

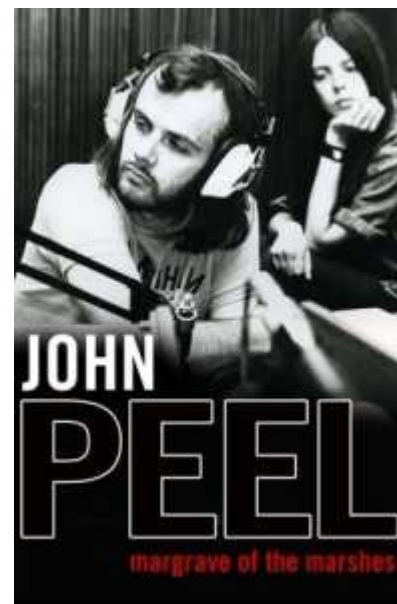
7/Oct/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Peel back the years

Sunday is international John Peel Day which commemorates the life, work and influence of the legendary radio presenter who died in 2004 from a heart attack. The annual celebration started in 2005 when the BBC encouraged as many bands as possible to stage gigs on the anniversary of his last broadcast. While the BBC stopped promoting the idea after 2007, the concept lives on with bands around the world putting on gigs to pay homage to the legacy of this unassuming broadcasting giant.

In Dunstable, the Majick Music Group will be hosting a show at The Wheatsheaf in High St North. Majick's Ryan Majchrowski tells me "I have decided to do this as much of my inspiration for music comes from hearing John Peel and the wide range of music he saw as his duty to put out there. Without this man we wouldn't even have the clash!" The programme for the gig reflects the diverse range of music styles that John Peel promoted through his long running radio show. The music starts at 6pm and features **The Nimblewits**, **The Arbitors**, **knieval genius** and **Dirty Joker** with some of Mr Peels favourite tracks being played during the night. For more details, see www.dunstablebob.co.uk.



I can highly recommend **The Nimblewits** with whom I shared the bill with in a gig down in London Last week. This plucky trio, which features **Craig** on guitars and voice, **Genevieve** on bass, violin and voice and **Rich** on drums, describe their music genre as Post-Cuddlecore. Their set features powerful lyrical acoustic rock songs with a definite pop sensibility and a wide dynamic to keep juices flowing. They seem to be doing a fair number of local gigs so if you miss them on Sunday you can catch them at the Fox & Hounds (Bedford) on October 23, The Hat Factory (Luton) on October 27 and The Bedford Arms (Bedford) on November 26. You can find the band on the web at www.myspace.com/thenimblewits.

Looking ahead, next Thursday you can catch the next PDM Gig Room event at the Hat Factory Arts Centre in Bute St, Luton. The line-up features **Drive Like Casey**, **The Brownies**, **People's Republic of Mercia** and **CC Smugglers**. The doors open at 8pm and entry is £3 with a flyer or in advance and £4 on the door without a flyer. For more details and tickets contact the Box Office on 01582 878100 or via the web at www.pdmusic.com.

On Friday (October 16) you can catch the next of the new series of Chiltern Ceilidhs featuring the nationally known caller **Fee Lock**. The house band is made up of **Mark 'madfiddler' Knight** (Tricks upon Travellers, K-Passa, Blue Horses) on electric violin, **Tom Fairbairn** (Whapweasel, Boka Halat) on bass, **Sam McEvoy** (Nordic Tone) on drums and electronic percussion and myself on electric guitar and guitar synthesiser. The event kicks off at 8pm and takes place at St Mary's Social Club in West St Dunstable. Ticket prices have been reduced to £5 (adults), £3 (concessions) and accompanied children (under 11) are free. See www.chilternceilidhs.info for more information.

14/Oct/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Record Autumn

Independent metal label Transcend Records are putting out the debut single for local band **Imicus** on Monday. The track, 'Visceral', will be released as a downloadable single along with 'Inveigle' on iTunes and other download sites. There will also be a limited edition CD version of the single, only available at the band's live shows. The 'hard copy' version will have both tracks plus "Veiled Oedema" as a bonus track, which is also featured on October's issue of Terrorizer Magazine's free cover mount CD.

Imicus are currently back in the studio working on their debut album, due out early in 2010, but will be taking a break to perform at the Hellfire II festival at the Birmingham NEC in November alongside the likes of Saxon, Anvil, Exit Ten and Sensor. They will also be appearing at the Hard Rock Hell III festival in December alongside Monster Magnet, The New York Dolls and Terrorvision. You can catch them locally; doing a warm up gig with their new lead guitar player (Lee Barker) at the M.V.P Nightclub in Cumberland St, Luton on October 27. You can check them out on the web at www.Imicusband.com.

Local alternative, rock and folk influenced quartet **The October Game** are launching 'Wildblood' at their Fuzzy Face gig at the Sun Hotel in Hitchin on Friday. The eleven track CD was produced at the members' home studios with some additional recording and mixing at Jordan Fish's Studio 91 in Newbury. The album was mastered by Frank Arkwright (The Smiths, Arcade Fire, Gomez, Belle & Sebastian) at Metropolis Studios in London. Friday's gig will also feature poetry, film, roaming magic and a bookstall in aid of Keech Hospice Care that has raised nearly £200 to date. For full details, see www.theoctobergame.com.

On Saturday, the **Knockouts** are releasing their eighth album 'Honolulu Suncream' on their home-grown High Town record label in collaboration with Topplers Records in Scotland. The album launch is at Luton's only local independent record shop 'Vinyl Revelation' to highlight the importance of local traders, especially for new bands just starting out. The band has a unique sound with their brand of instrumental garage-surf, heavy on rhythm, with shouting in French as their only vocal. The band will be playing live on Saturday week (October 24) at the Attic 'live' Room at the Hat Factory along with **Semi-skimmed**, **Beta Boy**, and **Pearl Handled Revolver**.

Andy Larmouth from the party covers band **The Blue Rinse** tells me that they need a new bass player. The band has quite a heavy gigging schedule so they would someone who is committed and reliable. Anyone interested in this should contact the band via their website at www.thebluerinse.co.uk.



Don't forget that on Friday you can catch the next Chiltern Ceilidh featuring the nationally known caller **Fee Lock** with music from a live band. The event kicks off at 8pm and takes place at St Mary's Social Club in West St Dunstable. Ticket prices are to £5 (adults), £3 (concessions) and accompanied children (10 or under) are free. See www.chilternceilidhs.info for more information.

21/Oct/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Portly trio hit town

On Friday, the area's chubbiest covers band – **Portly, Fat and Schnider** – are playing down at the Four Kings Bar and Café in High St South, Dunstable. Back by popular demand, the portly power trio will be playing a menu of classic rock highly spiced with the band's individual sense of humour. Led by the bassist and lead vocalist **Gary 'Gaz' Corcoran**, the band also features **Pete Boston** on lead and rhythm guitars and **Rob Bowers** on

drums (both ex 'Spanking Pirates'). Gaz is also a stalwart of the local music scene having played with far too many bands to mention here. The music kicks off at 9:30pm and entry is free. See www.fourkingsbar.co.uk for more details and directions.



Ryan from the Majick Music Group has told me a bit more about the gig at club MVP on Tuesday. The gig is the first of a regular MAJICK@ club night at the venue that used to be known as the Cork and Bull and Manhattans. The live bands kick off at 8pm and features energetic rock, post punk and indie from London band – **Subset** (myspace.com/subsetlondon), the alt.rock sound with progressive influences of **FireTone** (myspace.com/firetone) and headliner - **Imicus** (myspace.com/imicus) - who will be warming up for their Birmingham NEC gig next month. Doors open at 7pm and entry is free, see www.dunstablebob.co.uk for more details.



On Saturday you can catch the **Fred Eaglesmith Band** at Tingewick, just the other side of Buckingham. The band's cult status in the US has been sealed with the release of 17 albums over the last three decades with the last one – **Tinderbox** – attaining the top ten in the Americana charts. The music has received many rave reviews from the likes of New Yorker magazine and has been described as “Tom Waits meets Pink Floyd meets Hank Williams” and “a truly timeless brand of primitive rock'n'roll”. The gig is at Tingewick Village Hall on Saturday and tickets are £14 in advance and £16 on the door, which opens at 8.00 p.m. Check out the band at www.fredeaglesmith.com and for more information about the gig and tickets at www.empty-rooms.com.

Over the last couple of months, I've been banging on about petition calling on the Prime Minister to free small venues from the burden of getting a licence. The reason for this concern is that the police, who have a huge input to the whole live music licensing debate, have stated that live music always acts as a magnet for people to “behave in a way that is inappropriate, criminal and disorderly.” Frankly, I don't recognise this situation at all, in 30 years of gigging in the UK, I've only seen one fight at, or after a gig. Now I'm pretty sure that the police would love it, if we were all confined to our living rooms and fed on a diet of X-Factor. If you'd rather not then you can support the petition by voting at <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/livemusicevents> or go to one of the excellent gigs listed above.

28/Oct/2009 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Halloween Surprise

A mystery band is set to join **Elements of Refusal**, **Shogun** and **Twisted Image** at the latest Leagrave Rock Night on Friday. The event is going out under the 'monica' of Halloween Cauldron and takes place in the hall behind St. Luke's Church (Leagrave High Street). The organisers reckon the night will be a real treat for young rock fans with three of Luton's most exciting rock / metal bands. **Elements of Refusal** (with their Silver Fox) will be playing their unpredictable combination of heavy and melodic rock, while **Shogun** will be stopping off in Leagrave as part of their Autumn mini-tour and will be debuting three brand new songs as well as launching their first studio-produced EP.

Also on the bill are **Twisted Image** (formerly known as Chemical Melon) with their fun-loving frolics guaranteed to give this spooky special a real party flavour. There will also be a mystery band to complete the line-up. The Leagrave Youth Work Action Group Rock Nights are a regular event that runs every half term, aiming to bring live alternative rock, metal and punk to teenagers in a safe environment. Tickets are only £2.50 and are available on the door. The gig starts at 7pm and runs until 10pm, you can find the location details and other information at www.lywag.org.uk.

Keeping on the theme of superstition, Friday 13th of next month looks like it's going to be a very lucky day for piano rock fans in Dunstable. New York based pianist **Hugo** is coming over here next month for his first UK tour and will be appearing at the Four Kings in High St South, Dunstable. **Hugo** has played across the USA from coast to coast, playing at venues like the Viper Room and CBGBs and Schubas as well as festivals like MOBfest and the Red Gorilla Music Festival.

Hugo has also appeared nationwide on TV shows including FUSE and MTV's The Real World. On the recording side, his two EPs and full-length album have met strong critical praise with Time Out NY with comparisons to Todd Rundgren, Joe Jackson and Ben Folds. Anyway, the music on Friday fortnight starts at 9:30pm and entry is free. For more information, contact the Four Kings on 07709-779196 or by surfing over to www.fourkingsbar.co.uk. You can also find Hugo's website at <http://www.hugorock.com>.

After my piece last week, it seems that the government is about to do a U-turn and implement a small gigs exemption for live music venues with capacities up to 100. According to the Guardian, licensing minister Gerry Sutcliffe has said, "... there are already sufficient measures in place to deal with noise and anti-social behaviour...", something the rest of have been saying for ages. With any luck, small gigs could be exempt from licensing within months since he also said on Radio 4 that the government wants "to act very quickly". However, the change still has to survive a 12-week public consultation period so we're not out of the woods yet.

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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](http://lutonscene.com).