

13/Feb/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

A storm in Kashmir



Local acoustic rockers **Tempest** are at the prestigious Kashmir Klub down in London tomorrow night (Feb14) . The Kashmir is a club run by musicians to act as a showcase for new talent and is reputedly the haunt of music business personalities and some of the more intelligent record company A&R types. If you want find out if there's any space left on the coach down to the gig then call Tempests management on 07956-812831 or you can catch them live in cyberspace at www.kashmirklub.com. Or if you'd rather see them locally then you can catch them on Friday (Feb15) at The Roman Way, Tomlinson Ave, Lewsey Farm. The band tells me that they have just come out of the Studio again after working with Dave Dix, recording two new numbers at Kenny Denton's Studio in Chiswick. It sounds like they are moving on up.

If you want to shake a leg then you can catch the start of the 2002 Season of Unicorn Ceilidhs at Hitchin Town Hall on Friday (Feb 15). The first dance of the season kicks off with local band **Laughing Gravy** who will get you on your feet with an evening of frivolous dances to celebrate St. Valentine's Day, led by the **Jan Guyatt**. Interval entertainment is courtesy of the Polish Dance Troupe - **Zespol 'Wawel'** and there will be the usual raffle, and a real ale bar. The dance next month (March 22) features one of the best ceilidh outfits on the circuit with Hitchin based band **Chalktown** with calling by local hero **Mick Brooks**- put the date in your diary now. Tickets for all dances are available on the door, price £6 adults, £4 under 14s you can email TRPThomas@aol.com for more information.

Local gigs . . .

- Tonight (Feb 13) an acoustic music Session at The Fox, Pirton (near Hitchin). All musicians, singers, raconteurs, listeners etc. welcome, 8.00-11.00pm - free.
 - Sunday (Feb 17) Harmonica led rhythm and blues from **Headstone Blues** at the Grand Junction Arms in Bulborne - call 01442-890677 for more details.
 - Next Tuesday (Feb 19) Ben Christopher's and his band will be playing some Techno Folk at the Soundhaus in Northampton. Ben has built a reputation as a singer songwriter, with his recent album *My Beautiful Demon* being described a 'soft-as-snow' masterpiece of modern music. Support from Jacob Golden and Greg Cave. Tickets are £6 in advance and you can book on 01604-250898.
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20/Feb/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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Radio Downunda

I've been down in Melbourne (Australia) doing some recording for the new **WoodworX** CD and in between sessions I've been trying to get a handle on the local music scene to see how it compares with our local scene in Luton. The live music scene is pretty lively with the usual moans about how publicans are after 'cover' duos and the lack of good venues for original music. But the real jewel in the crown of the city's music scene is the local public access radio stations 3PBS and 3JJJ. These radio stations cover the entire metropolis - which is upward of four million people - and look to me like they are based on the Canadian Public Broadcast System (PBS) network.



Both stations are financed by public subscription, both from private individuals, from companies and even from state government departments. The DJ's are unpaid but very professional and extremely passionate about the music they play, which is why they do the job in the first place. From the listener's point of view both stations play a wide selection of music ranging from thrash metal, dance music, Latino, world and roots grooves - stuff that would never get an airing on commercial radio - and should get an airing on the BBC and doesn't. This is the way to go in the UK to give the public access to all the great new - and old - music that's being made in England and being swept into the media trash can. This might just be the time to take a leaf out of the book of our Australian cousins.

Back to something more local; Martin from the Luton funksters **Raw74** tells me that they have been quite busy recently. Apparently they are in the middle of a new project which will see a release in mid-March which comprises of various voyages into Funk, Dance and Chill and is being recorded both in Luton and Birmingham. The final result will comprise of six new studio tunes and one or two bonus live recordings featuring some great new musicians . It's all so new that they haven't even got a working title for the project yet! Martin says that it's sounding great, and he ought to know. They also have some other projects coming up soon, which if confirmed will very exciting if they come off!

Now if my PC's power supply hadn't been creamed by an antipodean lightning strike last week; I could have mentioned that the live recordings would be done at a showcase slot at the `Sound', in Leicester Square last Saturday (Feb 16). I hope it went well, but if you want find out more about the movements of one of the best bands on the local scene then give Martin a call on 07751-217160 or email him at martin.gibbings@breathe.com. Or you can watch this space for more information about the movements of **Raw74** including the new recordings and a `mini' U.K/regional tour.

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Justice on the airwaves

Local band **Audio Justice** want to give massive 'shout outs' to everyone who has voted for them on the Hertbeat FM radio poll for the last month. They tell that the band have

won every single week and the most recent result was nothing less of staggering

with a huge 94% majority vote. Unfortunately the band are only allowed to test their worth over a four week period, but they have built a good relationship with Hertbeat so hopefully we can hear some more Justice on the airwaves in the not too distant future.



Another local band - Battle of the Bands winners **Hush** - reckon that they are on a roll this year, having signed to the American Management group Morey and are preparing for a host of showcases in London over the next two months. Who says that British rock'n'roll is dead.

Things have been booming recently for another Battle the Bands finalist - **Fog Donkey** - with airplay on Radio 1 and Xfm in London together with some quality high profile acknowledgement. Apart from the big smoke, they seem to be causing quite a stir over in Cardiff. They've returned the favour by inviting Cardiff based **Douglas** (currently on tour with **Hundred Reasons**) to share a gig at Club 85 (Hitchin) on Saturday April 6th. Worth checking out. For more info you can visit their website at <http://www.fogdonkey.com>.

For the second year running, St Albans based **My Pet Junkie** have won their way through to the Semi-Finals of the Battle of the Bands at the Horn St Albans. They one the slot by polling over double the number of votes of the other band. What the local gig guides to see when their semi-final happens. Their next gig is down at the Bull & Gate on a Friday week (March 8) where they have nabbed the ten o'clock slot which is quite a good one as it's late enough to get a good crowd, but not too late to risk anyone missing their last train home. The doors open at 8pm and entry is £4 (a pound a band!). For more info email mypetjunkie@hotmail.com or phone 07763-607-007.

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Send gig information to "The Brian Heywood Column", PO Box 649, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 4XD and you can also email details of gigs, gossip, web sites or anything else to info@lutonscene.com. A search-able archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>