

2/Jul/20032 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

A Gala Nonesuch Gig

A sunny Sunday afternoon, a large field full of people and a great band playing live music. No, not Glastonbury, but Amptill Gala Day with Luton based **Nonesuch** on stage playing an extended set of spiky celtic rock songs spiced up with searing, fiddle led jigs and reels. The five piece band features members from the melodic grunge/funk band **Grief Society** and the popular English Folk Rock band **Mercy Street** and produces powerful crunchy rhythm textures and features the vocals of **Ade Thomas**, who also plays acoustic guitar and mandolin, along with bass guitarist **Angus Nurse**. The manic fiddle is perpetrated by **Pete Gyles**, supported by the almost legendary **Jim Abbot** on electric guitar and **John Carr** on drums. The band's current line-up has been going since the beginning of 2000 and though they don't seem to gig out much, when they do it's worth taking a listen. You can find out more about them by visiting their website at <http://members.lycos.co.uk/nonesuch> or by emailing them on nonesuch@020.co.uk.

Good luck to local band **Echelon Blue** who are in the final of the Freak Battle of the Bands to be held in Romford next Thursday (July 10). They've been topping the Freak heats so they look like they're in with a chance. The band produces a highly dynamic metal sound with influences as diverse as Beastie Boys, Black Sabbath and Micheal Jackson. I can also hear a bit of Eminem in there as well. You can contact the band via email cheeseandbun2@aol.com.

And now for something completely different. This Sunday's Brass Band Concert in Grove House Gardens features the **Woburn Sands Band** who come hotfoot from an appearance at the Wavendon home of Cleo Laine and Johnny Dankworth. The band have a repertoire ranging from Porgy & Bess through "Breezing Down Broadway" (a medley of favourites from the shows) to the Star Wars theme. What sets them apart is the quality of playing, especially the many members taking solo parts, the range of percussion and the humour and inspiration apparent in all their performances.

Live Gig action;

Wednesday July 2 -

- The Blue Angel Acoustic Café presents Strung Up at The Horn, Victoria Street, St Albans, featuring **The Blue Review**, **Freaka Nature** and special guests. Doors open 7.30, £3.
- St Micheals, St Albans Folk and Dance night - Music and Morris all evening - great family evening out.

Thursday July 3 -

- **Hush** are playing at The Chameleon Bar in Dunstable High Street North with **The Occasion** as support. Original Music comes back to Dunstable!

Sat July 5

- **Audio Justice**, **Stickerphase** and the **Dead on Holiday** at the Winston Churchill in Dunstable.
- **Reverie** are at Esquires, Bedford supporting a signed band (www.reverietheband.co.uk)

Sunday July 6

- Woburn Sands Concert Band at Grove House Gardens, Dunstable (3pm)

Thursday July 10

- Tempest will be playing a warm-up gig for there Willow Festival headline slot at The Cork & Bull, Luton (free entry).

9/Jul/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Music Renaissance in Dunstable . . .



Original live music seems to be making a real comeback in Dunstable with gigs at Bar Chameleon and the Winston Churchill. Last Thursday a good crowd turned out to hear top local rockers - the **Hush** - put on a great show with the support of the **Occasion** (an offshoot of Too Far Gone). I've not actually seen the **Hush** since they won the Dunstable Town Council/Gazette Battle of the Bands at the Queensway Hall a few years ago but they certainly have to be one of the best live bands on the local scene at the moment. You can next see them live on tomorrow fortnight (July 24) at the Dublin Castle (94 Parkway, Camden, London, NW1 7AN). The Occasion are coming along nicely as well with front man **Andy Sizmur** putting on a great show. You can find out more about the hush from their website -

www.hush.org.uk.

Luton band the **Tempest** will be playing a warm-up gig for their Willow Festival (almost) headline slot at The Cork & Bull, Luton tomorrow night. The Willow Festival is the largest rock and pop festivals in the UK and is set within the beautiful surroundings of the Embankment of the River Nene in Peterborough. The tree day event is the culmination of the Peterborough Festival and last year saw 120 bands perform on six stages over three days, playing to an audience in excess of 38,000. The Luton band have managed to get the prime slot just before the main headline act - **The Animals** - so they should get a lot of exposure from the gig. The band have thoughtfully provided transport in the form of two coaches and a minibus for any one who wants to get up to the festival. Tickets cost £6.00 and entry to the festival is free. Email robbo@the-tempest.com for more information. If you can't get to the festival then make sure you get down to the Cork and Bull tomorrow night (Cumberland St, Luton) for a free pre-festival party with the band.

Speaking of the Cork, my band **enQ** is playing down there on Sunday week (July 20). We'll have a film crew down there to take some footage for our new video so if you want appear as part of the audience make sure you get down there. It should be a great gig.



Andy Sizmur (the Occasion) that he has set up a new website for all Luton bands to advertise their gigs on so that the public can see who's on where and when. You can find the page at www.groups.msn.com/lutonmusicscene or as a link from the www.lutonscene.com website along with a search-able archive of Luton News/Dunstable Gazette live music columns along with additional pictures. Make sure you bookmark one of these pages if you want to keep in touch with the local music scene.

16/Jul/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Dunstable Rocks

On Saturday (July 19), the series of local band nights at the Winston Churchill (Church Street, Dunstable) continues when top local bands **Surefire** and **Hush** appear along with rising stars **Long Shore Drift**. This last outfit, an up-and-coming four piece, was originally formed by Queensbury Upper School students; **James Lee**, **Jonny Fever**, **Tom Windsor** and **Aaron Swain** to perform at an end of year celebration upon leaving year 11 in 2001. The band began regular rehearsals in 6th form and began writing their own material, and after some recording time courtesy of sound engineer **Tim Edwards** and **Adrian Stokes** joining to replace the original bass player in December 2002 they have been going from strength to strength, getting to the Esquires Battle of the Bands Indie final. So if you want to see three of the area's top three bands in one place then get down to the Winston Churchill on Saturday. The doors open at 8pm and the bar will be open until midnight, tickets only £3 available from the Winston or email surefirenews@hotmail.com over 18's Only - ID may be required.

Echelon Blue, who I mentioned here a couple of weeks ago, won the Battle of the Bands competition at the Hollywood Night-club in Romford last week. Apparently they beat off fierce opposition by **Set in Silence** and **Alesyndrome** to be the overall winners on the night. Judges awarded points on musical content, composition, performance and appearance. It was a tough call as **Set in Silence** were the favourites, having been in the lead through most of the heats but on the night the Luton lads pulled out all the stops and conquered the hearts of the judges and an enthusiastic crowd who gave them their hard earned support. On an extremely hot night the band turned up complete with an incredible hulk fan and blew the night away. Quote from band "We like to live dangerously!". This just goes to show the quality of the bands from the local music scene, we have a lot to be proud of.

Also, don't forget that my Celtic influenced roots/rock band - **enQ** - is playing down at the Cork and Bull in Cumberland Street on Sunday (July 20). We'll have a film crew down there to take some footage for our new video so if you want appear as part of the audience make sure you get down there. It should be a great gig. We'll also have plenty of copies of the new album - "Tear Down the Barriers" - for sale at a special price.

You can check out the details about local gigs on www.groups.msn.com/lutonmusicscene or as a link from the www.lutonscene.com website along with a search-able archive of Luton News/Dunstable Gazette live music columns - along with additional pictures. Make sure you bookmark these pages if you want to keep in touch with the local music scene.

23/Jul/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

A talent to watch...

I was playing down at the Cork and Bull in Luton on Sunday and was knocked out by the quality of the support singer, 21 year old **Laura Britton** from Chesterfield. Apparently she is in her third year at Luton University, and sings at the Cork & Bull every Sunday, sometimes with backing tracks or else with guest musicians under the guise of, "The Way Forward". Laura started at the pub after winning a karaoke competition at Brannigan's and has supported bands such as enQ and Two Mile Tailback when they've played down at the popular Luton venue. She tells me that she has been influenced by artists such as Donna Summer, Aretha Franklin and Eva Cassidy and she is currently on the look out for members for a permanent backing band. Anyone interested should speak to Laura on 01582-729586.

On the CD release front I hear that Dunstable Battle of the Bands finalists **Audio Justice** have released a new three track disc under the title of "Where the Sun Don't Shine" (which is the title track) along with "Good" and "Goodbye" which was recorded live at Club 85 in Hitchin. Check out www.audiojustice.net for more information. Hitchin based rockers **Stone Grass**, made up of ex-members of **Throat Oyster** and **Eesifreek**, have also released a four track CD. The Demo EP contains "Exist", "Sign Up To Everything", "Manic" and "Left Undone" and you can find out more information and samples at www.stonegrass.com.

I also understand that the Red Lion in Stevenage is after acoustic musicians for a "Lazy Sunday" gig. If you are interested in showing off your acoustic chops then ring 01438 220515 and ask for Neale. Also, don't forget that The Horn in St Albans has a regular acoustic night on Sundays that welcomes performers. Not only do you get in for free but you get a drink on the house, can't say fairer than that.

Battle of the Bands and Luton News Pop Poll winners - **Loose Thread** - are playing a gig at The Winston Churchill in Dunstable on Saturday, August 9 with their label mates **Rat:Daddy** (from Southampton) and local band the **Dandelions**. Dave from the Threads tells me that they've been enjoying the sunshine, but are getting ready to round off the summer and show off some new material they've been working on. The August gig is ticket only and they are on sale now for £4.00, contact Dave@loosethread.co.uk to find out how to get into the audience.

I've been wondering about how the new licensing law is going to effect live music and reckon that the biggest musical casualties are going to be the duos who currently can legally play in a pub without a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL) because of the 'two in a bar' rule. After next June the regime will be 'none in a bar' unless the pub has a full PEL, so I reckon that duos will find that their gig market will disappear.

30/Jul/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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It seems that last year's Battle of the Bands Winner **OVER*EASY** have had a bit of a set-back. It seems that their vocalist - **Brett "Bruth B" Arrellano** - has had to leave the band, though the decision was not entirely his own as apparently he was deported. I know this government has got it in for live music, what with the new licensing bill and all, but exiling musicians seems to be somewhat over the top. Anyway, he has been replaced by **Tim "Rock" Stock** who has already completed a series of shows with the group including their recent performance at the Bourgoin Fete de la Music, Festival, in southern France. The band tells me that they are very satisfied with the recent results, insisting that he is , "one of the family already". The group's as yet untitled debut album will shortly be available and you can continue to catch them live as they play around the area.

Louis Henry from Luton based band '**The Scales**' tells me that they have been pretty busy recently after a line-up re-shuffle due to drummer Shane Murphy leaving and being replaced by **Gary Mccrossan**. As well as recording a new demo with Luton based producer **Justin Saban** they have a whole host of shows, including a big gig coming up on Wednesday week (August 13) at Gossips in London. If you want a lift down to the London gig or just find out more about the band you can email them at thescales99@hotmail.com or look them up on the web at www.thescales.tk.

Folk singer **John Conolly** is appearing at the Hollybush Pub (Church End, Redbourn) tomorrow night (Thursday). John is perhaps best known for co-writing "Fiddlers Green" and "The Grimbsy Lads" with Bill Meek. Apparently got the gig when he happened to call into the pub on a music night and impressed the audience with some superb singing and playing during a floor spot. This time he will top the bill with some help from the clubs resident musicians. The club meets in The Old School Room at the back of the pub and the music starts at 8:30. Further details are available from : 01582 452954 or 07850 163241 or by contacting The Hollybush on 01582 792423.

Local Gigs...

- Friday (Aug 1) - Surefire at the Cork & Bull, Park St. Luton (01582-729586).
- Saturday (Aug 2) - Hard edged rock from 'Uncle Phil' at the Well in Hightown, Luton
- Thursday (Aug 7) - Celtic influenced original rock from enQ, The Horns, Watford (01923-225020, www.thehornswatford.co.uk)

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 searchable archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>.