

3/Jul/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Battle of the bands finalists **Reverie** are playing a set over at the new acoustic venue upstairs at the Edge in Park St, Luton on Saturday (July 6). The band usually performs a mixture of their own songs and covers and say that their main influences are Radiohead, The Verve, The Manics, U2, Stereophonics and the Stone Roses. Angie, one of the organisers, tells me that the club has been very successful so far with a relaxed vibe and a friendly atmosphere. Future gigs include sets from will include acoustic sets by the **Alan White Project** (July 13), **Lime** (July 20) and **Loose Thread** (June 27). Check it out.



Tonight (Wednesday) you'll get a chance to see new(ish) band **Bouncer** when they appear down at the Horn in St Albans. They describe their music as lively rock and will be on stage from 9pm till 10pm.

Or if you want to hear a more 'rootsy' style of music, **The Michèle Welborn Band** are doing the 'Roots @ Zaks' gig tonight which happens at Zaks, Church Street, Wolverton. More usually seen as a four-piece with a mellow feel, the band expands to five for this Roots @ Zaks special, when they get to play their funkier, folkier set which combines a mixture of traditional and contemporary songs and tunes. **Guy Fletcher** and **Tom Hall** will be on hand to provide hugely entertaining support. Tom is apparently 'a bit of a character' and combined with the superb fiddle playing of Guy Fletcher (who is a regular with **Tickled Pink**, **Dansaul** and many others) this looks like it could be a great gig. The doors open at 8.00 p.m and tickets cost £6 and are available on the door or in advance from Ticketweb (www.ticketweb.co.uk) or 08700-600100. More information on this regular gig is available from Cracking Music on 01908-310278 (www.crackingmusic.co.uk) or from the venue on 01908-315447.

Don't forget that **The Random Band** are playing a ceilidh/barn dance at St Mary's Church Social Club in West Street, Dunstable on Friday (July 5) where they will be releasing new CD - called 'Deviation'. The band features box players **Saul Rose** and **Paul Nye**, bass guitarist **Keith Holloway**, guitarist **Ian Woledge**, bass trombone player **Glynn Burch**, and drummer **Roger Smith** which gives the band a big sound. The caller will be **Will Hall** and there will be interval display by Chiltern Hundreds Morris as well as a real ale bar. The music kicks off at 8pm, tickets cost £6 (£4 concessions) and are available from Octave Music in High Street North, Dunstable or from the band on 01923-221701 (email: info@randomband.fsnet.co.uk) or on the door.

10/Jul/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Augmented Devlin

I hear that Luton News Pop Poll and Battle of the Band winners **Devlin** have added a backing singer to their line-up. **Debbie Gibson** worked on the studio sessions for Devlin's forthcoming CD release 'Distant Call' and has now joined the band for live gigs, debuting on Friday (July 12) down at the George II in Bute Street, Luton. If you've not heard them recently, they now sound a bit like a cross between Crowded House and U2 but with added funk-rock. I reckon that they are one of the best bands to have emerged from Luton in the last few years. For more information call Devlin Music on 01582-671832 or you can find them on the web at www.rocking.to/devlin.



On Sunday (July 14) jazz fans will get a chance to see internationally acclaimed singer **Lee Gibson** when her quintet plays at the regular Jazz at the Fairway gig at Panshanger Golf Club, Old Hens Lane, Welwyn Garden City. Lee has made over 1500 solo broadcasts, mainly with the BBC Big Band and appears regularly at Ronnie Scot's club in Soho and Pizza on the Park. The quintet features one of the UK's finest trombone players - **Mark Nightingale** - with **John Horler** on Piano, **Paul Morgan** on bass and **Bobby Worth** on drums. Admission is £8 (£6 for members) and you can find details on the web at www.hertsjazz.co.uk.

Pete Canavan from **Honest Joe** tells me that the band is on the road again, playing down at Eddies Bar in Luton at the end of the month (July 27). I saw them when they were gigging in the area a couple of years ago and was very impressed. They play mainly 70's and 80's rock covers performed with a confidence and panache rare on the pub circuit. The lead vocalist had the power and confidence to carry a wide range of material from R&B classic's to complicated set piece arrangements such as Paul McCartney's Live and Let Die. The band - keys, guitar, bass and drums - were all excellent musicians and displayed a remarkable amount of control and finesse that made them stand head and shoulders above the crowd.

I see the dreaded Public Entertainment License (PEL) police have struck again, this time in Bayswater where the Westminster Council have imposed fines for £6,000 against 'Tall Poppy Presents' an acoustic showcase gig for the music industry. This attack by the soulless wowsers at the Council is despite the club bending over backwards to satisfy their demands. But it seems that the council have a 'zero tolerance' for any events that actually involve live music. The icing on the cake is that the council's Arts Policy aims are; "... to support, enhance and develop the infrastructure of art provision ...".

17/Jul/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Picking up the Loose Threads . . .

I hear from 'Smiling' Don Vince that last year's Battle of the Bands winners **Loose Thread** have been busy with gigs all over the place including Plush in West London and up at the Peterborough Music festival last weekend. They have also linked up with a small independent record label called ChangesOne. As well having a track (Holdin On) featured on a compilation album, they are producing a 'split' mini-album with the amazing rock'n'roll band Rat:Daddy. Both CDs will be available online at www.changesone.co.uk which is not only a label, but Don reckons is one of the best online CD ordering services around - fast cheap and reliable!



Anyhow, if you want to catch up with the **Loose Thread** live set, you can see them next Wednesday (July 24) at Club-M, Luton, followed by an acoustic gig at The Edge, Luton on Saturday (July 27). A little further down the line, next month (Aug 11) they are playing down at the Cork and Bull with one of this year's Battle of the Bands finalists - **Audio Justice**. I've heard a few recent tracks from the band and was well impressed by the quality and drive of the music. You can find out more about the band and their news by checking out their web site at <http://www.loosethread.co.uk>.

Just a few days to go before the end of term and everyone heads off for their summertime pursuits so don't forget to put the weekend of September 6-7-8 in your diary for the Dunstable Folk Day. The weekend starts off with a ceilidh (which is like a barn dance but noisier) at the Peter Newton Pavilion by local electric ceilidh band **MoonDance** with caller **Fee Lock** who is fast making a name for herself on the UK festival scene. At the Saturday evening free open air concert in Grove House Gardens, 70's folk/rockers **Lindisfarne** top the bill as well as a return visit from the Euro-dance outfit **Prego** who went down a storm last year and MC **Rick Christian**. Local support acts on the Saturday are **WoodworX** and instrumental music from **No Dogs, No Football** and there will be Morris Dancers and music sessions going on around the town.

On the Sunday there will another free afternoon concert hosted by Martin Banks which will feature **Michelle Welbourne**, **Mary Humphreys** and **Anahata** as well as local talent and the weekend will be rounded off by a **enQ** gig in the evening at Brooklyn's Bay in High Street North. Like last year, many of the events will be organised by local musicians, dancers, venues and other organisations all co-ordinated by Dunstable Town Council. Anyone interested in getting involved in this growing high profile event should contact Michelle Alexander at Dunstable Town Council on 01582-513000 or check out the web site at www.roots66.co.uk/dfd/.

24/Jul/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Dunstable Battle of the Bands finalists **Reverie** will be playing their brand of hectic atmospheric experimental indie rock at the Cork and Bull pub in Luton on Friday (July 26). The gig is basically going to be a party thrown by the band before they head off on their summer touring schedule so should be a lot of fun. If you missed them at the Dunstable final then this is an ideal opportunity to see one of the best local bands around. The music features **Gerard McMahon's** pleasingly raw lead vocals supported by a powerful backing from the rest of the five piece guitar oriented band. **Reverie** are at the cutting edge of contemporary pop/rock music performing very dramatic numbers. You can check out the band on their web site at www.reverietheband.co.uk

Five piece local band **Surefire** are also playing down at the Cork and Bull in Luton, this time on Sunday (July 28). The band kicked off in 1997 and have been playing all round the country but recently decided to concentrate on their home patch. The line up is **Steve Dunn** (drums & backing vocals), **Chris Merrick** (bass), **James 'Blackie' Black** (lead vocals & rhythm guitar), **Paul 'Meady' Mead** (lead & rhythm guitar) and newest addition **Matt** (rhythm guitar & keyboards). They liken their sound to a modern version of **U2** and the Rolling Stones and are getting genuine industry interest from both major record and management companies. For other dates check out their web site at www.surefiregroup.uksingers.com

Tonight (Wednesday) you can catch up with **Loose Thread** at Club-M, Luton, followed by an acoustic gig at The Edge, Luton on Saturday (July 27). Next week's act at the Edge's Saturday acoustic session (Aug 4) is local duo **Nemo** consisting of **Char Ritch** and **Phil Knight** who produce a mellow acoustic vibe with overtones of Jazz and alternate folk with influences ranging from Depeche Mode, Beatles, Tori Amos, Joni Mitchell, The Doors, Suzanne Vega, and even Early Metallica.

On Sunday (July 28) the **Penny Millen Quartet** will be playing a set of cool Jazz numbers in Grove House Gardens as part of Dunstable Town Council's series of Sunday afternoon open concerts. The quartet is led by Dunstable based saxophonist and vocalist **Penny** and is ably supported by her guitarist husband, **Gary**, and an excellent rhythm section. Last time I saw them at one of these concerts they held the audience spellbound with their renditions of popular jazz standards such as Van Morrison's "Moon Dance" and George Benson's "This Masquerade". Perfect summer music for relaxing in the park and it's free!

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>
