



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

July 2008 Newsletter

It's hard to think that the summer holidays are here again and we're halfway through our shows for the year.

Friday night's entertainment was provided by Aidy Quinn and his band - now called The Ramblin Men - also Gerry Ford, and entertain they certainly did.

This unfortunately was Gerry's last visit to the North before he retires in November and emigrates to Australia to join his family. During the course of the night Gerry took us on a musical journey through his career which is now in its 31st year. In his relaxed laid back style he covered numbers from Hank Williams, Garth Brooks, and Jim Reeves to Alan Jackson, interspersed with his own songs and recordings.

Gerry and Joan spent time saying farewells to friends whom they have got to know over the 20 years they have been visiting Northern Nashville, and also new acquaintances whom they have met more recently since Gerry has been compere at our festival. Gerry will certainly be a miss to Country music in Scotland, however we wish himself and Joan all the best for a long happy life Down Under.

Aidy, son of Irelands Queen of Country Philomena Begley, was a very popular act when he was in the club last September. His popularity is growing from strength to strength and he is winning many prestigious awards in Ireland.

I got a real fright when I arrived at the club on Friday night and in through the door walked 'Cloudy' - the keyboard player - normally part of the James Quinn Band! I wondered if we had the wrong Quinn, or had three bands, however 'Cloudy' reassured me things were fine, saying he was delighted when Aidy asked him to join him on his tour of the north - he just loves coming to Scotland and playing in the club.

Cloudy was saying that the live country music scene in Ireland has really taken off at the moment, and they are delighted to be hosting the forthcoming Country Fest in August, with some American acts coming over later in the year.

Aidy & The Ramblin Men played a terrific spot on Friday night, covering a cross section of all types of music, and ensuring the dance floor was busy all night. He is a really nice guy - as are the members of the band - and he clearly takes his fine singing voice and personality from his mum and his dark good looks from his dad. He was playing at the Tain gala dance on Thursday night and decided to do a couple of laps round the hall on a bike before he came on stage.

I kidded him on that I'd had a phone call from the police down there asking me to warn the audience that there was a bike thief in the area, and if anyone had bikes left outside to make sure they were locked.

I think he took a minute to decide if I joking or not and to wonder how I knew. I admitted a friend was there and had e-mailed to ask me to wind him up. I noticed that Aidy was having a good look at our photo gallery on Friday night - he was especially interested in Danni Leigh - I WONDER WHY!!!

As I mentioned earlier the 'Country Fest' taking place in Dungannon, Co Tyrone over the first weekend in August, has a fantastic line up including country's greatest George Jones, also from America Gene Watson and Ricky Skaggs. Ireland is also well represented by bands such as Robert Mizzell, Eamon McCaan, Philomena Begley, Aidy Quinn - the list is endless. George Jones is booked to appear in theatre shows the following weekend - Kenny, Margaret, Ally and myself have tickets for both so lets hope he doesn't live up to his nickname 'No Show Jones'!

With going to Ireland we will have to give the Invergordon festival a miss this year - it takes place over the weekend of the 17th - 21st July. It will be strange not to be going as it has been a regular event on my calendar over the last few years. As usual I'm sure it will be very successful this year again judging by the line up, and we wish Anne all the best - we appreciate how much work goes into running such events.

Kenny's brother in law, who lives in Nashville, sent him a paper cutting which he thought we might be interested in reading, as it featured Ronnie McDowell who played this year at our festival. Ronnie, like the rest of us, is concerned about the soaring fuel prices and woke last Thursday morning at 3am with a song in his head which was inspired by this. He finished the song, recorded it in a Tennessee studio on Monday, and called it 'Hey Mr Oilman'. Since then it has been given airplay and the local radio stations have been inundated with telephone calls from people who can relate to the situation. Ronnie says with song writing timing is everything, and he compares the timing of this song to 'The King is Gone' - the massive hit he wrote as a tribute to Elvis following his death, which incidentally he also wrote on a Thursday - looks like Ronnie may have another number one on his hands.

I've been having another flick through the Country Music & Dance magazine before writing this and was reading that Shania Twain and her husband have parted recently - the couple have been together since 1993. I also read that Angie King, daughter of John C King and, at one stage, part of his Family Band, is back on the road as a solo artist. John used to be a regular, and very popular, visitor to the north - he was a very quiet guy but had a big voice.

I would also like to thank our friend from Shetland, Jim Pearson, for his recent letter in the CMDS mag thanking us for the great line up at the festival. Thanks for taking the time and trouble to show your appreciation. I have been trying to e-mail you Jim but they keep coming back - let me know if you have changed your address as I have a good photo I want to forward to you.

Next month has all the makings of another good night with James Quinn & Band, and I have it from a reliable source that dad Brendan will be coming with him. These guys are always warmly received in the club and they enjoy coming here. I have heard a rumour that they will be playing in Skinandis on the Saturday night - not sure how they will do there should be okay if they do plenty of 60's stuff.

Bill Alexander was booked as support band, however we got a phone call during the week to say he had broken his arm. Bill, as you will remember, did a great job as part of our 20th Anniversary and, along with his band Nebraska, opened our very first Northern Nashville club night in 1987. We are sorry Bill can't be with us and wish him all the best for a speedy recovery.

Once again that left us looking for a replacement and we landed lucky in the fact that Kenny just happened to be speaking to a guy who was more than happy to step in. This guy used to be a regular in the club as a solo act, a duo, and also part of the ever popular Duke Boys. He was compere at our first festival, and yes you all know him - George Malcolm.

George has recently returned from Tenerife where he has spent a few years playing in a bar - must be a bit of a downer returning from the heat to Scotland's glorious weather!!!!

George was playing in the Legion last night along with Nigel. We had a look in to hear them and judging by his performance he will go down a blast at the end of the month, he sang all our old favourites and is still telling the same jokes!

We have yet again another cancellation. Ian Cal-Ford & The Railmen, a band from Wales who feature Hank Williams and Johnnie Cash songs, were scheduled to play in August, however he has to go to America with work. Davie is telling me that it now looks like we can get Joe Moore (our Band of the Year winner) and he is just finalising details - we can't go wrong with Joe, although I was looking forward to hearing something new.

Well I think that's it about it for now, for the folks that are going on holiday hope you all have a good time and for us staying here lets hope the weather improves. If on your travels you see bands that you think might go down well in the club then please let us know and pass on their contact details.

Until next time

Keep it Country

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCCM