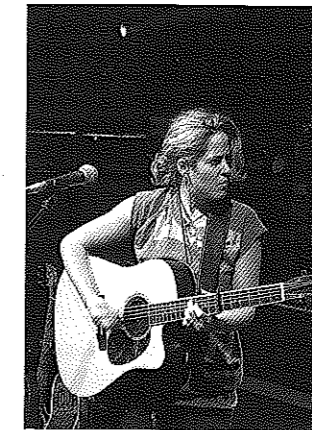
Of course in true folk club style, the MC asked "Do you want another", we got a Shirley Collins song 'Bonny Kate' to finish. Lots of positive comments from the audience, the one that sticks out in my mind is "How does she remember all those words?" The American visitors said that they had thoroughly enjoyed the 'Nelson experience'.

Thanks to Chris and Siobhan, (also Pete Rimmer) for a brilliant night, we also raised money for famine relief via the raffle. Thanks also to Denis Wane on Sound, John Cruickshank on lights.

Check out: www.singforsomeoneelsesupper.ukart.com; www.cnelson.plus.com; www.worden.ukart.com

Bernadette Dixon (The better half)

AMY WADGE, supported by Glyn Shipman, at Garstang Unplugged on 14 June 2007



Solo appearances in our area by Amy Wadge are as rare as summer days have been this June. She's one third of 'Hummingbird' who were appearing next day at the Beverly Festival, so this stop off in Garstang was something of a warmer for the weekend to follow. Perhaps 'warmer' shouldn't be taken literally though, for it was a cold night and she'd had just come back from holiday in Lanzarote.

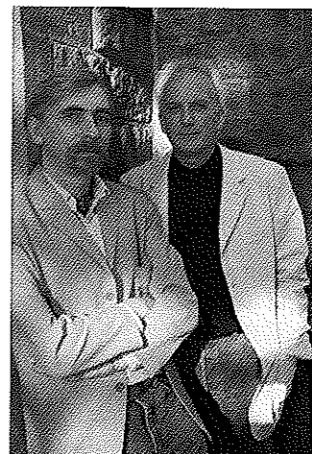
In person, Amy's dynamism is the first thing that strikes you. She's quite small, but there's a huge personality in there. The voice and talent are huge too. The set consisted mainly of songs from her current CD 'No Sudden Moves' and the previous (almost) eponymous 'WOJ'. They're powerful songs too, well crafted and presented. Standout songs were the opener 'No Sudden Moves', 'Always', and 'Shattered' from the current CD, 'Scream', 'Nothing' and my personal favourite, 'Breathe', from 'WOJ'.

Amy played Avalon guitars, both six and twelve string, and keyboard. Her virtuoso performance with the repeat pedal had to be heard to be believed. This technology seems to be becoming more common, with so many performances using it just to prove that it can be used, rather than to enhance the song. Amy used it just once, and got it right.

Support came from Garstang Unplugged regular, Glyn Shipman. He's an excellent songwriter; a singular talent with both lyric and tune. It's generally upbeat, and quite complex. These are the sorts of lyrics that really require attention to appreciate the complexity. Titles won't mean much unless you get the chance to hear him but 'Jesus and the Camper Van' and, my favourite, 'You and Me Babe' are on his website, and well recommended. Guest sound engineer Rob Bee's work at the mixing desk was well appreciated.

This was an excellent evening, rounded off by fellow 'Hummingbird' Edwina Hayes joining Amy for a rousing version of Dylan's 'I Shall Be Released'. It was well worth being there, and the sight of the cartoon Amy on the side of her van gave us something to remember, as well as the musical memories of the evening. Web references: www.garstangunplugged.com www.amywadge.co.uk www.myspace.com/glynshipman

Don Moore



JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE at The Citadel, St Helens on 23 June 2007

He is undoubtedly one of the best singer/songwriters this country has ever produced and a clutch of awards attest to that fact. On stage John Tams gives the air of a man in total control of his surroundings with a riveting line in chat and Barry Coope alongside him providing 13 unrivalled accompaniment and outstanding harmonies.

The evening got under way with "Lay Me Low", Barry led with John explaining how the song came about from his local pub the "Spanker Inn", in Nether Heague and is in fact a sea song?!? John wrote, "Amelia Where You Bound To" in 1992 while filming in Yalta in the Ukraine. During that time Michael Heseltine was closing the pits while the Grimethorpe Colliery Band won the premier brass band contest at the Royal Albert Hall.

"Harry Stone", died in 1937 and was John's grandfather, this award winning song named after him is coupled with "Remembrance Day", set to the hymn tune of "There is a Green Hill Far Away" and performed acappella. Barry led again on, "Who Will Blow the Candle Out Tonight", a love song written while John was living in a squat in West Hampstead. A song about yearning for home and those you love most.

"Hold Back the Tide", is a song of shipbuilding written when Glasgow was the European Capital of Culture. It's a song written from a woman's perspective performed by Wendy Wetherby on stage and Linda Thompson on the album. The show of course is the "Radio Ballads" written 40 years on from when Charles Parker and Ewan MacColl spoke to real people - not those sanitised behind a microphone - about things that were important to them. For the final song of the half, "Lucifer and Vulcan", led into "Steelo's". John went around what was left of the steel industry to get a feel for writing about the subject. The steelworks are now only there for showing school parties around where once 100,000 people were employed.

A broken token ballad started the second half, "Banks of the Red Roses", was first heard by John being sung by the Dubliners. John McCusker, fiddler extraordinaire, has written a suite in six movements, entitled, "Under One Sky". JT took part with six Scots while he was one of six Sassenachs involved. Jim Causley performed John's song, "Will I See Thee More" in the show, it's a truly memorable number.

Tongue firmly in cheek John did a Yorkshire version of the Dylan classic "Don't Think Twice, It's Alright" and then he performed a version of MacColl's "Manchester Rambler", which is a personal favourite of mine. This year is the 75th anniversary of the Kinder trespass, when walking on Kinder Scout in the High Peak was banned so that the landed gentry were free to shoot grouse, but out of all that evil finally came something good.

From a Dutch play came, "All Clouds the Sky", a song for the fishing. With so many fishermen lost, to quote Sir Walter Scott, "It's not fish you're eating, it's men's lives". We were treated to, "Rolling Home" for the encore on another triumphant night for a duo whose mere presence gives off a satisfying aura.

David Jones

ZOE MULFORD & JIM RONAYNE at the Manor Folk Club Wallasey Sunday 15 July 2007

Along with several other people I have been watching the progress of these two for some time now. You only have to look at their respective web sites to see Zoe's songwriting awards www.zoemulford.com and Jim's reviews of his CD "Voyage of the Dunbrody" www.jimronayne.co.uk to form an appreciation of the musical pedigree here.

Zoe hails from Philadelphia USA and is an award winning singer songwriter of immense talent. She is a multi instrumentalist playing guitar, banjo and melodica. She is certainly one of, if not the best fingerstyle guitarists that I have ever seen. Jim Ronayne is a long established fingerstyle guitarist of some quiet renown on the Northwest folk scene. He's trod the boards with some of the best and has appeared in concert with John

Renbourn. He has become a regular feature writer in the guitar column of this magazine.

And now to the gig. The Manor is one of the best folk clubs in the Northwest ably run by Roger Parker, George and Gill Peckam, Marje Ferrier and Mike Hignett. The Club boasts a terrific sound system expertly engineered by Maria Weaver. George and Gill opened the evening by performing some masterfully harmonised duets reducing the audience to a warm sense of wellbeing. Their set aptly set the scene for the main event.

The room positively buzzed with expectation and when Zoe and Jim came onstage they did not let anybody down. Zoe started the gig solo with "The Fox", "The Night is Young", then the beautiful self-penned "Those Boys", a tale of women watching boys turn into men. In the middle of introducing Jim to come to the stage to join her, in walked John Renbourn who had come down from Scotland to see him play. Yes...that John Renbourn.

From the minute that he joined her on stage the sense of humour and banter between the two of them started with Jim gently teasing her about a fluffed introduction a couple of nights previously when apparently she had introduced him as a "fingerstyle" guitar player. (Jim explaining that this is an advanced form of fingerstyle guitar playing invented in China) This set the tone for the rest of the evening with a lovely-relaxed on-stage manner between two superb musicians who are obviously very comfortable with each other, and both on the top of their form.

They started the "duo" part of the evening with Zoe's Gonna Wear Red and then (one has to write with quite some nerve and panache performed Lord Franklin for John Renbourn) the finale of which was a lovely little moment with John raising his hat to them and Jim promising that "the cheque would be in the post mate".

They paid a little "homage" to both of their jazz influences with Zoe's We Could just Pretend and then introduced Ruth Dockwray to join them for a set of tunes with Ruth on fiddle.

Ruth Dockwray was born in Liverpool and studied music at Bangor University. She plays and teaches violin, piano and music theory. Ruth is a vivacious young woman whose performances encompass a wide variety of musical styles. In other words she can play anything.

With Jim on bass, Ruth on fiddle and Zoe on guitar they then performed Angel in the Storm (my favourite track from Roadside Saints) and Earth and the Sky and then with Jim switching back to guitar Summertime. A three-tune set, which I think it's fair to write, stunned everyone in the club. Apparently the three of them met at a party last Xmas jammed a bit at the party and have taken things from there. Zoe again started the second set solo with the beautifully written Elegy followed by the very funny Just Before I Go, a defining relationship song if ever there was one. This was followed by "Babylon / Low Tide" The former being an acapella tune which shows off her vocal talent to considerable degree, the lyrics to the latter making it possibly one of the most sensual songs that you will hear in a folk club today. For his solo guitar tune for the night Jim chose Santa Cruz by David Qualey a real "tour de force" of fingerstyle playing if ever we heard one. With Jim switching back to bass they then romped through Zoe's tune Coffee Song a tune dedicated to nightshift workers. Introducing Ruth Dockwray back on stage they then launched into an absolutely superb arrangement of Cyndi Lauper's Time After Time. They finished the evening with another of Zoe's tunes American Wake, and then came back for an encore with Zoe's Our Lady of the Highways.

All in all a thoroughly entertaining evening of stirring and heart rendering performances from all concerned. The show encapsulated all that is good in the folk world. True talent and audience feeling and participation. Mulford is a supreme songstress and performer of dynamic proportions. Ronayne's guitar aerobics defy believe and Dockwray's mellifluous fiddling is nectar to the ears. If this is a sign of things to come they are going to sell out every single folk club in the country over the next 12 months. A great night.

Neil Hamilton

FESTIVAL NEWS AND MUSIC EVENTS



CHESTER FOLK FESTIVAL 26 to 29 May 2007

Held once again in the village of Kelsall, just 10 miles outside of Chester towards Manchester. Despite the great British weather holding true to the old saying "Never cast a clout till May is out" this year was a little cold and wet, but it did nothing to dampen the spirits of those attending. Indeed the attendance figures proved the popularity of this festival is growing. Playing to packed houses in the main marquee, the social club and the community centre, the audience had feast of both national and local artists to entertain them.

Saturday saw Crucible, Last Nights Fun, Nancy Kerr & James Fagan, Devils interval, Full House, Vicki Swan & Jonny Dyer, and Les Barker all strutting their stuff. All were most excellent, but I have to say Crucible, Nancy Kerr & James Fagan, and Full House (a local band now with 5 members) impressed me the most. Although the comedy from Les Barker and Last Nights Fun, always firm favourites, seemed endless, - need I say more!

Sunday found Swarbs Lazarus headlining the bill with Coope Boyes & Simpson, Isambarde, Meridian, and Caliko. For me Isambarde walked away with the crown for the best performance.

This was the 2nd year for them at Chester festival and the band just gets stronger and stronger. I have to confess to being a little disappointed with the top of the bill Swarbs Lazarus. Perhaps I expected more. Certainly they posses the fastest sets of fingers on the planet, but for some reason their 'showing off' and choice of material left me cold. This was definitely the year of the frantic 'Celtic style' strumming bands, indeed some of the bands are now tending to sound very much the same. However, worthy of an extra mention was the very talented multi instrumentalist's Vicki Swan & Jonny Dyer. I hadn't seen them before, nor have I seen a 'Nyckelharpa' a Swedish instrument I am told! They gave impressive performance and are well worth looking out for in the future.

I understand the main Monday concert at 2pm was a huge success with The Church Fitters, Phil Beer, Bill Caddick, and Ben & Joe Broughton on the bill. I would love to comment on it but the community centre was completely full and I couldn't get in! My fault for trying to be in two places at the same time. Memo for next year: get there early! However, I did manage to catch the 12pm to 2pm mini concert with Caliko, Isambarde, Andy Clarke, Roy Clinging & Neil Brookes, and Welcome, Finnan & Chrimes, again putting on fine performance, so I can't really

complain.

All in all it was an absolutely superb and well run festival, with all the sing-a-rounds, workshops, and sessions, never a dull moment, always something going on! Congratulations must go to the organisers and their team, for a job well done.

Peter Massey

THE ALISON ARMS FREE FOLK FESTIVAL Fri 8 to Sun 10 June 2007

At one time festivals were the preserve of rich entrepreneurs and mega-star acts, but in the 21st Century that is no longer true. Yes, huge and TV-broadcast festivals still happen on an almost weekly basis throughout the summer, more intimate festivals. These take place in large gardens, small fields and most usually in pub beer gardens.

Such was the Alison Arms Free Folk Festival in the Chorley suburb of Coppull. Organised by a small team led by Simon Goodfellow, who also runs the Wednesday night singarounds, it is an intimate event that mixes the best of the acts usually found playing on singers nights and in small folk clubs alongside more major folk artistes and singer-songwriters.

The audience was a mixture of folk-club devotees, drinkers, interested locals and bikers; many of whom I thought would not appreciate the mostly whimsical acoustic music. Despite the constant babble of voices and chinking of glasses, the audience loudly appreciated some of the best performances I've heard in heard in one place at any one time. I was able to get to see both Friday and Saturday evening concerts.

Each act brought something different and it would be unfair to cherry pick as everyone had their favourite festival act or moment, but a personal highlight was the last minute addition of guitarist Mark Claydon. Mark played alongside Martin Simpson last year and also plays in a country/folk-rock band as well as being an in demand session.

A particularly unique piece is his African drumming piece where Mark begins by playing each of the different drum patterns as a riff on the guitar, before building them up into one big piece incorporating all five separate riffs. Breathtaking. Roll on next years festival.

James Blatchley

SEAN KEANE, JOHN WRIGHT, ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE at the Bromborough Civic Hall (Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival) on 9 July 2007

Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival, held over a weekend in early July, featured a Saturday evening concert with three artists who achieved formidable reputations on the folk circuit. The concert was part of a strong festival bill in the compact and accessible Wirral suburb of Bromborough. On a glorious summer's evening - literally the calm before the ensuing storms - we looked forward to a mouth-watering evening of the highest quality entertainment.

One of the problems of dipping into a festival is that the major artists usually perform at least two split sets. If you're unable to catch their full performance you are sometimes left with the inevitable feeling that you've come in half way through a TV series and have to pick up the plot.

Anthony John Clarke is regarded a clever lyricist and songwriter of talent. I've seen his full set on previous occasions and enjoyed the gravitas of a number of his more serious songs. Although his 40-minute set went down well with most of the audience, for me it seemed too lightweight and the humour failed to connect

but this may have been in contrast with his other sessions at the festival. And it's always a difficult task being on first with the anticipation of two other such prestigious performers to follow.



John Wright was having some problems with his throat but this didn't prevent him delivering his usual wholehearted performance with every sinew stretched with passion and commitment to whatever song he was performing. Wright has to be one

of the finest interpreters around on the folk scene. He has a mild mannered yet commanding stage presence that engages audiences to the full. His set opened with 'The Old Boys', a track from his outstanding and most recent CD, 'The Gypsy Life'. The song was written by the brothers Rory and Calum MacDonald of Runrig and is a poignant lament for young men who have moved away from their homeland - usually to fight wars - and have never returned. 'You tell me the battle is over' saw John interpret one of Dave Mallett's finest songs with justifiable outrage and indignation at those who destroy whales and the planet without any respect for its species and environment.

Another song from the latest album is 'Making up the miles', a song from the great Kieran Halpin that the writer sent to John several years ago shortly after he'd composed it. John didn't like it initially but later went back to it and it's certainly turned out to be one of Kieran's finest compositions and one of the best and most emotive tracks on the album. We then went into old favourites mode with the uplifting Mary Chapin Carpenter ballad, 'Naked to the eye', followed, in a more somnambulant mood, by Dar Williams' 'Family', a song that John was first sent in 1996 when he was still working as a shepherd. He was immediately struck by it's feel and meaning. It remains a firm audience favourite as it evokes so many different emotions and touches many common experiences.

John Wright always seems to have a canny knack of attracting some superb musicians and artists to accompany him. The current line up comprises of Pete Abbott, a formidable singer songwriter and guitarist in his own right, and the great fiddle and guitar playing of Joe (no relation) Wright. Their quality shone throughout the evening and all had the opportunity to show off their considerable talents with a cover version of one of my favourite all time songs, Don Henley's highly resonant, 'The End of the Innocence'.

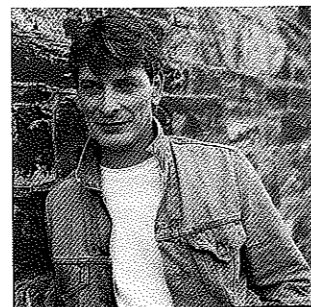
The set finished all too soon with 'Whatever goes around comes around'. The late Chris Jones, a close friend and one time musical partner of Kieran Halpin, wrote it. By this time John was clearly struggling with a bad cold and had the audience joining in supportively with the sing along upbeat chorus. Despite his throat problems, this was another wholehearted performance by a singer who gives nothing less than his all every time he walks out on the stage.

After a short interval, Sean Keane then treated us to a wonderful set. Keane is one of Ireland's finest song interpreters and musicians, and on this occasion he was accompanied by the high-class guitarist Pat Coyne from Connemara and the exemplary Roscommon based fiddler, Sean Regan who has played on stage with a host of notable artists, including the Cathie Ryan Band. His performance was certainly a revelation, taking fiddle playing to a new dimension.

Keane's set featured mainly songs and tunes from his more familiar back catalogue, starting with 'Home away from home', then quickly engaging the audience with 'Tunnel Tigers', Ewan MacColl's homage to the unsung heroes who made the London

underground system possible. Most of the men who dug out the tunnels were Irish migrants and many paid for the privilege with their lives or serious injury.

In a more laid back fashion, Keane delivered his unique interpretation of John Prine's superb ballad, 'Killing the blues' with Regan's fiddle pulling unashamedly at the heartstrings. The sedate offering of 'The Man from Connemara' was preceded by an opportunity for the highly accomplished Coyne and the virtuoso Regan to take the spotlight, and followed by a beautiful lilting ballad taken from the Citizen Keane collaboration. It's about someone who loses his job and decides to leave the rat race for an alternative lifestyle in the countryside in Ventry. He asks his wife to go with him and she responds 'The pleasure will be mine' - hence the title of the song.



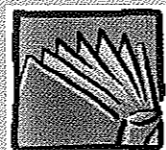
After a further selection of jigs and reels, Sean concluded with another old favourite, 'Home', followed by some inventive mouth music before finishing with 'Taglione', a song that tells the tale of a miserly elderly bachelor who wants to get a wife, then finds love through an unusual and unexpected turn of events. Having decided to take up ice skating, he then falls through the ice and is rescued by the woman who turns out to be his bride to be. Not exactly speed dating but it obviously worked for him!

Beneath Sean Keane's understated relaxed vocal delivery lies a voice of pure quality and strength. He's a superb singer who, very much like John Wright, has an uncanny knack of picking just the right material, drawing mainly on the best - and often underrated - writers from his homeland and across the Atlantic. Like Wright he also has the knack of spotting the best musicians who can complement his vocal style.

As a fitting end to a great evening the Sean Keane and John Wright bands gathered together on stage with the ever popular MC, Dave Jones, to deliver a fine rendition of 'Wild Mountain Thyme', which sent everyone home with a warm satisfying feeling. What a night it turned out to be!

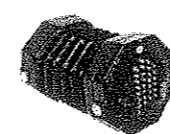
Lewis Jones

JOHN'S DIARY CHAT



Hello again. As I write, it is almost the end of July and tropical storms and floods abound. Let's hope that by the time you read this edition that the 'summer' we were expecting arrives a little late.

Everyone at the 3rd (but first weekend) Wirral Folk on the Coast Festival couldn't believe their luck with nature as the weekend of the 8th, 9th and 10th June proved to be blisteringly hot. Scenically, the festival site, at the OC Sports and Leisure Club in Bromborough, is absolutely superb and must be one of the best in the country with four acres of manicured grass and hedges, a bowling green and tennis courts and loads of easy car and caravan access to this beautiful oasis of a camp site. Facilities are very good too at this former manor house with a 200-seat concert room and first floor rooms suitable for the likes of 'Chance to Meet' and music sessions. The management



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			27th	closed	
				** = extra night	
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Date		Admission			
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25th	Singers & Musicians Night	Free			
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15th	ACOUSTAK	£3-00			
22nd	Singers & Musicians Night	Free			
29th	Singers & Musicians Night	Free			

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and staff too at this venue are very helpful and friendly and the ale and food is great as well, and reasonably priced.

After many hiccups during the festival preparation period it was just fantastic to see 32 acts performing so professionally for the enthralled punters. The headliners being the Kathryn Tickell, Sean Keane and John Wright bands, Bob Fox/Billy Mitchell, Johnny Coppin, Marie Little and others. An excellent number of high quality local performers helped to make each of the six concerts go off very successfully. The wonderful Kirkby singer/songwriter John O'Connell (The Urban Troubadour) once again proved he is very much a 'cut above' and brought the festival to a brilliant conclusion with his interpretation of many of those popular folk songs that you had forgotten about. John's own material is also extremely listenable as well. <http://www.johnconnellmusic.com/>

Looking to next year, I can confirm that the OC Club will again be the venue for WFOTC 2008 and the dates for your diary are the 6th, 7th and 8th of June. Presently, some of the confirmed top acts who will appear there are Chris While and Julie Matthews, Harvey Andrews and Les Barker. The following acts to be confirmed by contract are - Martin Carthy, Jez Lowe, Les Barker, Tom Topping Band and John O'Connell. Excellent support will doubtless be provided by Fiddlestone, Phil Chisnall, Vocal Point, Alison Parker and the Third Man with, as I write, more acts still to be announced.

I strongly recommend you set aside that weekend for a visit to Bromborough. OK, yes, it is on the Wirral, but to those of you who live east of the peninsular, please remember that 'you do not need a passport to cross the River Mersey'. Without breaking the speed limit one can get to Bromborough from Liverpool city centre in about fifteen/twenty minutes by car, so it really is accessible and easy to find at CH62 6AR and just a stones throw from the New Chester Road.

Festivals

So far Angela and I have visited seven festivals, the first being Upton on Severn, where it must be said, we were rather disappointed with the musical fayre offered. Plenty of dancing but not much good quality professional folk music around.

Over the Whit weekend we visited the Chester Festival at Kelsall, which once again was absolutely excellent. My favourites there were the Churchfitters who brought the house down on the last night. The young band Isambarde from Coventry were a treat and presented an excellent 'Chance to Meet' event and Last Night's Fun were their usual mixture of brilliant musicianship and comedy with little Nick Scott once again baring the brunt of Chris Sherburn's jibes. Regretfully, the less I say about Swarb's Lazarus the better!!

The Middlewich Folk and Boat Festival (MFAB), had its usual great line up of artists that commenced on the Friday night with Seth Lakeman and Elbow Jane and was topped off on the final evening with an immaculate performance from Show of Hands, with Amanda Sykes adding beauty, discreet double bass playing and harmony singing par excellence. A pity though that the campsite has been relocated quite a distance from the main marquee and town. It is a long (and very wet) distance to walk to in the rain when you miss the last courtesy bus back to the campsite.

Angela and I also visited Stewart Lever's Lymm Festival specifically to see the new line up of Garva at the concert named "Not the Garva Irish Night". Tony Gibbons has managed to obtain the services of Phil Hare (guitar), Kevin Webster (melodeon) formerly a member of Garva a while back and John

Murphy's son Liam on uellian pipes and other woodwind. The lads put on a great show with, by their own admission, little rehearsal. Let's hope this line-up manages to stay together. As Tony said, it was great to hear the box and pipes together again. It sounded just like old times. I would also like to thank and make mention of Lesley McGough and Terry Coyne, Tony's former colleagues in Garva, who provided such wonderful sounds with Tony in the days post Shay Black. No doubt they will be performing in other formats in the future and I wish them (as Vinny would say) - "All the very best".

A day visit to the Four Fools Festival and a weekend at the Conwy Bluegrass Festival created a complete contrast for us over consecutive weekends. At Four Fools it was good to meet up with many faces that Angela and I know from Maghull, The Wooden Horse and other folk clubs on the other side of the Mersey. Conwy was something though. Where else could you go and sit for over five hours in a theatre style auditorium and see act after act presenting bluegrass music to such a high standard? The best acts for me were Sunnyside, a quartet from Czechoslovakia, Shake the Roots and John Dowling's band Doghouse Central who all hail from that 'hotbed of bluegrass', Cheshire. As I may have mentioned before John is a former World Champion banjo player having knocked spots off the Yanks over in USA a few years ago. Did this festival have too many banjos? No not really. Just happy music played with a smile on the face. You have to get used to the lack of discipline of audiences though who seem to think that it is acceptable to move around the auditorium at anytime during an act's performance. Lack of a recognised interval during this lengthy show meant you had to take your own comfort breaks whenever you could.

We have just returned from the Brampton Live Festival drawn there by the fact that Steve Earle was the headliner. Unfortunately I must report that, in my opinion, this was one of the most disappointing festivals we have ever been to. With the emphasis being too much on Roots and not enough on traditional/contemporary folk music, and with little else available, we felt badly let down. Kathryn Tickell and Corrine Hewitt's 'State of the Union Show' went on much too long and seemed fragmented at times with main festival guests tooting and frowning on and off the stage. The arm-swinging Eddi Reader has many followers and so too has the angry man of folk - Dick Gaughan, but I felt that many of their negative comments were in conflict with those of Kathryn's who was most positive about the collaboration that goes on musically between southern Scotland and Northern England. It was significant that the negative comments generated applause from certain members of the audience yet Kathryn's positive comments generated no recognition by the audience. A great pity.

I must say that the only saving grace for this festival in my eyes was that the best performances we saw were given by Les Barker, Last Night's Fun and the wonderful Spooky Men's Chorale from Australia. With seventeen voices good enough to grace the Eisteddfod and with a superb visual performance of morose and glaring body language, this is an act that you just cannot take your eyes off for a second. Visit <http://www.spookymen.com.au/spookyed.htm> for a taste of their talent. Keith Donnelly tried very hard as the compere of the final concert to control the talking masses at the back of the main marquee and generally succeeded where others had failed at previous concerts. I wonder how long it is going to be before festival organisers recognise that the best way to prevent such disturbing 'talkers' is to fill the whole marquee right to the back with chairs? Job done, problem solved. With the second marquee being a 'sit on the ground jobbie' the venues were, again in my opinion, too large and distinctly uncomfortable. The attitude and conduct of some solo artists also left a lot to be desired with political

preaching and swearing on stage. Within minutes of coming on stage the top act decided it was quite in order to use the 'F' word (and I don't mean 'folk') in front of the large number of children who were sat in front of him. Although Angela and I are not in any way prudes we found the display provided by this now unrecognisable American icon both tedious and boring. Needless to say we did not 'stay the course' to see his act through fully. We trudged back to our caravan in the mud for a very nice cup of tea and bed. Never mind, with Shrewsbury, (at its new venue), Fylde (at its 30th Anniversary event) and Bromyard festivals to come, I am sure we will end the festival season on a high.

Last Autumn witnessed a burst of extra folk activity in the Swinton area, complementary to the weekly Monday folk club. The club and folk festival venue at the White Lion saw the introduction of ad-hoc Friday night concerts; these have now become a regular feature on the last Friday of each month hosted by Pete Ryder. The annual festival is held towards the end of October, and initial moves are being made for a repeat of last year's inaugural and highly successful Folk Music and Lancashire night, 27 November, put on jointly by Swinton Folk Club and the Swinton Rugby League Supporters Trust. For updates on both events, google Swinton Folk Club and for the latter, www.lionstrust.co.uk

What do you do when you are in the middle of your annual folk festival and the licensee of your folk club (and festival venue) suddenly decides to do the 'offmans'? Well this happened to Stewart Lever. Yes, right in the middle of the Lymm Festival the licensee decided to close the Railway Hotel and head off for pastures new without telling Stewart. This left Stewart only two days to find a venue for Billy Mitchell's concert. Stewart tells me that he did it, but it was the most stressful twenty-four hours he has ever experienced. Anyway, our Stewart's a quick worker and with all the help of the Lymm folkies, particularly Bernard Cromarty, the club was re-branded. It is now the 'Lymm Folk Club' and the club website has been renamed to www.lymmfolkclub.org.uk. Stewart's already got a new venue at the Spread Eagle Hotel. It is located right in the centre of the village close to the canal. Post code is WA13 0AG. For some of the bigger gigs though, like Vin Garbutt and Jez Lowe a larger venue will be required and that will be - the Lymm Rugby Club, Crouchley Lane, Lymm, WA13 0AT. It is on the A56 heading towards Altrincham. Take the first right after the Church View pub. Next time you see Stewart he suggests that you give him a big hug. I think he needs one after all he has gone through. For further info ring Stewart on 07919-270-916 or email him at stewart_lever@yahoo.co.uk

Club news

Bad news first. Ron Callow has been indicating to me in the past that the Howcroft FC has been suffering with poor support. A change of licensee has also caused problems and consequently the club had its last night on 12th June when the main act was Pete Ryder, a founder member of the club. Ron wishes to express his thanks to everyone who supported The Howcroft over the years.

Now the better news. Brenda Judge at Acoustic Folk at the Rugby Club tells me that the club will move to the Nursery Inn, Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport, on Thursday 6th September. This means a change of night and a change of name. The new name will be - "Acoustic Folk at the Nursery". The opening night will see David South and Lynn and Barrie Hardman as the special guests.

Kieron Hartley, who runs the Crown FC and The Armoury FC seems to be a glutton for punishment as he has started a further club at the Heaton Mersey Sports and Social Club, Halewood

Road, Stockport. I am unsure about the name but I have listed it as Heaton Mersey FC. This club will meet monthly on the first Thursday.

Paul and Penny at The Acoustic Tearoom, advise that they have changed their website address to www.acoustictearoom.com instead of '.co.uk'.

Eric Cox at Biddulph up in Arms FC tells me that Chris While and Julie Matthews will be appearing at Sandbach Town Hall on 24th October and on 3rd November Rosie Hardman comes out of retirement again and will be appearing at Biddulph Town Hall.

Graham Cooper will again be her accompanist having flown in from his home in Portugal. By the way if anyone would like to book Graham while he is in this country, just ring 0151-678-9902. Support act for Rosie will be Judy and Dave - the excellent Sad Pig.

The sudden disbandment of Garva caused problems for Pauline Dowsett at Leigh FC who asked Harvey Andrews to perform in their stead. Pauline wishes to express her thanks to Harvey for stepping in at such short notice. Apparently he put on a brilliant performance. She also apologises for the lack of publicity and availability of tickets for this gig. Being away on holiday she was unable to facilitate advance ticket sales in the usual way.

Whilst on the subject of Leigh FC, Pauline bids a welcome back to her club to the wonderful Fiona Simpson who will perform there on Friday 28th September. Fiona is also booked to appear at the Cross Keys on 29th August. Contact number for further Fiona Simpson bookings is 0151-678-9902.

I saw Fiona recently at Maghull FC and she put on a superb show, so much so that she won herself a booking at the 2008 Maghull Day of Music. Well done Fi.

Pauline Westall, the organiser of the Open Door FC tells me that the club has another Extravaganza event coming up - No. 13. It will take place on Sunday 14th October when the guest performers will be Trio Threalfall, George Papavgeris and Hughie Jones.

Mentioning Hughie makes a nice link as his wife Christine tells me that the reason for the Everyman FC having to close on 11th September is because there will be a Food Festival on Hope Street on that date and all the goings on will make it very difficult to accommodate the usual Tuesday night folk club in the Everyman Bistro.

Pete Rimmer a stalwart of The Bothy wishes to inform of an open mic night every Thursday - free admission starting at 9pm at The Herald, Portland Street, Southport.

Clive Pownceby, boss-man at The Bothy reminds everyone of two monthly music sessions that take place at the 'Guest House', Union Street, Southport. 1st Saturday at lunchtime and 3rd Monday in the evening. Give Clive a ring if you want more details.

And now something for next year's diary - Alton and Carol Alexander at Frodsham FC have a couple of significant events they wish to bring to notice. On 11th January 2008 a celebration of the club's 40th Birthday as a folk club will take place. On 19th January there will be a special concert night at Frodsham Parish Hall, Church Street when the special guests will be Jez Lowe, Mary Humphreys and Anahata. Ring 01928-733-050 for tickets.

The Hungry Horse Acoustic continues to go from strength to strength with full house attendances recently at the Houghton Weavers and Vin Garbutt nights. Additionally, artists such as Cheshire's - Full House, The Time Bandits and Shake the Roots appeared for the first time and were very well received. Local bands, Alison Parker and the Third Man, Reckless Elbow and The Queensberry Rules from Stoke-on-Trent paid their second visits and entertained superbly. Most recently Zoe Mulford (USA) and her accompanist Jim Ronayne also drew a full house, despite appearing 'down the road' so to speak at Roger Parker's Folk at the Manor a few days earlier. You would not believe it but none other than John Renbourn travelled all the way from Scotland to meet up and see their performance at the Manor. He did not take up a guitar and do a floor spot though but it gives you a good indication of the level of competence of Zoe and Jim both instrumentally and vocally. They are a class act that will burst out on to the folk scene before too long. I strongly recommend them for a booking to any club organisers who may be reading this article. You can see and hear Zoe at www.zoemulford.com

Performers

There are some interesting names in the centre pages this time and some of them are:-

The Santa Cruz River Band - a trio from Tucson, Arizona. They will be appearing at Biddulph up in Arms and at Wrexham FC. Michael J. Ronstadt, a member of this trio, is the brother of Country Music super star - Linda.

Accordion and singer/songwriter Keith Hancock is a performer whose absence has been noticeable in the region. He is however booked by John and Ailsa Booth at Northwich FC. Remember his wonderful song - Absent Friends?

Two thirds of that former excellent band Risky Business perform at Jim Schofield's Cross Keys club, namely Ruth Fuga and Ken Powell. Their former partner Dave Walmisley can be seen solo at the South Ribble Arts Forum.

A beautiful sounding Australian singer has been brought to my notice. Her name is Beck Sian who is a cousin of Kate Bush. She appears at Bury Met. When her agent pointed me in the direction of YouTube for a 'look see' I was well impressed, so much so that we have her booked at the Hungry Horse Acoustic next year. http://www.becksian.net/becksian_youtube.htm

French finger picking expert and singer Claude Bourbon is scheduled to perform at Carlisle Folk and Blues and Folk at the Manor.

The all female band Uncle Earl have bookings at Bury Met and The Platform. "Their music points towards the roots of string band music with Scottish and Irish ballads, Celtic fiddle tunes and the blues. It is haunting and timeless, yet instantly appealing and accessible", (whatever that means!).

Don Moore at Garstang Unplugged was singing the praises to me of Angie Palmer a singer/songwriter from the north west (yes our region indeed) who is described by Bob Harris (BBC Radio 2) as being 'one of our greatest British songwriters'. Needless to say Don has Angie booked again at his club this quarter.

Arts Centres and Theatres

At Bury Met - Blue Murder appears on 23rd November and features Norma and Mike Waterson, Martin Carthy, Marie Knight (Lal Waterson's daughter) and Coope, Boyes and Simpson. "With a stage ambience varying from intense to hilarious this

act fills the stage with their presence and some of the best and most powerful harmony singing the folk scene has ever known". Moisha's Bagel - on 2nd December, present rip-roaring foot stomping, jazz-inflected klezmer and Balkan music from some of Scotland's finest musicians e.g. Salsa Celtica, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Celtic Feet, Scottish National Jazz Orchestra. They are described as "An intoxicating, life-affirming mix of Eastern European folk music, Middle Eastern rhythms and virtuoso performances with the excitement and soul of improvisation".

Voices at the Door - on 6th December present "Midwinter Songs and Carols". Coope, Boyes and Simpson again, Fi Fraser, Jo Freya and Georgina Boyes tell the story of carols - joyful and vigorous, darkly resonant or sublime - with tales of squabbling choirs, composers, collectors and controversy in a words and music programme of superb unaccompanied harmonies and fascinating historical detail. Salt - is a Canadian band from Vancouver. Awna Teixeira (a former founder member of Barley Wik and Alison Russell (founder member of Po' Girl) are described as already being veterans of the international roots music community. Between them they play pretty much anything they can get their hands on and everything they touch 'sounds like' - yes you've guessed it - Salt!

At Southport Arts Centre: Dochas - 14th October. This band features Jenna Reid and Julie Fowles, and is an award winning and dynamic band from Scotland.

Kekele (Congo) - 19th October - are original and thrilling and bring out the beauty and heart of Congolese music. "Melodies that glide, dip and crest, rhythms that gently massage and harmonies that you can taste. This is African music at its best". Van Eyken obviously have as their leader Tim Van Eyken and are made up of Olly Knight (Lal Waterson's son and collaborator with Tim), Pete Flood a member of Bellowhead, Colin Flood and Jackie Oates formerly of Rachel Unthank and the Winterset. At the Philharmonic Hall: The Imagined Village - 20th November - features Billy Bragg, Chris Wood, Eliza Carthy, Martin Carthy, Sheila Chandra and Simon Emmerson. "The Imagined Village album grew out of a discussion prompted by the BBC Radio 3 documentary "A Place Called England" which addressed the blind spot amongst the English concerning their own musical heritage. It is also influenced by Georgina Boyes' book of the same name which examined the pivotal impact the Victorian and Edwardian song collectors, most notably Cecil Sharp, made on the development of an English music repertoire". John Prine appears at this venue on 30th October and on the following night - Capercaillie.

At The Platform, Black Umfolosi is holding an afternoon workshop before their evening concert at the same venue on Saturday 10th November.

Jan Shevlin informs me that on Saturday 24th November there will be a fundraising concert for the Saddleworth Folk Festival. It will be held at Playhouse 2 and will feature Anthony John Clarke and Elbow Jane. Tickets are available from Petticoats in Shaw tel.no. 01706-847-494 or from Playhouse 2 itself.

That's it for now. But I would just like to add that should any of you folk club organisers want to book an act that people say is a 'breath of fresh air to the folk music scene' then I can do no worse than recommend to you - Vocal Point. Contact number for bookings is - 0151-289-1267 or 07939-346-878.

Enjoy your folk music during autumn. I will speak to you again in December.

John Owen

ARTICLES



Radio Review: Round-Up and Rebukes

A bit of a mixed bag this quarter, so let's get the main points underway first. The northern, southern and north-eastern fringes of our region have felt the impact of programme loss which, aside from listening diversity, cuts off one avenue of event publicity. In terms of federation members, about 12 venues could be said, geographically, to be affected; other folk establishments will also feel an impact.

To the north, BBC Radio Cumbria no longer carries Alistair Anderson's Sunday "Northern Folk", which was axed in June for all northern BBC stations. The old and sadly familiar story I'm afraid, where personnel changes at senior level in the BBC local radio network for the North resulted in an emphatically negative decision.

Secondly, BBC Radio York has lost the Wednesday "North Yorkshire Folk", as presented by Michael Brothwell. A third casualty is the BBC Midlands network's loss of Nonny James, presenter of the folk hour of "Fretwork", on Thursdays (principally for our area BBC Radios Stoke and Shrewsbury). In these latter two cases, it is the presenters' decision to leave the shows. However, enquiries vis-à-vis BBC Radio York do not suggest that they have plans themselves to reintroduce a dedicated folk programme and "Fretwork" no longer has sufficient "folk strength" to merit listing. Again, the station looks to be pondering its strategy. As readers and listeners, you are invited to join the lobbyists for each station and programme who are complaining and campaigning for the reinstatement of folk broadcasts in the northern regions. Similarly for the latter two stations, urging them not to use the "it was only Folk" standpoint as a cause for inertia and not filling the resultant vacuums in an appropriate way. The scenario over and beyond the Pennines reminds me of the massive gap left when the BBC local networks there axed Henry Ayrton's "Folk and Roots" programme about five years ago. Furthermore, all three scenarios only go to emphasise the points regularly carried in the final two paragraphs of Radio Xtra's column on page 6: the North West is so well blessed with folk programmes, don't take it all for granted and praising the producers now, WHILST THE PROGRAMMES EXIST, may prevent loss and complaints. Contact details as on page 5.

On a personal note, "farewell Nonny". This correspondent gave her more than a few friendly earfuls over the 'phone during the many programmes (which started about 1989 I believe). The show was always a good showcase of the broad church of Celtic music, particularly on high days and saints days. So thanks for the well crafted playlists, the A to Z's of folk, the diary dates - and all the best for the future.

Tartan turmoil: my friendly nemesis, BBC Radio Scotland, has truck again. Observant readers and listeners, particularly those with a Caledonian connection, will have noticed that over mid-summer printed information (FNW Summer 2007) will not have matched broadcast reality. The station has sent its listed presenters off on their hols, maybe "doon the watter", perchance to relax on Rothesay, lie-up in Largs, or ar** about on Arran. But they'll all be back by the time this issue's out.

In some instances, replacement programmes seem to have been tasty, e.g. Sunday afternoons 1.00-3.00 "The Traditional

Top 100"; home some of you therefore enjoyed a surprise Scottish treat on this one. Also, in the last issue the station's Saturday evening "Pipeline", 9.00-10.00pm was inadvertently omitted. Thankfully, it's still on air; there's nowt like a good, mournful "P:broch", pre - Match of the Day, when your team has massively underperformed yet again.

The most eagle-eyed of readers will have noted from page 6 that the midweek evening Radio 2 programme, messrs Radcliffe and Maconie, has not even survived its vague reference from the previous issue of Folk North West. On an overrun from Mike Harding's Wednesday show I did once hear a Fairport track, but "one swallow...", and I stick to my first assessment.

Wednesday nights for radio folkies can be a microcosm of the wider varieties of broadcast fare on offer. Radio 2's offering can at times be a "Top of the Folk Pops", to some extent understandable in terms of its remit and broadcast reach. One almost knows what and who to expect: "here's the latest from..."; or "someone who's currently on a national tour is...". The Rusby and Drever Show, as I've heard tell. But noticeably, their regular listeners' request programme seem to come up with "asked for" numbers from current releases and virtually nothing from pre-2000. Maybe - and hopefully - this reflects a new generation, a new wave of listening folkies, plus also the contemporary Arts Centre audiences, all for whom the prominent artistes are their touchstone. Conversely, it may be some commercial mover - and - shaker's idea of milking the maximum exposure out of the latest albums and big-tour giants. Whatever the baseline this programme is effectively radio folk's flagship and when it comes to requests (and even routine programmes) might improve if more "back pages" material could be aired. It is telling that the majority of requested earlier material only seems to pop-up from their "folk vaults" and even then only when listeners vote from a pre-trailed half-dozen of classic tracks. How about it, Smooth Ops and our Crumpsall Cracking Cowboy of Rochdale.

A little later on Wednesday at 9.00pm, some may find RTE's "The Rolling Wave" a counterbalance (even a complement) to Radio 2. It's not unlike sticking your head round the door of a music session in an Irish pub, listening in on the craic, tales and anecdotes. There's a wealth of archive material for the studios, as befits a production from the land of Saints and Scholars. There was a recent broadcast from RTE's archives, in the form of a piece from one of the great precursors to the "Rolling Wave", the much revered "The Long Note". This came from the 1970's presented by Michael O'Donnahill of The Bothy Band, nowadays rightly lauded as legendary greats, but back then merely having a cult following. Even at that time, earlier material from the station's archive was being aired, field recordings of unaccompanied singers in rural Ireland. A double dimensional retrospective - brilliant!

Beyond dedicated and mainstream folk programmes, praise is also due to Late Junction, Radio 3, late evenings on Tuesday to Thursday. This is just the ticket! It also demonstrates how folk music can sit comfortable against other - but not distant - musical genres in one programme. One show in July gave us Martin Simpson, Dick Gaughan and Martin Hayes with Dennis Cahill all in its first 15 minutes. Despite some hints in the Radio Times, you never know what's coming up, how or when. In these days of Ipod/MP3 technology usage and selectivity this more than suffices as a minimalist alternative, and descriptively educational to boot.

The momentum of Community Radio is "gathering pace" (in terms of relatively, almost a Bothy Band reference there!). Research and assessment remains a "work in progress" at present, before the picture is complete for categorised listings.

As per my piece in FNW Summer 2007., this sector demonstrates promising growth. All FM (www.allfm.org) - from the heart of Geoff Higginbottom's Levenshulme Triangle" - has been joined in the south of our region by Winsford-based Cheshire FM (92.5 FM, www.cheshirefm.com). Mounting therefore an assault (sic) on the airwaves, it reportedly carries "Acoustic Sessions" Wednesday evenings, 8.00 - 10.00pm. For both stations, your comments and observations would be welcomed, either via the editor or by Mark Dowding's "wireless waves" page on this magazines website (see contact listings pages 3 and 4). Salford City Radio is poised for launch and the latest news can be gleaned from www.salfordcityradio.org.

Aside from radio matters, I'd like to give a personal well-wishing to those stalwart organisers of the Red Lion Folk Club, Westhoughton. Thanks for the sterling efforts over all those years. Didn't get there half as much as I should have but your presence on the regional (and national) folk scene was much valued. Like those who are members of wildlife or conservation bodies, and don't go to all their major reserves, perhaps merely visiting our local patches, it is nevertheless always reassuring to know that these primary habitats were being nurtured for the greater good; so with the Red Lion for this correspondent. And I do recall jousting Folk knowledge, about 20 years ago, with their members as they met the White Lion, Swinton in Mike Billington's "folk club quiz" on his Radio Manchester folk programme; (now there's an idea, Ali O'Brien!).

Reference to the first Radio 2 Folk Awards club winner, the aforementioned Red Lion in 2000, leads me to be treading on dangerous ground in this publication: listing a folk club in Yorkshire! Anyroad up, as it's a winner of that programme's 2004 award, and I enjoyed a fine night's entertainment with Steve Tilston there in July, it goes on record: The Rockingham Arms, Wentworth (now the Rock at Maltby), www.therock.org.uk). The club found its new home in March this year, in a converted chapel with its roots firmly in community regeneration in a once - thriving coalmining area. Whilst there, I picked up a copy of "Stirrings" magazine (for South Yorkshire Folk). As well as noting the demise of BBC Radio York's folk show it carried a piece about Jacey Bedford and her campaign to energise the folk scene via internet forum and email discussion groups. "Let's make the new 'folkclubs' list active and useful and prove fRoots and others wrong when they say are dying on their feet. Frankly, it's our duty to make sure they thrive beyond our generation". I am familiar with the fRoots quote and there's no hesitation in offering the retort "smug self-interested commercialism". Where else are the next generation to get a foot on the ladder, learn stagecraft and presentation, acquire confidence? Everyone has to start somewhere. In the early 80's a good pal from student days opened a folk night at his squash club business near Halifax, and gave a booking to a young Leicestershire lad, quite possibly his first ever. The lad's name? Pete Morton: now what did he go on to achieve? "Radio Folk", particularly on local stations has its part to play in the whole exercise to protect and nurture the value of grass roots folk. This is especially so in studio showcasing of artists and by diary date listings for singers and musicians nights in addition to guest nights. I go back to my opening points: don't take it all for granted, safeguard this region's broadcast riches and let the various station managements know what you value.

Rob Dunford

"UNPLUGGED" / "OPEN MIKE" SESSIONS AND FOLK CLUBS

In the last issue, I briefly mentioned "unplugged" / "open mike" sessions as a "grass roots" movement similar to folk clubs, so

in the spirit of research (and being up for a night out listening to good music), I ventured out to find out what's going on. I visited "Garstang Unplugged", which meets on the last Wednesday each month at the Kenlis Arms, Garstang, between Preston and Lancaster (www.garstangunplugged.com), "Open Mic Surgery" - every Wednesday at the Stubbing Wharf Inn, Hebden Bridge (www.openmicsurgery.net) and "Wharfe Unplugged" - every other Sunday at the Ilkley Moor Vaults, Ilkley (www.wharfeunplugged.com). The "open" ethos of the movement seems to be summed up on the "Open Mic Surgery" website "... a wide range of people and musical styles, from teenagers to pensioners, blues to cutting edge contemporary acoustic music ... everyone gets the chance to perform ... you bring the music, the attention and the vibe. We provide a chair, a spotlight and a house guitar anyone can borrow". Garstang "... sets out to be as eclectic as possible. Our only rule is 'no backing tracks' ...".

The first thing that struck me is how the atmosphere was very similar to early folk clubs - there was a real "buzz" from a packed audience of all age groups really appreciating the performers, just like the old days in the 60s and 70s. The second thing was the size of the audience - all three were more-or-less full. At Hebden Bridge I counted 60 - 70 people, not including those standing in the passage outside - you need to get there early to get a seat! Also, you definitely need to arrive early if you want a spot - at Garstang they average about 25 performers each session, the record being 38 in a single night! This obviously needs some precision organisation, so musicians are given plenty of advance warning and a separate room for tuning up. Quite a few folk clubs could learn from this!

One thing they all seem to have in common is a wide variation in the performers. Some seemed to be experienced musicians, perhaps gigging regularly in bands etc., who welcome the opportunity to play the music they really like just for the love of it. Particularly at Hebden Bridge, there were also a number of younger performers - some very confident in front of an audience, others more hesitant and unsure of themselves; some gave a polished performance, whilst others were a bit "ragged round the edges" The audience expects this, and is very encouraging - we all have to start somewhere. What really shines through in all of them is their sincerity, commitment and enthusiasm, and the mix of experienced musicians and young talent can be really beneficial to their development. Younger musicians can also help to swell the audience by bringing their mates - at Ilkley there were a couple of lads from the local grammar school who sang Bob Dylan songs very well, loudly applauded by their friends.

Also noticeable is the importance of being seen as part of the local community. This is something we seem to have lost on the folk scene, probably because clubs are now very scattered, but also because for a lot of people folk has become an activity merely for a few summer weekends at more remote festivals. Don Moore from Garstang pointed out "... we are in a tiny town. Once a month is a social occasion, to be more regular would be an obligation ... we run occasional guest nights, with the rule that 'one of ours' does the support slot". Hebden Bridge takes this a stage further, their very worthy aims including "To bring together the diverse members of the community of the Upper Calder Valley" and "To inspire people to improve their local environment by participation."

The question is though, why is it that your average folk club can muster an audience of perhaps a dozen on a singers' night, whereas you can get five or six times that number for an "unplugged" session? What's the secret? Is the "F" word putting people off? In the opinion of Leon Sienkiewicz from Wharfe Unplugged, who is also one of the regulars at our folk club "...



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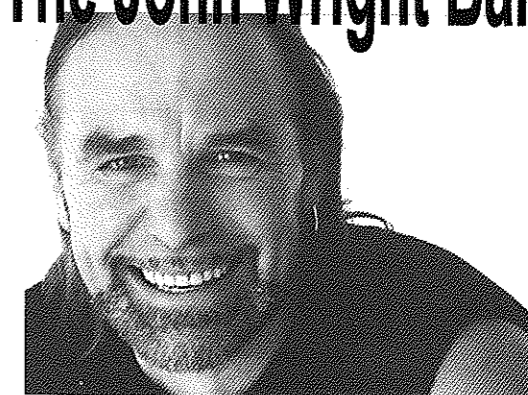
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personally I think some of it is just down to the music unfortunately. Quite a few people I talk to say they simply don't like folk, so they wouldn't go to a folk club". He also pointed out that one of the better attended folk clubs that he had visited was "... more like an acoustic club really - there was a bit of folk music, including some trad / acappella / chorus songs, and more modern folk stuff ... but mostly what was played was the same type of thing we get at ours".

This was borne out at a recent singers' night at our club where we had songs such as "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square", John Lennon's "Beautiful Boy", Paul Simon's "Kathy's Song", traditional songs like "Pleasant and Delightful" and several self-penned songs. My overall impression is that there is very little difference between the material you would hear at the average folk club or "unplugged" night, so if we'd advertised it as "unplugged", could we have had a larger audience than the 15 who turned up, without changing the format or programme? In my last piece I pointed out some of the dross about folk music that appears in the press, but it could be that epithets such as "unhip" and "bearded weirdos", however inaccurate, reflect how we are perceived by the general public. It means we definitely have an "image problem" which can work against attracting a wide range of performers and audience.

Perhaps the purists would argue that we are here to preserve 'the tradition' rather than merely provide entertainment. If that's your opinion, fine - but please remember that a traditional song will be listened to and appreciated at an "unplugged" night just like any other genre of music. Which brings me to a final question: which is better for keeping alive 'the tradition' - fifty people hearing one traditional song or five people hearing ten traditional songs? Discuss.

Paul Reade

THE SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL IN WASHINGTON DC

Pete Castle was amongst the Tenterden Folk Festival regulars representing Kent at the Smithsonian Folk life Festival in Washington DC.

There are times when I can't believe how lucky I am to do what I do for a living. For a week at the end of June/beginning of July I was one of the first English people to participate in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC. (Previously Scots, Welsh and Irish and just about any other nationality you can name have been there but, for some reason, not the English!) I went as a 'cultural exemplar' (I've been called many things before!) from Kent, where I was born and frequently appear at events such as Tenterden Folk Festival. Our programme in Washington was called the Roots of Virginia Culture and I worked alongside Virginians, American Indians and Senegalese. Also participating in their own sections of the festival were delegations from the Mekong Delta and Northern Ireland.

The Washington Post described the event thus: "Seven city blocks; 10 days of arts, crafts, music, sports and games; 32 languages; 90-degree temperatures; 103 tents; 415 volunteers and 707 guest participants: Yes, the 41st annual Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Mall promises to be a bustling, sometimes overheated, multi-tented and multicultural mini-metropolis."

I was asked to perform at the opening ceremony and by the time I was on stage the audience had been listening to strange music and long speeches for nearly 2 hours so it wasn't the time for a serious ballad or long story! 'Hopping Down in Kent' proved to be the right choice and I'm told that the Governor of Virginia, the Ambassador for China, Martin McGuinness et al

were joining in and swaying along behind me!

We musicians/storytellers did several sets each day on one or other of the various stages and joined random selections of other artists to discuss a variety of topics on the discussion stage. It was a bit unreal to find yourself sharing a stage with a great blues singer like John Cephus or some of the Appalachian banjo pickers who looked as though they'd walked straight out of Deliverance!

It was a once in a lifetime opportunity. You don't often get the chance to be heard by over 160,000 people in one day! (They reckon on 1 million people during the course of the festival. It's all free-a 'museum without walls'.) To eat breakfast with American Indians; to hear Chinese, American, and Vietnamese musicians jamming together; to engage in good natured banter about politics with a Rev. from Northern Ireland; to share a lift with exotically clad dancers from Cambodia... you think you're in a dream.

If you look at my website at www.petecastle.co.uk you'll find a page dedicated to the event, complete with pictures and links to other sites on which you can find interviews and even videos of me performing! I will be back in Kent at in the near future and at Tenterden Folk Festival 2007 from the 5th to 7th October.

Pete Castle

SOME JOE STEAD RAMBLINGS



Karl Dallas - yes that old war horse of a writer who filled our imaginations every Thursday when the Melody Maker was printed 50 years ago with tales of Rambling Jack Elliott, Steve Benbow, Peggy Seeger and Alex Campbell. That same Karl

Dallas, resolute old warrior of the political song, has come up with a little gem to the tune of 'Ye Jacobites by Name' called 'New Labourites by Name'. Just the kind of protest song I like.

New Labourites by Name

New Labourites by name, lend an ear, lend an ear,

New Labourites by name, lend an ear.

New Labourites by name,

You cannot escape the blame.

You're the cause of Labour's shame, you shall hear, you shall hear.

You're the cause of Labour's shame, you shall hear.

Your leader Tony Blair told us lies, told us lies.

Your leader Tony Blair told us lies.

Your leader Tony Blair,

Promised to be fair,

But for us he had no care, now we're wise, now we're wise.

For the poor he had no care, now we're wise.

The rich got richer still, than the poor, than the poor

The rich got richer still, than the poor.

The rich got richer still,

And their coffers he did fill,

And our children he did kill in his war, in his war.

And our children he did kill in his war.

And now we've Gordon Brown in his place, in his place.

And now we've Gordon Brown in his place.

And now we've Gordon Brown,

And the story goes around

That he'll soon be putting down, all the waste, all the waste.

Ingleton Folk Weekend

5th - 7th October 2007

Friday 5th October

6.30pm **Open Air Family Ceilidh** with Mooncoyn

7.30pm **A Big Sing** *no instruments - just bring your voices and join in!*
Both events are free for everyone - just come and go as you please

8.30pm **Jez Lowe & the Bad Pennies** Tickets £12

Saturday 6th October

12.00pm-5.00pm **An Afternoon of Family Entertainment** *in and around the Village Square*
Featuring Rivington Ladies Morris, Stone the Crows, Legs Levens & the Limestone Cowboys, Keith Donnelly, The Durbervilles

6.00pm **Fun 'n' Food** with Dom Collins £6.50 inc. pie & peas supper

8.00pm **Bernard Wrigley**
The Devil's Interval Tickets £12

8.00pm **The Duncan McFarlane Band** *at the Ex-Servicemens Club* Free Entry

Sunday 7th October

10.30am **Folk Weekend Songs of Praise** *in the Village Square*

From 12 noon Live Music in the Pubs, Clubs & Cafes
with Wildwood - Wendy Arrowsmith - Chris Milner - Hard Times - The Dalesmen -
Keepers Fold - Three Score & Ten - The Young'uns - Peter Taylor
plus - Comic Song Competition hosted by Mooncoyn sponsored by Mason's Dog Oil

Free Entry to all venues - full details on our website & in our Programme of Events

Plus free Sessions & Workshops all weekend with
Keith Donnelly, David Burbidge, Derek Gifford, Chris Parkinson, Lesley Parker, Legs Levens

Info & Bookings - Ingleton Community Centre - 015242 41701

Check out our website for the latest information www.ingletonfolk.co.uk

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CLUB RESIDENTS (as on 18th July, 2007)

ACOUSTIC COLLECTIVE – Ann English, John Keighley, Geoff Monks, Paul Roberts, Pete Roberts, Jim Schofield, Jan & Pete Shevlin, Chris Turner, Linda Wild
ARMOURY – Kieron Harley, Polly MacLeod, Glyn Davies, Keith Glazzard
BACUP -- Brian Eastwood, Boo Long, Dave Dawes, Helen Lancashire, Joe Caswell, Keith Winfield, Mark Almond, Martin Willingham, Paul Morris, Pete Benbow, Tom Winstanley
BARNOLDSWICK -- NowThen
BOTHY -- Clive Pownceby, Steve Freedman, Pete Rimmer, Bill Hackney, Alison Younger, Chris & Siobhan Nelson, Ray Rooney, Nev Grundy, Bev Sanders, Kevin Littlewood
BURNLEY – Korrigan (Dave Grimshaw, Alex Nearney, Keith Cocker & Paul Morris), Steve Cook
CROSS KEYS – Jim Schofield
CROWN -- Kieron Hartley, Jeff Monks, John Keithley, Dave Wild, Ian Vesty
EARBY – Station Folk
EVERYMAN -- Chris & Hughie Jones, Shirley Peden
FLEETWOOD -- Spitting on a Roast
FOLK AT THE MANOR -- Gill & George Peckham, Roger Parker, Marje Ferrier, Mike Hignett
FOLK AT THE PROSPECT -- Chris Hanslip, Carol & John Coxon, Dave & Cheryl
FOLK AT THE NURSERY – Lynn & Barrie Hardman, Dave Jones, Crumbly Fruit Cake, David South
FOLK IN THE BARN -- The Occasional Three
FOUR FOOLS -- Malc Gibbons, Geoff & Lindsay Smith, Tom & Ann, Angie Bladen
FRODSHAM – Alton & Carol Alexander
GARSTANG UNPLUGGED -- Pete Hardman, Caroline Lovett
GREGSON LANE -- Trouble at Mill, Celtic Fringe, Smithereen, Caroline Lovett, Rob Kentel, Chris Lomax, John Poulton, Ken Kershaw, Jamie & Simon Blatchley, Mark Claydon
HUNGRY HORSE ACOUSTIC – Alison Parker & Jim Gallagher, Ian Dawson, Vocal Point - (John Owen, Sue Farley, Patricia Ward, Angela Owen)
LEIGH – 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, Mark Miller, Graham Sagers
NORTHWICH -- Jamie Anderson, Brenda Yates, John & Ailsa Booth, Iain Bowley & Tom Francis, Bill Pook
PARKGATE -- Eddie Morris, Bob Burrill, Brass Tacks
PORKIES -- 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, Sacked Paddy, Andrew & Steve Hesford
WESTHOUGHTON -- Auld Triangle
WOODEN HORSE -- Quartz, Loctuptogether, Back in Business, Mark Dowding
WREXHAM – Offa

(Please send alterations or additions to John Owen by email at – folksingerjohn@aol.com)

NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF FOLK CLUBS				
ARTS CENTRES and THEATRES				
SUNDAY				
Bothy	8:00 PM	Park Golf Club, Park Road West, Southport, PR9 0JS	Clive Pownceby	0151-924-5078
Folk at the Manor	8:30 PM	The Old Manor Club, Withens Lane, Wallasey, CH45 7NF	Roger Parker	0151-678-1962
Kings Lock	8:30 PM	King's Lock Inn, 1 Booth Lane, Middlewich, CW10 0JJ	Liz Rosenfield	01606-834969
Open Door	8:45 PM	Royal Oak, 172 Manchester Road, Werneth, OL9 6BN	Pauline Westall	0161-681-3618
Walshaw	9:00 PM	Sports Club, Sycamore Road, Tottington, Bury, BL8 3EG	Frank Brough	01204-413909
Walton (and Wed & Fridays)	8:30 PM	County Labour Club, 39 Hale Road, Walton, Liverpool, L4 3RL	Lilian French	0151-474-0979
Wooden Horse	8:30 PM	The Junction, News Lane, Rainford, WA11 7JU	Jim Coan	01772-452782
MONDAY				
Bacup	8:30 PM	Bacup Conservative Club, Irwell Terrace, Bacup, OL13 9AW	Helen Slater	01706-873063
Conwy	8:30 PM	Malt Loaf, Rosehill Street, Conwy,	Denis Bennett	01492-877324
Folk at the Prospect	8:30 PM	Prospect Inn, Weston Road, Weston Village, Runcorn, WA7 4LD	Roger Hanslip	01928-731567
Four Fools	8:15 PM	Crown Hotel, Platt Lane, Worthington, nr Standish, WN1 2XF	Ken & Angie	01257-263678
Red Bull	8:30 PM	Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3AY	Peter Hood	0161-432-4142
Room at the Top	8:30 PM	Red Lion Hotel, Ashbrow, Newburgh, WN8 7NF	Mark Dowding	01257-464215
Swinton	8:30 PM	White Lion, 242 Manchester Road, Swinton, M27 4TS	Ged Todd	01942-811527
TUESDAY				
Acoustic Collective	9:00 PM	Old General, 73 Crescent Road, Dunkinfield, SK16 4EU	Paul Roberts	07930-340-260
Crown	8:30 PM	Crown, 154 Heaton Lane, Stockport, SK4 1AR	Kieron Hartley	07957-492917
Everyman	8:30 PM	Everyman Bistro, 5-9 Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BH	Christine Jones	0151-709-3336
Longridge	8:30 PM	British Legion, Townley Road, Longridge, Nr. Preston PR3 3EA	Ron Flanagan	01772-785179
Maghull	8:30 PM	Maghull Community Ass'n, 604 Green Lane, Maghull, L31 2JH	Tony Gibbons	01744-607566
Skipton	8:30 PM	Royal Oak, Water Street, Skipton, BD23 1PB	Sheila A. Keisali	01535-665889
St Anne's Acoustic Roots	8:30 PM	Conservative Club, 353 Clifton Drive North, L/St Annes, FY8 2NA	Mike Black	01253-781448
Urmston Acoustics	8:30 PM	Nags Head Hotel, 1 Lostock Road, Urmston, M41 0SU	Martin Kavanagh	0161-748-5497
WEDNESDAY				
Alison Arms	9:00 PM	Alison Arms, Preston Road, Coppull, Chorley, PR7 5CQ	Derek Docherty	01257-791262
Biddulph up in Arms	8:30 PM	Biddulph Arms, 171 Congleton Road, Biddulph, ST8 6QJ	Eric Cox	01782-514896
Burnley	9:00 PM	Kettledrum Inn, 302 Red Lees Road, Cliviger, Burnley, BB10 4RG	Alex Nearney	01282-436467
Clarence	8:30 PM	Clarence, 88 Preston New Road, Blackpool, FY4 4HG	Ann Green	01772-683027
Cross Keys	9:00 PM	Running Hill Gate, Uppermill, Near Oldham, OL3 6LW	Jim Schofield	01457-833897
Garstang Unplugged	8:30 PM	Kenlis Arms, Ray Lane, Barnacre, Garstang, PR3 1GD	Don Moore	01995-602795
Red Bull	8:30 PM	Red Bull, 14 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3AY	Peter Hood	0161-432-4142
THURSDAY				
Acoustic Folk at the Nursery	9:00 PM	Nursery Inn, 258 Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport SK4 2NA	Brenda Judge	0161-432-4830
Chorlton	9:00 PM	SW Manchester Cricket Club, Ellesmere Road, Chorlton M21 05G	Joseph Roberts	07833-735-729
Earby	7:30 PM	Station Hotel, 123 Colne Road, Earby, Barnoldswick, BB18 6XL	Sharon Hobson	01282-841727
Fleetwood	8:30 PM	Steamer Hotel, Queens Terrace, Fleetwood, FY7 6BT	Mike France	01253-776607
Gregson Lane	8:30 PM	Sports & Social Club, Gregson Lane, Houghton, PR5 0FD	Graham Dixon	01254-853929
Heaton Mersey (new club)	8:30 PM	Heaton Mersey Sports & Social Club, Halewood Road, SK4 3AW	Kieron Hartley	07957-492917
Hungry Horse Acoustic	8:15 PM	The Rake, Rake Lane, Little Stanney, Ellesmere Port, CH2 4HS	John Owen	0151-678-9902
Lymm	8:30 PM	Spread Eagle Hotel, 47 Eagle Brow, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 0AG	Stewart Lever	07919-270-916
Parkgate	8:15 PM	Boathouse Pub/Restaurant, 1 The Parade, Parkgate, CH64 6RN	Eddie Morris	0151-677-1840
South Lakes Music Prom'n	8:30 PM	Sports & Social Club, Priory Road, Ulverston,	Nick McDermott	07743-555227
Wrexham	8:30 PM	Nags Head Inn, Mount Street, Wrexham, LL13 8DW	Ian Chesterman	01978-357307
FRIDAY				
Bollington	8:30 PM	Dog & Partridge, 97 Palmerston Street, Bollington, SK10 5JX	Arthur Wakefield	01625-573596
Carlisle Folk & Blues	8:00 PM	Sunset Suite, Carlisle Football Ground, Warwick Road, CA1 1LL	Myrna Rae	01697-72305
Folk in the Barn	8:15 PM	Rosehill Barn, Rosehill Theatre, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA28 6SE	Terry Haworth	01900-604765
Frodsham	8:30 PM	Conservative Club, 74 Main Street, Frodsham, WA6 7AU	Alton Alexander	01928-733050
Leigh	8:00 PM	Conservative Club, Railway Road, Leigh, WN7 4AX	Pauline Dowsett	01942-604603
Northwich	8:30 PM	Harlequin Theatre, Queen St, Northwich, CW9 5JN	John Booth	01606-79356
Porkies	8:30 PM	Royal British Legion, Georges Road West, Poynton, SK12 1JY	Dave Hughes	01625-430149
Preston	8:30 PM	Moorbrook Inn, 370 North Road, Preston, PR1 1RU	Rob Malaney	01257-231463
Rhyl	9:00 PM	RAFA Club, 17 Windsor Street, Rhyl, Denbighshire, LL18 1BW	Jeff Blythin	01745-588072
Second Friday Folk	8:15 PM	Pensby Hotel, Pensby Road, Pensby, Wirral, CH61 8RA	Dave Jones	0151-639-9350
Westhoughton	8:15 PM	Westhoughton Golf Club, Long Island, Westhoughton, BL5 2BR	Pat Batty	01257-230508
SATURDAY				
Acoustic Tearoom	7:45 PM	Acoustic Tearoom, Market Street, Kirby Stephen, CA17 4QN	Penny & Paul	017683-72123
Armoury Folk & Acoustic	8:30 PM	Armoury Inn, Shaw Heath, Stockport, SK3 8BD	Kieron Harley	07957-492917
Barnoldswick	8:00 PM	Fosters Arms, Gisburn Road, Barnoldswick, BB18	Sharon Hobson	01282-841727
Buffet Bar	9:00 PM	Platform 1, Stalybridge Rail Station, Stalybridge, SK15 1RF	Jim Schofield	01457-833897
Standish	8:15 PM	St. Ann's Parish Hall, Church Lane, Shevington, WN6 8BD	Dave Jones	0151-639-9350
ARTS CENTRES & THEATRES				
Brewery Arts Centre	8:00 PM	122a Highgate, Kendal, Cumbria, LA9 4HE	Box Office	01539-725133
Brindley Arts Centre	8:00 PM	High Street, Runcom, Cheshire, WA7 1BG	Box Office	0151-907-8360
Burnley Mechanics	8:00 PM	Manchester Road, Burnley, Lancashire, BB11 1JA	Box Office	01282-664400
Bury Met	8:00 PM	The Met, Market Street, Bury, Lancashire, BL9 0BW	Box Office	0161-761-2216
Folk at the Forum	7:30 PM	Forum 28, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1HH	Box Office	01229-820000
Friends of Folk	8:00 PM	Various locations	Jim Minall	01772-422416
Mr Kite Benefits	8:00 PM	Worden Arts Centre, Worden Park, Leyland, PR25 1DJ	Steve Henderson	01772-621411
Pacific Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Pacific Road, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 1LJ	Box Office	0151-647-0752
Philharmonic Hall	7:30 PM	Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street, Liverpool, L1 9BP	Box Office	0151-709-3789
Platform	8:00 PM	Station Buildings, Central Promenade, Morecambe, LA4 4DB	Glynis Johnson	01524-582878
Playhouse 2	8:30 PM	Newtown Street, Shaw, Oldham OL2 8NX	Barrie Cottam	01706-663117
Rose Theatre	8:00 PM	Edge Hill University, St Helens Road, Ormskirk, L39 4QP	Box Office	01695-584480
Southport Arts Centre	8:00 PM	Lord Street, Southport, PR8 1DB	Emma Burrows	01704-540011

26th AUGUST to 29th SEPTEMBER				
SUNDAY	26TH AUGUST	2ND SEPTEMBER	9TH SEPTEMBER	23RD SEPTEMBER
Bothy	closed	closed	JOHN DIPPER BAND	CHRIS COE
Bury Met				
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Friends of Folk @ Darwen				
Library Theatre				
Kings Lock	Singers & Musicians			RALPH McTELL
Open Door	Singaround	Singaround	DAVE GIBB	Singaround
Walshaw	Singaround	Singaround	Singers Night	Singaround
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	closed - Bank Holiday	Singers Night	Singers Night	Residents Night tbc
MONDAY	27TH AUGUST	3RD SEPTEMBER	10TH SEPTEMBER	24TH SEPTEMBER
Bacup	JOHN KELLY	Singaround	MEN OF A CERTAIN AGE	ELBOW JANE
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	REAL TIME	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	closed - Bank Holiday	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	Singers Night	tba	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	28TH AUGUST	4TH SEPTEMBER	11TH SEPTEMBER	25TH SEPTEMBER
Acoustic Collective	Geoff Monks	MARK WRIGHT BAND	Paul Roberts	Acoustic Collective
* Biddulph up in Arms				
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman	closed	Singers Night	closed	Singers Night
Longridge		Singers Night		
Maghull	50 years of "SKIFFLE" with Bob Lyster	Singers Night	ELBOW JANE	Singers Night
Skipton	Singers Night	STEVE TURNER	Singers Night	Singers Night
St Annes Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics		Singers Night		
WEDNESDAY	29TH AUGUST	5TH SEPTEMBER	12TH SEPTEMBER	26TH SEPTEMBER
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Burnley	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Clarence	closed	closed	BOB FOX	Singers Night
Cross Keys	FIONA SIMPSON	Geoff HIGGINBOTTOM	FYRISH	JOHN COURTMAN & RON YATES
Garstang Unplugged	Singers Night			Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night			Music session - English
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night

THURSDAY	30TH AUGUST	6TH SEPTEMBER	13TH SEPTEMBER	20TH SEPTEMBER	27TH SEPTEMBER
Acoustic Folk at the Nursery		DAVID SOUTH & LYNNE & BARRIE HARDMAN	Singers Night	Singers Night	
Bury Met	Singers Night	EMILY SMITH	Singers Night	Singers Night	SALT
Chorlton	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Earby	Singers Night		PETE ABBOTT		Singers Night
Gregson Lane	Singers & Musicians	Singaround	Singers & Musicians	ISAMBARDE with Vocal Point	Singers & Musicians
Heaton Mersey		BOB FOX with Roger Parker		ALLAN TAYLOR	
Hungry Horse Acoustic	Big SPOT with Colin Batho	VIN GARBUIT	Big SPOT with Mark, Jan & Kathie Taylor		BIG SPOT with Gus Glyn
Lymm	tba				JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE
Parkgate		LAST ORDERS			
South Lakes Music Promotion		ALTERNATIVE THERAPY		SCOLDS BRIDLE	
South Ribble Arts Forum				SANTA CRUZ RIVER BAND	
Wrexham				21ST SEPTEMBER	
FRIDAY	31ST AUGUST	7TH SEPTEMBER	14TH SEPTEMBER	21ST SEPTEMBER	28TH SEPTEMBER
* Biddulph up in Arms		BANDERSNATCH	Singers Night		JAMES GRANT
Bollington	Singers Night			ACOUSTIC STRAWBS	TREBUCHET
Bury Met		TONGUE TIDE & PAUL HARRISON		NICK HENNESSEY	JESS KLEIN
Carlisle Folk & Blues		JOHN KELLY	JEZ LOWE		JOE TOPPING
Folk in the Barn	Singers Night		Singers Night	TOM McCONVILLE & DAVE WOOD	Singers Night
Frodsham		Singaround			
Hale & Hearty					FIONA SIMPSON
Leigh		MARTIN CARTHY & DAVE SWARBRICK	ROD PICOTT @ Worden Arts Centre		
Mr Kite Benefits @ Bury Met		Singers Night	BURDEN OF PARADISE (HELEN WATSON & SNAKE DAVIS)		
Northwich	Showcase Night - BLACKHEARTS				
Playhouse 2		PETE ABBOTT	Singers & Musicians		
Porkies	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Preston	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	RON TRUEMAN BORDER	Singers Night
Rhyl				J D SOUTHER with Emily Barker	
Southport Arts Centre					
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	HELEN WATSON	Singers Night
Acoustic Tearoom	1ST SEPTEMBER	8TH SEPTEMBER	15TH SEPTEMBER	22ND SEPTEMBER	29TH SEPTEMBER
Armoury Folk & Acoustic	Singaround	VIN GARBUIT	DOWNTRODDEN STRING BAND		
Barnoldswick	Singers & Musicians				
Buffet Bar	Singers Night	Singers Night	SHARON SHANNON		
Burnley Mechanics					
Friends of Folk @ Worden			ABBIE LATHE & Friends		
Arts Centre, Leyland		BERNARD WRIGLEY & THE OLDHAM TINKERS		BRIAN KENNEDY	INTERNATIONAL GUITAR NIGHT
Playhouse 2			OLDHAM TINKERS	RALPH McTELL	

Note: * = Not the usual night ** = Not the usual venue

30th SEPTEMBER to 3rd NOVEMBER (NB: Always check with organisers before travelling)			
	30TH SEPTEMBER	7TH OCTOBER	14TH OCTOBER
Acoustic Tearoom			
Bothy	Singers Night	LAST NIGHT'S FUN	Singers Night
Bury Met			
Folk at the Manor	GEORGE & GILL PECKHAM	Singers Night	Singers Night
Kings Lock			
Open Door	GEOFF HIGGINBOTTOM	Singers Night	Singers Night
Southport Arts Centre			
Walshaw	BELLOWHEAD	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton			
Wooden Horse			
MONDAY	1ST OCTOBER	8TH OCTOBER	15TH OCTOBER
Bacup	Singaround	FREE SANDWICHES	GALLIARD
Conwy	Singers Night	QUARTZ	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Four Fools	Singers Night	GRACE NOTES	Singers Night
Red Bull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Room at the Top	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Swinton	SAGGY BOTTOM GIRLS	Singers Night	Singers Night
TUESDAY	2ND OCTOBER	9TH OCTOBER	16TH OCTOBER
Acoustic Collective	JOEZEPH ROBERTS	Jim Schofield	Jan & Pete Shevlin
Crown	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround
Everyman	Singers Night	BRAM TAYLOR	Singers Night
Longridge	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Philharmonic Hall			
Rose Theatre			
Skipton	Singers Night	HILARY SPENCER	SQUEEZEBOX PETE & HARPIST FRANK
St Annes Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	3RD OCTOBER	10TH OCTOBER	17TH OCTOBER
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Biddulph up in Arms		JACKIE LEVEN	MARY COUGHLAN
Brindley Arts Centre	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians	Singers and Musicians
Burnley			
Bury Met	MARTYN WYNDHAM READ	HIS WORSHIP & the PIG	MARTIN STIMSON
Clarence	tba	tba	tba
Cross Keys			
Garstang Unplugged			
Philharmonic Hall			
Red Bull			
Rose Theatre	ELIZA CARTHY	Music session - English	Music session - English
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night

	18TH OCTOBER	25TH OCTOBER	1ST NOVEMBER
THURSDAY	18TH OCTOBER	25TH OCTOBER	1ST NOVEMBER
Acoustic Folk at the Nursery	Singers Night	SHOW OF HANDS	Singers Night
Bury Met	ELIZA CARTHY	MICK HANLEY	Singers Night
Chorlton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Earby	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Gregson Lane	MOONGOYN	Singers Night	Singers Night
Heaton Mersey	Singers Night		
Hungry Horse Acoustic	JOHNNY SILVO	FIDDLESTONE with Vocal Point	NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN with Vocal Point
Lymm	Singers Night	BIG SPOT with Tainted Honey	SKETCH
Parkgate	JEZ LOWE	COLCANNON	SKETCH
South Lakes Music Promotion	KEVIN BROWN		LES BARKER
South Ribble Arts Forum	BRIAN PRESTON & PHIL WIGNALL	POYZER & Friends	DAVE WALMSLEY
Wrexham	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE	Singers Night	JOE TOPPING (tbc)
FRIDAY	5TH OCTOBER	12TH OCTOBER	2ND NOVEMBER
Bollington	Singers Night	THE QUEENSBERRY RULES	ROY CLINGING
Burnley Mechanics			
Bury Met	JOHN SPIERS & JON BODEN	AL TAN	NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN
Carlisle Folk & Blues	LAST NIGHTS FUN	Singers Night	
Folk at Hillbark	DOUGIE MACLEAN		
Folk in the Barn	MEGSON		
Friends of Folk @ Thwaites Theatre, Blackburn	Singers Night	DANGEROUS CURVES	KEN NICOL & ASHLEY HUTCHINGS
Frodsham	Singaround	DALE WATSON TRIO	Singers Night
Hale & Hearty		Singers Night	Singaround
Leigh			
Mr Kite Benefits @ St Bede's Northwich	Singers Night	* CLOUDSTREET	CRAIG MORGAN ROBSON
Philharmonic Hall			
Playfarm	FAIRPORT CONVENTION		RICHARD THOMPSON
Playhouse 2	ELENOR McEVOY		NANCY KERR & JAMES FAGAN
Porkies	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Preston	Singers Night	EMBER	Singers Night
Rhyl		KEKELE (Congo)	
Southport Arts Centre	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Walton	6TH OCTOBER	13TH OCTOBER	20TH OCTOBER
Acoustic Tearoom		KEITH JAMES & RICK FOOT	
Armoury Folk & Acoustic Barnoldswick	Singers & Musicians	Singaround	Singaround
* & ** Biddulph up in Arms	JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE		
Brindley Arts Centre	ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE		
Buffet Bar	Singers Night		
Burnley Mechanics	ROBIN & BINA WILLIAMSON	TONY BENN & ROY BAILEY	JOHN ETHERIDGE
Bury Met			Singers Night
Friends of Folk @ Preston Guild Hall Foyer			BECK SIAM
Philharmonic Hall			CHRIS WHILE & JULIE MATTHEWS
Playhouse 2	BOB FOX & BILLY MITCHELL	DON McLEAN	

Note: * = Not the usual night
** = Not the usual venue

4th NOVEMBER to 8th DECEMBER

SUNDAY	4TH NOVEMBER	11TH NOVEMBER	18TH NOVEMBER	25TH NOVEMBER	2ND DECEMBER
Bothy	PHIL HARE & TONY GIBBONS	Singers Night	ABBIE LATHE & the LOVELIES	Singers Night	PAT RYAN
Bury Met	Singers Night	Singers Night	CLAUDE BOURBON	Singers Night	MOISHE'S BAGEL
Folk at the Manor	Singers Night				Singers Night
Kings Lock	Singers Night				Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ St Bede's	Singaround	Singaround	KIMBER'S MEN	KATE CAMPBELL	Singaround
Philharmonic Hall	CHARLIE LANDSBOROUGH				
Platform		Singaround	UNCLE EARL		
Walshaw		Singaround			
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	JOHN PRENTICE	Singers Night	Singers Night
Wooden Horse	Singers Night	Singers Night	JOHN PRENTICE	Singers Night	Singers Night
MONDAY	5TH NOVEMBER	12TH NOVEMBER	19TH NOVEMBER	26TH NOVEMBER	3RD DECEMBER
Backup	STEVE WOOLEY	Singaround	ED MCGURK	HELEN SLATER	
Bury Met	TOM PACHECO	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Conwy	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Folk at the Prospect	MIKE LENNON	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	FIDDLESTONE
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					
TUESDAY	6TH NOVEMBER	13TH NOVEMBER	20TH NOVEMBER	27TH NOVEMBER	4TH DECEMBER
Acoustic Collective	ANN ENGLISH BAND	Linda Wild	Singaround	John Keighley	tbc
Burnley Mechanics		Singaround		ANGELO DEBARRE	Singaround
Crown	Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
Everyman	NORMAN PEDERSON & BOB CONROY (USA)				
Friends of Folk @ Preston					
Guild Hall					
Longridge	Singers Night	Singers Night	THE OYSTER BAND		THISTLE
Maghull	Singers Night	Singers Night	ALAN BELL BAND	Singers Night	Singers Night
Philharmonic Hall			THE IMAGINED VILLAGE		
Skipton	Singers Night	THEME NIGHT - PEACE	LOCTUP TOGETHER	Singers Night	MARTYN WYNDHAM READ
St Annes Acoustic Roots	Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
Urmston Acoustics	Singers Night	Singers Night		Singers Night	Singers Night
WEDNESDAY	7TH NOVEMBER	14TH NOVEMBER	21ST NOVEMBER	28TH NOVEMBER	5TH DECEMBER
Alison Arms	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Biddulph up in Arms	KRIS DREVER	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	** ANDY IRVINE	Singers & Musicians
Burnley	Singers & Musicians			Singers & Musicians	ELIZA CARTHY TRIO
Burnley Mechanics				MAURICE DICKSON	STRAWHEAD
Clarence	THISTLE	GRACENOTES	Singers Night	tba	tba
Cross Keys	TAINTED HONEY	BETTER LATE	THE HOMETOWNERS		
Garstang Unplugged		Music session - English		Singers Night	
Red Bull		Singers Night		Music session - English	
Walton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night

THURSDAY	8TH NOVEMBER	15TH NOVEMBER	22ND NOVEMBER	29TH NOVEMBER	6TH DECEMBER
Acoustic Folk at the Nursery		Singers Night		Singers Night	
Bury Met		JOHN SMITH		RACHEL UNTHANK & WINTERSET	VOICES AT THE DOOR
Chorlton	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Earby	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
** Garstang Unplugged		ANGIE PALMER			
Gregson Lane	BRACKENRIGG		Singers Night		ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE
Heaton Mersey					Singers Night
Hungry Horse Acoustic	Singers & Musicians	ACOUSTAK	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	BERNARD WRIGLEY & Vocal Point
Lymm	Singers Night	JOE TOPPING	BIG SPOT with Paul Pearson	NELSON PEACH	Singers Night
Mr Kite Benefits @ City Varieties				SHOW OF HANDS	
Parkgate	* ALLAN TAYLOR			CRAIG & WILLOUGHBY	
Platform				ANDY IRVINE	
South Ribble Arts Forum		JON BRINDLEY		FULL HOUSE	
Wrexham		Singers Night			JEZ LOWE
Bollington			23RD NOVEMBER	30TH NOVEMBER	7TH DECEMBER
Burnley Mechanics		HOWDEN JONES	Singers Night	Singers Night	Singers Night
Bury Met				BERNARD WRIGLEY & THE OLDHAM TINKERS	
Carlisle Folk & Blues		CLAUDE BOURBON	BLUE MURDER	ELBOW JANE	tbc
Folk in the Barn	BOB FOX		FLOSSIE MALAVIALLE		
Frodsham	Singers Night	Singers Night	BRIAN PETERS	Singers Night	PETER PRICE
Hale & Hearty		Singaround			Singaround
Leigh				THE AMAZING MR SMITH	
Mr Kite Benefits @ Bury Met	UNCLE EARL		Singers Night		Singers Night
Northwich	Singers Night			BELSHAZAAR'S FEAST	
Philharmonic Hall				SAW DOCTORS	
Playhouse 2				JOHN ETHERIDGE	ST AGNES FOUNTAIN
Porkies	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians	Singers & Musicians
Preston	Singers Night	Singers Night	ELBOW JANE	Singers Night	Singers Night
Rhyl			JULIE FELIX		
Rose Theatre					ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE
South Lakes Music Promotion		VAN EYKEN	Singers Night		Singers Night
Southport Arts Centre		Singers Night			
Walton					
Westhoughton	ALLAN TAYLOR	VIN GARBUIT	Singers Night		
SATURDAY	10TH NOVEMBER	17TH NOVEMBER	24TH NOVEMBER	1ST DECEMBER	8TH DECEMBER
Armoury Folk & Acoustic	Singaround	Singaround	Singaround	Singers & Musicians	Singaround
Barnoldswick				Singers & Musicians	
Buffet Bar				Singers Night	
Bury Met	CARA DILLON		Singers Night		Singers Night
* Hungry Horse Acoustic					CHRISTMAS CELIDH with ALISON PARKER & 3rd MAN
Platform	BLACK UMFOLOSI				
Playhouse 2			ANTHONY JOHN CLARKE & ELBOW JANE		
Southport Arts Centre				THE GATHERING	

Note: * = Not the usual night ** = Not the usual venue

THE NEXT CALENDAR IN THIS MAGAZINE WILL COVER THE DATES - Sunday 25th November 2007 to Saturday 8th March 2008. FINAL COPY DATE IS - Sunday 7th October, 2007

**ADVANCE DATES FROM
DECEMBER 2007**



ACOUSTIC COLLECTIVE

Dec 4 Guest to be arranged
Dec 18 Christmas Party Night with Jock (Biggles)

ACOUSTIC FOLK AT THE NURSERY

Dec 13 Christmas Party Night
Dec 27 closed
Jan 3 closed
Jan 10 Reopen

BIDDULPH UP IN ARMS

Dec to be arranged
Jan 9 Uiscedwr
Feb 13 Alan Prosser (of Oyster Band fame)

BOTHY

Dec 2 Pat Ryan
Dec 9 Singers Night
Dec 16 Alistair Anderson
Dec 23 The Office Party
Dec 30 closed
Jan 6 - 2008 Singers Night
Jan 13 Roy Bailey
Jan 20 Singers Night
Jan 27 Pete Coe
Feb 3 Singers Night
Feb 10 Allan Taylor
Feb 17 Singers Night
Feb 24 Kimbers Men
March 2 Singers Night
March 9 Gordon Tyrrell
March 16 Singers Night
March 23 Easter Special
March 30 Doug Eunson & Sarah Matthews
April 6 Singers Night
April 13 Debra Cowan (USA) Pete Smith
April 20 Singers Night
April 27 Peg Leg Ferret
May 4 Singers Night
May 11 Brian Peters
May 18 Maggie Holland
May 25 closed - Spring Bank Holiday

BURNLEY MECHANICS

Dec 5 Eliza Carthy

BURY MET

Dec 2 Moishe's Bagel
Dec 6 Voices at the Door
Dec 12 Last Night's Fun
Dec 13 An Albion Christmas
Dec 15 Lucy Kaplansky
Dec 21 Christmas Champions

CARLISLE FOLK & BLUES

Dec 14 Christmas Party Night Guest to be arranged

CLARENCE

Dec 5 Strawhead
Dec 12 John Wright Band

CROSS KEYS

Dec 5 tba
Dec 12 tba
Dec 19 Stanley Accrington & Friends
Dec 26 closed

EVERYMAN

Dec 18 Christmas Party Night
Dec 25 closed

Jan 1 closed
Jan 8 closed
Jan 15 Reopen

FOLK AT THE MANOR

Dec 16 Anthony John Clarke
Dec 30 Roger Parker
(other nights - Singers Nights)

FOLK AT THE PROSPECT

Dec 3 Fiddlestone
Dec 24 closed
Dec 31 closed
Jan 14 Brian Peters
Jan 28 Mike Nicholson
Feb 11 Stephen Quigg (tbc)
April 14 Anthony John Clarke
July 7 Mick Ryan & Pete Harris
(other nights - Singers Nights)

FOLK IN THE BARN

Dec 7 Guest tbc

FRIENDS OF FOLK

Dec 19 Carols & Capers Concert Maddy Prior & the
Carnival Band @ Preston Guild Hall

FRODSHAM

Dec 7 Peter Price
Dec 21 Charity Carol night (RNLI)
Jan 11 Birthday Night
Jan 19 Frodsham Folk - 40th Birthday concert with
Jez Lowe with Mary Humphreys & Anahata
(other nights - Singers Nights)

GARSTANG UNPLUGGED

Jan 30 Singers Night
Feb 27 Singers Night
March 26 Singers Night
April 30 Singers Night
May 28 Singers Night
June 21 4th Kenlis Arms Music & Beer Festival
June 25 Singers Night

GREGSON LANE

Dec 6 Anthony John Clarke
Dec 20 Singers Night (Christmas Special)

HUNGRY HORSE ACOUSTIC

Dec 6 Bernard Wrigley
Dec 8 Christmas Ceilidh Dance
with Alison Parker & the Third Man
Dec 13 Singers & Musicians
Dec 20 Singers & Musicians
Christmas Party with Special Guests

Dec 27 closed

Jan 3 - 2008 closed

Jan 10 Singers & Musicians

Jan 17 Singers & Musicians

Jan 24 Harvey Andrews

Jan 31 Singers & Musicians

Other acts booked so far:-

March 6 Graham Cooper

April 3 Baker's Fabulous Boys

April 17 Beck Sian (Australia)

May 15 John Wright Band

Sept 4 Anthony John Clarke Band

Nov 6 Chris While & Julie Matthews

LONGRIDGE

Dec 4 Thistle
Dec 18 Christmas Party Singers Party

LYMM

Dec 6 Singers Night

Dec 13 Christmas with Garva
Dec 20 Singers Night Christmas Party
Dec 27 The Marrowbones
Jan 3 Singers Night
Jan 10 Trio Threlfall
Jan 17 Big Spot - Loose Elastic
Jan 24 Bandersnatch
Jan 31 Singers Night
Feb 7 Martyn Wyndham Read
Feb 14 Valentine's Singers Night
Feb 21 Tony Downes

MAGHULL

Dec 11 Harvey Andrews

MR KITE BENEFITS

Dec 20 St Agnes Fountain

NORTHWICH

Dec 7 Singers Night
Dec 14 Singers Night (venue tbc)
Dec 21 Keith Donnelly
Jan 11 Bram Taylor
Feb 8 Anthony John Clarke
(other nights - Singers Nights)

PLATFORM

Dec 20 Frost and Fire

PLAYHOUSE 2

Dec 7 St Agnes Fountain
Dec 16 John Wright Band
Dec 28 Mike Sanchez
March 8 Last Night's Fun

PORKIES

Dec 7 Ben & Joe Broughton
Dec 14 Christmas Party

RHYL

Dec 14 Tom McConville & Dave Wood

SKIPTON

Dec 4 Martyn Wyndham Read
Dec 11 Christmas Music/Traditions
Dec 18 Christmas Party Night
Dec 25 closed

SOUTH LAKES MUSIC PROMOTION

Dec 7 Christmas Special - Anthony John Clarke Band
Feb 7 Boo Hewerdine
March 6 Devil's Interval plus
Shona Kipling & Damien O'Kane
April 3 Kirsty McGee & Matt Martin
May 1st Emma & The Professor & Jonathon Draper

SOUTH RIBBLE ARTS FORUM

Dec 13 Trouble at' Mill

SOUTHPORT ARTS CENTRE

Dec 1 The Gathering
Dec 20 The Albion Band Christmas Show

WOODEN HORSE

Dec 2 Singers Night
Dec 9 Singers Night
Dec 16 Cockersdale
Dec 23 Christmas Party
Dec 30 closed
Feb 3 Martyn Wyndham Read
March 9 Nick Caffrey & Eddie McGurk

WREXHAM

Dec 6 Jez Lowe
Dec 20 Christmas Party Charity Night with Yardarm
Closed until:-
Jan 17 Singers Night

**THE FIRST LOSTOCK
HALL
COMMUNITY FESTIVAL
OF TRADITIONAL ARTS
incorporating
THE FOUR FOOLS FOLK
FESTIVAL**



The same music
song and dance but
with the addition of
traditional craft
workshops

**LOSTOCK HALL COMMUNITY
HIGH SCHOOL
TODD LANE NORTH, LOSTOCK HALL,
PRESTON, LANCS. PR5 5UR**

Guests to include

**DEARMAN, GAMMON & HARRISON
RON TAYLOR & JEFF GILLET
MRS ACKROYD BAND (SUN)
JUDY COOK (USA)
MARTIN CARTHY
SUE BURGESS
JOHN MORRIS
LES BARKER
CARA
QUARTZ
JIM MAGEEAN
JANET RUSSELL
MULDOON'S PICNIC
ROBERT HARBRON (tbc)
with MAGPIES (tbc)
LOCTUP TOGETHER
DAVE FLETCHER & BILL WHALEY
TOM McCONVILLE & DAVID WOOD**

Further information
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36, The Oaks, Eaves Green, Chorley,
Lancs. PR7 3QU.
Tel (01257 263 678) e.mail:-
four.fools@virgin.net
Website:- www.four-fools.co.uk

That he'll soon be putting down New Labour's waste.

But he is guilty too for what's been done, what's been done
He is guilty too for what's been done
He is guilty too
And the whole New Labour crew
And we know what we must do with them all, with them all
And we know what we must do with them all.

Put New Labour in the bin, make them go, make them go.
Put New Labour in the bin, make them go.
Put New Labour in the bin,
For we know we'll never win
Till rebellion we begin, what we'd reap we must sow.
If a harvest we would win we must sow.

Karl Dallas
July 17, 2007



Lancashire Tea
Lancashire tea is a strange phenomenon that I had never encountered until recently. I made a big thing about Yorkshire tea a few months back in the Ramblings when I too was floundering under criticism from all quarters regarding Jamie Oliver's cookbook. To my utter amazement I was presented with a large packet of Lancashire Tea on my next visit into that dreaded county by Graham Dixon who

organizes folky events in the Preston area. I have to say I was very touched. No, really, really, I felt very privileged. Now what do I think of the tea?



Well considering Graham has decided to book Kimber's Men again in 2008 I am loath obviously to be critical. I mean you never look a gift horse in the mouth. However my fellow band members, despite me having lived here for 22 years, refuse to accept me even as a token

Yorkshire man, which causes only slight concern on this side of the court as I'm proud of my own heritage of Kent and South East London. But I seem to have developed the siege mentality of the Yorkshire Tyke, many of whom, whenever confronted with anything Lancastrian, turn to sarcasm and under handed criticism. So I really should at this point tell you that after just one cup of tea I was forced to make an unscheduled visit to my doctor. But no! I actually quite liked it and I'm looking forward to another cup.

I can't honestly (or even un-honestly) say I preferred it to Yorkshire tea but it was certainly a pleasant drink made more palatable of course by knowing that the Ramblings are read from top to bottom by more people than I imagined and knowing also that I can leave the real slagging matches to those who know more about red and white roses. God Bless you Graham; I shall drink your health for a few more tea times yet. I'm going into hospital in September for a new knee and I will recuperate with cups of Lancashire Tea!

Anybody else wishing to send me tea can send it to: Joe Stead, Providence Place, Sowerby Bridge, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX6 1BA. Although in all honesty just HX6 1BA will do as we have our own private postcode! So there. **Joe Stead**

GUITAR WORKSHOP



THE BUTTERFLY

Tuning DGDGBbD (Open G minor); Arr: Keith Offord

For the second consecutive issue it's my great pleasure to present a piece by another guitarist other than myself. This issue's guest being Keith Offord.

Keith is possibly most well know on the folk scene for being the guitarist for that much loved trio Manticore who graced the scene some years ago. Shortly after Keith and I met we quickly found we shared a mutual love of the playing of John Renbourn. Little did we know back then that we would end up recording John's tune The Pelican on my first CD a few years ago. In fact some of the most prestigious reviews that the CD received highlighted Keith's playing on that particular track.

Keith's first love has remained the very intricate fingerstyle reminiscent of John's work and often described as "folk baroque" This particular track is taken from Keith's CD The Sun Returns (see Keith's web site for availability) www.keithofford.co.uk

Keith will be my joint tutor at a residential guitar course "Starting Fingerstyle Folk Guitar" tuition weekend at Burton Manor www.burtonmanor.com 5th -7th Oct commencing with a "one off" Friday night concert with Zoe Mulford www.zoemulford.com on the Friday evening. **Jim Ronayne**

Keith Offord's Notes for The Butterfly.

This beautiful slip-jig has been credited to fiddler Tommy Potts and is actually two tunes bolted together, section A and B being one while section C is another. They compliment each other well, the slightly unusual progression in the 5th bar giving the overall tune a unique feel.

I have used open G minor DGDGBbD tuning to enable the use of open strings where possible, the end result being much smoother than it might have been otherwise. This tuning is particularly good for Irish jigs and reels, enabling melody lines to be played in the bass with accompaniment on treble strings.

Some of the moves may take a little practice but work well once you have mastered them. For example, the beginning of bar 4 works best with a complete barré at the seventh fret leading to the open D in the top which provides time to come back to a half barré at the second.

It is advisable to start slowly and then gradually increase the speed of the tune as you gain confidence. It should be delivered with a lilting rhythm, keeping the 9/8 feel.

LETTERS



Dear Ken,

Paul Reade's article on press stereotyping of the folk scene reminded me of an edition of Radio Four's Loose Ends a couple

The Butterfly

Trad, arr. Keith Offord
Transcribed Jim Ronayne

Section A

Section B

Section C

OBITUARIES

CHRIS FYFE



Chris Fyfe, my identical twin brother, who played mandolin as part of The Fyfe Brothers and also with the Celtic-Rock bands Eavesdropper and Collaboration sadly passed away on 4th May 2007 following a massive heart attack.

of months ago. The presenter introduced Eddie Reader by describing how she had moved from pop to folk music where, he told us, she has breathed new life into traditional music that had been stifled by 'the finger-in-the-ear-brigade'. (Eddie Reader then politely pointed out that she was actually going to sing a contemporary song).

I e-mailed the programme that it is not necessary to praise an artist by denigrating others, especially not the very people who have helped ensure the survival of traditional music. No reply, so I sent a formal complaint to the BBC. I pointed out that I have no personal axe to grind, as I am not in the least a traditional performer. I received an apology and was told my concerns would be brought to the attention of the programme maker, which is about as much as I expected.

People who know me will confirm that I am much more likely to sing Buddy Holly than Fred Jordan, but I loathe lazy journalism, and all journalism that resorts to stereotypes is lazy. Paul Reade is right that most folkies couldn't care less about being unhip, which I'm sure really irritates the journalists concerned: after all, if the pen is mightier than the accordion, how can their wit (or demi-wit, perhaps?) be so casually ignored?

However, the damage is more subtle, in that while folk regulars will continue to do what they have always done, newcomers to the scene may be put off before they try. Attracting young performers to folk clubs is hard enough, especially as they are likely to performing to people of their parents' generation, without perpetuating the myth that there is a gaping chasm between young, photogenic performers trying bravely to take an ancient music form forward into the 21st century and the dyed-in-the-arran, bearded old guard glaring at the whippersnappers over their foaming pints of Old Headbanger.

The reality is quite different, as I am sure most Folk NW readers know; performers are welcome, whatever their age. It actually couldn't be otherwise: traditional music has been handed down through generations, and folkies know better than most that you need the next generation to hand it on to.

Neville Grundy

Ken

'Sing For Someone Else's Supper' has now been up and running for just over a year. Its aim is to encourage musicians to raise money to help people who are victims of famine/poverty in Africa. It is by no means 'BAND AID' but as you can see from the totals page over £10,000 pounds has been raised at the time of writing. It's a great reason/excuse to organise a musical event (however small) and as you can see from the list on the 'Grand Total' page, many different people have bought into the idea. www.singforsomeoneelssupper.ukart.com/total.htm

I must re-iterate here that I am not a charity and anyone organising an evening should not send any money to me but should forward it to one of the reputable aid agencies (I use CAFOD but as you can see OXFAM & CHRISTIAN AID are also popular) Just let me know about any event and I will publicise it on the page and add the 'funds raised amount' to the total.

As well as specific concerts we have had interval raffles & collections, which have proved to be successful and very well received. The media are delighted to publicise any events that are raising money for such causes.

Graham Dixon
Preston Tel 01254 853929 or 07815522925



Andy) plus Nick with his recitation "Help A Toad Across The Road" had the assembled throng laughing - in all the right places.

It was a pleasure to greet so many of Chris's friends from the London Irish Session and folk circuit including Brendan McAuley (Uilleann pipes) and Alan O'Leary (flute), Ray Tassie (mandolin), ex-band members from Collaboration (Terry O'Flaherty), Heck Speckles Phantom & The Kitchen Band (Bill Perring), Eavesdropper (Stephen Lillywhite) and of course the 'Hastings Murphia'; Barry Dransfield, Peter Knight, Garry Blakeley, Russ Haywood, Pete & Paul Sedgewick, Charlie Gask, Will & Jane Downes, Jeremy Lucas, Steve Cooke and Ian Dobson.

Of course I'd also like to thank my relatives including our elder brother Rod & Family, Glenys & Family, Auntie Myrtle, Michael and The Waltons for travelling far and wide to make sure that they could attend this celebration of Chris's life.

I hope I haven't offended anyone by leaving them un-credited - senility and a slightly blurred memory caused by a marathon six-hour session (playing - not drinking! Well, OK perhaps just a little bit) leaves me somewhat hazy in the re-collection process but I know how much all your friendships meant to Chris and we'll never forget him for his beaming smile and gentle nature.

Let's raise a glass to Chris!

Cheers

Pete Fyfe

POETRY & SONG



Graham Holland, the author of the poem below is a schoolteacher working in Runcorn. Graham has kindly given us permission to reprint this poem that was first published in a collection of poems by local artists from, or living, around Merseyside.

The book entitled "The Dead Good Poet's Society" is a great collection and is available from "News From Nowhere" at their Bold Street shop in Liverpool or online at www.newsfromnowhere.org.uk (And if you pop in there you can also buy the latest edition of Folk North west!)

If you are a schoolteacher or someone involved in education it will undoubtedly strike a chord with you in these Ofsted dominated times!

I HATE SCHOOL

I hate school
I really hate school
I really, really, really hate school
I hate school so much it makes my head hurt
It's true
Honest
Cross my heart and hope to die
Swear on my mother's life
I hate school

I hate school because of Julie Hamill

Lessons would be good
if it wasn't for Julie Hamill.
Playtime would be fun
if it wasn't for Julie Hamill.
Dinner time would fly by
if it wasn't for Julie Hamill.
I hate school because of Julie Hamill

Last week
A man came to visit my class
He said that everyone has the right
to enjoy school and to be free from
bullying
He told us about the Council's
anti-bullying line
It's a free-phone number you can call
if you are being
bullied
and want help
I wanted to call it.
I really, really, really wanted to call it
But I was too scared
Scared in case the person at the other end
started laughing at me
Scared in case Julie Hamill
found out I had phoned

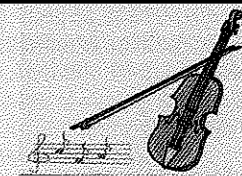
I hate school because of Julie Hamill

Today
The headmistress came into my class.
She said she had a letter for us
It was all about the school's anti-bullying policy
And it included the council's anti-bullying number
The one I was too scared to phone
She handed the letters to me and said
"Now you will make sure every child
takes a letter home with them tonight,
Won't you, Mr Holland?"
It was all I could do to look at her and reply,
"Yes, Mrs Hamill"
As my head started to hurt again.

I hate school.

© Graham Holland

ARTIST CORNER



ACOUSTIC STRAWBS



The Strawbs have enjoyed success for 30 years and now tour with an acoustic line-up. Playing classic Strawbs songs with the integrity and musicianship for which the band has always been recognised.

They will appear at The Citadel on Sat 29th September 2007 at 8.30pm

LES BARKER



The British Computer Association of the Blind (BCAB) is proud to announce the third CD in the Guide Cats for the Blind series: 'Top Cat, White Tie and Tails'. Following hot on the heels of the incredibly successful 'Guide Cats for the Blind' and 'The Missing Persians File' CDs (both favourably reviewed in FNW), this latest addition to the collection promises everything you've come to expect.

An all spoken collection of poems from the exhaustless repertoire of humourous poet Les Barker, the CD lives up to its predecessors with a glittering array of celebrities getting involved. Tim Brooke-Taylor, Andrew Sachs, Roger Lloyd Pack, Joss Ackland, Prunella Scales and Christopher Cazenove, are joined by Les Barker, Judi Spiers, Ken Bruce and many others.

Proceeds from all the Guide Cats CDs go toward funding BCAB's EyeT4All initiative. The national scheme aims to introduce blind and partially sighted people to low cost, affordable and easy to use technology. Buy the CDs from the Guide Cats Shop and help promote this unique and innovative project.

BCAB is a UK organisation of visually impaired people who

use information and communications technology. Their membership ranges from experienced computer professionals, to people who are beginning to explore the use of information and communications technology for leisure, study or employment. Visit the BCAB website www.bcab.org.uk/guide-cats/top-cat-white-tie-and-tails.html for more information and to buy any of the Guide Cat CDs.

Between now and the end of the year Les Barker appears at several venues in and around the region:

SEPTEMBER

1-2 Fylde Folk Festival, Fleetwood, (solo and with Mrs Ackroyd Band) 01253 872317

OCTOBER

27 Traditional Music and Arts Festival, Derby, (with Keith Donnelly) 01332 255800 (noon)

27 Folk Festival, Sheffield, (Mrs Ackroyd Band) 0114 279 8897 (evening)

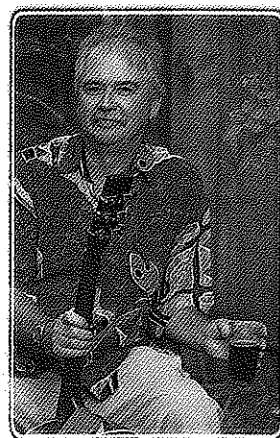
NOVEMBER

1 Sports Centre, Ulverston, 07743 555227

DECEMBER

9 Ring o' Bells, Warrington, 01925 812725

14 Leopard, Stoke on Trent, 01782 616015



BERNARD CARNEY

Bernard Carney will be on tour from Australia in April 2008. He's already booked for:

April 15th Belper (Derbyshire) TBC and
April 16th Blackpool.

Bernard Carney is a brilliant, warm, funny, talented performer who writes his own songs from both the silly and serious ends of the spectrum. Voted 'Entertainer of the

Year' at the 2003 Port Fairy Folk Festival (one of Oz's 'big-three' festivals!) Bernard also won the prestigious Lawson-Patterson Award for song writing in the same year.

Bernard has a witty touch, and a sense of humour from his native Lancashire. Lancashire lost him to the sunny shores of Perth, Western Australia some thirty years ago - but he reinvents his native land once a year to remind us of what we're missing the rest of the year round.

His shows focus on his original songs, which are exceptional for the wit and smartness of the lyrics and the flawless guitar style that accompanies them. He might sing you his ode to the common cold, 'The Bronchio-dilated Blues,' or his songwriting song, 'Here Comes the Chorus.' He's an exceptional wordsmith and plays effortless fingerpicking blues-style guitar. Visit www.jacey-bedford.com and www.bernardcarney.com for further information.



COLCANNON

Colcannon, the contemporary Australian band from Adelaide, South Australia, whose music feel is slightly Celtic but the songs are

strongly Australian, pay a return visit to the UK in October including:

25 Oct 2007 Wirral Parkgate FC

26 Oct 2007 Standish FC

Visit www.colcannon.net for further details and up to date itinerary.



JULIE ELLISON CONCERTS & GUITAR CLINICS

Julie Ellison has the following concerts booked in and around the North West this autumn:

11th October

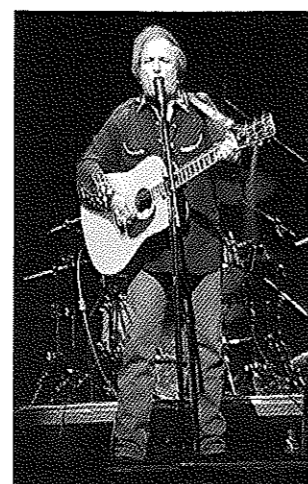
Ruthin Acoustic Music Club, North Wales

10th November

Maghull Day of Music 2007, Merseyside

Alongside her concert appearances this year, Julie has been undertaking a national tour of Borders stores running in-store guitar clinics. The events, run in association with 'Acoustic' magazine, feature a mix of performances and guitar workshops and have proved very popular. You can get details from her website: www.julieellison.co.uk or by calling 01724 735 349.

DON McLEAN



Don McLean pays a visit to the region when he plays at The Bridgewater Hall in Manchester on Tuesday 9 October. McLean is one of America's most enduring singer-songwriters, and is forever associated with his classic hits Vincent and American Pie, which has been voted into the top five songs of the last century.

Since first hitting the charts in 1971, Don has amassed over 40 gold and platinum records and, in 2004, was inducted into the Songwriters' Hall of Fame. His songs have been performed by

artists as diverse as Fred Astaire, Chet Atkins, Elvis Presley, Josh Groban, Coolio and most notably Madonna, with her No.1 recording of American Pie in 2000 and George Michael with The Grave in 2003, sung in protest at the Iraq War.

This date is part of Don McLean's most significant overseas concert tour in 16 years and early booking is recommended. To book tickets priced from £24.50 & £29.50, please call The Bridgewater Hall Box Office on 0161 907 9000 or book online at www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk using the new 'select your own seat' option.

MELANIE



Melanie is the definitive hippie-chick who wowed the Woodstock crowd as a nervous 19 year old, and has been enchanting audiences ever since. Fresh from her triumphant London appearance at Jarvis Cocker's

recent Meltdown Festival, the singer - whose wonderfully wayward style has paved the way for the likes of Beth Orton and Joanna Newsom - brings her songs of peace, love and anguished catharsis back to Manchester this September, when on the 24th she plays The Bridgewater Hall.

With over 80 million records sold world wide - putting her on par with Dolly Parton and not far behind Bob Dylan - Melanie's hits include Ruby Tuesday, Look What They've Done to My Song, Ma, Brand New Key and Lay Down (Candles in the Rain). Recently described in MOJO magazine as 'The forgotten princess of sob', whose voice 'rivals that of the old flamenco divas', Melanie's return to Britain after an absence of 20 years is the comeback of the year. Don't miss!

To book tickets priced £24.50 phone The Bridgewater Hall Box Office on 0161 907 9000 or book online at www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk using the new 'select your own seat' option.

MULDOON'S PICNIC



Muldoon's Picnic is a five-part harmony-singing group based in the lovely green city of Glasgow. Our repertoire is highly eclectic and ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous: everything from folk songs to world music to spirituals to Victorian parlour music, mostly in our own arrangements. We have been known to sing in Bulgarian,

Croatian, Georgian, Welsh, Cornish, Manx, Breton, Scots Gaelic and Sotho, not to mention dodgy American and Canadian accents. Muldoon's Picnic are available for weddings, conferences, private parties, festivals, theatrical performances, James Joyce appreciation jamborees and what have you. We also offer workshops in Sacred Harp (shapenote) singing, world music and general a cappella harmony.

Their festival season kicked off in fine style with the Four Fools Festival at Preston. A very busy but rewarding three days, including their now-traditional all-day Friday workshop with children from Lostock Hall school who joined them on stage for the final concert on Sunday. This was technically the last Four Fools, but don't go thinking it's all over: a brand-new ("rebranded"?) folk arts festival will be there same time same place next year. Meanwhile, all congratulations to Angie and Ken and their team for 19 years of a truly excellent festival.

Muldoon's Picnic appear at Fylde Folk Festival (Fleetwood 31 August-2 September) and on the afternoon of Sunday 9 September we'll be performing in the Rotherham Show. Visit www.myspace.com/muldoonspicnic for further information.

LINDE NIJLAND



Linde Nijland is an incredible singer from Holland who toured in the UK in 2007 as one half of Ygdrasil. She and multi instrumentalist Bert Ridderbos will be touring the UK again in 2008 (13th to the 26th February) with their show "Linde Nijland sings the songs of Sandy Denny". 2008 is the 30th year since Sandy died and she expects there will be some renewed interest in the songs. Linde was invited to sing with Fairport Convention when

they were in Holland sometime ago, and she was also asked to perform at "An Evening with Joe Boyd" in 2006.

On February 15 Linde plays the Acoustic Tearoom, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, U.K. You can also visit her website at www.lindenijland.nl

NEWSREEL



IT'S A FROG'S LIFE - REALLY

Runcorn based Graham Holland hosts an entertaining blog with the curious title of "It's A Frog's Life Acoustic Podcast" where you can find a new show every two weeks featuring some of the best podsafe acoustic music from Liverpool and across the UK. If you're a musician who is from the UK or based here and you'd like Graham to feature your music then just ask him. Or if you want to subscribe to the show -it's free - his email address is: podcast@itsafrogslife.net

One of his recent shows (number 29) featured Graham's visits to Stainsby Festival and each show has an interesting selection of songs from unknown or up and coming artists, many of whom should appeal to folk scene regulars. Although Graham is primarily a musician and music lover, he also has a wider interest in the arts and elsewhere in this edition (Poetry & Song) you will find what we think is his only published poem - but it's a gem. So take a look at it and see what you think.

CHORLEY FM HAS A NEW WEBSITE



James Blatchley tells us that Chorley FM has a new website. It is at www.chorley.fm and anyone with a broadband connection can listen live to the station 24 hours a day. There is also a web cam.

Most of the folk sessions are 'podcasted' on the website within

7 days. The show's permanent (?) time for 'Chorley Folk' is Sunday afternoons between 3 and 6pm. Guests arranged for later in the year are local artistes Geoff & Barbara Snape, barn dance band Full English and 4 Part Harmony group One Accord and local acoustic folk/roots Rob & Suzie from Gregson Lane Folk Club. From further afield comes young female singer/songwriter Charlie Barker who is great.

For more information please visit www.myspace.com/chorleyfolk for more details on the show.

CHORLEY SPARKS - celebrating Chorley's clog heritage



Chorley will be celebrating its clog heritage for the next eight months through a programme of activities led by local clog dance artist Alex Fisher with Project Co-ordinator, Joyce Morris. Alex and Joyce, who both live in Eccleston, have been working closely with

community clog dance group, Eccleston Heritage Clog to secure a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to enable this unique project to go ahead.

Starting in September, clog dance workshops will take place in four local primary schools whilst their friends and families will be invited to record some of their memories of wearing clogs in Chorley eg. taking them to the clog maker for new irons, 'sparking', and all the old clog sayings: 'all clogged up', 'wood from head to toe' and 'clogs to clogs in three generations'. Does anyone remember old Jack Lydon who used to clog dance to entertain the cinema queues in the 1940s and 50s?

People of all ages will be involved in the project which will culminate in a special celebratory performance at Chorley Town Hall on November 21st, Chorley Clog Day. This will feature clog dance numbers from Alex Fisher and the four school groups, along with live music, songs and lecture demonstrations on clog making and the history of clog dance. There will also be an exhibition of clog memorabilia, clog dance workshop photos and schools' research and artwork.

The ultimate aim is to create a DVD that will capture and celebrate the unique status of clogs and clog culture in Chorley and to present a comprehensive history of clog dancing, not only as a local tradition but as an important part of our national dance heritage.

Alex Fisher 01257 453185 Joyce Morris 01257 452059

RADIO BRITFOLK

The first part of a series of programmes about English Country Dance Bands has recently appeared in the Radio Britfolk schedule <http://www.radiobritfolkhome.co.uk>.

Barry Goodman presented the show, based on an original idea by Pete Coe who also loaned of some amazing music, much of which appeared in the first programme, "Roots". The whole series is called "Stepping Out" and looks at English dance music over the past 35 years or so, as well as music from some of the traditional musicians who were such an influence on the early bands of the "revival".

Programme one contained such delights as Bob Cann, Oscar Woods, Bob Smith's Ideal Band and Scan Tester, as well as the Old Swan Band, Oak, Umps & Dumps and Whapweasel.

CLADDAGH RECORDS

Claddagh Records has a massive selection of Irish traditional music available, ranging from the early traditional recordings of the 1960s to the most recent new releases. Whether it's solo albums, groups, traditional song or more recent contemporary music they have it all for your listening pleasure. You can find their full catalogue at: www.claddaghrecords.com

CALLING ALL BUDDING YOUNG PERFORMERS



This year marks the tenth anniversary of the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award, and the search for new talent is on. Whether you are a soloist, duo or group, BBC Radio 2's Mike Harding Show is looking for young people aged between 15-20 who perform folk,

roots and acoustic music from any culture. This is a great opportunity for young performers to learn new skills from professional musicians, be taught the tricks of the music trade

and immerse themselves in making music and song with other like-minded people.

To enter, each group, duo or soloist should send a recording of their performance along with a completed entry form to BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award 2008, Mrs Casey Music, PO Box 296, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3XU. To request an entry form please email info@mrs-casey.co.uk or call 01629 827012. Alternatively you can download an entry form from the BBC Radio 2 website at: www.bbc.co.uk/radio2 where you can also find full information about the entry requirements. Entry forms and recordings must arrive with Mrs Casey Music by Monday 10 September 2007.

Successful entrants will be invited to a Semi-Final Audition Weekend on 19 - 21 October 2007 in Stratford-Upon-Avon along with up to forty other musicians and singers. Semi-finalists will attend workshops led by high profile musicians Robert Harbron and Benji Kirkpatrick and there will be opportunities to learn about stagecraft, technical support and working in the music business. There will also be plenty of time for socialising and informal music sessions.

During the Semi-Final Weekend, on Saturday 20 October, entrants will perform in a public Audition Concert. The BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award's top music industry judges will choose which acts will go through to the Final, which will be held at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, London on 7 December 2007. The winning act will record a session to be broadcast on BBC Radio 2's Mike Harding Show, appear at three top UK festivals - Cambridge Folk Festival, Towersey Village Festival and Fairport's Cropredy Convention and receive a year's free membership to the Musicians Union.

All finalists and semi-finalists will gain valuable performance experience that will help them develop and go on to further success in their music careers. Previous winners include Tim van Eyken, BBC Radio 2 Folk Award winner and frontman of the highly acclaimed Van Eyken band, Uiscedwr, Bodega, Last Orders and spellbinding fiddle player Lauren MacColl.

CHOIRS GET WIRED FOR SOUND!



Whether your choir sings gospel, barbershop, chamber or tributes to Grease, BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year, the UK's largest amateur choral competition wants to hear from you! This year it is even easier to enter the competition. Choirs are being

asked to submit recordings online or via CD, encouraging more groups than ever to take part. In 2006 5,000 singers from all over the country participated in the competition and BBC Radio 3 are expecting record-breaking numbers of entries this year. Aled Jones, presenter of BBC Radio 3 programme The Choir (Sunday evenings at 6.30pm) hosted last year's semi-finals and will continue to show his support by hosting the 2008 competition.

Entries can be submitted by CD or online between 3 September and 18 November at www.choiroftheyear.co.uk. Choirs can enter the competition in four categories: Open, Children's, Youth, and Adult. Following open submission entries, a panel of expert judges will reward successful choirs with places in the regional semi-finals. Amongst confirmed judges for the 2008 competition are Stuart Barr, musical director, vocal coach, and member of the British Voice Association and Cece Sammy vocal and performance coach on the TV Show Pop Idol and a judge on the BBC's celebrity duet show Just the Two of Us.

THREE OF IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC'S LEADING BANDS

playing in the north-west this autumn

SHARON SHANNON

with Michael McGoldrick, Jim Murray & Dezi Donnelly

15th Sept: Burnley Mechanics - 01282-664400
17th Sept: Victoria Hall, Saltaire (West Yorks) - 01274-588614

ALTAN

16th Oct: Sale Waterside Arts Centre - 0161-912-5616
18th Oct: The Buttermarket, Shrewsbury - 07809-157845
19th Oct: Burnley Mechanics - 01282-664400

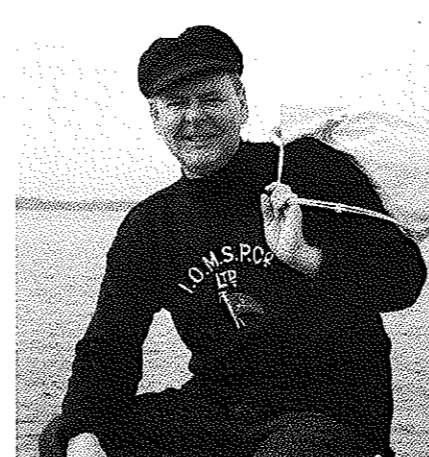
LUNASA

13th Nov: Sale Waterside Arts Centre - 0161-912-5616

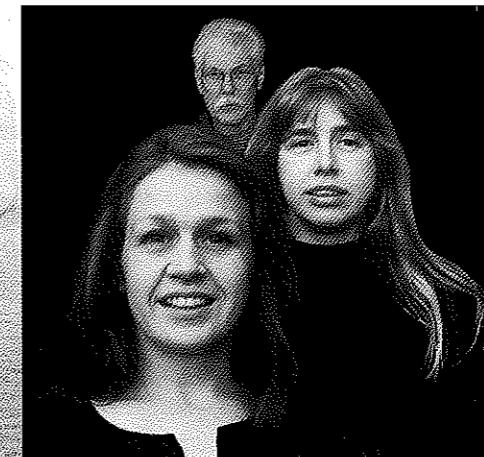
Open Door Folk Club

The Royal Oak, 172 Manchester Road, Werneth OL9 7BN

Extravaganza 13 – Sunday October 14th



Hughie Jones



Trio Threlfall



George Papavgeris

Tickets: whole day £12 – individual tickets available
contact Pauline 0161 681 3618 or pauline@opendoorfolkclub.co.uk

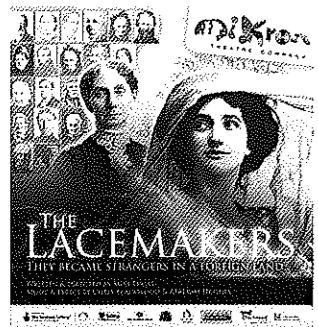
BBC Radio 3 Choir of the Year 2008 regional semi-final venues and dates:

" The Anvil, Basingstoke Saturday 1 - Sunday 2 March 2008
 " Warwick Arts Centre Saturday 8 - Sunday 9 March 2008
 " Queen's Hall, Edinburgh Sunday 27 April 2008
 " The Octagon, Sheffield Sunday 11 May 2008
 " St David's Hall, Cardiff Sunday 18 May 2008

MIKRON STAGE NEW PRODUCTIONS

Mikron is a small theatre group that presents very interesting productions in informal settings. They're well worth seeing. The dates for Mikron's Autumn Tour 2007 are now booked and confirmed. www.mikron.org.uk Jim Woodland, partner of Janet Russell, is one of the principal songwriters for Mikron.

2007 Show Outlines. This year, we're pleased to present two new productions, The Lacemakers by Mike Lucas and Married to the Job by Richard Povall.



The Lacemakers - The story of the John Heathcote, the inventor of the lace-making machine, and the Loughborough Luddites, who fought against mechanisation and attacked the frames during the year 1816.

Married to the Job. - Thomas Telford and Civil Engineering. Having explored Trevithick and

Brunel, Mikron now conclude their trilogy of plays about the great engineers with an exploration of the life of Telford 250 years since his birth and how his profession is viewed today.

SEPTEMBER

Sun 16th 3pm (L C) St Thomas & St Andrew's Doxey, Stafford. For further details tel: 01785 621453/251622. This performance is supported by Doxey Community Association.

OCTOBER

Sun 7th 2pm (MJ C) Stone Amphitheatre, Trent Close, Stone. The show will take place in the open-air amphitheatre next to the canal. Bring a blanket or cushion! This performance is part of the Stone Food & Drink Festival 2007 www.stonefooddrink.org.uk and is supported by Brindley's of Stone, Narrowboat Restaurant www.brindleysstone.co.uk

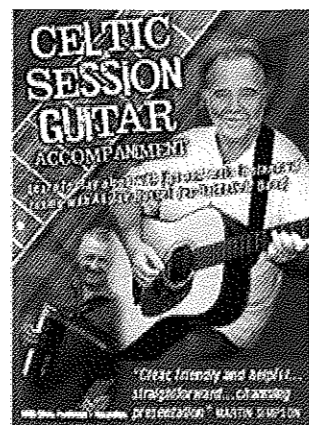
L = Performance of The Lacemakers; MJ = Performance of Married to the Job; C= No tickets needed

STEP OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Throughout the Folk Boom of the 1960s and into the new wave of popularity in the 21st century, one style of music has been constant: Celtic Jigs and Reels. Musicians of all ages and abilities have jammed at pubs, in bars and at festivals, honing their technical skills and developing confidence, whilst also absorbing a whole new repertoire of music.

So, to set the scene. You're at a bar, or perhaps a festival, or maybe you've popped down to your local folk club. Amongst the chatter, a group of musicians sit together playing through tune after tune, at ease with the music, enjoying each other's company. They exchange tunes, play familiar favourites and as the night wears on, people drift over to have a listen. The impromptu band begins to attract more of a crowd and you move closer to look and have a listen to what they're playing. Maybe you've picked up the guitar a few times and tried to get to grips

with the basics, or perhaps you've played for a couple of years now. You enjoy strumming at home or with close friends and family but feel nervous at the prospect of trying to join in with a session like this. Something is holding you back. They make it look so easy. You wonder how they know what chords are coming next, when the changes in tempo are going occur, how they seem so at ease and so confident. You go back to the bar and wish.



Whether you're a budding novice or even a more experienced guitarist, the secrets of jamming in a Celtic session can now be yours. A new DVD from Alistair Russell (of Battlefield Band fame) will help turn you from a shy strummer into a confident Celtic session guitarist. Students will be introduced to Irish and Scottish dance music, using just eight chords, taken through five jigs and five reels in several keys, with slowed-down explanations of rhythmic patterns, all in standard tuning.

The beauty of a session is the opportunity to play with people of all ages, and abilities, to learn from each other, to develop your playing and listening skills and make some great music in the process. Alistair's clear and accessible tuition provides the ideal platform from which to develop, enabling you to feel confident about joining in the next Celtic session you encounter, whether it be at your local pub, festival or folk club.

Alistair's DVD is available from Mrs Casey Records. You can order your copy now by phoning Rocking Chair on 01629 827013. Alternatively you order it at www.mrscasey.co.uk rockingchair or email rc@mrscasey.co.uk



ALL JIGGED OUT - Wish Hill (Hobgoblin Records HOBBCD1004)



The opening few bars of this tremendous instrumental album will immediately catch your attention! For those of you who can cast your mind back to Moving Hearts or early Davy Spillane you'll feel comfortable in an indulgent sort of way and those who can cast their mind even further back there are

touches of Vladimir Cosma who wrote the inspired score for the David McCallum TV version of 'Kidnapped'. This sense of grandeur explodes from arrangements such as 'The All-Knowing Salmon/McArthur Road' featuring the band's jazz/folk cross-over brilliantly with a Grapelli-esque Benjamin Lee (fiddle) sparring with the flute of Philippe Barnes. Tom Phelan (Piano) and Ollie Boorman (percussion) prove no slouches either when it comes to accompanying the death defying instrumental leads laying a solid foundation of rhythm that just makes you want to dance.

This is a staggering debut from a band that should see them as late-night festival headliners in no time at all. Brilliant! www.alljiggedout.com

Pete Fyfe

PHILIPPE BARNES & TOM PHELAN - The Madrid Sessions (Hobgoblin Records HOBBCD1003)



This is one of those albums that seamlessly draws together two like-minded musicians who were just born to perform with each other. This is technical yet non sterile playing which is a soulful co-joining of both traditional folk and jazz proving that both musicians are not frightened to expose their Celtic roots. Both

Philippe and Tom are equally at ease paired down to just the duo (flute and piano) for this album or working with their full-blown band All Jigged Out. Listen and be prepared to be amazed by some digital dexterity at its best.

www.phillipebarnesandtomphelan.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

BREABACH The Big Spree (Vertical Records VERTCD081)

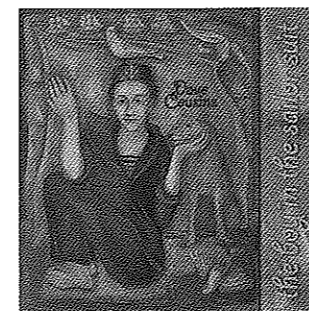


The Tannahill Weavers and The Battlefield Band have a lot to answer for when it comes to enforcing the signature of Scottish 'folk' bands. OK, so having established the path taken by the quartet Breabach I'm personally pleased to see that they have retained their roots with the explosion of war pipes, fiddle, whistle and guitar driven tunes.

A warm smile will cross the faces of those of old enough to remember when tunes such as Merrily Danced The Quaker's Wife were king and the inclusion of the more melancholy Matt McGinn song "Rolling Hills Of The Borders" and the traditional "Lochaber No More" will please those of a gentler persuasion. www.breabach.com

Pete Fyfe

DAVE COUSINS The Boy In The Sailor Suit (Witchwood Records WMCD 2040)



The master of the iconic rock riff and tortured vocals Dave Cousins returns with yet more songs that really make the listener want to listen. These days the 'band' The Blue Angel Orchestra sound like an amalgam of The Strawbs and Fairport Convention courtesy of Ian Cutler. This works particularly well on the opening track "Never Take Sweets From A Stranger" where the guitar and fiddle join together in a Down By The Sea

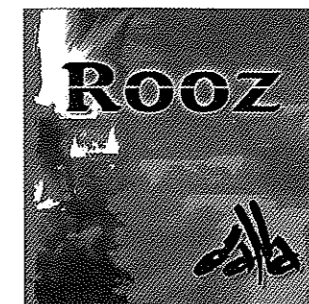
kind of moment given a touch of the gothic Ripley's Believe It Not element to the lyrics. Bizarre and yet strangely haunting and a real Cousins classic!

On the quirkily quintessential English "Wish You Were Here", the lyrics bring vividly to mind seaside pleasures of a bygone era that I'm sure Dave would hanker for particularly now that

he's based on the Kent coast. Another compelling album. www.strawbsweb.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

DALLA ROOZ (Dalla Records DACD 04)



The opening track "Young Man Of Cornwall" conjures up images of the Wicker Man soundtrack with Hilary Coleman and Bec Applebee's distinctive harmony vocals and Neil Davey's dramatic chordal fiddle accompaniment proving a great start to a great album. At times, sounding not unlike the much missed Pyewackett particularly when joined by the gutsy tones of the

clarinets Dalla's music has a dervish quality that will grab the listener by the throat.

This trio don't hold back when it comes to waulking style songs and the unusual inclusion of rock smashing has to be a first. By the way check out the superlative mandolin playing by Neil on The King Of Sweden - astonishing! www.dalla.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

HUMMINGBIRD Tougher Than Love (Flying Sparks Record)



Hummingbird is a trio of women singer songwriters featuring Amy Wadge, Cathy Burton (who replaced Rosalie Deighton from the original line up) and Edwina Hayes. All are notable solo artists still pursuing separate careers in their own write. Tougher Than Love is the group's first CD offering and it's an ear catching debut with the trio demonstrating some sweet harmonies while rotating lead vocals.

Hummingbird have an engaging style and produce consistently strong vocal performances throughout. They are already booked up until the middle of next year, recently played the Glastonbury Acoustic stage, and have been offered a tour of Australia.

Their tight harmonies and mellifluous tones have brought favourable and justifiable comparisons with the Dixie Chicks and there are similarities with the acclaimed Linda Ronstadt/Dolly Parton/Emmylou Harris 1980s collaboration. Amy Wadge commented recently: "We do work hard at it but we have never really had to work very hard at the vocal side of things because it's very natural". This comes across in the effortless way that their different musical styles and backgrounds complement one another so perfectly. Although their music clearly exhibits strong Americana influences, their style is firmly rooted in the UK folk and rock traditions. From the immediately melodic hooks of songs like the opening track 'Sing a Lullaby' and the excellent 'Appletree', you can tell Hummingbird possess special individual and collective talents.

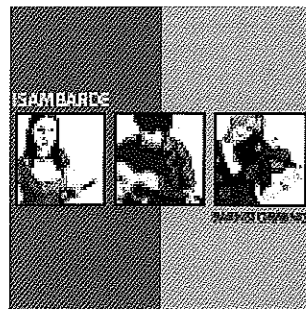
There are changes of tempo and mood throughout the album so that ballads and lullabies are counterposed with the injection of the raunchier numbers, as exemplified by the title track of the album, the upbeat song 'Shine On' (that's received Radio 2 airplay on Wogan) and 'Live your life laughing'. There's also a reworking of one of Amy Wadge's more recent compositions, the evocative 'Freefall' and Hayes' 'I Want Your Love'. While the trio individually or together are responsible for writing or co-

writing four of the tracks, others wrote the remainder of this well chosen selection. There's also a fine supporting cast of musicians to supplement their own playing. Hummingbird made a wise choice in teaming up with the Mighty Vibration production team as they bring the trio's vocal and musical qualities to the fore.

Hummingbird are on the verge of a breakthrough into the mainstream, as many are seeking something different from the bland image-focussed music that the large labels like to market, but they have not compromised their musical integrity in doing so. Their Americana folk rock style will give them appeal beyond the confines of the folk circuit in this country and abroad. All the signs are that 2007 will see Hummingbird consolidate their early success. Their collective talent certainly merits it. Visit www.amywadg.com for more details.

Lewis Jones

ISAMBARDE Barnstorming (Whirly Whorl Records, 2006)



If ever an album had a good title 'Barnstorming' is it! - This is only the 3rd album from Isambarde and it can only serve to put them up amongst the cream of the acoustic folk bands in the world, - there, I've said it!

Isambarde are Chris Green: vocals, acoustic guitar, bouzouki and bass. Jude Rees: vocals and oboe. Emily Saunders: vocals, fiddle and viola. All three are

brilliant musicians and with their chosen instruments and arrangements they bringing a freshness to English folk song that is long overdue. Chris backs the songs with a bright solid rhythm on his guitar while Emily and Jude weave in and out with riffs and tunes on the fiddle and Oboe to compliment the songs. The enthusiasm and the freshness they bring to the songs, is never in question. The result is something that has to be heard. It is hard to believe that the band only really got together in 2003/4, for they gel together with an experience that you normally only find in bands that have been playing for much longer. I've seen them 'live' on stage four times now, and each time they have blown me away with their performance and stagecraft. Festival and club organisers take note; you might want to book them while they are still relatively inexpensive. This band is on the way up!

So what makes the album so good? In a nutshell - simplicity, plus a good ear for a song, the result is an ideal choice of material. If you think about it, when you visit a folk club or festival, which are the songs that lodge themselves in your self-conscience and you find yourself humming or whistling the tune on the way home. It has been said that all the revivalist singers in the 50's and 60's had a field day rooting out the very best of the traditional songs for their repertoire, and left the rest! Traditional bands these days go to extraordinary lengths to find material that hasn't been done. But what's wrong with the old songs the revivalists unearthed? Nothing at all.

So it is young bands like Isambarde, who were born in the 70's & 80's, left to pick up the thread. Simple you might think, but it's the refreshing treatment Isambarde gives to the songs that makes them extremely 'listenable' all over again. Traditional songs like 'The Bold Fusilier', 'High Germany', 'I Wish', 'The Wounded Hussar (tune)', 'A Miners Lifeguard', 'Hard Times of Old England', command your attention and are sensitively complimented by more contemporary standards such as 'Farewell to the Gold (Metzer/Jones)', 'Lilly of Barbary (Scowther)', 'Farewell Farewell (Thompson)', and 'Old Bones

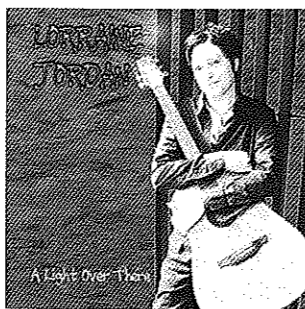
(Lowe). It's the arrangements of which that go to make these Isambarde's own.

Although the album runs for over 43 min's it's a pity there is only 10 tracks on offer, for it truly leaves you wanting to hear more. If ever there are two bands deserving of world wide recognition, one is Isambarde, the other is Show of Hands, so it is no surprise that Phil Beer of Show Of Hands appears on the album as a guest musician (fiddle & quarto on two tracks) as do the brilliant Vicki Swan and Jonny Dyer on bass and piano accordion on three of the tracks.

So, should you need your enthusiasm reviving, or just want to hear the very best in English traditional music and song, you seriously need to buy this album, even if you buy nothing else this year! You can do so online at the Isambarde web site here: <http://www.isambarde.co.uk/shop.shtml>. The next generation of folk bands is here! And, with likes of Isambarde, it's in good hands I am pleased to say.

Peter Massey

LORRAINE JORDAN A Light Over There (Hazellville Music HZD 11)



Lorraine Jordan is undoubtedly one of the finest and most talented folk singer-songwriters in Britain. She is probably best known as a writer for composing the wonderful 'Winds of Freedom', a song that highlights the physical, mental and cultural torment of the Highland clearances. Born in Wales to Irish parents, and resident for many years in Scotland, she is now London based but her musical Celtic pedigree remains as strong and relevant as ever.

A Light Over There is her long awaited fifth solo album and follows a period in which she has devoted much of her creative energy to Planet Woman, an exhilarating collaboration that brought together a group of artists from the UK and New Zealand. In the past few years, this has inevitably meant her sharing her time between the UK and Australasia. Even if it's been a long time in the offing, the evidence is that A Light Over There has been well worth the wait.

She's has gathered around her a great bunch of musicians, including the superb fiddle player, Sarah Beattie, the veteran Steafan Hannigan (Uilleann pipes), Richard Jones (accordion), Jenny Maidman (various guitars), and cello player Kate Baker. Jordan and Debbie Dickinson have really done a great job on production and the CD hangs perfectly together as a sequential entity.

Jordan has absorbed a number of influences on her travels but she is probably at her most comfortable and lyrically articulates with ballads and lullabies. Many of the songs on the CD seem to tap into her personal experiences - as any good songwriter does. The opening track really shows the upside of love, when you are in that falling in love state that sees you inexorably absorbed into a blissful relationship in which you offer 'No Resistance' to what is happening to you. 'Your love' contrasts the state of mind and depths of despair that can happen when one has no soul mate ("Down to zero I dropped, Down too deep I was lost") with the sudden uplifting transformative confidence that finding the right person brings.

Other very notable tracks on a very notable album include,

'Danni', about someone whose been damaged by many of life's tortuous experiences but is now coming out the other side, while the title track and 'Dreamers' draw heavily on her Scottish tradition and influences. There's also the beautiful love ballad, 'If you want me too' and the album draws to a fitting close with the lovely lulling lullaby, 'Dum di Diddle'.

Lorraine Jordan's performance and quality as an artist is best summed in the second track on this album. 'From the heart' (penned by Susan Clark and ironically the only track not composed by Jordan) is upbeat, passionate and highlights the quality that separates out those artists, like Jordan herself, who put their heart and soul into every performance and those who just go through the motions. The main message of the song (and the album) is 'sing like you don't need the money...it's got to come from the heart if you want it to work'. She has a highly distinctive voice and delivers her superb repertoire of songs with distinction. And yes Lorraine Jordan does sing like she doesn't need the money and yes it works to perfection. Highly recommended. Visit www.lorrainejordan.net/welcome.htm to buy CD and downloads.

Lewis Jones

LUCY KAPLANSKY Over The Hills (Red House Records RHR CD 200)



Three years after the album, 'The Red Thread', Lucy Kaplansky has released the long awaited follow up. It emerged following a very difficult personal period in which she lost her father, to whom she was very close, as well as friend and mentor, Bob Feldman, who founded the label for which she now records. These events have clearly influenced the tracks on the new CD, which sees her very much in a reflective mode. Not only in the very personal lyrics of the songs she has co-written with lyric partner and husband, Rick Litvin, but also those songs written by others that she reinterpreted so well and most of which have formed part of her live performances for several years.

As usual, Lucy Kaplansky has surrounded herself with an excellent band of some of the finest musicians available, including regular accompanist Duke Levine (guitars), Larry Campbell (mainly pedal steel, dobro and fiddle) and Charlie Giordano (accordion). There are guest background vocal appearances from former Cry Cry Cry compatriot, Richard Shindell, Red House stablemate Eliza Gilkyson, and Buddy Miller (who joins Lucy on his wife Julie's 'Somewhere Trouble Don't Go'). Ben Wittman is responsible for the crisp clear production as well as performing superbly on drums, organ and harmonium.

The CD opens with one of Kaplansky's own compositions, the enchanting 'Manhattan Moon' which opines about the joys of motherhood, followed by 'Amelia', a more disturbing tale of a woman trapped in a claustrophobic, unfulfilling relationship with no apparent means of escape and she is determined that for her daughter doesn't repeat her mistakes.

On a more personal level, 'Today's the day' reflects on the day she and her father said their final goodbyes, while 'Over The Hills' and 'The Gift' deal with the painful loss of her father and her mentor but salutes the legacy they have left behind; the memories that live on and the talents are passed down from one generation to the next.

Interspersed with the original songs are the aptly selected

songs by others, which fit seamlessly into the mood and tempo of the album. For example, Kaplansky's reworking of the Roxy Music classic, 'More Than This' is exemplary (if you've seen the film 'Lost in Translation', it's a similar tempo and arrangement to Bill Murray's rendition but this time by a singer who can sing rather than an actor who struggles with the medium of song). There's also a great reinterpretation of Ian Tyson's well covered 60s song, 'Someday Soon', a personal favourite that has long formed part of Kaplansky's live repertoire - although you have doubt the wisdom of a woman falling for a cowboy who 'loves that damn old rodeo as much as he loves me'. On this occasion the father was right to tell her to steer clear!

The cover of the enigmatic Loudon Wainwright favourite, 'The Swimming Song' flows along nicely and while her version of 'Ring of Fire' doesn't carry the raw desperation of Johnny Cash's original, she still comes out well in the black on the musical balance sheet.

Over The Hills represents another intriguing chapter in Lucy Kaplansky's recording career - a career that continues to go from strength to strength. It follows a difficult period in her life and although many of the tracks are obviously reflective they look positively forward rather than sadly back. Fittingly Over The Hills is dedicated to her father and former Red House Records president, Bob Feldman. Lucy Kaplansky has produced a CD that is not only a fitting and worthy tribute to their memories but also to her quality as an artist. She has every right to be proud of it.

Lewis Jones

TOM KITCHING & GREN BARTLEY Ruses (Fellside Records FECD202)



This, 'Ruses', is the first release for Tom Kitching and Gren Bartley on the Fellside label. Paul Adams, head honcho at Fellside was recently heard to say that this is the record that has most excited him since his release of the Spiers and Boden debut. No pressure, boys, eh? Mind you, I'm just back from seeing Tom and

Gren's major stage debut at Brampton Festival and can confirm that these young men are likely to take the big stage in their stride in much the way that the two Jo(h)ns have. Confidence abounds and why shouldn't it with this pair of talented young men.

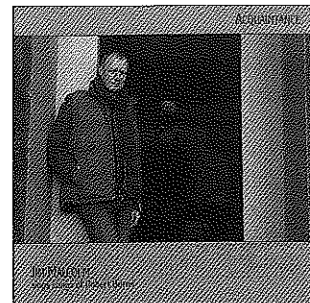
There are fourteen tracks here with around five re-worked from some self-released EPs. What you'll get is a well-stirred (and stirring) mixture of their two musical talents. First off, Tom is an excellent fiddle player as witnessed by his place as a finalist in the BBC Young Folk Awards of 2003. So, naturally, there are a number of sprightly fiddle tunes including 'Record Lovelies' and 'Clyde Street'. However, so well are the two musicians teamed up that whilst Tom's fiddle drips like honey over the melody, you'll find that it's Gren who has composed these tunes. Indeed, Gren takes on most of the composing load including songs that show off Richard Thompson inspired guitar work on tracks like 'City Of Sleep'.

When the guitar work flies, there is obviously less need for Tom to adorn the song but the boys are back in tandem on other Gren songs such as the lovely 'Window'. That's not meant to underplay Tom's contribution here, as his fiddle is a delight and features strongly on a number of traditional tunes such as 'Old Molly Oxford'. If that's not enough to whet your appetite, the duo also has a penchant for drawing from not only the tradition

on this side of the water but also that of America in the form of some good old country blues. And why not? Too long has the country blues of the likes of 'Standing At The Judgement' been at the fringes of the folk circuit. While we are on the subject of 'standing at the judgement', there'll be many giving this the big thumbs up! And I, for one, will be with them. Great stuff. www.tomandgren.co.uk

Steve Henderson

JIM MALCOLM Acquaintance (Beltane Records BELCD105)



I've admired Jim Malcolm for many years both as a singer and songwriter but, for those of you unfamiliar with this engaging performer, Jim (to me anyway) is a more subtle version of Dick Gaughan. On this, his seventh solo recording, he has decided to rely on the songs of another fellow countryman, Robert Burns.

Now before a majority of the British folk world stick up their hands and say "...jumping on the Eddi Reader bandwagon are we?..." I must admit to wishing that Malcolm had recorded a full-blown Burns album for quite some time. If you purchase this disk you will be rewarded with expected standards such as "A Man's For A' That", "Parcel O Rogues", "My Love Is Like A Red Red Rose" and, of course, "Auld Lang Syne" - here set to the original, more melancholy melody, even though there is the concession of the more popularist version sneaking in at the end.

The album may prove less energetic than in his days with Old Blind Dogs relying on a more laid back approach in production joined by Fraser Stone (percussion), Pete Clark (fiddle), Stuart Duncan (keyboards) and Sheila Blige (oboe) but without doubt the surprise of the project is Jim's wife Susie who provides backing vocals throughout and even the lead on "The Ploughman". Perhaps not in your face this is more a case of a "listeners" album and one that will definitely grow with repeated plays.

Pete Fyfe

SIMON MAYOR & THE MANDOLINQUENTS Dance Of The Comedians (Acoustics Records CDACS 056)



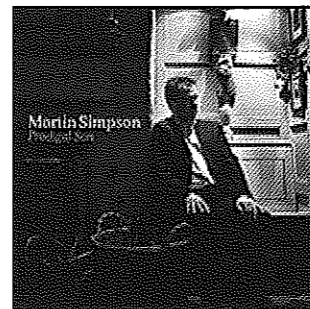
Prepare to be enchanted, entertained and above all astonished by the mellow tones and dexterity of the Mandolinquents captured live - that's right...live! In all their glory the quartet of Simon Mayor, Hilary James, Richard Collins and Gerald Garcia are some of the finest exponents of stringed instruments to be found in these fair isles of ours. Also, with a voice

surely inherited from an angel Hilary performs with a beautiful clarity that brushes aside any pretentiousness inherited by so many divas.

In many ways this is a band 'covers' album including as it does many popular standards such as "Lullaby Of Birdland", "Loch Lomond" and the opening track "Pizzicato". This album is a dazzling display of musicianship that will leave you open-mouthed in incredulous silence. www.acousticsrecords.co.uk

Pete Fyfe

MARTIN SIMPSON Prodigal Son (Topic Records TSCD567)



Recent albums from Martin Simpson have had the reviewers debating what mood he was favouring. Is it an English folk tradition record? Is he in American mode after having spent time living over there? 'Prodigal Son' will have them wondering what to say, as you'll find Martin dipping in and out of styles. In fact, if you ever doubted it, you'll hear the range of talents

that marks Mr. Simpson as one of our finest.

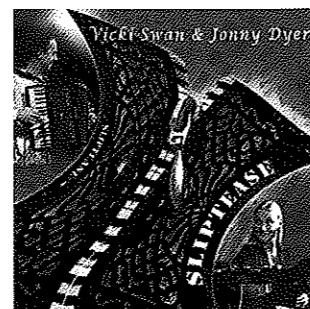
Within the first track, you'll see what I mean. 'Batchelor's Hall' is a song collected by Cohen in the US and appearing on a Smithsonian Folkways CD but the casual ear will think this is straight out of an English tradition. I know the music historians out there will tell me how 'obviously' the two are linked by history. However, I know plenty of music fans that look down their nose in one direction or another across the Atlantic. Here, Martin masterfully uses the music itself to avoid flitting between styles and to weld them seamlessly together. Following this, 'Pretty Crowing Chicken' sees the banjo given a full instrumental work out whilst 'Little Musgrave' gets plucked from a memory of Nic Jones playing this traditional tune and, so, the selection goes along.

Scattered amongst the traditional material, Martin has written a number of instrumentals inspired by sad moments, 'She Slips Away' on the death of his mother, and happier moments, 'Mother Love' for his daughter and her mother. If there's any doubt that musicians can translate emotions for us, these tracks should be provided as evidence. He has also provided some excellent songs with 'A Love Letter' and 'Never Any Good'. The latter inspired by his father and blessed with a wonderful backing vocal from Kate Rusby. If that's not enough, there is Jackson Browne providing backing vocals on Randy Newman's 'Louisiana 1927' and Kellie White, Danny Thompson, etc throwing in their talents. It's decidedly wall-to-wall quality.

I always hesitate to say 'best ever recording' as I realise that everyone has different taste but I can assure you that my hand will reach for this CD on a regular basis. In fact, my ears fooled me early on and I thought the track 'Lakes of Champlain' was 'Lakes of Champagne' - maybe, I was right the first time, drink deep of this one.

Steve Henderson

VICKI SWAN & JONNY DYER Slipcase (Wild Goose WGS343CD)



Vicki and Jonny were members of the group Serious Kitchen and have a previous album that was mainly tunes. Vicki plays double bass, Scottish smallpipes and flute while Jonny plays guitar and accordion on this CD. They are both very accomplished musicians as their last album showed but they also show their worth as singers here with tight,

close harmonies, clear diction and subtle tonality.

Their treatment of the traditional songs on the album, all of which are fairly well known, is refreshing and the arrangements well thought out. I particularly liked their unusual version of 'Lovely

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15 Nov Joe Topping (£5)

22 Nov Big Spot (Paul Pearson) (£1)

29 Nov Nelson Peach (£4)

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Contact/Tickets: Stewart Lever 07919 270916

stewart_lever@yahoo.co.uk

www.stewartlever.co.uk

Joan'. Unfortunately I didn't like 'The Two Magicians' because, having heard it sung unaccompanied by so many good singers, the up tempo guitar work (though it is extremely well played!) in this rendition doesn't do it for me.

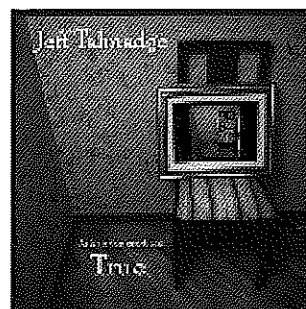
Conversely, the similar treatment given to 'Young Hunting' does work although the definitive version of this song for me will always be the one from the late Tony Rose whom they acknowledge as a source. This, the last track on the album, takes a full 8 minutes to tell the gory story in full but doesn't pall in the treatment of it.

As for the tunes, they are all very easy to listen to and are as varied in style and tempo as are the instruments used. I think I liked 'The Cribbage Set' the most but 'Tystnaden' (which is Swedish for 'the silence') is a very restful tune too reflecting Vicki's Scandinavian family connections.

As is usual with a Wild Goose production the sleeve notes are erudite and concise and the cover is very imaginative too - I don't usually mention cover inserts unless they're particularly awful, but this one I like: must be something to do with the basque...now there's one reason to buy this CD!!!

Derek Gifford

JEFF TALMADGE At Least That Much Was True (Corazong 255 096)



Although the title of this CD closely resembles a line from one of Spandau Ballet's greatest hits, that's where any resemblance sharply stops. It seems that Americana singer songwriter Jeff Talmadge has reached his current occupation via a circuitous route, having had a number of highly varied and interesting positions ranging from

janitor and seminary student to Capitol Hill Congressional press secretary and associate major league baseball scout!

Talmadge falls most definitively into the mould of a singer songwriter who describes stories of people and places he's seen and visited, many of which are derived from his own extensive personal experiences. On first listening this CD feels unremarkable but when you get below the surface, you realise the quality of the poetic lyrics and intricate melodies and appreciate how well crafted and emotive are this writer's words.

With the current obsession for single track downloads and shuffle plays, many people (including some artists) fail to remember that albums should be heard as a whole, with tracks designed to be heard sequentially and interdependently, rather than a random listening experience. Even if an album does not have a theme, the tracks are usually designed to flow into one another to form a cohesive project that creates mood, balance and a varied tempo. Talmadge's CD definitively reinforces the ethos that albums should be heard rather than chopped into isolated independent tracks.

There isn't a bad song on the CD. Some however, gradually envelop the consciousness in an almost subliminal way. 'The Wrong Train' is based on Talmadge's experience of a train journey when gig touring in the northern part of the Netherlands, during which he ends up on the wrong train but nonetheless finds pleasure in that experience. He still arrives at his destination even if it wasn't by the route he intended. He recounts that: "Sometimes in life we think we're headed in the wrong direction" only to find that "we've chosen a different route to get to our

destination". One has the feeling that he may not have been so sanguine if his train journey had been on the West Coast mainline - a journey that sometimes saps the will to live!

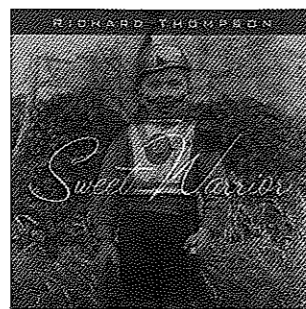
"Because of you" has a similar feel and quality to Richard Shindell, while "So the Blues Would Stay" could easily have been written by the likes of Tom Russell or Dave Alvin. However, while Talmadge has clearly absorbed influences of fellow songwriters from Texas and the mid west, his style and delivery is very much his own.

All the songs - bar two - are self penned, apart from his version of Dylan's 'Girl from the North Country' that fits comfortably into the mood of the album, and 'The White Cross', co written with friend Claudia Russell. They came up with a similar idea for this song independently but around the same time. In places in the UK people often leave flowers at the side of the road to mark the spot where a loved one has been called, in some European countries they build a small shrine, and in parts of the USA they leave a white cross.

There are a plethora of singer songwriters in America who fall into the fairly amorphous category now referred to as Americana. Many have jumped on the bandwagon but are little more than average. In the case of Jeff Talmadge, he is a singer and lyricist who stands head and shoulders above the pack and has every right to be regarded in the same high esteem as those singer songwriters at the height of their creative powers he has sought to emulate.

Lewis Jones

RICHARD THOMPSON Sweet Warrior (Proper Records PRPCD032)



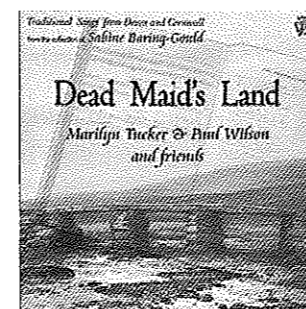
According to RT himself, his pile of songs suited to a band approach had got rather big. So, 'Sweet Warrior' is not the garage studio production of 'Front Parlour Ballads' but a full-blown studio affair. The usual culprits pop up in the band with the stalwart rhythm section of Danny Thompson on bass and Michael Jerome on drums firmly in place.

The record starts out with a couple of foot tappers before slowing down to the ballad 'Take Care The Road You Chose'. However, the approach is firmly electric in mood and those looking for a little acoustic number to play in the local folk club may struggle. Subject matter this time out covers the usual personal and love interests but, as the title suggests, war bubbles below the surface in many tracks and bursts through in quite a few. The standout 'Dad's Gonna Kill Me' draws on the army slang of 'Dad' for Baghdad and, well, you can guess the rest. 'Poppy Red' takes that war theme further in telling the tale of a woman at war. On 'Guns Are The Tongues', Sara Watkins of Nickel Creek adds fiddle to a tale of terrorist/freedom fighters and their obsessions. Whilst on 'Johnny's Far Away', the stresses and strains of maintaining personal relationships when local comforts are at hand is revealed for all to see.

No, it's not too cheerful but the record is well up to standard and contains a number of songs that I'm sure will feature in live sets going forward from here. Herewith, I submit 'Needle And Thread', 'Dad's Gonna Kill Me', 'Sunset Song' and 'Poppy Red' in evidence, m'lud. My case rests. RT is proven to still be top of the heap.

Steve Henderson

MARILYN TUCKER & PAUL WILSON & FRIENDS Dead Maid's Land (Wild Goose WGS292CD)



This album is a collection of 15 songs and 2 tunes selected from the many hundreds collected in Devon and Cornwall by the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould over a century ago. They reflect very well the local life of the time. The song 'When I Was Young' probably represents this comprehensively with its veritable gazetteer of West Country places and a compendium of trades and professions of the time.

Among the better known songs are very interesting versions of 'Herring's Head', 'Three Drunken Maidens', 'Golden Vanity' and 'Georgie' (AKA Geordie). The title track is an early version of the 'Seeds of Love' a song collected much later by Cecil Sharp. There is also an unusual wassailing song from Cornwall called 'Robin Redbreast'.

Other highlights include 'Gypsy Countess', a fascinating song with links to the 'Wraggle-taggle Gypsies', and 'The Old Ewe' is a strange account of a trip to Guernsey. 'Haymaking' and 'Harvest Song' are particularly appealing chorus songs. I can almost hear them been sung at many a singaround or festival singing session. The two jaunty tunes included are 'William Andrews' Hornpipes' nos. 1 & 2 making a nice break from the songs.

Paul Wilson acted as a creative musical director reflected in the competent arrangements, harmonies and accompaniments some of which even include a touch of brass. A high standard of performance from the musicians and singers (too many to mention individually) on this album make it well worth a place in anyone's collection of our traditional folk song heritage. Highly recommended and available from Wild Goose via their web site: www.WildGoose.co.uk or telephone 01264 860569.

Derek Gifford

MIKE & ALI VASS The Duets EP ((MAVCD01)



I had the pleasure of hearing and watching this Nairn based duo the other day and was immediately impressed in the strength of their instrumental and vocal performance. There's something very gritty about our Scottish cousins that makes you feel proud to be part of their heritage as I am. Be it from the triplet triggered 'MacArthur Road' courtesy of Boys Of The Lough's

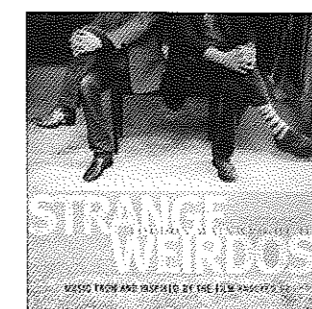
Dave Richardson or the more melancholy beauty of Robert Burns 'Westlin Winds' this duo have what it takes to be that something extra special. I can't wait for the full blown album that should hopefully be available in 2008. www.mikevass.com

Pete Fyfe

LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III Strange Weirdos (Nonesuch Records 0888072303010)

Music from and inspired by the film 'Knocked Up' - so goes the lead up to this record. Judd Apatow, the producer of the film writes the sleeve notes telling how he adored Loudon from afar before he got near enough to offer him some screen roles. The culmination of these efforts has resulted in this soundtrack by

Loudon and Joe Henry. Unashamedly, a piece of work approached as a song writing effort and not that of composing a score.



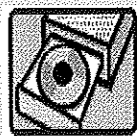
The main effect of this has been to allow the studio time to work up arrangements with more complexity than the usual 'man with battered acoustic approach'! To be truthful, this detracted from the lyrics for my first few listens but this meant an album that grows on you in the long run. It also allowed room for a few special guests to turn up with old friend Richard Thompson adding

guitar on three tracks and Van Dyke Parks popping up elsewhere. The former adds to a paean to Los Angeles, 'Grey in LA', that includes typically droll Wainwright observations of how the sun-drenched city can be at its finest when it rains. 'Daughter' is bound to have you wondering if this is about his own daughter but, in fact, was written by Peter Blegvad. There are other covers in the form of Mose Allison's 'Feel So Good' but the majority are Loudon compositions with his own view of life stamped across them. 'Doin The Math' typifies this with lyrics that cover ageing, one of his more recent inspirations, but taken as a slow and lazy blues with full band and backing vocals. So, reflecting the added production. Even, the title track that could have been taken as a simple guitar and vocal is nicely embellished with piano and strings.

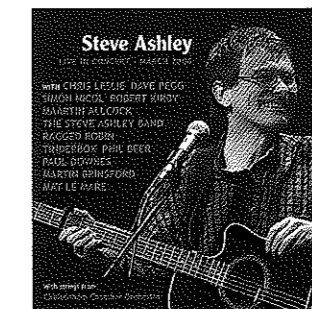
So, much the usual top quality writing and a chance to hear his sings with some lavish arrangement. A new Loudon Wainwright is always a treat and there's no change there. The key point being the fact that fans can buy this CD without worrying that this is a soundtrack slung together to suit the movie moguls.

Steve Henderson

CD COLLECTIONS, LIVE ALBUMS & RE-ISUES



STEVE ASHLEY Live In Concert March 2006 (Dusk Fire Records DUSKCD102)



While it's difficult to imagine that even diehard Steve Ashley followers lie awake at night thinking "if only he'd release a live album if only..." this in-concert collection proves to be a more than respectable outing from the man who was part of the original Albion Country Band. Recorded last year at a special one-off concert held to mark Steve's 60th birthday at Cheltenham's Bacon

Theatre, and 'probably this year's most memorable gig - one for attendees to brag about and absentees to mourn' as one journo afterwards wrote. Why he isn't one of our highest profile artists is too dispiriting a concept to entertain. If ever a singer/writer were feted by those who admire him and 'who he'd?' by those who don't, it's Steve Ashley. Hands up, I count myself among the former.

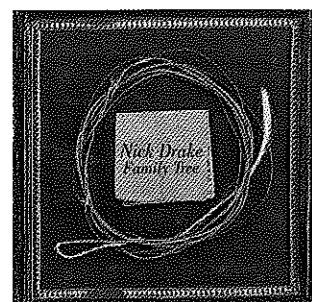
Assembling a cast of guest musicians from old chums and former band-mates in Tinderbox, Ragged Robin, adding some Fairporters and an orchestra conducted by Robert Kirby - the man responsible for the gentle string backdrops on many of his previous recordings (and those of Nick Drake) Steve here leafs through some of his back pages. Rearranging the furniture slightly, rather than opting for startling Dylan-like makeovers, a polished sheen of orchestral accompaniment to many items, it's like slipping into an old overcoat instead of shopping for clothes. However, if you're coming fresh to his work, this is as good a place as any to start. Given that there's an air of restrained tastefulness in the hall - and Ashley is not exactly a "Helloooooo Cheltenham" type, he has the capacity to breathe lungfuls of new life into None Can Tell and The Well At The World's End - compelling readings of material from the Speedy Return album.

Whilst he has more than his fair share of sharply pungent songs - Ships Of Shame getting a first outing here prior to its appearance on the next studio recording, in more bucolic moments, articulate, perceptive lyrics stapled to well-constructed arrangements often conceal more bite than might first be apparent. Sure Say Goodbye is about the decimation of English apple orchards and varieties but it's equally a metaphor for the passing of old days and old ways that have gone and aren't coming back. By turns warm and affectionate (Family Love) light and flighty (Feeling Lazy) and reflective (Once In A While) the writing is never less than passionate and meaningful.

A snapshot of where one of our finest writers has been and just as importantly where he's headed. Ladies and gentleman, Steve Ashley is still inside the building. www.steveashley.co.uk Steve appears at the Bothy, Southport in October this year.

Clive Pownceby

NICK DRAKE Family Tree (Island Records 1734041)



It's odd but between 1969 and 1972 Nick Drake recorded three albums that have garnered more praise since his tragic early death than was heard when he was alive. A variety of compilations and unreleased tracks have already been packaged for what seems to be a pretty insatiable fan following. Just as you might expect there would be no more 'Family Tree' pops up.

Of course, the cynics would say that this record is scraping the barrel scrapings. However, surprisingly, this release has some lovely moments. As the title suggests these are very early recordings that are quite lo-fi quality - hiss and chat all over the place. Indeed, fans who found their way to the Drake family home were often rewarded with cassette copies of the work here. To some extent, it was the existence of these tapes and copy after copy appearing that stimulated the enhancement of the recordings and the release of this record.

Lovingly put together by original producer, John Wood, there are twenty-eight tracks that have been gathered from the family archive of reel-to-reel recordings made at home in Tanworth-In-Arden and Aix-En-Provence where Nick briefly studied. The material ranges from songs of his favourite artists at the time - Jackson C. Frank, Bert Jansch and Bob Dylan - to pieces recorded with sister, Gabrielle, and mother, Molly.

It's rather an obvious point but the first three albums are the starting point for anyone who has not heard Nick's material

before. On the other hand, as these are intimate recordings involving the family, what is a most intimate music can be found in its natural setting. For sure, hearing the formative work of their hero will intrigue his fans.

Steve Henderson

JONATHAN KELLY Bootleg Series Volume One (Own Label JKM1)



The height of Jonathan Kelly's popularity was around the early to mid 1970s when he was renowned as a radical singer songwriter on the folk scene and produced several notable albums, including the much acclaimed 'Twice Around The Houses'. Kelly became disillusioned with the music scene and until a few years ago had not performed for almost 30 years.

Thanks to John Tobler's Road Goes On Forever label, four of those early albums have seen the light of day again. As a result of a revived interest in his music, Kelly has been enticed out of musical hibernation to perform at a number of enthusiastically received gigs.

On the back of this has come the limited release of the first of what is intended to a series of officially sanctioned 'bootleg' CDs. The first volume is taken from digitally remastered live performances recorded by Geoff Harden on reel-to-reel tape in 1971 and 1972. Geoff ran the Medway Folk Centre where the performances were recorded.

Kelly's fans will recognise 10 of the 13 tracks from his earlier studio albums. It contains favourites such as the beautiful love ballad 'Madeleine' (a song still covered performed by a number of artists on the folk circuit) and the haunting 'Sligo Fair' as well as 'We are the People' that reflects the radical politics of the early 1970s. An omission - hopefully to be rectified on subsequent volume - is 'The Ballad of Cursed Anna', certainly one of Kelly's most popular and requested songs. There are bonuses in the form of the never released 'Dedications to Mary Unlimited' and 'Guru Rakhan', while 'Mother Moon' only ever made it as a B side on "Let the People Stay", a hard to find single.

While this is partly a CD for Kelly's fans, many of his songs have stood the test of time. Although the producers of the CD don't consider it good enough quality for a full release, nevertheless the digitally restored recordings easily pass muster in terms of sound quality and atmosphere. While some of the banter in between songs may have dated a bit, Kelly's music certainly hasn't. Jonathan Kelly is still an artist who grabs your attention with the quality of songwriting and with a voice that delivers his songs with feeling and commitment. This good value CD is available only at: <http://home.freeuk.net/jonathanled/> Price £12 + P&P (UK £1.50)

Lewis Jones

JOHN KIRKPATRICK Make No Bones (Fledgling Records FLED 3065)

No frills, no additives, just how it comes - that's what the sleeve notes tell us. 'Makes No Bones' is a double CD that is meant to reflect a typical evening of two forty-five minute sets of music from John Kirkpatrick. And, so it does.

His career spans many years and a new recording like this shows just how many tricks he's picked up along the way. Of course, there are interpretations of traditional material. Of particular local

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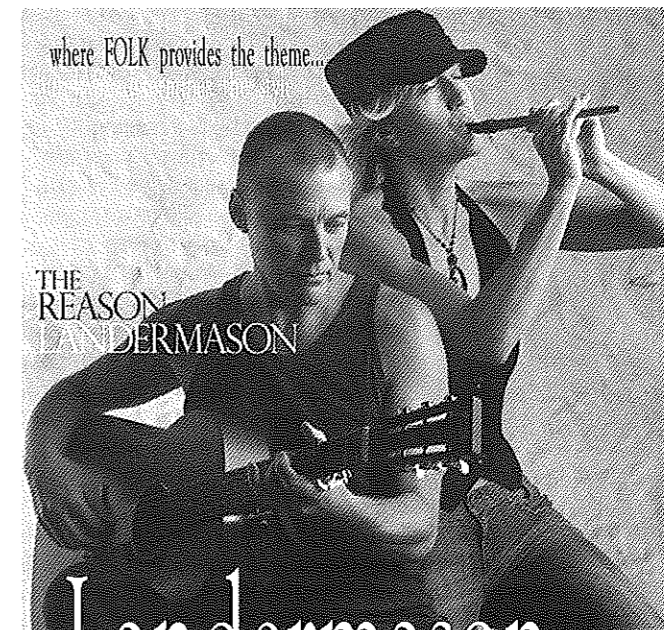
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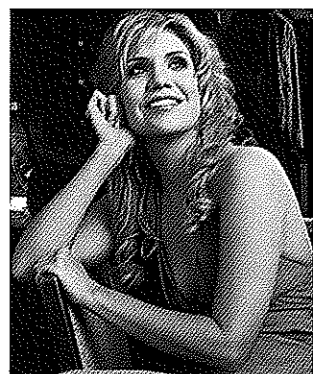
interest is 'The Farmers And The Cow' which is taken from a recording of Blackpool's Beth Bond made by Nick Dow who you'll remember from his days on Radio Lancashire's folk programme. Side by side with such tracks, John records his own material like 'Saint George' - songs that would pass for traditional to the unfamiliar ear. Indeed, the medley 'Here's To Coalport China'/'The Ironbridge Hornpipe' pulls the two aforementioned approaches together with the first song from the pen of Kirkpatrick and the second being a traditional tune.



Naturally, John's squeezebox playing looms large across both of the discs with tracks like the medley of 'King George the Third's Minuet'/'Valentine's Day' highlighting his talents in this area. What was slightly surprising for me was the eleven minutes and more of 'Lord Bateman', which is a purely vocal performance. John's notes say that he takes it at a pace, as the version he draws from would fill the CD! Amongst all this seriousness (ahem), he's as likely to provide amusing songs of his own such as 'I Wanna Go Twang (But I Just Go Tooraloo)' as he is of borrowing from more recent writers like his version of Tom Waits' 'Fish and Bird'. When an artist can draw upon a variety of styles and sources like this, you know that you're experiencing quality of the highest order. Though those of you who don't favour traditional styles may balk at tracks lasting eleven minutes or so, there's no questioning the quality on show here.

Steve Henderson

ALISON KRAUSS A Hundred Miles or More: A Collection (Rounder Records 11661-0555-2)



These days, we're used to hearing Alison Krauss surrounded by the crack outfit of session musicians operating under the name of Union Station. On 'A Hundred Miles or More: A Collection', some older tracks from around a decade ago are gathered together along with a variety of duets and unreleased tracks. These find her in less familiar settings but give us the great benefit of reminding us what a wonderful voice she possesses.

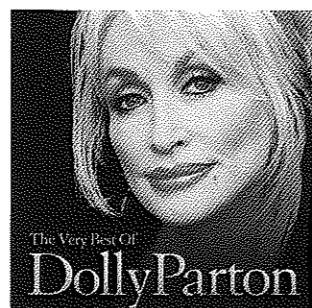
Normally, on records like this that sweep up the flotsam and jetsam of an extensive career, you can find some rather dubious material. However, even the previously unreleased tracks like 'Simple Love' aren't throwaway material. More familiar amongst the sixteen tracks will be songs like 'Missing You', a duet with John Waite. Other duets include 'How's The World Treating You' with James Taylor, which was recorded for a tribute to The Louvin Brothers. Songs from soundtracks also loom large with the best known being 'Down To The River To Pray' from the 'O Brother, Where Art Thou?' film. Though equally worthy of your attention are 'The Scarlet Tide', written by Elvis Costello and T-Bone Burnett, as well as 'You Will Be My Ain True Love', a couple of tracks from the 'Cold Mountain' film.

Her taste in musical relationships is generally impeccable and produces some excellent work. Even when she dips into 'Baby Mine', a song recorded for a project called 'The Best of Country

Sing The Best of Disney' - gulp - Her marvellous voice makes you forget the rather schmaltzy tune. It all adds up to the old saying, "form is temporary but class is permanent". Alison Krauss falls squarely into the class category.

Steve Henderson

DOLLY PARTON The Very Best Of... (Sony 88697060742)



What, you're asking yourself, is Dolly Parton doing in the hallowed pages of Folk North West? Simple. The answer is that her career has covered lots of ground and much of it traditional. Coming from her Tennessee mountain home, she is steeped in bluegrass music whose roots are sunk in this side of the Atlantic. This single CD reveals some early 70's classics that reflect those roots such as

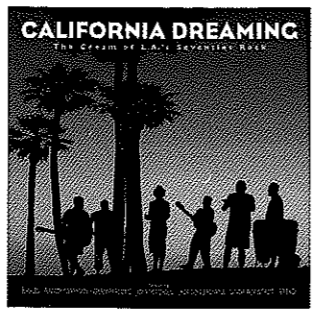
'Coat Of Many Colours' telling the tale of stitching rags together to provide a coat for the children. And there's the ironically titled, 'Dumb Blonde' which she definitely isn't. It also takes on board her more mainstream material such as 'Islands In The Stream' with Kenny Rogers.

Did you, for example, know that she wrote 'I Will Always Love You'? The song that became known to millions after the version by Whitney Houston appeared in the film 'The Bodyguard'. Or, perhaps, that she recorded with Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt as a successful trio on songs like 'To Know Him Is To Love Him'? Then, again, recording with Tammy Wynette and Loretta Lynn on the pure country of 'Silver Threads and Golden Needles'. They're all here on this twenty-track retrospective that charts a career that has ranged from the magnificent to the middle of the road in a musical sense.

What this CD doesn't tell you is the story since the early 90's when the last of these recording was made. Despite Dolly being one of the few that we can truly point to as a musical icon, she couldn't get herself a recording contract during the 90's and she returned to her real love for bluegrass. So, if you're not keen on the full range of her styles found here check those later CDs out. On the other hand, here's the evidence that she is a real living legend, as anyone who witnessed her recent Manchester show will tell you.

Steve Henderson

VARIOUS ARTISTS California Dreaming (Warners - WMTV045)



With the Reviews Editor's permission, I couldn't resist sneaking this little fella in. It hit the shops in late May, it's a forty-track compilation of all things 70's Californian. If you're past the fifty years old landmark, this is a total nostalgic wallow in wonderful songwriters. Imagine James Taylor's 'Fire and Rain', Joni Mitchell's 'Blue', Rickie Lee Jones' 'Chuck E's In Love', Bonne Raitt's

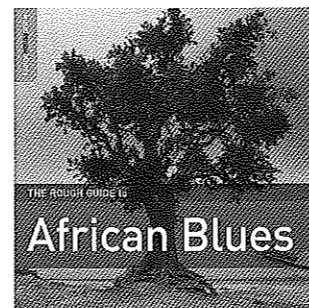
'Love Has No Pride', Stephen Stills' 'Love The One You're With', Jackson Browne's 'Take It Easy', Carly Simon's 'You're So Vain' - are you drooling, yet?

Though most areas of music have been compiled to death - do you really want anymore Tamla compilations, for example - it's rare that the classics of this time are gathered together unless

it's from a Beach Boys viewpoint. They're not included, by the way. For my mind, this is the music that inspired many of us latter day folkies and, of course, folk music was their inspiration too. Certainly, this looks likely to be cemented into the CD player of my car for the summer. If you see me wearing flowers in my hair, do give me a peace sign. Cool, man.

Steve Henderson

VARIOUS ARTISTS The Rough Guide To African Blues (World Music Network RGN2 1152 CD)



Remember the days when blues was grafted onto folk music like a second skin? The phrase 'folk and blues' still abounds though many don't realise how the more familiar forms of blues music are rooted in folk music from another continent. Of late, bands like the bluesy Tinariwen have made a name on the world music stage but the blues is rooted in various parts of the continent and not just sub-Saharan Africa. Naturally,

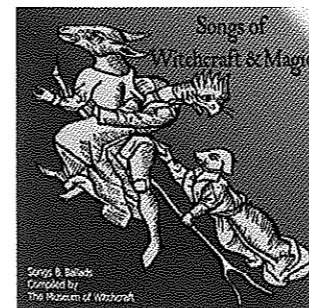
those smart folk over at World Music Network know all about this and have put together a musical education for those who consider themselves as students of the blues.

As the sleeve says, the DNA of the blues runs all the way back to Africa. On this CD, there's no Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker or Eric Bibb. Yet, every song here is infused with guitar work that feeds those more familiar blues players. Most of the music comes from West Africa with opening tracks from Western Sahara (Miriem Hassen) and Senegal (Nuru Kane) typifying the mood of the record where their blues has been driven by the bruising conflicts of the region. Indeed, the aforementioned Tinariwen began life as a bunch of Tuareg rebel soldiers.

Corey Harris, the American blues player has studied these blues roots and makes an appearance here in collaboration with, probably the best-known African bluesman, the late Ali Farke Toure. So does that other meticulous student of guitar, Bob Brozman. There are classic recordings such as Rasha's 'Azara Alhai' and tracks from superstar African musicians in the form of Baaba Maal, Boubacar Traore, Oumou Sangare, Djelimady Tounkara and Rokia Traore. It's a feast of blues for those with interests in that direction. But we expect no less from those expert cooks over at World Music Network. www.worldmusic.net

Steve Henderson

VARIOUS ARTISTS Songs of Witchcraft and Magic from the British Folk Tradition (Wild Goose WGS341CD)



This album has been compiled by and produced for The Museum of Witchcraft at Boscastle in Cornwall by the Wild Goose Studios. It contains some of the best songs that reflect the significant part that magic and witchcraft has played in our culture. They are also performed by some of the best interpreters of traditional song including Martin Carthy, Bob Fox and Stu

Luckley, Frankie Armstrong and the late Peter Bellamy.

All the recordings, bar one, are taken from various albums by other record companies as well as Wild Goose's own. The

renditions of the performers needs little comment other than to say they are all of a very high standard. The material is nicely varied in spite of the restrictions of a themed album.

I suppose with an album of such a high standard it might be considered churlish to pick out particular tracks but among my favourites are 'The Two Magicians' from Bob Fox and Stu Luckley, Martin Carthy's 'Willie's Lady' and Alva's arrangement of 'The Bells of Paradise' which has a haunting drone accompaniment behind it. Hector Gilchrist and Liz Thompson also do a lovely version of 'The Selkie' a good 'old song' which has always been one of my favourites.

There is also a mysteriously labelled 'Bonus Track'. This is 'The Chase Song' performed by Graham King with his partner Kerriann. Why? Who? you might ask. Well, Graham is the manager of the museum at Boscastle and both he and Kerriann are good singers so why not have a contribution from the 'boss' too?!

The album is accompanied by a 36-page booklet containing the words of the songs and extensive research notes as well as some delightful illustrations. As with 'Dead Maid's Land' reviewed elsewhere in this edition of FNW this is a collector's item useful as a substantial reference work as well as being a 'reet good listen'!

It's available from Wild Goose or The Museum of Witchcraft, Boscastle whose web site is www.museumofwitchcraft.com or telephone 01840 25011.

Derek Gifford

**PRESS
RELEASES**

FAMEGEM

Love new and original music? You will love the recently launched unique music site, FameGen.com. Created for those who truly love and appreciate their music FameGen is the only place you ever need to visit whether you're an emerging musician, a talented band, promising artist or even someone keen on finding undiscovered music. By signing up, listeners are immersed into a complete social music network and the opportunity to download masses of DRM free music from all over the world with many tunes available at no cost at all. Bands and musicians also benefit using the website as a powerful marketing tool. Hopefully opening up routes into the music industry and claiming a slice of success.

The many features available to FameGen users are guaranteed to keep them coming back for more. There is the option of downloading free music, personalising your profile, networking with other people and even arranging your social calendar. This can be organised by gigs, concerts, tours, parties, jamming sessions and any other musical events in your chosen location. At the click of a mouse tracks can easily be located using the intelligent filter system and then added to your playlist.

FameGen has already captured the imagination of hundreds of artists from varied genres during their Beta testing phase. Since then new acts and listeners have been joining the site on a daily basis. Its uniqueness has been one of its biggest pulling powers along with the opportunity for bands and artists to make an incredible 70% every time a listener downloads a purchased track. For more information visit www.famegen.com

MORRIS ON: THE LAST WORD!

The restless musical genius of Ashley Hutchings has long been acknowledged for finding new ways to modernise the traditions and rituals of the British Isles, in particular those of England. This first manifested itself after he left Steeleye Span and developed a love of ancient Morris dance tunes in their many forms, culminating in a glorious, star studded, (Richard Thompson, Barry Dransfield, John Kirkpatrick, Dave Mattacks,) celebratory album that has taken on a life of its own cannily titled "Morris On." Indeed it proved a rich seam to mine, Ashley has returned to the idea quite a few times since, with each subsequent visit adding new twists and turns to the original. Now though in conjunction with Morris/roots fusion enthusiast Simon Care, Ashley has taken steps to modernise the Morris in ultimate fashion.

Recruiting today's brightest and best as well as the experienced, due this autumn "The Mother Of All Morris," is one of the year's most significant folk/roots releases. Along for the ride, Eliza Carthy, John Spiers & Jon Boden, Saul Rose, Jim Moray, Show Of Hands, John Kirkpatrick, Chris Leslie, Ric Sanders, Ken Nicol, Ruth Angell and key traditional players like The Minehead Hobby Horse musicians as well as Ashley own crack band. Each has their own take on this age-old tradition, creating a unique document that will be released on Talking Elephant Records.

Watch for this one. English instrumental music is alive and jumping once more. Know roots. know Morris. For details; HJ Promotions. 01260 271628 e mail snajers@ukonline.co.uk Talking Elephant. 0208 301 2828 fax 0208 301 2424 email talkelephant@aol.com

MUSICIANS FINE TUNE WITH POWERBALL

The Powerball Gyro is a fitness product that can be used by musicians and enthusiasts of many different kinds of instruments involving the use of wrists, arms, shoulders and fingers, including piano, violin, guitar, drums and wind instruments.

With just five to ten minutes use each day helping to tone or build substantial power and strength in the wrists, forearms and shoulders, the Powerball has the potential to improve a musician's grip and increase the strength of their hands, wrists, forearms and biceps in a very short time. It will also strengthen the ligament of the wrist and reduce the injuries that musicians can encounter, such as tennis elbow, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI Syndrome).

A little larger than a tennis ball, the non-impact device works through a perfectly balanced rotor (flywheel) which generates inertia as it is spun. It is up to the user to increase the speed of the rotor by making rotational movements with their wrist, keeping in synch with the spinning speed of the ball. The faster they spin, the more demanding it becomes. The speed of the rotor can range from around 2000rpm up to in excess of 15,000rpm.

The Powerball retails at between £13.99 and £69.99, depending on the model. For further information visit www.powerball-gyros.com.

ONE VENUE . . . FOUR DAYS . . . FIVE GREAT EVENTS
15-18 November 2007, Eastwood Hall Conference Centre, Eastwood, Nottingham

Over 350 people are expected to gather for the biggest series of seminars, presentations, debates and training opportunities the folk music industry has ever seen. With the current explosion of interest in folk, these events offer an opportunity to help this

new wave continue and create an even brighter future for this music.

Based on feedback from the Folk and wider Events Industry, FolkArts England has developed a series of events covering many of the key issues and important topics that have hit the headlines or have been discussed in local and national government in recent months.

The series begins with two Folk Industry Focus Days:
Day 1: Thursday 15 November: Folk in Education & Development. For all full-time and part-time, paid and voluntary folk activists working in education and folk development.

Day 2: Friday 16 November: Publicity, Marketing, Media and Promoters. For people interested in marketing, promotion and sales of folk and roots music.

Running alongside these Focus Days will be two FolkArts England Training Days; a great opportunity to spend the whole day learning from an expert with a small group of like-minded people. Choose from Fundraising for Folk with Julia Payne from the hub on Thursday 15 November or Roots into the Community - everything you need to plan and deliver a successful community arts project with Marilyn Tucker from Wren Music on Friday 16 November.

On the evening of Friday 16 November the annual Association of Festival Organisers Conference will begin where over 240 festival and event organisers gather together for presentations, seminars, debates, key note speeches, showcase concerts, a trade market and the all important networking opportunity.

Delegates can choose to attend one or two events or stay for the whole four days. All of these events will be held at Eastwood Hall Conference Centre, Eastwood, Nottingham - a purpose built conference venue with modern facilities and situated in stunning landscaped grounds.

For more information and to book for these events visit www.folkarts-england.org, call the FolkArts England office or email info@folkarts-england.org on 01629 827014

READY BEDS

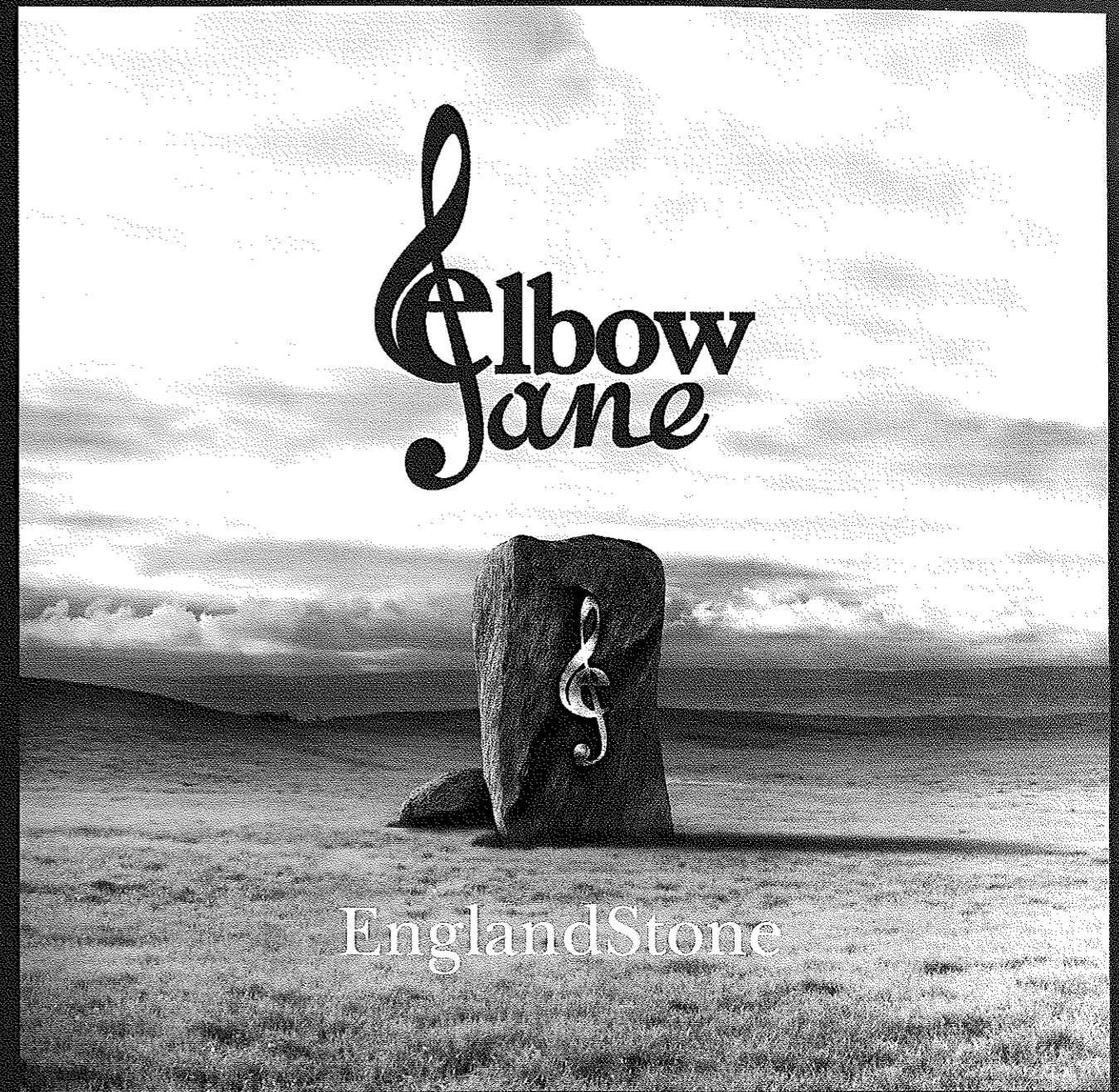
If you're a music-lover and never miss the annual round of music festivals, then you're no stranger to camping out under the stars and living back to basics. However, if you really want to appreciate the bands and singers on offer, not to mention cope with less than luxurious sanitary facilities, then you really need a decent night's sleep to stay sane and relaxed. And this is why a Ready Bed could be your best festival friend!

Ready Beds are inflatable beds with a built in sleeping bag that can be easily removed for washing. They can be easily inflated in minutes with a battery pump and come in their own carry case so they're easy to transport. Perfect for travelling to and from festivals and a lot more comfy than a standard sleeping bag on rock hard ground!

Ready Beds are available in double or single sizes, so whether you're sleeping alone or touring the festivals with your partner, there's a Ready Bed to suit your night-time needs. Plus, back at home Ready Beds are easy to store away in their carry cases, and very handy to have at hand for overnight guests. Adult Single Camping Ready Bed - £19.99; Adult Double Camping Ready Bed - £39.99.

Further information can be found by visiting the Worlds Apart website www.worldsapart.com or calling the customer service number on 0800 389 8591.

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Lancashire. L39 4QP
www.edgehill.ac.uk/rosetheatre



Eliza Carthy

Wednesday

3rd October 8:00pm

Tickets £13.00 /
£11.00 concessions

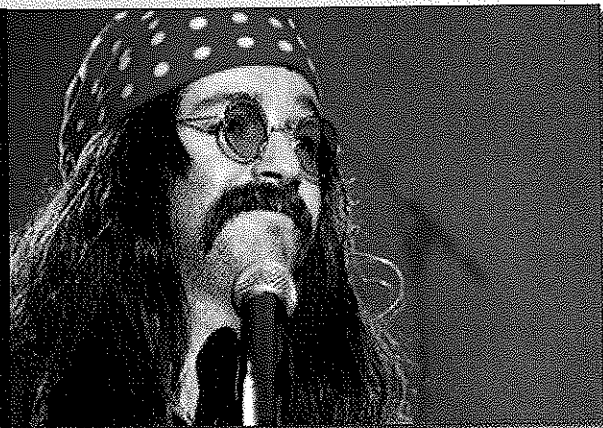
Photograph by Chris Bates

Mundo Jazz

Tuesday

30th October 8:00pm

Tickets £8.00 /
£6.00 concessions



Julie Felix

Friday

23rd November 8:00pm

Tickets £12.00 /
£10.00 concessions

Call the Box Office on 01695 584480