

1/Oct/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Andy Sizmur tells me that the MeltingPot team at The Well has joined forces with Casper's Night Club to offer a full nights entertainment for all rock n roll fans every Saturday and every other Thursday. The night kicks off at 7pm at The Well with a quality live band and DJing from Neil Fox. From 11.30pm a minibus is available to ferry people up to Caspers where they can party to the continuing sounds of Neil Fox until 3am (cost £2.50). The regular event will kick off tomorrow night (Thursday) with local band **Shine** who's sound is somewhat reminiscent of **Reef** and **AC/DC** and have recently had a song released on a compilation album put out by Matchbox Records. Other bands lined up include **Chester** (Oct 11), **Noon Layer Drive** (Oct 16), **The Measure** (Oct 18), **Pipedown** (Oct 25) and **Long Shore Drift** (Oct 30). There will also be a special fancy dress Halloween night (Oct 31) featuring **The Dead On Holiday** which will include a screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show - and prizes. The Well can be found in High Town Road not far from Luton Station.

The ever gigging Luton rock 'n rollers **Loose Thread** will be playing at the Live Circuit monthly alternative music night at Hitchin Town Football Club on Friday (Oct 3). The gig will also feature **Bushnut** (hip-hop rockers), **Parifica** (rock) and Stevenage based hard-core punks **Dead Against**. Entrance costs £3 and doors open at 7.30pm. Contact sophie@livecircuit.net for more information.

On Saturday (Oct 4) **Audiogene**, **Long Shore Drift** and **Under The Ice** play the first of the 16+ gigs at The Winston Churchill (Church Street, Dunstable) that I mentioned in last week's column. Entrance costs £4 and the gig runs from 8pm until 11pm. Remember that you will need to have ID to prove you're over 18 if you want to purchase alcohol at the bar.

I hear that **Long Shore Drift's** bass guitarist has decided to follow his dreams of theatrical stardom so is leaving the band as of the end of October. The band are making this month a big one with gigs on 3rd, 4th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 16th and a final gig at The Well on October 30. They are planning to carry on with a new bassist, so anyone interested should leave a post on their website (www.longshoredrift.tk) with a phone number and they'll be sure to give you a ring.

8/Oct/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Sunday Night Entertainment

On Sunday (Oct 12) the popular North London rock group - **Waste** - are playing down at the newly refurbished Cork and Bull in Cumberland St, Luton. The Cork, who've won awards as one of Luton's most popular pubs, has often had live music on Sunday nights but now they're making it a regular event with varied entertainment aimed at all ages. This week's act are a soft rock group, musically and vocally gifted, who perform a mixture of original material, coupled with well known covers. They tell me that they have performed at many festivals and are on the verge of securing a recording contract. Sounds like a good way to round off the weekend as the evenings start closing in. For more information contact the Cork on 01582-729586.

I hear from my spies that the first of the 16+ Gigs at the Winston Churchill in Dunstable on Saturday went very well indeed. There was a little confusion with the ID system but the night was a complete success, with many 16 - 18 year olds entering the venue with credited ID and conducted themselves in a befitting manner. Apparently both **Long Shore Drift** and **Audiogene** went down particularly well with the former showing an amazing array of styles and techniques within their set. The headline act **Audiogene**, who are currently on a national tour, recently signed a song writing deal with publisher Bob Grace. You can see **Long Shore Drift** again in Dunstable when they play tomorrow night (Thursday) at Bar Chameleon or on Friday at the Wheatsheaf (High Street North).

The refitting of the Winston's new venue, known as Kelley's Bar, is a real community effort with regulars of the Friday night rock nights giving up their free time to completely overhaul the venue. A lot of hard work went into the refurbishment, with the working day started at around 10 am and often finished after 2am. Chris from Longlights tells me that the support was amazing, on two consecutive nights volunteers worked until 4am having started at 10am the previous day. The new layout includes a new stage area, new lighting has been installed, a sound booth has been built, and the room has been papered and painted in two shades of blue, with black trim and stainless steel details. A large round of applause to all involved.

Blues fans should get down to The Three Blackbirds in Flamstead on Friday (Oct 10) to see the **Grapevine Blues** duo. The band is based around experienced guitarists Dr Ika and Mike Chase who aren't afraid to push the boundaries of the Blues - for instance mixing Hendrix and House or a Hip Hop version of Crossroad Blues. Check it out.

15/Oct/2002 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Tempest back on-line...

You may have been wondering what happened to the popular Luton based acoustic rock band - The Tempest - recently. Well it seems that for the last couple of months they've had their heads down in their new studio, busy on their forthcoming album release. Anyway, tomorrow night (Thursday) they are taking a break from studio work to do a gig at The Well (Luton). They tell me they have a bucket load of new songs to dish out so if you want hear how they're doing then get down to the Well in High Town Road (not far from Luton Station).

Anglo/Australian duo **Nancy Kerr** and **James Fagan** are featured in a set of afternoon workshops followed by an evening concert on Sunday week (October 26) in St Albans. The pair won the 'Best duo' category in this year's BBC Radio 2 awards for their combination of highly skilful and innovative performance with accessibility, warmth and stage presence. The workshops consist of two instrumental sessions - fiddle with Nancy Kerr and bouzouki/cittern with James Fagan (1:30pm) followed by the art of imaginative accompaniment (3:30pm). The workshop sessions and the evening concert, which kicks off at 7pm, are at the Trestle Arts Base, Russet Drive, Highfield Park, St Albans and ticket prices are £8 (£6 conc.) for the concert and £15 (£5 conc.) for the workshops. For more information or to reserve tickets call 01727-852111 or check out www.stalbansfolkmusic.org.uk

Dunstable based singer/song writer **Lauren Field** is doing well with her debut album "Modern Woman". The CD, which was launched last month at a packed 606 club in Chelsea, features Chris Issacs' Wicked Game and 14 self penned songs and has a strong jazz influence throughout. In fact, five of the songs were co-written with Randy Bachman (Bachman Turner Overdrive and The Guess Who) who also appears on the album along with Mick Taylor (Rolling Stones etc.). The CD's producer - Charles Foskett - says that the original concept was to produce an album along the lines of the Buena Vista Social Club featuring some of the greats of the British jazz scene of the 50's and 60's. The CD is generating lots of industry interest for Lauren and she has already appeared on Radio 2's Richard Allison show and with Mike Mendoza on LBC. Lauren's CD is available from HMV Records and other record shops throughout the UK. For more information check out www.shmusicmusic.com

Malibu Stacey are playing down at The Winston Churchill next Thursday (October 23) which is in Church St, Dunstable. The band features ex-Terrorvision bass guitarist **Leigh Marklew** and ex-Leafcutter guitarist **Kes**. The doors open at 8pm and the music goes on till midnight, entry only £5.

22/Oct/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Bop until you Drop

By the time you read this I'll be in Seville attending the world's largest World Music Expo - WOMEX 2003. World Music is a massive mix of music styles from all around the world and ranges from costumed folk music specific to a particular culture to all kinds of interesting fusions. A lot of stuff that's been coming out in the last decade has been heavily dance influenced, and UK's **Jah Wobble** is an example of this. The genre is pretty massive in mainland Europe but has a rather more limited impact on this side of the English Channel probably due the stranglehold that mainstream Pop has on the media.

Anyone who came to the main concert at this year's Dunstable Folk Festival will have heard four different takes on the world music theme with **Mas Y Mas** (latin/celtic), **Prego** (euro-dance), **enQ** (celtic) and **Bram Taylor** (English) or just listen to some of the music behind the procession during the Luton Carnival. Maybe Luton Council should have a World Music stage at next year's carnival to acknowledge the diverse ethnic mix of the local population, as well as get some more great music.

Anyone into e-Ceilidh - which is a kind of souped-up barn dance - have got a busy fortnight ahead of them. It kicks off on Saturday (Oct 25) with Milton Keynes' based **The Cock and Bull Band** appearing at this month's Reeling in Ealing with caller **Andrew Swaine**. The band has over 20 years experience and are recognised as one of the top ceilidh bands on the circuit. I'd have to agree with Nick Beale in the international World Music magazine fROOTS; "One of the most successful splicings of traditional dance and automated rhythms I've come across". The venue is Ealing Town Hall, New Broadway, Ealing W5 2BY and you can get information from 01923 221701, info@randomband-agency.com or check out www.randomband-agency.com

The following Friday (Oct 31), Unicorn Ceilidhs continue their regular monthly gatherings at Hitchin Town Hall with **The Posh Band** and caller **Bobby Ritchie**. This four piece band - melodeon, fiddle, banjo and piano - has a more laid back, traditional sound, but still has got a lot of lift. Doors open at 7.30 for an 8.00 pm start, with an 11.30 pm finish with tickets at £6 adults (£4 children under 14) available on the door or from 01582-724261.

Finally on the following Friday (Nov 7) **Mick Brooks** is appearing with **Nelson's Arm Band** at St Mary's Hall (West Street, Dunstable). This is the latest in an occasional series of Ceilidhs that goes under the name of Tyre Kicker's. The band features the violin (and electric guitar) of Kevin Adams (Stocai) and the melodeon of Elaine and the bass and keyboard skills of Ned. For more information call 01582-862643 or 01582-475655 or see www.roots66.net/tkc. Tickets will also be available from Octave Music in High Street North, Dunstable.

By the way, the Hollybush folk music club has moved. Tomorrow night's session (Thursday) - which features the New Roots Finalists 2003, Ben Keith and Frances Wilkins - will be held at The Cricketers Public House on Redbourn Common, Redbourn, Herts.

29/Oct/2003 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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Local Acoustic Scene Flourishes...

Acoustic duo **Kathryn Roberts** and **Sean Lakerman** hit Rebound next Thursday (Nov 6) when they play at the Village Hall (in the High St). Kathryn has made her name by achieving the BBC Radio 2 'Young Tradition Award' and as the lead singer for the well-known Folk-Rock Crossover band 'Equation', which has toured the world and continues to play to packed houses from Los Angeles to Lisbon. She also grabbed national attention when she nabbed the 'Folk Roots' album of the Year in 1995 along with her long time friend Kate Rusby. Sean, who hails from Devon, has played guitar since the age of six and was recognised from an early age as one of the most talented and promising young guitar players on the folk scene. As well as partnering Geordie fiddle favourite Tom McConville he was also a member of the BBC Folk on Two 'Young Tradition Band', alongside previous winners of it's award, Luke Daniels, Simon Thumire and Catriona MacDonald. Soon after this he met up with Kathryn during a recording session and they went on to create 'Equation'. Further details are available from 01582 452954 or 07850 163241.

While I'm talking about acoustic music, this seems to be a growth in the area with new acoustic sessions popping up all over. Tomorrow night (Thursday) there is an acoustic night at the Green Room, The Doctor's Tonic, (Church Road, Welwyn Garden City) featuring **Steve Forbes**, **Black Water Music**, **Clinton Garrick** and **Steve Bert** (£2, doors open 7.30pm). On Sunday (Nov 2) acoustic aficionados are spoilt for choice with the Winston Churchill's monthly open stage called 'Give it some Stic' (Church St, Dunstable, 01582-662552), an acoustic night at Hitchin's Club 85, with host **Anna Neale** (£2, doors 7.45pm) and 'The Blue Angel Acoustic Café' at The Horn (Victoria Street, St Albans) which is having a semi-acoustic weekend wind-down, featuring the **Streamwalkers** (doors 7.30pm, free and floor-spots get a free drink). Meanwhile the **Wellington Bootles** are performing 'unplugged' at The Well in Hightown Rd, Luton, (01582-487464, from 7.30pm). Further afield there is an Open Acoustic Stage at Shorty's Sports Bar (24 Queen Street, Hitchin, from 7.30pm) and Monkeyboy Promotions have a free Open Mike Acoustic Night at Bar:[me] in High Street, Watford, (from 6pm, 07974-830129). So break out your acoustic guitar, fiddle and/or favourite songs to participate in the scene or just pop on down to tap into the music of the future.

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>

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