

## 6/Aug/2008 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Loz Jones on XFM*

Loz Jones tells me that XFM Radio is supporting unsigned talent on their website and that you can visit his band XFM page at [www.xfmuploaded.co.uk/lozjones](http://www.xfmuploaded.co.uk/lozjones). The way it works is that the more visits a page gets the more airplay the band's tracks get. Alternatively, you can catch them live on Saturday at the Dry Bar in London, just by Barbican Station. I've played down there with The Quirky and it's a nice little venue, with a laid back atmosphere and a chance to get up close and personal with the band. The band's new album - 'Spoiling It For Everyone' – is due out on September 29 and anyone pre-ordering the CD will get two free tickets to the launch party at the Hat Factory on Friday October 10, see the website ([www.lozjones.com](http://www.lozjones.com)) for full details.



I made a mistake last week when I mentioned tomorrow's Countiesound2 gig at the Hat Factory, which will be featuring local bands **Shapes**, **The Raid**, **Kilto Take** and **Pirate Radio**. It is a PDM gig, not DTA, as I put in last week's column. Both these promoters are tireless supporters of live music in the area and should be the first port of call when you're looking to find local live music. You can find out about the gigs by going to their respective websites at [www.pdmmusic.com](http://www.pdmmusic.com) (PDM) and [www.dtamusic.co.uk](http://www.dtamusic.co.uk) (DTA). You can also download flyers, which get you into the gigs cheaper so you know it makes sense. The gig tomorrow is a collaboration between PDM and "BBC Introducing..." team, the BBC Three Counties radio programme that is fronted by **Gareth Lloyd** and **Kelly Betts** and highlights the best new local musical talent.

Later on in the month (Aug 16) they are hosting a massive gig at St George's Square in Luton featuring: **The Friday Nights**, **Amy Lee & the Integrals**, **Pirate Radio**, **Terrapin Trainstation**, **The October Game**, **Critical Path**, **The Raid**, **Fruition**, **The Ruby Shoes**, **Shapes**, **Imperial Vipers** and **The Runners**. Anyway, this radio show is essential listening if you want to hear what's happening on the local music scene. Check it out live on Fridays (BBC Three Counties at 7pm) or time shift using the 'Listen Again' option on the BBC website ([www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/introducing](http://www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/introducing)).

Some local band news; Mike from the **Grapevine Blues Band** tells me that the band's sax player – Caz – has decided to leave the band due to family reasons. He goes on to say that they are looking for a keyboard player, so if you know anybody suitable, then get them to contact Mike on 07884-376970. You can find out more about the band from their website ([www.grapevineblues.com](http://www.grapevineblues.com)) or via the MySpace page ([www.myspace.com/grapevinebluesband](http://www.myspace.com/grapevinebluesband)).

Also, local funk / punk / blues outfit **Personal Justice** are looking for a new bassist and guitarist. They say, "If you play and enjoy your music, message us and let's see what you can do! One jam, one voice". For more details about the band, see their MySpace page - [www.myspace.com/personaljustice](http://www.myspace.com/personaljustice).

## 13/Aug/2008 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Vipers and Friends Rock Luton*

Saturday sees the big Summer live music spectacular at St George's Square in Luton when no less than ten unsigned local bands hit the stage. The event – hosted by the “BBC Introducing...” team from BBC Three Counties Radio - makes a welcome return after last year's successful outing with an even bigger day of unsigned music from across Beds, Herts and Bucks. Top of the bill (at 4pm) are **The Imperial Vipers**, a band that kicked off back in early 2003. Five years down the road (and on it!) the band is getting into its stride with a sound described as somewhere between Soundgarden and the Clash. They've toured with the legendary Hanoi Rocks and can name Iron Maiden front man, Bruce Dickinson, as a fan as well as having topped the Sun Newspaper's prestigious on-line 'Battle of the Bands'.

In fact Kerrang Magazine said that they were a “...kicking rock n roll band that have the potential to cause serious structural damage” and they're now working on their second album – “The Sickness” - with legendary producer Steve Power (Robbie Williams, Feeder, Charlatans, Blur, Bon Jovi) for Eminence Records. The Sickness comes out on October 6 and the new single ‘Check This’ hitting the street on September 15, see [www.imperial-vipers.com](http://www.imperial-vipers.com) or [www.myspace.com/imperialvipers](http://www.myspace.com/imperialvipers) for more details.



The rest of Saturday's line-up looks like a local music hall of fame with appearances from; **The Friday Nights, Amy Lee & the Integrals, Pirate Radio, Terrapin Trainstation, The October Game, Critical Path, Fruition, The Ruby Shoes and Shapes**. I'm sure that Gareth and Kelly will tell you all about it on Friday's “BBC Introducing...” show on Three Counties' Radio at 7pm on their webpage ([www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/introducing](http://www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/introducing)).

Make sure you get down there if you want to hear best local talent in one place (and it's free!).

I'm down at Broadstairs festival all this week playing with **MoonDance** and **enQ** at various times over the week. This is a great town based festival that has been going over forty years and sees a huge range of events all around the town - from the top names appearing at the Concert marquee and the Pavilion to the inexperienced amateurs getting together in impromptu sessions and workshops. Although billed as a ‘folk’ festival, there is a wide range of music styles ranging from country, through celtic to straight rock ‘n’ roll. The streets also come alive with Morris dancers; Appalachian clog dancers, rapper sword dancers and many others demonstrate their skills and provide a colourful backdrop.

This would be a great model for Dunstable and South Beds District Councils to check out if they want to develop the Dunstable Festival. The inclusive mix of genres and events – many of which are free – provide a cultural influx for local residents as well drawing in tourists from all over the country, boosting local business. And the best bit is that it doesn't cost the rate payers a single penny as the whole shebang is run by an independent organization – a registered charity – that funds everything by a combination of ticket income, arts grants, commercial sponsorship, individual donations and other fund-raising activities.

## 20/Aug/2008 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Life and Times of Bedfordshire at Towersey Festival*

It's Towersey Festival this weekend and local duo **Barry Goodman** and **Graham Meek** will be performing "Treasures of the Heartland" at the Village Hall on Saturday (3pm). This show is about the people, industries and customs of Bedfordshire, told in song, story and pictures. This is a rare opportunity to see the show at a major British festival. **Life & Times** will also be appearing at the Festival Folk Club at noon on Monday together with the Askew Sisters, Doug Eunson and Sarah Matthews, and Bob and Gill Berry. See [www.towerseyfestival.com](http://www.towerseyfestival.com) for more information about the festival. If you can't make the festival then you can also hear Barry and Graham perform - together with Redbornstoke Morris - at the Woodworks Festival at Marston Vale Forest Centre, Marston Moretaine (near Bedford) on Sunday fortnight (September 7). See [www.marstonvale.org/woodworks](http://www.marstonvale.org/woodworks) for details.



I hear from Colin Anderson that The Wheatsheaf pub in Dunstable is under new management and starting up live music again. The High Street North based venue was featuring regular live gigs until the end of last year - mainly rock and pop covers. Over the years, the pub has seen bands such as; **Marillion**, **The Hamsters**, **John Otway**, as well as most of the members of **Hawkwind**. On Friday you can catch **The Donkeys**, a four-piece rock covers band from Essex featuring songs by AC/DC, Led Zeppelin, Metallica, Free, Bad Company and Iron Maiden. According to the band's Lemonrock web page ([www.lemonrock.com/thedonkeys](http://www.lemonrock.com/thedonkeys)), the band has been going for over fifteen years and the band is; **Smurf** on lead vocals, **Scott Lomas** on bass, **John Hoare** on lead guitar and **Jim Gardener** on drums.

As of this Monday, Bedfordshire based band **The October Game** will be making their track 'Concrete (When we were Invincible)' available as a free download from their website - [www.theoctobergame.com](http://www.theoctobergame.com). The band tells me that the freebie is a little gift from to say "thank you" to their fans for their support. The track was featured on Tom Robinson's BBC 6 radio show on Monday, apparently Tom phoned the band personally to let them know that the track would be included in his show and how much he liked the track. If you missed the show, you can listen to it again at [www.bbc.co.uk/6music/shows/tom\\_robinsons\\_introducing](http://www.bbc.co.uk/6music/shows/tom_robinsons_introducing) or on his podcast, which you can download from the site after the show has aired. If you want to catch the band live you can see them at the George II in Bute St, Luton on Friday.

I've come across an interesting new website which aims to build an archive of every gig, by any band, artist or performer that's ever happened – a pretty mammoth task. The site is [www.gigsremembered.com](http://www.gigsremembered.com) and aims to be a kind of cross between Friends Reunited and Wikipedia for live music and includes photos, videos, set lists and reviews of the event contributed by both bands and fans. You can see an example of a page at <http://tinyurl.com/55r23c> - MoonDance at Broadstairs Festival.

## 27/Aug/2008 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

### The Brian Heywood Column

#### *Silver Sided Success*

Local rockers **Silver Sided** have made it through to the Semi Finals of the Surface Unsigned Competition and are heading to the Regional Final that takes place at The Dome in Tufnell Park on Saturday. At the time of writing, they are also in the top spot of the Surface Festival's national UK Chart. According to one reviewer, the four-piece outfit's performances are "Oozing charisma, front man Mark Shea led the way through meticulous changes, aggressive, engrossing intros and all too catchy choruses."



The band's mix of rock and pop punk certainly seems to be winning them fans and, perhaps more importantly, keeping them dancing. As another reviewer puts it; "the music seems to carry some kind of infectious rhythmic virus, that slowly but surely, conquers and controls the nervous system until the victim cannot help themselves but dance." Saturday's gig takes place at 178 Junction Road, Tufnell Park, London, and you can get tickets from the band's website at [www.silversided.com](http://www.silversided.com).

On Friday, you can catch **Gekko**, **The Ruby Shoes** and **Paramanza** at The Music Box, which takes place at The Horn, Victoria Street, St Albans – which recently won the UK's "Music Pub of the Year" award. The doors open at 8pm and it costs £5 to get in, check out [www.thehorn.co.uk](http://www.thehorn.co.uk) for more information. Bands interested in playing at The Horn should contact Hansi on 01727 853143.

Tomorrow night you can hear **Moths** (Alternative / Indie / Other), **Footsteps and Voices** (Psychedelic / Pop / Rock) along with an acoustic set from **Paul Harley-Rose** at The Hat Factory in Bute St, Luton. This PDM event takes place in the Hat Factory's basement performance area, so there are no age restrictions. Doors open at 8pm and admission is £3 in advance from the box office (01582 878101), with a flyer, or £4 on the door without a flyer. You can download a flyer from the PDM website ([www.pdmusic.com](http://www.pdmusic.com)).

You can also catch singer / songwriter **Aisling Austin** doing an acoustic set over at the George II (Bute St, Luton) tomorrow night. Aisling was the rhythm guitarist with the Dunstable based **Martha's Fury** and has been performing her own songs solo since the band split due to artistic differences. Her songs tend to be introspective and provide a neo-hippy, 'left field' interpretation of life in modern society. So if you are looking for a laid-back end to the week then check her out ([www.myspace.com/ashflashmeister](http://www.myspace.com/ashflashmeister)).

I hear from guitarist Perry Gallagher that the popular London indie band the **Honey Fits** has had to pull out of their gig at the New Greyhound in Dunstable on Saturday due to a family crisis of one of the band members. The band has a huge following in London and has played some amazing venues such as Camden Underworld, Water Rats and Barfly and has a gig lined up at the Borderline in October. Keep an eye on their MySpace page ([www.myspace.com/honeyfitsmusic](http://www.myspace.com/honeyfitsmusic)) to see when the Dunstable gig is going to be rescheduled.

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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> and on MySpace at [lutonscene](http://lutonscene.com).