

6/Apr/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Imicus Liff

The Luton and Stevenage based rockers — have announced their launch into the music world with a CD single, a new album and their first live shows. The band is a spin-off of the popular local band Dilate and the live debut will take place on June 24th at Club 85 in Hitchin when they launch their new



"Resolution" album. They tell me that they may have some special "warm up" shows over the coming weeks so keep an eye on the band's website (www.imicusband.com) for details. The band is previewing the album by pre-releasing a track from the forthcoming CD. "Breathe" is currently available in a special limited edition CD single available from the band's on-line store or as a free download. The website also features videos of the band in the studio, photo's, wall papers and a forum so that fans can keep in touch with the band and each other.

The band were originally formed by three music college graduates and lifelong friends in 2003 and after parting with their last vocalist and following an extended break were joined in the winter of 2005 by Miller and Dan from **Dilate** who breathed new life into the ensemble. The band tells me that their dark sound features superb lead guitar work and real emotion that's built an incredible level of hype for the professionally focused outfit. They certainly seem to know what they're about on the promotional side as their website received over 1,000 hits in its first week, the single has already been downloaded 400 times and the on-line shop has been selling band merchandise far away as Germany.

On the **Dilate** front, the band has decided to take a break while they work on new material as well as getting into the recording studio with top local producer – Justin Sabin. Over the last couple of months they've been gigging pretty hard, culminating with a show sharing the bill with Breed 77. Watch here for more news as it arrives.

James from the well-established original local band **The Tempest** are looking for an experienced drummer who's had to call it day with the band due to other commitments. The band's style ranges from moody rock tunes to acoustic ballads and they tell me that they have been likened to Feeder, the Stereophonics and U2. The band has their own studio and rehearsal space and is in the process of completing their debut album, have a tour pending and have a single awaiting release; so now is a good time to join the band. If you are interested in the position then give James a call on 07838 223 266.

13/Apr/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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Award winning Duo Perform at Redbourn

The winners of the 2003 BBC Radio 2 Folk Award for Best Duo - **Nancy Kerr and James Fagan** – are playing down at The Cricketers public house in Redbourn (opposite the common) next Thursday (April 21). Nancy and James are the scions of two of the best known 'folk' families of England and Australia and combine highly skilful performance with accessibility, warmth and stage presence. I saw them perform with the rest of the Fagin family at Australia's National folk fest in Canberra last year and heard for myself their amazingly full sound with Nancy's earthy and exquisite fiddle and viola playing combining with James's strikingly rhythmic guitar or bouzouki accompaniment. You can check them out on their web at www.kerrfagan.com. Tickets for next week's performance are available now at £8 and could well sell out for this small venue. For more information ring 01582 452954 or 07850 163241 or visit the club's website - www.redbournfolkclub.org.uk



On Sunday afternoon (April 17) you can check out the next generation of local folk superstars at the finals of **New Roots** competition for young musicians in St Albans. The aspiring artists will be judged by a bunch experienced folkies; Lynne Heraud, Pat Turner as well as Sarah Allen and Brian Finnegan of Flook. Alternatively you can cut to the chase and see the winners performing along with the judges in an evening concert (tickets £9 or £7 conc.) which starts at 7pm. Both events take place at the Trestle Arts Base in Russet Drive, Highfield Park, St Albans AL4 0JQ. To book tickets in advance, ring Alison Macfarlane on 01727-852211 or see the website - www.stalbansfolkmusic.org.uk

Dunstable Battle of the Bands finalists – **Reverie** – would like to thank their fans for their support at the band's gig at the Well in Luton at the end of last month. The next big gig is at the Carling Academy in Islinton on Tuesday (April 19) where the band will be going on-stage at 7:45pm. Check out their website at www.reverieuk.com to download a flyer for cheap entry to the gig or there may even be some free tickets left if you are very lucky. You can email the band on info@reverieuk.com

On Saturday (April 16) you can hear some original Rock 'n' Roll from **The Shine** at the Well in Hightown Luton. The five piece band has members from Milton Keynes and Hitchin and their sound is influenced by the likes of the Beatles, Oasis, The Rolling Stones, The Bluetones, The Stone Roses and the whole indie/guitar sound phenomenon. You can find out more from their website www.theshine.co.uk or email them on the.shine@dsl.pipex.com

20/Apr/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Vipers out of Hibernation

The Luton based **Imperial Vipers** are coming out of hibernation this month and are making quite a splash, with a little help from their friends. Over the winter the band has been recording their debut album with legendary producer Stuart Epps (Led Zeppelin, Elton John, Oasis and Robbie Williams). Stuart has now worked his magic on the fast and furious new rock Vipers' sound and the album is in the throes of the final mix. The full album will be released through Eminence Records later this year but fans won't have to wait that long as they will be releasing a debuted single - Kick a Hole - on Monday 30th May. The single has distribution so it will be available from local stockists all around the country.



Leading up to the release, the band has embarked on an ambitious 40 date tour of the UK which started last week with dates in Liverpool, York, Leeds, Hull and Welwyn Garden City. Tomorrow night (Thursday) sees the first of the Radio 1/Kerrang shows will be at Basildon Jumpin Jaks along with Colin Murray (Radio 1) and Lucio (Kerrang! Radio). Sharing the bill will be **Freefaller**, who you may have seen on TV as they have recently scored two top twenty hits. You can find out more about the band and their gig schedule from www.imperialvipers.com/gigs.htm. Closest gigs to their home town seem to be at Hemel Humping Jak's (April 28), Stevenage (May 11), Hatfield (May 24) and Hitchin (June 8). This again shows up the lack of a decent live music venue in the Luton/Dunstable area which is a disgrace.

The Vipers achieved a certain amount of notoriety last year when their manager struck out at the UK music industry in the News/Gazette savaging the short term 'Pop Idol' approach to new music. Indeed, if the Beatles, Rolling Stones or David Bowie had started their careers during the last decade then they would have been stacking supermarket shelves by now. It's great to see that the Vipers can not only 'talk the talk' but can 'walk the walk' as well. So if you want to support independent music get out there and see the band's live gigs, buy the band's CD (if you like what you hear). Despite the ignorance and sloth on the current big players in the 'music biz', someone out there is minding the bottom line, and if they see a market in independent music developing then they will promote it.

On a different tack; well known local Ceilidh/Barn Dance band - **Time of your Life** – led by Barry Goodman is performing a fund raising gig on Friday (April 23) at Hitchin Football Club, Fishponds Road, Hitchin. The dance is in aid of the Scouts and Guides and is open to the public. The doors open at 7.30pm and the event ends at 11.00pm. There will be a bar and food available and tickets cost around £7.00. If you're interested, you can contact Clare Thomas on 01462 625258 and you can find out about the band at www.timeofyourlife.info

27/Apr/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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The Joys of Spring...

After complaining bitterly about the lack of venues in the Luton and Dunstable is good to see the launch of a new Luton based promoter - PDM Music. They will be promoting live music on Sundays at The Exchange in King Street - which was the venue for the successful Tsunami benefit gig earlier this year. The series kicks off on Sunday (May 1) in partnership with Luton Metal Promotions with a night of top quality metal and hardcore featuring **Raise The Dead**, **BaySix**, **TheStarsHaveFallen** and **Your Demise**. The music starts at 7.30 and carries on to Midnight with admission costing £4 – which is just £1 a band, a real bargain. For more information check out www.pdmmusic.com or call the venue on 01582-729371.

Raise the Dead draw their influences equally from thrash metal sensibilities, death metal ferocity coupled with a strong modern hardcore influence and have just recorded their first CD called 'Famous Last Words' due for release later this year. **BaySix** are a hardcore punk act who formed down in the South West in 1999 playing fast and aggressive songs with a positive message. The band's debut album - 'Death by Misadventure' - was released worldwide in March. **TheStarsHaveFallen** are Luton's very own hardcore band that've gone from strength to strength since forming early last year, gigging regularly and building a large and loyal following. **Your Demise** from St Albans are newcomers to the scene. You can see photos of some the bands at www.exchange-luton.co.uk

Incidentally, PDM Music are looking bands and artists to put on The Exchange and welcome demos from local bands in every genre from Rock to Country and Jazz and Funk to Folk. PDM want to make The Exchange a respected local venue where audiences know that whatever the music the quality will always be the best available. Demos should be sent to PDM Music at 89 Third Ave, Luton, Beds, LU3 3ER.

If you want a slightly more traditional way of welcoming in the Celtic New Year then the fabulous **Stömp** ceilidh band are playing over at Hitchin Town Hall on Friday (April 29) with Hugh Rippon calling. The band have recently played in Dunstable and went down very well indeed with their high-energy English Ceilidh music from all over the British Isles, Scandinavia and beyond. The music is influenced by a huge range of traditional and contemporary sources which come together to cross the generations and fill the dance floor. **Hugh Rippon** is a leading light of the folk dance world and has championed folk dance for more than 40 years. Doors Open at 7:30 pm and tickets are (adults £7.50, under 14's £4, conc. £5) or you can make reservations by email (tickets@unicornceilidhs.org.uk). Email enquiries@unicornceilidhs.org.uk, call Alan Creamer on 01582-733113/724261 or check out www.unicornceilidhs.org.uk for more information.

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 www.lutonscene.com

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