

2/Nov/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Rick Christian Returns to Dunstable

Now that the summer has slunk off into the cold and damp distance; the Dunstable Town Council entertainments programme has retreated indoors with their regular Tuesday Lunchtime recital. On Tuesday (Nov 8) popular singer/songwriter **Rick Christian** (www.rickchristian.co.uk) returns to perform a solo set in the council chamber in Grove House on High St North in Dunstable. Rick is a firm favourite in the town from his role as the regular master of ceremonies at the Dunstable Folk and Dance Festival concert at the beginning of September. In case you've managed to miss Rick's set at the festival, he performs a range of folk, country and popular songs in a direct and friendly style. His repertoire includes songs by other writers as well as his own material and he is equally at home performing in a more intimate setting as in a larger venue, and seeing a performance by Rick is like meeting a good friend. You could also say that he's something of a 'high flyer' as he's even played live on a Virgin Airlines 747 to the USA. The music kicks off at 1:10pm and admission is free, for further information please contact Dunstable Town Council 01582 513000 or email info@dunstable.gov.uk



Local atmospheric rockers **Reverie** tell me that their CD single, which was recorded at Fortress Studio in London, is now in the final mastering stages. It is being released on the Luton based Latent Lemon Records label and will be available soon. Their next local gig is at the Hobgoblin in Bedford on Tuesday (Nov 8), see www.reverieuk.com or call/text 077 347 397 94 for more details.

Freddie Mercury fans should get down to the Horn in St Albans on Friday (Nov 4) to see the band **Killer Queen** who are regarded by many as the UK's Number One Queen tribute with **Scott Maley** touted as the best Freddie impersonator in the biz. Music starts at 10:30pm and entry is £6, for more information see www.thehorn.co.uk and www.killerqueenonline.com.

On Friday week (Nov 11) you can shake a leg to popular local ceilidh band **Laughing Gravy** with caller **Malcolm North** at the next Dunstable Tyre Kickers' Ceilidh at St Mary's Social Club in West Street. If you're wondering about the band's name, it's the title of a Laurel and Hardy film, and the line-up was originally put together to be the 'house' band for the regular Unicorn Ceilidhs in Hitchin Town Hall. The band features a lot a familiar face from the local folk scene and has front line of melodeon (Theo), fiddle (Steve) and accordion (Martin) backed up by a rhythm section of acoustic guitar (Alan) and electric bass (Adrian). Their repertoire features some unusual tunes along with a lot of old favourites which combine to get you up and dancing before you know it. Tickets cost just £6 for adults, £3 for concession and accompanied under 12's get in for free. See www.roots66.net/tkc or call 01582-733113/475655 for more details.

9/Nov/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Go on Punk, make my day!

Luton music promoters PDM are going from strength to strength. As well as their regular gig at the Exchange on Sunday (Nov 13) featuring **Drive Like Casey**, Dunstable Battle of the Bands winners **Over*Easy** and punksters **The Dead On Holiday** they're taking over the two music spaces at The Hat Factory on the last Saturday of the month (Nov 22). In the Gig Room they've got top Luton pop punk bands **Pirate Radio** and **Penny Racers Last Journey** with a third to be added in the next day or two. Meanwhile veteran singer / songwriter **Tom Pacheco** has added a Luton date to his UK tour and will be appearing in the basement venue. Tom's songs have been covered by Jefferson Starship, the Band, Rick Danko, Ritchie Havens to mention just a few, with many them charting in the UK and – strangely enough – in Norway. He is one of those artists who never quite makes it into the big media spotlight but is uniformly admired by critics, fellow performers and perceptive music lovers. See www.tompacheco.com for more information about Tom and www.pdmusic.com for more details about the gigs.

Singer and guitarist **David Rovics** along with professional nutter and Albanian football support **Attila The Stockbroker** will be appearing at Redbourn Folk Club tomorrow (Thursday). The evening's entertainment is not for the faint hearted with David performing modern day protest songs with catchy titles like "Who Would Jesus Bomb" and sharp tongued, high energy social surrealist poetry from Atilla, who has been largely inspired by the punk era. The club meets at the Cricketers public house on Redbourn Common and the music starts at 8:30pm with admission at £6. For further information see the web at www.redbournfolkclub.org.uk or ring 01582 452954 or 07850 163241. Booking in advance is advised.

On Friday you can shake a leg to popular local ceilidh band **Laughing Gravy** with caller **Malcolm North** at the next Dunstable Tyre Kickers' Ceilidh. The event takes place at St Mary's Social Club in West Street and is a great family event. Tickets cost just £6 for adults, £3 for concession and accompanied under 12's get in for free. See www.roots66.net/tkc or call 01582-733113/475655 for more details.

Crunch time is approaching for a lot of live music as we approach the official introduction of the new public entertainment licensing law at the end of this month. Even the Daily Telegraph, which is not particularly renowned for its coverage of live music, is starting to take notice. After pointing out that carol singers this Christmas will need to apply for a licence to sing at a shopping centre or railway station the paper goes on to muse that it will be illegal to play folk music in an unlicensed pub, but not to show a live football match to hundreds of fans on a large television screen and go onto ask "Which of these is likely to attract trouble?"

14/Nov/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Them Walker Blues

Over the weekend I was up in Telford at the Association of Festival Organisers (AFO) canvassing for some festival work for my various roots/fusion bands. There were a couple of showcases on the Saturday evening and one of the acts deserves a special mention. Considering the popularity of American guitarist Bob Brozman locally, I was gratified to find that we have a home grown artist who can achieve, or even surpass Bob's acoustic guitar pyrotechnics and very entertaining repartee. **Eddie Walker** hails from Middlesbrough (oop North) and held an audience of Festival organisers and paying public in the palm of his hand throughout his 27 minute set while he played a mix of Mississippi Delta Blues songs and instrumentals, including a lip trumpet solo for one song. Eddie is definitely worth going out of your way to see – maybe the Hat Factory should consider booking him. For more information you can check out the web at www.folkmusic.net/eddiewalker



Closer to home, Andy Miller from local band **Imicus** tells me that they are headlining at the Macmillan Cancer Relief show in The Green Room at The Doctor's Tonic in Welwyn Garden City on Friday (Nov 18). Andy said "Everyone can say that they have been touched by Cancer in some way, whether it be via family or close friends and Imicus are no different. This year alone the band has lost two family members through the disease". He goes on to say "Understandably this charity is very close to our hearts." The band will also be running a coach to the show and anyone interested in supporting them and the charity can find the details on the band's website at www.Imicusband.com or via email from Miller@imicusband.com. Entrance to the show will be £5 or £4 in advance with all proceeds of the door and Imicus merchandise sales going to Macmillan.

Actually, if you can't wait till Eddie plays locally to get a fix of guitar wizardry then you get a dose of contemporary finger style guitar from internationally acclaimed **Pete Smith** and **John Buckley** at the Orange Tree in Norton Rd (Baldock SG7 5AW) tonight (Nov 16). The duo avoids being pigeonholed by smoothly moving between traditional jigs and Django style Hot Club Jazz, swinging through Swing back to Baroque. Chris Rockcliffe from the Buxton Club Acoustic says "If you like acoustic guitar playing at its best these guys are simply phenomenal. For more information about the duo check them out on the web at www.petesmithjohnbuckley.co.uk. The music starts at 8.30pm and you can get more information about the gig from 0845 123 2658, madnanny@questor-cp.co.uk or www.madnanny.co.uk

James from popular local band **The Tempest** tells me that their studio project is expanding with two new rehearsal rooms coming 'on stream' this week to augment their current digital recording facility and guitar and drum lessons for beginners. So any bands, musicians, producers, or tutors who would like to check out the facilities offered by Touch Studios (just off High Street North in Dunstable) should contact James on 07838 22 32 66 or email Jamesingy@yahoo.co.uk

23/Nov/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

The Sky's the limit for Grief Society

Angus from Luton based funk-metal outfit **Grief Society** tells me that they are getting back onto the road for a few pre-Christmas shows. They are going to use the gigs to showcase material from their forthcoming album in cosy, friendly surroundings. The mini-tour kicks off at the Horn in Victoria Street next Wednesday (Nov 30), followed by a gig at Edward's No 8 in Birmingham. You can still buy their last single 'Time Travel' online at www.cdbaby.com/grief3 and the "Universal Misunderstanding" album is on sale at www.cdbaby.com/grief2 or from Amazon. Angus also tells me that one of their tracks is on Linsey Hooper's A-list on SkyTV's Pulse Rated channel (905).



I hear from **OVER*EASY** that they are going down a storm on their "Dirty Up A Tone" tour. They completed the first leg of the hugely successful tour with a gig at the George II in Luton as a special 'thank you' for all their loyal fans. The band, which topped the last Dunstable Battle of the Bands, are promoting their recently released album which features their new line-up playing their special brand of soul influenced power pop. If you missed them at the George then you can catch them next Wednesday (Nov 30) at the Sound in Leicester Square or at The Well in Hightown, Luton on Friday December 9. For more information on the band and free samples from their album; point your web browser at www.overeasymusic.co.uk

Live music can be a great rallying point for bringing people together for a good cause. At the **Imicus** gig I mentioned last week, the sale of band merchandise alone raised over £70 for Macmillan Cancer Relief - this is over and above the money raised from ticket sales (www.imicusband.com). Also the tribute concert for the late **Audio Justice** drummer Lee Haynes raised almost £2,000 for Renal Unit at Lister Hospital (see <http://tinyurl.com/9lc7k> for more details). This makes a mockery of the government's determination to regulate the live music scene to death because of its threat to public order and potential noise pollution problems.

As an example of the chaos in store over the next few months after the new licensing laws come into force on Friday you can't do much better than the next Unicorn Ceilidh in Hitchin. Despite much wrangling, arguing and effort to get an alcohol licence for this month's dance they were unable to jump through all the bureaucratic hoops. So when top ceilidh band **All Blacked Up** appears at Hitchin Town Hall on Friday, you will have to bring your own booze. The bar will be open as usual for the sale of non-alcoholic drinks, crisps etc. and in all other respects the evening will be the same as normal. Doors open at 7.30pm and tickets are £7.50 for adults and £4 for children under 14. You can get tickets on the door or in advance by calling 01582 733113 / 724261. For more information, visit www.unicornceilidhs.org.uk

30/Nov/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Rocking the Foundations

If you missed **The Foundations** playing at the Cali-R gig last weekend then you can get a second bite at the cherry when they play down the road at the Horn in St Albans next Friday (Dec 9). This sixties soul band had a string of hits with classics like “Build me up Buttercup” and “In The Bad Bad Old Days” amongst others and have become closely associated with the California Ballroom. In fact lead singer Clem Curtis helped out with the official launch of a Dunstable street sign in memory of the famous venue earlier this year. It’s amazing to think that at one time Dunstable had the largest entertainment venue in the Southeast of England, and now we don’t have any public venues at all!

On Friday The Foundations will be performing all their greatest hits along with many soul and Rhythm and Blues classics. The support act for the gig will be North London band **The Score** who will presenting a stripped down acoustic set which will kick off at 9pm with the main act hitting the stage at around 10pm. Tickets can be booked in advance by calling 01727 844627 on online via Ticketweb (www.ticketweb.co.uk). You can also buy tickets in person from the Horn (Victoria St, St Albans) but as the gig is likely to be sold out you’ll want to do this as soon as possible. You can also get details of this and other gigs from the venue website at www.thehorn.co.uk

The **Imperial Vipers** tell me that their new single 'Promised Land' will be available for download from this week with a limited edition etched vinyl version being available from Monday (Dec 5). The band has just finished a punishing 47 date nationwide tour with the final gig being at the Phoenix down in Plymouth last Saturday. The Vipers - who started out in Dunstable – have been receiving a lot of press recently with their big stadium rock sound being featured on the cover mount discs of Classic Rock and Zero Magazine. All this bodes well for them hitting the big time in 2006. Check out their website at www.imperialvipers.com for more information and sound file downloads.

While we’re talking about single releases, local band **Fruition** is launching their new single “Ticking Away” at Club 85 in Hitchin on Saturday (Dec 3). They say that it will be available from all good record shops and online from Monday (Dec 5) but you will be able to pick up advance copies at the Launch Party. The band was recently featured by BBC Three Counties Radio as part of the coverage of the Rhythms of the World Festival and you can hear a live version of the new single on the BBC 3CR website. Check out the **Fruition** website (www.fruitionhq.co.uk) for more details and a link.

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>.