

6/May/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

The Band Battles Heat Up...

The third round of the Dunstable Battle of the Bands was a real stonker with a large crowd turning up to see the six bands vying for a place in the next round. It was a hard fought heat and the bands that made it through were; **In Remission** with a heavier sound supported by a stage show bursting with movement and energy, **Flexy Boys** who, with overtones of Nirvana, delivered a great show and **Fabulous Weapon** who pulled out all the stops with their good time rock and roll that got the crowds moving.



The next heat will be at The Nags Head tomorrow night (Thursday) and will feature **Her : Enemy** (herenemy), **Side of the Sky** (sideofthesky) and **Toxins** (toxinsuk). The next heat is next Thursday (May 14) back at Bar Chameleon with an eclectic mix of genres from **God of Small Things**, jazz / soul / funk from **Esta B Daley**(estabdaley), **Mista : Kite** (mistakiteband), **Vanadium** (hatual) and **White Water** (whitewatermusic). As usual, I have put the MySpace ID of the bands in brackets after the name so you can check out the music online. The music starts at 8pm and entry is free.

According to the competitions promoter, Ryan Majchrowski of the Majick Music Group, the competition is going from strength to strength the internationally renowned Marshall Amplification endorsing the competition. As Ryan points out; “live music is just what Dunstable needs” to bring people back into Dunstable and, as research has shown, live music crowds cause far less trouble than clubbing and live sports TV crowds so everybody should welcome this transfusion of life back into the failing town centre. You can keep up-to-date with the latest news on the web at www.dunstablebob.co.uk.

Looking forward, next Friday (May 15) there will be a benefit gig at the George 2nd pub (Bute St, Luton) in aid of the “Love Music, Hate Racism” campaign (LMHR). The gig features the amazing **Joe Driscoll** from New York, **Pirate Radio**, **Lester Allen**, **The Janet Street Preachers**, **The Quirky** followed by Drum and Bass DJ sets continuing late into the night. Joe has been creating waves on both sides of the Atlantic with his revolutionary take on music fusing hip-hop, reggae, soul, folk and rock to create a completely original and unique sound. If you don't believe me, check out the YouTube videos on his website (www.joedriscoll.net). Moreover, it's all done without the aid of a safety net, utilizing heavy vocal percussion, an array of instruments, a loop pedal, and a lot of imagination.

The gig is being organised by the prominent Luton based promoter PDM Music who are working with a combination of local unions and political groups to put on a series of events in Luton featuring local bands and LMHR guests from further afield. These are leading up to a LMHR show in St George's Square, Luton next summer. The gig on Friday is an 18+ event and entry is free with a BBQ from 7pm and the bands kicking off at 8pm.

13/May/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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Dunstable Fun Day Sunday

Sunday sees the Bar Chameleon in Dunstable hosting “Pasque The Mic”, a full day of showcases in aid of the Pasque Hospice featuring local artists and singers. The line up looks pretty interesting with a mix of performers ranging from up-and-coming local artists like **Johnny Fever**, **Sarah Doe** and **Aisling Austin** to acts who have already made a mark like Ed from **Bowfinger** and the **Imperial Vipers** taking a break from their high profile gigs to do an acoustic set. The whole thing kicks off at noon and runs till late with entry for the event only £2 with all proceeds going to The Pasque Charity (Registered Charity No. 1035089). Under 18's are welcome before 8pm (ID might be requested to order drinks).



Meanwhile, down the road at the White Swan in High Street South, Declan Duggan will be celebrating 20 years as publican. As part of the celebrations, **The Hoedown Band** will be playing a mix of new country and celtic numbers for laid-back evening of songs and tunes. The band features lead singer **Martyna Hodges** who has been described by Richard Allinson (BBC Radio 2) as having “An incredible voice that will take you to places you'll want to visit again and again”. The band also features myself on electric guitar and vocals, and **Sian Phillips** on fiddle, **Tom Fairbairn** on bass and **Mike Vishnic** on drums (entry is free).

The Dunstable Battle of the Bands is back at Bar Chameleon tomorrow with an eclectic mix of genres. The band line-up features jazz / soul / funk from **Esta B Daley** (myspace.com/estabdaley), alternative indie rock of **God of Small Things** (myspace.com/godofsmallthingsuk), rock, funk and blues from **Mista : Kite** (myspace.com/mistakiteband), **Vanadium's** heavy rock (myspace.com/hatual) and indie rock from **White Water** (myspace.com/whitewatermusic). The music starts at 8pm and entry is free. The bands who when through from the last round were **The Toxins** and **Liliths Army**.

On Friday the amazing beatboxer/looper **Joe Driscoll** from New York will be appearing at the George 2nd pub (Bute St, Luton) at a benefit gig at the in aid of the “Love Music, Hate Racism” campaign (LMHR). Also appearing are **Pirate Radio**, **Lester Allen**, **The Janet Street Preachers** and **The Quirky**. The gig on Friday is an 18+ event and entry is free with a BBQ from 7pm and the bands kicking off at 8pm. See www.LutonLMHT.com or www.pdmmusic.com for more details.

A real problem for younger music fans (and bands!) is the lack of venues that they can get into. The good news is that The Horn in St Albans (just by the mainline station) is starting a new series of 14+ gigs on Sunday afternoons. It will feature younger local bands who can't normally perform at the venue, with the idea of starting to bring in touring bands. The first one is on Sunday from 1pm until 5pm with **Late Day Breakers** plus **Room94**, **The Jetsons**, **Lukobe** and **Legal Aspects** and entry is only £3. Bands that want to play at these events can get in touch with Hansi on 01727 844627 or email info@thehorn.co.uk

20/May/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Forbidden Planet Luton...

Left field, electro acoustic punksters **The Knockouts** are playing over at the Hat Factory next Thursday (May 28) as part of the B:Fest Arts Festival along with a little help from the rockabilly punk of **Black Time**. The B:Fest Luton Arts Festival is back for a second year in 2009 after a very successful pilot last year and is dedicated to showcasing the artistic talent that is thriving in the town and generally giving an opportunity for all sorts of artists to demonstrate their creativity. Thursday's event is billed as a multimedia music extravaganza and will have a science fiction theme, which given the nature of the headline band, seems entirely appropriate. Presented by PDM Music as part of their Gig Room series entry is £4 on the door or £3 in advance and you can get more information from the Hat Factory Box Office on 01582 878100 or from www.pdmmusic.com.



NEW YORK'S JOE DRISCOLL
(GUITARIST/BEATBOXER/MC)
PIRATE RADIO LESTER ALLEN
THE QUIRKY
THE JANET STREET
PREACHERS
+ drum n'
bass with
dj a.n.c after
the bands!!
FREE ENTRY!!
Fri 15th May, 8pm - late
George II Pub, 70 Bute St
Luton, LU1 2EY

While on the topic of PDM, those who were at the George 2nd Pub in Bute St for the Love Music, Hate Racism (LMHR) gig to see Joe Discoll were disappointed as he pulled out at the last minute, apparently due to ill health. However, it was a cracking night regardless with great solo performances from Dan Collins from **Pirate Radio** and Dave of the **Janet Street Preachers**, a kicking set from **The Quirky** and with **Lester Allen** finishing the night off in fine style. The Luton LMHR groups thought that the gig was a great success and Paul from PDM thanks both the bands and the audience for putting up with the technical hitches during the evening. The next fundraising event for LMHR will be at the Hat Factory on July 9 and will feature **The Assault**, **The Van Cleef**, **The Adenoids** and **Vacant State**.

Hitchin's Club 85, which is the only dedicated live music venue in the Mid Herts area, has a full programme this weekend with gigs on Friday and Saturday. First off, you can get your weekend off to a funky start with some melodic heavy funk from the **Liquid Metal Men** supported by **Hooverhead** (punk ska rock), **Blue Root Zoots** (hardcore funk rock) and **Monk Phish** (psychedelic funk rock). Tickets are £4 (£3 with flyer) and it is a 16+ gig. On Saturday Rot 'n' Roll presents a night of hardcore metal featuring **Many Things Untold**, **Evita**, **Heart In Hand**, **Ioneyes** and **The Rise Of Sirin**.

Club 85 is a not-for-profit organisation with the aim of supporting all local bands as well as introducing quality touring and out-of-town acts into the local scene. This policy of mixing up local and national acts is a 'good thing' for everyone, as it not only exposes the local music community to the current 'zeitgeist' of the scene but supports the wider scene, helping to ensure that local bands have somewhere to progress to once they've outgrown the local scene. The doors open at 7.45pm for both gigs and you can get more information from www.club-85.co.uk.

27/May/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

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One Hundred Not Out!

You can hear some great country influenced music from singer / songwriter **Carrie Rodriguez** and her trio when they play over at the Tingewick Village Hall on Friday week (June 5). Carrie is over here promoting the European release of her second album "She Ain't Me", which is the follow-up to her critically acclaimed first release "Seven Angels on a Bicycle". Hans Holzen (guitars) and Javier Vercher (keyboards, percussion, sax) will help out Carrie, who is a classically trained violinist branching out in new directions. This event is the 100th gig of the Empty Rooms series of concerts, and according to promoter Mike Trotman, "It seems appropriate that Carrie should be our main act on this occasion" since she one of the first acts, with Chip Taylor, booked back at the start of the series.



The support act on the night will be from local singer / songwriter **Linda Watkins** with help from bass player **Godfrey Yeomans**. Linda has appeared at Cambridge Folk and numerous other festivals and also has a new album "Emily's Rainbow" which has garnered local radio airplay. This policy of using local artistes to support international touring acts is a great way for promoters to encourage the local music scene; I wish more venues did the same. Tickets are £12 in advance and £14 on the door which opens at 8.00 p.m. For more information, email enquiries@empty-rooms.com or check out them out on the web www.empty-rooms.com.

Ryan from the Dunstable Battle of the Bands tells me that the last heat at the Bar Chameleon had an impressive turnout with a wide range of styles from jazz and funk to acoustic punk. The heat's winners were **God of Small Things** (myspace.com/godofsmallthingsuk) and **Gertrude** (myspace.com/gertrudepunk). By the time you read this the last of the first round heats will have taken place at the New Greyhound. Round two will see four bands in each heat, of which there will be four; 28th May The Four Kings, 4th of June The Nags Head, 11th June Bar C, 25th June Bar Chameleon.

Friday sees the next Unicorn Ceilidh in Hitchin featuring **The Aardvark Ceilidh Band** with Pete Grasby calling. The band have been described as "one of the most energetic and exciting bands on the English barn-dance circuit" and feature a folk / rock line-up of guitar, bass and drums, lead by melodeon. Doors open at 7.30pm and it costs £8 for adults, £4 for children under 14, £5 for concessions and £20 for a family ticket (2 adults and up to 3 children). Tickets are available on the door, or in advance from 01582 733113 / 724261 or www.unicornceilidhs.org.uk. Unicorn Ceilidhs take place at Hitchin Town Hall (Brand Street, Hitchin).

If you like celtic music, then check out Jim Carway's new Irish Music radio slot on Diverse FM (102.8), the community station covering the Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis area. The show hits the airways every Tuesday evening from 6pm to 8pm. See www.diversefm.com for more information.

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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. A searchable archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com> and on MySpace at lutonscene.

