



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

Summer 2016 Newsletter

Firstly, I must apologise for not getting round to writing a newsletter after our last show - unfortunately for most of the month I wasn't feeling well took a bug or virus which went into my bowel and there it remained until last week. Not very nice; had no energy or interest in anything just feeling like my old self now getting my appetite back; never thought I'd see the day I was wanting to put on weight.

We seemed to go into June which went flying past without stopping for summer, needless to say I wasn't on form for our show at the end of the month however thankfully everyone else was and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Making their regular yearly visit with us and kicking off the night was Buzzard Creek. Billy and John from Falkirk are at home and comfortable in the club very popular with our members. They cover a wide spectrum of music from all eras, playing traditional country favourites then bring it right up to date giving us some current popular songs and they also don't leave out the golden oldies or popular dance tunes. Two cracking guys who please the crowd and ensure they are all on the dance floor and remain there during their set.



Next up a very welcome return to the club for the multi award winning duo from Co Fermanagh Thomas Maguire & Fhiona Ennis, their last visit to the club was in 2013. At that time they still had their five piece band with them, however since having baby Sherese and going back on the road the couple are now travelling as a duo and still busy every weekend. Listening to the pair I thought, why did they ever need a band behind them their harmonies are fantastic what a beautiful voice Fhiona has. They put on an excellent show; during their spots they treated us to a varied selection of numbers from their country and Irish influences and songs from their many albums which include Sold As A Rock, We're Still Together, Promised To John, some excellent numbers. Their latest single released in April is doing very well for them it's called The Love Of A Child a song with lovely words: no prizes for guessing who instigated it.

Another well attended show which always makes for a better atmosphere, feedback from the crowd on the night was a definite winner brilliant music from both acts. On the 9th July the committee were invited to a party in the Legion to celebrate Kenny Macleod's 65th Birthday and retirement.

Kenny and his wife are great country fans and regulars at our club nights, a few of us went along and we had a great night. The band for the night local group Frayed Edges and for those of you who don't know the line-up is Nigel & Alasdair from the Duke Boys along with Barry Reid and on lead vocals is Colin McFeat ex-Silver they covered a great selection of songs obviously to suit the occasion good to hear Colin again -- must try and get them booked for the club--

I was looking through my diary and noticed that unfortunately I will be missing a couple of shows later this year I knew we wouldn't be at the October one as that is the date of Michelle's wedding but now we have the hen night the same night as our August one can't be helped but I'm sure the boys will be fine without me.

Several country legends will travel to Texas for Stars Behind the Stars, a charity concert to benefit fallen police officers in Dallas, Texas. Five officers were killed and two others wounded after a Black Lives Matter protest in Dallas on July 7. The killings marked the deadliest assault on police officers since Sept. 11, 2001. The Stars Behind the Stars event will serve as a way to raise money for the families of the officers whose lives were lost during this protest.

Randy Travis is scheduled to make a special appearance at the Stars Behind the Stars showcase along with Tanya Tucker, Mark Wills, Collin Raye, Janie Fricke, T.G. Sheppard, the Bellamy Brothers, T. Graham Brown, Gene Watson, John Conlee, Ronnie McDowell, Mickey Gilley and Moe Bandy all of whom will be backed by the Texas Country Music Hall of Fame Band. The proceeds raised from the concert event will be donated to the Dallas Police Association's Assist the Officer Foundation to provide financial assistance to an officer's family in the event of the death of an active officer.

I was looking on Facebook at some of the video clips and photos from the Hootenanny weekend held over the weekend 15th -17th July in Dunecht, Aberdeenshire. Among the acts appearing were Nicky James, Trevor Loughrey, Gary Gamble, Declan Nerney, Joe Davitt Band along with east coast bands Flame Ze, The Brothers & Double Trouble and I noticed that Paul Gallagher was playing as part of the Ryan Turner instead of Stevie - everyone certainly looked as if they were having a great time.

I read somewhere that a chap called Mike Patton claims to have purchased papers at an auction in 1994 and when he recently looked at them he discovered that they contained sheet music for eight songs written by the late great Conway Twitty. After researching he found that four of the songs had never been recorded for whatever reason so he is investigating further, maybe we haven't heard the last of Conway who passed away in 1993 aged just 59.

Conway along with Loretta Lynn was one of the most popular duos in country music, now after nearly 30 years after their last chart topping single Loretta and Conway's son Michael are honoring him with a series of songs.

Recently at Loretta's ranch they dazzled the audience with loads of hits made popular when the pair were performing together this included one of their most memorable hits Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man apparently their performance was something to behold Loretta is sitting center stage and Michael takes her hand as if he's serenading her - yes would certainly like to have seen that I just loved Conway remembering visiting Twitty City after he died and they were just pulling the whole place apart very sad to see -

I noticed that Ronnie Milsap had collapsed before going on stage to perform in Georgia thankfully later reports said he was released the following day and had been suffering from dehydration. I don't think he keeps very well this is not the first time he has had to pull out of gigs – even as far back as the 70's when he wasn't able to play Wembley – I had really been looking forward to hearing him so to make up for my disappointed I trailed the life size cut out of him home on the bus with me; wonder if it's still in the loft.

Our good friend and festival supporter Tony Byworth recently suffered a nasty accident whilst out in Nashville; he was knocked down by a car and fractured his spine. He spent weeks in a top Nashville hospital where he reported he was looked after very well and received lots of visitors from friends he has made out there over the years, after intense physiotherapy he is now back home and doing well. Tony an inductee in the British Country Music Hall of Fame has been involved in the country music scene for over 35 years as a country music journalist also founder member of the British Country Music Association—we wish him a speedy recovery –

Nearer home another Country music stalwart who has been in poor health for some time is our own ex-NNCMC Chairperson and instigator of our first festival Davie Shearer. He recently celebrated his 70th birthday and I went out to visit him with a gift from the club, as usual he was in good spirits and we had a lovely afternoon catching up on the news and reminiscing over old times. He's certainly a fighter he hopes to be joining us again in the club soon –we hope so too-

I noticed that the Barry Kirwan Show originally scheduled to take place in The British Legion, Thurso on the 20th August is now taking place in Lybster hall, I believe this is due to an oversight and the Legion was double booked. Barry has just launched his new band in June and in the process of promoting it, the 30-year-old has toured as a drummer for the last 10 years playing with Derek Ryan, Lisa McHugh and of course with his dad. He also spent a while in Nashville with brother Colm during that time he stayed with Joey & Rory and had the privilege of playing drums in their band. To coincide with the debut of his band he has also released a C/D called New Beginnings; hopefully the change of venue will not have too drastic an effect on ticket sales for the gig.

The event now scheduled to take place that night is a fund raiser on behalf of the R.N.L.I. Barra who are fundraising for new premises the event is being run by George Malcolm and his wife Lynn. George plays as part of the Duke Boys also goes out as a solo act and was our festival compere for a number of years. I did tell you last time that Lynn lost her son in a fishing boat tragedy a few months back, they were grateful and overwhelmed with the help support and kindness shown to them during that sad time they decided they wanted to give something back. It is an all-day event starting at 10 am with a line dance marathon tea, pancakes, stalls and things to keep the kids occupied. Then in the evening starting at 9.00pm there will be a dance music provided by George himself The Dynamos and compere for the night will be Liam Christie. Sounds like a great night with lots of fun can't believe they are only charging £5.00 admission fee but I'm sure people will give generously when they are there to support this very worthy cause, so get along if you can Royal British Legion Saturday 20th August.

Devastating news this month is that Jerry, the 19-year-old son of top country artiste Craig Morgan, drowned after a boating accident on Kentucky Lake in Tennessee on July 11th. It is suspected he died of injuries after hitting a wave turning over and despite wearing life jacket he failed to surface—so so sad –

I was saddened to hear that after 35 years the very popular well established and attended Americana Festival was forced to cancel a month before the event. They had changed the venue but otherwise things looked as everything was going to plan tickets were booked line up in place until it was confirmed that for legal reasons and unforeseen problems with the venue owners they were left with no option. I can only imagine how disappointed organizer Chris Jackson must have felt after the work they have put in over the years to establish their festival – however he is hopeful that things will go ahead as per normal next year—

On to our last show: certainly one of the most memorable ones this year so far and I'm sure for some the highlight of the year. An almost capacity crowd looked forward to a great night and they weren't disappointed they certainly got that, superb country music delivered by three fabulous acts.

On stage first was Nashville singer songwriter Max T Barnes son of another award winning songwriter Max D Barnes, he treated us to an acoustic spot and I'm delighted to say the crowd gave him the best of order the hall was silent. Max sang his way through some of his better known hits written for the likes of George Jones, Waylon Jennings, Ray Stevens & Colin Raye. He also told us some great stories including the one regarding his dad and himself both competing for a CMA Award for Song of the Year, Dad won with Look At Us written for Vince Gill would have been my choice also. He had the crowd participating in a fun number called A Handshake Will Do written by Max as he was fed up being hugged by men – the song title says it all -

Johnny & Max met last year when Max was in Ireland for the songwriter's festival, together they sang a great version of The Craic and during Johnny's spot they sang it together. Max has also recorded a duet with Irish singing songstress Lisa Stanley a great number entitled Looking For A Girl.

Very nice guy, crowd warmed to him and on more than one occasion I heard folk saying "You hear all these songs but don't think about who wrote them" that's very true.



Following Max was Country Friends, Jim & Tom from Livingstone & Bathgate original members of Springfield who were previously with us last August when they supported Norman Borland. Both guys are big country music fans evident by their choice of music for the night, they added their own twist to some great country numbers from some of their influences in country like George Jones, Gene Watson & Merle Haggard. They started their spot with Louisiana Saturday Night which got the crowd on the floor straight away where they remained for the rest of the night.



To bring a fantastic night to a close our Band of the Year Award winner for 2015 Johnny Brady took to the stage with his band, prior to him starting his spot we called him up to present him with his trophy (which came as a surprise to him as he'd forgotten he'd won) Doing the honours on behalf of the club was young Kaitlyn who is a big Johnny fan she was delighted when we said she could come along to the show and it made her night when we asked her to give Johnny his award.

This was Johnny's third visit to the club and his second time winning Band of the Year, he has been involved in the industry for over 20 years working with a host of top musicians and after forming his own five-piece band he soon became a household name. Johnny is noted for his lively high energy shows this teamed with an immense talent and charismatic personality ensures he's popular wherever he goes –and he certainly was—

We heard numbers such as I Owe It All To You, We Danced, Chicken Fried, Give me One More Chance, songs from his newly released album Radio which includes this summer's hot hit Just Dance. Johnny has a string of awards under his belt including Entertainer of the Year, Single of the Year & Best Northern Band however I'm sure he was equally delighted to be the recipient of the NNCCMC Award as voted by the club members.

A great night enjoyed by everyone shame all shows couldn't be so well attended what a difference it makes --- can I say a big thanks to all the visitors and first timers in the club hope you come back soon, also a big thanks to Dounreay Community Fund who gave us a generous donation in order for us to bring American acts to Caithness.

I've had a busy time since then on the Sunday we headed to Dornoch for a family reunion, my mums side of the family arrange a get together every five years it gives the opportunity to catch up sadly too often these days we only met up at funerals. There was around eighty of us some travelling long distances, so it was really good every time there are a few missing but happily always new additions.

We stayed in Dornoch that day and in the morning we drove to Aberdeen the main reason was to see Ally's brother who is just recently home from hospital and doing very well after having a triple by-pass op. I didn't do much shopping instead we spent the time visiting and catching up with all the aunties, cousins & nieces in and around the Aberdeen area.

We came up the road on Friday and on Saturday night we went to the Legion to see Johnny Quinn, who used to be a regular visitor here when he lived in Allness in fact he was almost a local at one point. Johnny was born in County Down and made his first public appearance when he was only eight years old and could yodel even at that age. The first song he sung on stage was If Those Lips Could Only Speak and he still sings it now, by the time he was 16 Johnny was singing all over Ireland He got his first big break when he joined Philomena Begley's band and became one of her Ramblin Men later going on to front his own band. His association with Scotland particularly the north began when Ann Carmody invited him to appear in Inverness during the early 80's, then during the NNCMC'S early days he appeared regularly in the Viewfirth and I have a clear memory of him sitting on a bar stool (by the way he did that frequently in those days) in the middle of the floor singing the red Sovine number Teddy Bear. Johnny has recently released a new album and DVD entitled My Island Of Dreams which includes four of his own tracks, the title track recalls his childhood memories of home in Ireland. Ireland Must Be heaven is written about Daniel O'Donnell's love for his mother. Always is a sad number concerning fathers love for his daughter during a bitter custody battle and Irelands Country Hall Of Fame is a tribute to all Irelands greats who would be in there if we had one. It was a super night good to hear Johnny again singing some oldies from way back (shame he now stays so far away) and the Legion was busy; just like it used to be in the good old days.

I notice that Moe Bandy has just released a new album called Lucky Me; it features some songs which are not too well known but have been performed by other popular country acts. I haven't heard it but judging by the reviews I've read it looks like another great country album from Moe who thankfully hasn't strayed from his roots he still remains good old hard core country.

I read last week that Jade Jack Stone has split from singer husband Doug Stone, Jade if you remember was part of the heart of Texas acts who came over to appear at our last festival a brilliant young singer and fiddle player. She had married Doug who was quite a bit older than her just a week before she came over here, Doug was a very popular country singer in the late 80's and 90's who scored a big hit with I'd Be Better Off In A Pine Box. However, he had issues with alcohol which led to the breakdown of previous relationships, they married very quickly and I'm sure lots of people thought it was recipe for disaster. The couple gave birth to baby Bristol in March and Jade didn't have a good time during or after her pregnancy suffering health issues. On the 28th of July she thanked and praised Doug for looking after her however on the 1st of August she very publicly announced that she had left him as during their time together he had fallen off the wagon a few times and had been aggressive towards her, and the night before he had returned home drunk with a friend and both of them assaulted her verbally and physically – what shame so sad

Next show we have Kelly and the Duke Boys along with Country Features: Kelly Cobett is a new name for me although I did hear her singing on Stewart Fenwick's programme and enjoyed the little I heard. Kelly is from Southern England and appears as duo and along with a six-piece band she has released an album of eight self-penned tracks and hopes to record another one later this year. It will also be a welcome return to the club for Florence and Robbie they are like old friends now and we know when are in for a great night's entertainment when they are on stage. I am vexed to be missing it I will be across the water in Orkney for a hen party, hopefully we will have a good crowd and the boys behave without me (this includes Ally) keep your eye on them.

Well I think that's about it for now until next time

Keep it country

Christine