



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

Feb 2012 Newsletter

It seems ages since I wrote the last newsletter. Christmas & New Year have come and gone, as has January - can you believe how quickly it went flying past?

What a difference from last year when the snow was up around our ankles for most of January. In comparison this winter hasn't been too bad at all - it certainly didn't ground us and the nights are starting to stretch already, all of which hasn't made January so dreary and dismal as usual.

We started our N.N.C.M.C. entertainment for the year with a cracker of a show from local band The Chicken Pickers supported by Ellis County, a duo from Wishaw.

This is the first time that Willie Mac and Dan (who is originally from Minnesota) have been in the club; in fact they have never been further north than Elgin.

The duo went down very well with the members and gave us a great night of country music, covering a wide range, and with a good selection of numbers delivered perfectly by Willie along with Dan, who is a first class guitar player.

The boys were initially quite quiet and looked a bit apprehensive, possibly because it was their first visit with us and they didn't know what to expect; what kind of material would go down well? were we a line dancing club? etc. This maybe resulted in them taking a wee while between numbers, however once they had us sussed they got on with it and played what we wanted - good country music!

What can I say about The Chicken Pickers apart from the fact that they were brilliant and went down an absolute storm? I know I say the same after every time I hear them how much they have progressed, but when I think back to only three years ago when, as shy young boys, they took to the stage at the Festival, and I look at them now as confident young men and accomplished musicians.

Mikie, Chris, Andrew, Michael & Ryan are looking forward to the release of their debut CD which, if all goes well, should be on sale at the Festival.

During the course of the night we heard them play some great songs by their influences in country music such as Dwight Yoakam, Rick Trevino (who I know Mikie really enjoyed when he heard him at our Festival) and not forgetting The Jacks - Mikie even sounds like Geordie when he sings certain numbers.

Anyway a great start for us... I needn't have worried about January being quiet; everyone must have been ready for a good night out and we certainly had that - fingers crossed it will continue throughout the year.

Haven't been doing a lot myself since the year started. We have been busy decorating and getting round to all the jobs that were put off until retirement, no excuses now for not doing them.

We did go to the Legion on Christmas Eve to hear Manson Grant & The Dynamos and they gave us a great night as usual. Brandon, apart from playing some great tunes on the accordion, is now doing more of the vocals and it's great to see such exceptional young talent keeping country music alive.

I have just finished reading this months issue of Country Music People which included a seven-page feature on Johnny Rodriguez, one of our Festival artists, and am feeling quite angry.

I will admit it did say he was playing U.K. gigs but no specific mention of our date in Scotland, then later in the mag. I read (to quote) *the same people who were behind bringing Gene Watson over last year are taking Moe Bandy and Johnny Rodriguez over this Spring.*

Well actually we had Johnny all booked up when the English dates were added which understandably makes the trip across for the artistes more feasible.

I know it makes sense for us all to work together to bring these acts over to the U.K., but it would be nice if we got a mention somewhere along the way! We have been doing it for a few years now but our event is never mentioned - look at the publicity Wembley is getting, makes me mad so think I will have to drop them a line & get it off my chest.

On the subject of the Festival, tickets are still going very well and it looks like it's going to be another sell out. Single show tickets are now on sale and we have the programme drawn up so it will be on the web site soon. Bettine is away sunning herself so I am on ticket sales at the moment until she gets back.

We have a few things lined up for during the year. Next month we are going to the Granite City Festival in Aberdeen from the 9th -11th. It has been arranged by Liam & Lorraine along with Robbie & The Brothers, so I am sure it will be good crack. Looking forward to catching up with Bill Conlon again as it's been a while since I've seen him, also Lemon Grass and Blue Horizon. I think there are still some places available - if you would like further details or to book a place you can ring 01463 811677.

Of course we are looking forward to seeing Derek Ryan when the Triple C put him on in the Assembly Rooms in May along with Slange Ava - another good night and tickets were going very quickly for that one.

In June, 10 of us are going to Texas for an 18 day trip (Texas won't know what hit it). Alan got an American trip for his 50th - not sure if his wife Evelyn wanted half the committee to go along with them, but it kind of escalated one night with a few drinks and we thought we would all go. I'm sure great fun will be had by all. Don't have it all organised as yet but have been talking to Tracy Pitcox - the agent we work with to bring the Texas acts over to our Festival. He is running a five day event whilst we are there so we will go to that, and then we're planning Fort Worth, but no doubt over the course of the weeks you will hear all about it.

As a complete contrast we got tickets to see Mrs Browns Boys, so will be in Glasgow for that. I know it's a bit near the bone at times but I think its sooooo funny, and we're looking forward to seeing it live.

I noticed following the death of Billy Jo Spears that Lynn Anderson had stepped in to replace her on the Ladies Of Country Tour - I did wonder who they would get. I wonder if I'll find time to see that - better wait a while before I bring the subject up!

I was reading that Leann Rimes also has a new album out - her first in four years. It's entitled *Lady & Gentlemen* and features her versions of classic country songs normally associated with male singers.

On it she tackles the tracks *Help Me Make It Through The Night*, *He Stopped Loving Her Today* and the Vince Gill number *When I Call Your Name* - an interesting project and something a little bit different. She also does a great version of the Freddy Fender hit *Wasted Days, Wasted Nights*, singing some of it in Spanish - her husband is Cuban and he translated it for her. I'm just glad to see that she has gone back to her country roots as I felt it was a waste of a voice like hers to cross over to the pop scene.

Well I think that's about it for now doesn't seem to be much else happening, remember our AGM is taking place on Saturday night, the 11th Feb at 7.30. Hope to see you all there.

Until next time, keep it Country.

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCMC