

### 3/May/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

#### The Brian Heywood Column

##### *The Queen of May*

This weekend you can get a chance to see one of the country's top Queen Tribute bands when **GaGa** plays in Bedfordshire. Billed as 'The ultimate tribute to Queen' they have the blessing of Queen's guitarist, Brian May, who asked for a copy of their first CD entitled 'A Tribute to Queen'. He later commented that he thought **GaGa** were "excellent and stylish musicians", so you can't say fairer than that. Though they are based up north in Merseyside, they are actually no strangers to the area as they have been regularly packing out the Corn Exchange in Bedford for the last twelve years. What really impresses me about the band is that they concentrate on the music rather than trying to create a theatrical experience. Chatting to drummer and founder member Graham Patrick he said it arises from the fact that they are all 'Queen freaks'. In fact the band started back 1989 as a more general 'covers' band covering a variety of different bands' songs and after being known briefly as 'Catch the Wave', they worked for a couple of years under the name 'Wanted'.



The transition to a Queen tribute was actually suggested by the trio's growing band of fans who suggested that they concentrate on the music of their idols. So this is the 'real deal', the songs from one of the UK's most famous mega-bands by professionals who know the music from the inside out. To be honest when I found out the band was only a three piece I was a bit sceptical so I put drummer Graham on the spot and asked him if the band relied on backing tapes. He told me that they did use some pre-recorded backing but this was only to provide the keyboard parts, the rest of the programme is 'live' - real music made by real musicians. In fact the band has tried over the years to find a musician to fill the keyboard slot, without any luck, so they've settled on an invisible fourth member until the right person comes along. On Friday (May 5) you may be able to see them at the Library Theatre in Luton (01582 547474), however this is very likely to be sold out by the time you read this, however it's always worth checking for returns. On Saturday (May 6) they take the stage at the Corn Exchange in Bedford (01234 269519) which has a lot more space so tickets should still be available. To find out more about **GaGa** you can check out their website at [www.gagaonline.co.uk](http://www.gagaonline.co.uk).

If you have a more 'metallic' taste in music then you can see **Sadako**, a five piece metal band from just down the road in St Albans, at the Luton University Students' Union on Saturday (May 6). The band play metalcore ranging in style from the late 90's to screamo and discord metal. The other acts on the bill are hardcore outfits **Her Words Kill**, **Prize Fight Winner**, **Your Demise** and **Forever Falling**. The doors open at 7pm and entry is £5 which works out a mere quid a band (age: 14+). For more details and links to the bands' websites check out DTA Promotions at [www.dtapromo.co.uk](http://www.dtapromo.co.uk).

## 10/May/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Imicus back on track*

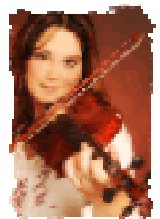


Andy from local melodic metal band **Imicus** tells me that they are gigging again after a short break to write and record new material. They're starting off with a bang when they headline at the Luton University Union on Saturday night (May 13) at which they plan to debut the new songs. This gig is the band's first return to Luton since

the packed out February show at the same venue and the band plan to re-launch their website to celebrate the return to local music scene. They've been pretty busy while they've been under cover; as well as recording tracks for a follow-up to last year's "Resolution" album they have been negotiating a management deal with Pam Cooper-Thorne of Amalgamation Development. Pam has a wealth of industry experience including working with current Warner artists "Battle". Andy tells me that they are currently putting the final touches on some plans with Amalgamation which should be announced over the coming weeks. For more information you can check out [www.Imicusband.com](http://www.Imicusband.com) or [myspace.com/Imicus](http://myspace.com/Imicus).

Saturday's gig is one of the DTA Promotions series of events that bring metal bands from all over to play at the Luton University. Supporting **Imicus** on the night will be local bands **Bilker**, **Fell City Girl** and **Via Negativa**. Also on the bill are **Endstand** who have come all the way from Finland to pedal their Scandinavian metal. Incidentally, DTA are looking for cool people that wish to help support the local scene by distributing flyers, putting up posters & directing people to the DTA website. So if you are up to a challenge and wish to join the DTA street team then send your name, age and postal address to [info@dtapromo.co.uk](mailto:info@dtapromo.co.uk). Back to Saturday night; the event is open to anyone 14 or over so you will need ID if you want to buy alcohol. Doors open at 7pm and it costs £5 to get in, see [www.dtapromo.co.uk](http://www.dtapromo.co.uk) to download a flyer.

This month's Tyre Kickers' Ceilidh takes place at St Mary's Social Club in West Street Dunstable on Friday (May 12) and features the fabulous **Cat Kelly** calling with music from **MoonDance**. Cat is a rising star on the national e-ceilidh circuit and is equally confident calling for experienced ceilidh dancers or complete beginners. She has called with a variety of well-known bands such as Hekety, The Committee Band, Stömp, The Bismarcks and the Climax Ceilidh Band and has called at many of the major ceilidh series, including Knees Up Cecil Sharp, Reeling in Ealing, and Meltdown Ceilidhs, as well as at Broadstairs and Towersey festivals. **MoonDance** is a local folk/rock ceilidh and barn dance band and has been a regular performer at the Dunstable Folk and Dance festival over the last six years, hosting the opening ceilidh. The band's sound ranges from full-on rocking jigs and reels led by keyboards, saxophone and electric guitar to more jazz and folk influenced music. The doors open at 8pm and tickets cost £6 or £3 for concessions with accompanied children (under 12) getting in free. For more information email [tkc@roots66.net](mailto:tkc@roots66.net), call 01582-475655 or check out [www.roots66.net/tkc](http://www.roots66.net/tkc).



## 17/May/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Stencil in Saturday night at the Greyhound*



On Saturday night (May 20) you can catch the debut gig of a new covers band called **Stencil** at the Greyhound in High St South, Dunstable. I don't normally put my musical activities at the head of the column, but I know that a lot of Dunstable people know Rick Christian from his regular appearances at the Dunstable Folk and Dance Festival. In fact Rick has hosted all but one of these, entertaining the crowd during the band changeovers and generally making sure that the event runs smoothly. Anyway, to cut to the chase; Rick and I, along with drummer Donna Whitlock and bass player Brian Jenking have gotten together for **Stencil** to play the hits of the 50's, 60's and 70's. The repertoire is an eclectic mix of pop, rock and touch of country, from both sides of the Atlantic and the songs range from Arlo Guthrie to The Eagles, Eric Clapton to the Beatles with loads of musical highways and byways in between. Rick has just been gigging over in the Southern parts of the USA so expect him to have a

good tan. The music starts at 9pm and entry is free. For more information about **Stencil** you can check them out on the web at [www.stencil.org.uk](http://www.stencil.org.uk).

Local band **The Suspects** have got a busy week ahead of them with another gig at Eddie's Bar tomorrow night (Thursday) and a slot in the UK Unsigned Bands Competition, St Georges Theatre in Luton on Monday (May 22). The band play a mix of covers and original material and have been getting themselves quite a reputation in a relatively short time. Future fixtures include a possible gig at the Musik 4U festival which is held in Milton Keynes with an anticipated 10,000 people attending and a Battle of the Bands slot at the Horn down in St Albans next month. Bass player Stephen Lock tells me; "We're really pleased about performing at the Horn and really want a big crowd to get behind us for the Battle of the Bands night on the 13th June."

Stephen goes on to say that their next big target is to break into the London gig circuit and that so far they've been getting good feedback and are awaiting confirmation of dates.



You can now buy the **Phonic Rapture** album "Dirty Dreams of the Filthy Rich" (cat. no. LLCD009) from Luton's Latent Lemon Records for £7.99 (including postage and packing). Tracks include; Stronger, Filthy, Diluted, Till The End, Run Like Hell, Dreaming Of September, Jackknife, Long Way Home, One Life's Breath and Wake Up. UK Music search has described the CD as "good old fashioned rock music; big crunching riffs, pounding drums, squealing guitar solos and growling vocals all the way" and the band; "an in-your-face rock outfit, Phonic Rapture are untouchable." If you want to see the band live then you can catch them at the Luton Student Union on Saturday (May 20) along with **Drop The Holiday Theme, The Panic, Takota** and **Firstborn**.

## 24/May/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *All that Jazz*



Saxophonist **Butch Thomas** is going underground with his quartet at the Hat Factory in Bute St, Luton tomorrow night (Thursday). Butch has covered a lot of ground in the Jazz world since he graduated from Webster University in 1983 and has played with some of the world's top jazz and pop performers. In fact his first regular gig was playing Tenor Sax with the seminal bass player Jaco Pastorius, the guy who essentially invented the modern fretless bass. After a four year stint which included two albums, Butch moved on, becoming one of the most in-demand session Sax players of the 1990's. The list of artists he's worked with looks like a who's who of the pop and rock world. Recording and touring with Sting, tours with Lenny Kravitz, The Temptations, Elton John, Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and many more. He also kept in touch with Jazz roots playing with the likes of Lester Bowie, Jack McDuff and others.

Now resident in the UK, Butch continues to play with local Jazzers Julian Joseph, Sax Appeal, the BBC Radio Orchestra and Pete Oxley's New Noakes Internationals. Now, with a record deal recently signed and sealed, he's striking out on his own with his own band. Support for the night will be supplied by the Hat jazz Trio who are the 'House band' at the Jazz jam nights. Doors open 8:00pm and tickets are £10, or £8.00 for concessions and advanced bookings with students with an NUS card get in for £6.00. Call the Box on 01582 878100 for more information or to buy tickets. This gig is being promoted as part of the Focus on Jazz Programme that kicked off at the end of 2004 to promote the local Jazz scene and build on the local expertise of the likes of 33 Records and Paul Jolly. They also organise weekly the weekly Jazz Jam on Sundays, Jazz in the Basement and other Jazz related activities.

Tomorrow night also sees **Tetra'tum** appearing down at the Cork and Bull in Cumberland St, Luton. The band mixes rock, punk and blues originals together with a sprinkling of covers. The four piece band is fronted by vocalist and lyricist **Zeph** on vocals, whose sultry demeanour hides a dark secret which I'm not at liberty to divulge (you'll have to go to the gig and ask her!). The rest of the band comprises of **Didge** on guitar and didgeridoo, scouser **Steve-G** on bass and **Slayer Stevie-B** on drums. The music starts at 8:30 and entry is free, see [www.tetratum.com](http://www.tetratum.com) for more information, sound and video clips.



Pam Cooper-Thorne from Amalgamation Development tells me that **Jenny Tudor** and her Luton based band **Reverie** ([www.reverieuk.com](http://www.reverieuk.com)) will be joining the artist development company's roster. This means that they will be promoting two locally based bands, the other one being **Imicus** ([www.imicusband.com](http://www.imicusband.com)). She goes on to say that the whole thing couldn't have happened without the help of Luton based record producer **Justin Saban** from Latent Lemon Recordings ([www.latentlemon.co.uk](http://www.latentlemon.co.uk)).

## 31/May/2006 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Terry Cannons to Success*



Local singer / songwriter **Terry Emm** is playing an interesting 'left field' gig just up the M1 at The Cannon in Newport Pagnell on Friday (June 2). Terry, who goes under the stage name or '**Emm**', is an 18 year old, singer / songwriter who taps into his experience of growing up in a small village in the depths of Bedfordshire. His intimate, hypnotic acoustic songs are inspired by the ever changing rural landscapes and the isolation of being slightly detached from the rest of the world. Last time I spoke to him he was working on his first full album with Jamie Masters at West Street Studios in Buckingham.

Friday's gig is headlined by **Al Duvall** who is a beer brewer from Brooklyn, New York who also plays a catchy mix of folk, ragtime and sea shanty style songs in a gothic comedy style ([www.alduvall.com](http://www.alduvall.com)). Also on the bill is **Bela Emerson** who creates freeform electronic sound vistas using a heavily processed 'cello and a psychedelic female folk duo from Manchester called **Cooper-Jones**. The doors open at 7:30pm and entry is £3, for more information about the venue see [www.cannonlive.org.uk](http://www.cannonlive.org.uk).

On Saturday (June 3) you can tap into the metal and neo-punk scene at the DTA Promotions show at the University of Luton Student Union. On the bill are **Anemic** who pedal a variety of riotous rock/metal, **Locus Of Control**, **Hekz**, **Subversion** and **The Smoking Hearts** who play punk 'n' roll music, fusing hardcore with garage. According to their blurb they achieve the type of vibe that made AC/DC so contagious along with elements of punk rock and a rock 'n' roll attitude. Sound cool if they can deliver. To find out it will cost £5 on the door and the whole shebang kicks off at 7pm. See [www.dtapromo.co.uk](http://www.dtapromo.co.uk) for more details.

Stephen from local band **The Suspects** tells me that following the mention of the band in this column a couple of weeks ago that Esquires in Bedford have asked the band to support **Vincent Vincent** and **The Villians** on Sunday (June 4). He tells me; "We're really excited about this as Esquires is the type of venue we're keen to be playing at", going on to say that they are "following the likes of Coldplay, The Libertines, Franz Ferdinand". Good luck guys and keep up the good work.

Tomorrow (Thursday) you can hear **Nemo** playing the Hat Factory in Bute St, Luton and supported by **Joe Woodham**. They tell me that this is their first official gig with the new bigger **Nemo** sound, adding a drummer and second guitarist. I've seen them do a couple of spots at the Headstart Jam Nights so can recommend the new, more powerful setup. Doors open at 8pm and you can find out more at [www.nemo-music.com](http://www.nemo-music.com).

Finally, on Friday (June 2) my band **Stencil** will be playing hits from the 50's, 60's and 70's over at The Goat which is at the Hemel end of the High St in Berkhamsted. The music starts at 8:30pm and entry is free. For more information about **Stencil** see [www.stencil.org.uk](http://www.stencil.org.uk).

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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](mailto:info@lutonscene.com). A searchable archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>.

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