

2/Aug/2004 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

We're all going on a Summer Holiday!

Summer is here at last and August sees the music scene opening out around the country with loads of music festivals and folk generally heading off on their holidays. The nearest and one of the biggest local open air weekend festival is Towersey which is held over the August Bank Holiday (Aug 26-30) at a village on the other edge of the Chiltern Hills just north of Thame - about 40 minutes from Dunstable by road. This year is the festival's 40th anniversary and they're pulling out all the stops with three days of music, dance and loads of other activities in the middle of the Buckinghamshire/Oxfordshire countryside.

The festival kicks off on Thursday night (Aug 26) with **The Kremlinaires**, a unique seven piece Eastern Swing band playing Soviet swing and Bolshevik Boogie and the next three days are packed with artists such as **John Spiers** and **Jon Boden**, **Steve Tilston**, **Rory McLeod**, **Flook**, **Martin Simpson**, **Mas Y Mas**, **Andy Irvine**, **Roy Bailey** and many more. On the dance side you'll find **Florida**, **The Woodpecker Band**, **Stomp**, **Asha** and **Bedlam** along with callers such the inimitable **Gordon Potts**.

For the younger festival goer (12-25) there is the popular series of 'Shooting Roots' workshops, sessions and sing-arounds with plenty of opportunity to participate and learn new skills from musicianship to drama and circus skills. There are also plenty of events targeted at younger children as well with concerts, dances, craft workshops and magic. You can either camp for the entire weekend with a season ticket, get a day ticket which will get you into all the events or just pop over for the day and get a showground pass that will give you access to the Arena performances and market stalls, selling loads of stuff that you won't see anywhere else (except perhaps another festival!). To find out more information you can check out the website at www.towerseyfestival.com or you can call 01629 827016.

Tomorrow night (Thurs 5) long time Luton rockers **Cerberus** will be appearing at The Well music venue in Hightown Luton for the first time. They are pretty much legends in the local rock scene and the venue is proud to have them gracing the Well's stage. And what's more, entry is free! For more information call The Well on 01582-487464 or check out the website; www.thewellmusicvenue.com

I hear that there is a new promotions company called **Junction 23** which is looking for talented local acts for future events as well as venues to host them. Bands should send demos to Junction 23 Promotions, Units 17-18 Martinfield, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL7 1HG, or email junction23@hotmail.com or phone Clint on 07979 317237 or Paul on 07962 104244 for further details.

11/Aug/2004 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Dilate are back...

Local heavy metal band **Dilate** been keeping a low profile over the last few months. They tell me that they've spent the time writing new material and changing the line-up of the band. It seems that some months ago the band said farewell to drummer **Ant Halligan** and have since recruited new sticks' man - **Rafie Utudjan** - to replace him. According to front man **Andy Miller**, Rafie has returned the unity and focus to the line-up surprising the rest of the band with his ability to learn the diverse material and become a creative member of the unit within a matter of weeks of joining. The new line-up has been working hard on new material and will be airing it at a comeback gig at Luton's premiere music venue – The Well in Hightown on Thursday September 2nd.

Andy also tells me that the new material takes inspiration from the difficult last year of the band's life and will provide a new harder sonic landscape to the energetic live shows. It also seems that **Dilate** have big plans for the future and are currently looking for a management team to take them to the next stage of their musical career and include branching further a field to areas such as Brighton and the London live music circuits and talking to the relevant companies with the bands new material and CD. Anyone interested in helping out can contact the band by calling 07718955566 or emailing them at Dilateuk@yahoo.co.uk. You can check out their sound and pictures of the band on website at www.dilate.org.uk.

While we're on the subject of CDs, **Bowfinger's** debut album "Happy with what you got" is now available from Latent Lemon Recordings' website. For more information, press downloads, MP3s and how to buy stuff, visit Latent Lemon Recordings at www.latentlemon.co.uk.

And since I've already mentioned line-up changes, rumour has it that **Over*Easy** are about to announce the departure of their current bass player; **Simon "McDaddy"** McPhearson. From what I've heard, that although the decision was not mutual, there is no animosity between any of the guys. Since the band has tours lined up and a new album in the pipeline I guess that a replacement will need to be found pretty quickly to fulfil the band's existing commitments. The departure comes only twelve months after original singer **Brett Aarellano** returned to the USA and only leaves **Matt Lawrence**, **Adam Lawrence** and **Anthony Tearle** from the line-up that won the last Dunstable Battle of the Bands. So if any local bass players want to take a stab at the available slot they should contact the band. Check out www.overeasymusic.co.uk to contact the band.

18/Aug/2004 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Good Time Watford...

On Sunday (Aug 22) you can get into the musical mood of our current hot, humid and generally somewhat sweaty summer by checking out the sweaty Cajun swamp rhythms as played by local band the **Bon Temps Playboys** at the Horns in Watford. The band promises a Good Time (i.e. their name translated) with their brand of Cajun, Zydeco, Swamp Pop based dance music with some Rhythm and Blues thrown in for good measure. The word Cajun is derived from 'Acadian' and is the meeting of European, African and Native American music in the melting pot of New Orleans and the surrounding Mississippi swamps. Cajun music has led on to all kinds of interesting fusions such as Zydeco, Tex-Mex and even fed into styles such as Jazz and Country music. The underlying principle though is to go straight for the feet with those subversive swamp rhythms.

The band formed over ten years ago from a number of musicians 'playing for beer' down the road in Hemel and has developed into a seven piece band which has become a popular outfit on the U.K. Cajun / Zydeco circuit. The band and has played at venues and festivals throughout the UK and occasionally in Europe, playing their mix of toe tapping, foot stomping, goodtime roots derived numbers. They've even appeared on BBC radio sessions, including a live session for Andy Kershaw, and appeared on 'the Warehouse' Carlton TV program. I can remember talking to one of the founder members at Snook's bar a few years ago who had just arrived back from Louisiana. He assured me that Cajun music from the Hertfordshire swamps is just as popular in New Orleans as the reverse was true over here.

The band have just released a limited edition CD – called 'Bon Temps Gumbo' - which features sixteen tracks from their live set including Cajun two-steps, waltzes and Zydeco and there's even something in there for line dancers as well! John Swift from the Cajun Life and Times described it a "genuine taste of Louisiana!" On Sunday the music starts at 3:30pm and entry is free. You can find the band on the web at <http://members.aol.com/BonTempsPlayboys>.

Later in the same evening (Sunday) you can catch 'The Sunday Jumble' eclectic music evening at The Well Music Venue (5 Hightown Road, Luton) featuring **The Occasion**, **Corona Sun**, **Gary Williams**, **Ghost Ten** and **Sporadic**. The Occasion is a Luton based five piece which has been described as a mix of Coldplay and The Black Crows and features local music personality Andy Sizmur. Andy has put a lot into the local live music scene so go and show your support by popping down to the Well. Doors open at 5pm and entrance is free.

25/Aug/2004 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Dunstable Festival Frolics

It's less than a fortnight until the Dunstable Folk and Dance Festival which looks like it's going to be the best yet. The three day event kicks off on Friday night (Sept 3) with a high powered ceilidh (barn dance) from local band **MoonDance** with top caller **Barry Goodman** at St Mary's Social Club in West Street, Dunstable. The band is a five piece 'electric' line-up featuring fiddle, the accordion,/keys/saxophone, electric guitar, bass guitar and drums. The word ceilidh is celtic and means 'party' and the whole idea is to have fun; the music is upbeat and the Barry will guide you through the simple moves in time to some great music. The music starts at 8pm and tickets – which are available on the door or in advance from Octave Music in High Street North - are £6 for adults or £3 for concessions and under 16's while under 12's get in free, call 01582-475655 for more information.

On Saturday (Sept 4) during the day there will be Morris Dancing throughout the town centre preceding the main event of the weekend, which is a free open air concert in Grove House Gardens sponsored by Dunstable Town Council. This year's concert features a return visit from the amazing Latin/Celtic sounds of **Mas Y Mas** along with sets from **Roy Bailey**, **The Oyster Band** and the **Acoustic Strawbs** with Singer / Songwriter Rick Christian introducing the acts and performing between the other acts. The **Strawbs** is based around the song writing and singing talents of Dave Cousins who had hits with songs like Part of the Union and Lay Down in the early 70's. On Sunday afternoon (Sept 5) at 3pm you can see Rick perform again when he hosts the Free Folk Show case in Grove House Gardens along with **Wanderin' Soles** and **Sons of the Soil**.

If you want to get into the open air music experience in the coming weekend then you could trot down the road to Harpenden for a "Picnic in the Park" at Deacons Fields (Harpenden Rugby Club) in Redbourn Lane. On Saturday (Aug 28) you can see and hear the English National Orchestra conducted by Sir Anthony Ingliss and featuring singers Sarah Ryan (Phantom of the Opera, Les Miserables and Jerry Springer the Opera), Lindsey Danvers (Cats, The King and I), Mark O'Malley and David Bardsley (Les Miserables, Romeo and Juliet, Miss Saigon) performing a 'last night of the Proms' style classical programme along with songs from West End Shows culminating in a spectacular firework finale (tickets start at £18). Or if you prefer to hear pop music you can catch **Blue**, **LuLu** and other chart acts on Sunday (tickets from £25) at the same venue. You can get tickets for both events from 0871-2260228 or visit <http://www.picnicinthepark.net>

Send gig information to "The Brian Heywood Column", PO Box 649, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 4XD or info@lutonscene.com. A search-able archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>

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