

6/Nov/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

A one night stand in Tring . . .

Local acoustic rockers **Tempest** are down at the Cork and Bull on Sunday (Nov 10). Recently Tempest - along with Luton Acoustic trio **Rush Hour** - have reached the final of the Star Search competition. The event is in aid of the Victim support charity and takes place at the Bedford Corn Exchange towards the end of the month (Nov 24). For more information about the band call their management on 07956-812831.

Former Battle of the Bands winners **Loose Thread** have had very busy year culminating with being signed to the ChangesOne record Label who will be releasing the band's first "official" release in the near future. To celebrate they will be returning to their home turf with a ticket only gig at The Winston Churchill in Dunstable on Saturday November 23. The gig will also feature **2 foot Nothing** and **Rat:Daddy**, all the way from Southampton. Following the release of their first album, **Loose Thread** will be hitting road with their first UK tour in April 2003. Tickets for the Winston Churchill gig will be on Sale from this Friday. Tickets cost £3.00 and are available from Upstairs at the Winston or from band members, for more information see www.Loosethread.co.uk.



Next Wednesday (Nov 13), the legendary **Boo Herwerdine** returns to Roots@Zaks in Wolverton (Milton-Keynes). Noted as a singer of real depth and emotion, Boo will be familiar to rock music fans because cult band, "The Bible" formed in 1985. Since then he has pursued a solo career. His first solo record was the self produced "Ignorance", followed by two albums produced by John Wood. Last year's album "Thanksgiving" received the best reviews of his career. Tonight's act is an acoustic trio comprising Gerry Colvin, Nick Quarmby and drummer Martin Fitzgibbon. For more information contact Cracking Music on 01908-310278 or check out the website www.crackingmusic.co.uk.

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

The Brian Heywood Column

The death of Rock and Roll

By the time you read this column, the Prime Minister of our freedom loving country will have presented the Queen's Speech. You know, the one where the government sets out its plans for any legislation that will be debated in parliament by our duly elected representatives during the coming year. You might think that a column about the local live music scene is a strange place to mention this fact, but all indications are that one particular bill could spell the death knell for local live music in licensed premises such as pubs. Hidden away inside the legislation to liberalise the opening hours of pubs is the removal of the rule that says that no more than two musicians can play in a bar unless it has a Public Entertainment Licence (aka PEL).



"Great!" you might think, our leaders will draft the law so that will allow us the freedom of enjoy live music in our social environment, only moderated by the proper considerations of safety and the avoidance of annoying the neighbours. Err, no actually. The government's current plan is that the 'two in a bar' will become 'none in a bar'. This means that having even one un-amplified guitarist or singer in a pub or restaurant will become a criminal offence - unless first licensed. While there will no longer be a financial penalty to the publican who wants to entertain with live music, he (or she) will need to draft a detailed operating plan which will need to explicitly define types of music, a risk assessment and details of additional security and safety measures taken before they allowed to have live musicians on the premises. It is interesting to note that entertainment on satellite or terrestrial TV, or radio, is to remain exempt from any kind of licensing requirement.

It seems strange that first British Prime Minister to hold office who has actually played in a rock band - he played guitar in **Ugly Rumours** - will oversee the demise of live music as we know it. The minister responsible for drafting the new licensing laws - Kim Howells - has said that the hospitality and leisure industry would resist 'robustly' if the government were to put satellite TV on an equal footing with live music. He didn't say why, but the reasons are obvious, the big pub companies fear the bureaucratic licensing process and the potential for onerous local authority licensing conditions. The solution seems obvious to me, just remove the need to have a licence to perform music in public, just like more civilised countries like Scotland. C'mon Mr Blair, you know it makes sense!

20/Nov/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Bowfinger Exclusive Free CD For Fans!

Luton band **Bowfinger** tell me that they are currently recording a special CD to give away to

fans at their Christmas gig on the December 20 at Sadlers, Manchester St, Luton. Ed (vocals and guitar) said "It's been a fantastic year for Bowfinger, so we thought a thank you present for our fans was in order!". The CD won't be available anywhere else - it's exclusive to the gig at Sadlers. Record producer Justin Saban is also giving his time free to record the CD.

The band wouldn't say what tracks are being recorded but it's sure to be a collectors item! Bowfinger's single "Probably wrong" is now available in record stores on the Latent Lemon Record label. To find out more visit the band's website www.bowfinger.net.



UK based Australian blues guitarist **Gwyn Ashton** will be displaying a quieter side to his musical nature when he plays two solo sets next Saturday (Nov 30) at the Eight Belles in Milton Keynes (Buckingham Road, Bletchley). More used to playing the big stadiums, Gwyn, whose touring schedule usually includes festivals and clubs across Australia, New Zealand, Europe, USA, Poland and the Czech Republic says "It's really good playing the big stuff with my band but every now and again I really like to do something uncluttered that brings me closer to the audience." The gig is a return trip to the Eight Belles after a successful acoustic gig there earlier in the year. This is a free entry gig and the music starts at 9.00 p.m, for further details call 01908-379906.

The charity gig in Tring planned for Friday, December 6 that I mentioned a couple of weeks ago featuring **TooFarGone**, **Bowfinger** and **Powervalve** has had to be rescheduled due to spiralling costs. The gig now be held on Saturday December 7 at the Sub Club at the Luton University Student Union. As well as the live bands, **Neil Fox** of Filmstock will be DJing indie/rock n roll music after the bands. Unfortunately **Bowfinger** cannot perform on the Saturday due to prior commitments, so **Hush** have stepped in to fill the breach. Tickets are £5 and are available on the door, see the website www.dcpromotions.co.uk for more details. All profits will be going to support the War Child charity.

I had a little rant last week about the new licensing bill, but it's even worse than I imagined! It looks like any live music at private events such as parties, weddings etc. will become illegal unless licensed, as will any private performance 'with a view to raising money for charity'. What's more, musicians could be guilty of a criminal offence if they don't check first that premises hold the appropriate authorisation for their performance.

27/Nov/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Lime's infectiously crunchy Latin/jazz dance grooves will be on the bill on Saturday (Nov 30) at the Cork and Bull in Cumberland St, Luton. The band were finalists in the Dunstable Battle of the Bands earlier this year when won over both audience and judges with a set of original arrangements of songs and instrumentals featuring **Dave Hallam's** fantastic guitar work and the suppressed power of vocalist **Anna Abrahams**, all underpinned by the percussion of **Elim Gobbit**, who also shared the lead vocals in their rip-roaring signature last number - a stunning rendition of "I feel Good". So what better way to spend a Saturday night than in the company of a bunch of punchy jazz funk instrumentals featuring the band's twin saxophones. The band's funk sensibility and their obvious musical talents coupled with a pop perspective mean that you'd better make sure you have your dancing shoes handy and prepare yourself to have a good time. For more information call the Cork on 01582-729586.



Well we all knew it was true, but it seems that Luton's (and Dunstable's!) music talent can knock the rest of the UK's into a cocked hat. Three local bands have proved it this - entirely reasonable proposition in my mind - by trouncing the opposition in a number of competitions around the country. First in the queue is Luton superstar - Sean Devlin - and his eponymous ensemble **Devlin** which took the top slot in a national 'Battle of the Bands' last Thursday. Local bands **Tempest** and **Rush Hour** have also reached the final of Bedfordshire's biggest charity talent show at the Bedford Corn Exchange. Starsearch 2002 took place last Sunday, too close to the copy date to get the results, so you'll just have to wait till next week to find out whether real music, from real musicians impressed the judges.

The lads from **SureFire** tell me that they've recently signed with All Fired Up, a London based management company who've worked with such artists as The Beach Boys, Dr Hook, Kraftwerk, Bob Seger, Natalie Cole & Don McClean. If you want to see the lads before they embark on the music biz roller coaster you can see them on Tuesday (December 3) at The Park in Park Street, Luton or next Saturday (December 7) at the Winston Churchill in Dunstable.

More on how the new licensing laws will effect live music, and other kinds of entertainment. Just in case anyone is interested, Jim Lawton has posted a simpler version of the Entertainment Schedule to the new licensing bill on the Internet at <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/james.lawton/schedulefrontpage.htm>. Jim thought that the wording of the new law was so convoluted that it needed to be translated into English.

Send gig information to "The Brian Heywood Column", PO Box 649, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 or to info@lutonscene.com. A search-able archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>.