



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

July/August 2013 Newsletter

Firstly I must apologise for the lack of a newsletter last month but thankfully I am not to blame (for a change). I rushed and got it written so Robin could get it on the site before he went on holiday, but for some reason it didn't upload properly and there was nothing that could be done until he came back. I did have a rant at the poor man whilst he was sunning in Portugal – the drawback of modern technology you can be contacted anywhere – I have taken out the bits which are now out of date and modified it a bit and just combined the two - these things happen!

The summer is flying past and thankfully we have managed to get some good weather in July let's hope August is the same, I am making the most of it and sitting out in the sun writing this.

Anyway it didn't matter what the weather was like on Friday 28th June night we had a scorcher of a show despite the morning starting dismally.

First thing we got the dreaded phone call to say that Buzzard Creek our support act were unable to play, apparently one of the guys had a nasty inner ear infection which was making him sick and dizzy. Clearly they were unable to make the journey from Falkirk to play lets hope he has now fully recovered.

Headache or what who would be available to play at such short notice, we knew a few of our local bands were busy but George Malcolm had tickets for the show so that meant he wasn't playing.

George was due to be our support act the following month but he very kindly said he would change and come along and play on the Friday night instead.

Not an easy thing for a solo act trying to get the crowd on the dance floor and playing such long spots (made worse because we changed the format) however he did a great job.

George as I'm sure you know was compere at our first festival then following his return from Thailand he stepped back into the role after Gerry Ford's departure to Australia and he has ensured that all goes to plan during the last four events.

George is a well known musician up here in fact he's nearly a local having been coming back and fore to play since the early 80's when he started as a solo act in the Stardust Lounge, later as a duo and part of the Duke Boys.

It was no bother to George he had the crowd with him from the start, interacting with them through the cabaret and on the dance floor constantly during his second spot. He covered a wide range of material took us back in time with numbers like *The Answer*, we heard middle of the road songs some new country also some great standards from artistes like Ronnie Milsap, which we don't hear very often. So a HUGE thanks to George for doing a brilliant job and I must thank the crowd for giving him the reception he deserved even laughing at his jokes.

George and girlfriend Lynne got engaged recently and have set the wedding date for early March delighted for them both as long as he remembers to return from honeymoon in time for the festival.



What can I say that hasn't already been said about the young lady who was the star of our show Ireland's Sweetheart of Country Music, Lisa McHugh.

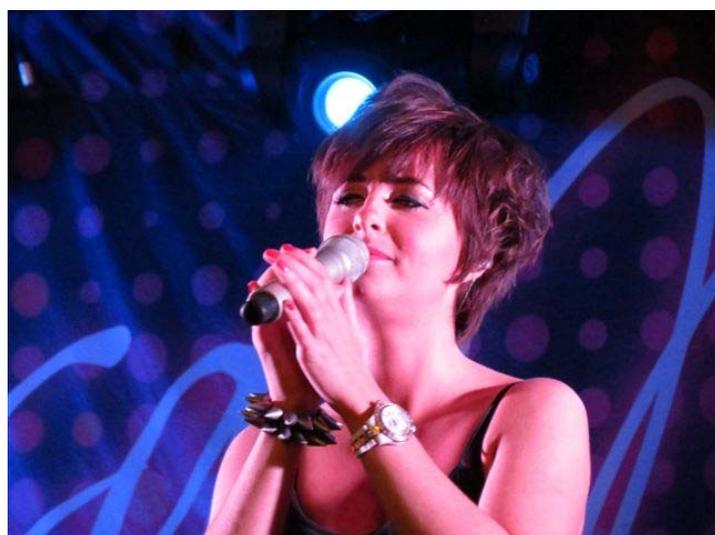
Lisa her band and crew ensured they gave the crowd exactly what they wanted a truly slick professional show the sound, lighting and stage performance flawless.

Lisa certainly is the full package sounding and looking as good as ever, she was sporting a new short hairstyle must have been a thought cutting off her lovely long hair but it really suited her as did her very 'with it' outfits.

For one so young she is full of confidence has a great personality on and off stage always taking time to meet with her fans as she said recently "I always look forward to putting on my best performance and meeting with my fans and friends when the show finishes, this way I get to sign autographs, have a chat and photographs taken"

As I've told you before Lisa has won a string of awards in her short career and continues to do so, in 2013 she has already received two separate awards for Female Vocalist of the Year.

As expected she sang her way through her full range of material some from her albums *Dreams Come To Life* & *Old Fashioned Girl* introduced us to some new songs including her new released latest single *Let's Pretend We Never Met* which is a number written by Joey & Rory who are amongst Lisa's favourite singers.



Lisa is trying hard to complete work on her next album but with being so busy on the road it's hard to find the time, hopefully we won't have to wait long she promises that it will contain many original numbers including the duet she recorded in Nashville with Gene Watson.

Mum and Dad Joe & Sally were with us and Lisa dedicated a song to each of them for mum she sang Dolly's *Coat Of Many Colours* and for Joe *Daddy's Hands* as usual they had a good night joined in with crowd and along with 'The Dancer' Cathol they impressed with their jiving skills and had no shortage of partners.

Whilst there's no denying that Lisa and her band gave 100% entertainment value, feedback from some said that they thought she was moving away from country, however judging by the reaction she received the crowd loved her.

The place was bouncing both Lisa and the band looked like they were having a ball and that's what it's all about. When asked what her ambition was for the future she said "To be the biggest female artist in Ireland and the U.K and to become successful in America and all over the world--- I'm sure with her talent and determination she'll get there ---"

As expected it was a very busy night with us having sold our quota of tickets weeks ago however I was still getting phone calls at teatime with folk asking for them.

So it was disappointing that some people just didn't turn up without letting us know they couldn't manage; this resulted in us having empty seats and the folks who were on the waiting list didn't get the opportunity to come I know it gave more room but it didn't help us financially.

We had the Sweetheart of Country Music on Friday night and on Saturday night The Queen, Philomena was in Invergordon along with her band.

Quite a few of the Thurso squad went along and by all accounts they had a great night, said she put on a first class show as she always does, it's a while since she has been to Caithness will have to sort that. Philomena has recently released her latest album titled *How I Love Them Old Country Songs* which is a good mixture of old and new numbers.

It includes *I Aint Over The Hill* she has certainly proved that despite celebrating 50 years in the business last year she remains one of the most popular Irish singers around still sounding as good as ever. On the number *All The Road Running* she duets with son Aiden Quinn who is now part of her band, a bonus track *Country Girls Never Grow Old* a catchy fun tune features Debbie & Carrie Moore who were with us at our last years festival.

As I mentioned earlier in the week we had decided to try a change to the format of the show instead of asking the bands to do three spots we thought we would still have each band do a half hour cabaret spot. Then instead of two 45 minutes spots each band would do a 90 minute spot, this would cut down change over times and offer continuity sometimes we feel the band are only getting into their spot and it's time to come off.

Of course it would all have to be with the agreement of the artistes this is the norm for the Irish bands, we'll see how it works maybe you could let us know what you think.

Visiting the area recently was The Davitt Country Band these guys are very popular and put on a great show we received many requests to get them in the club and subsequently have them booked for our Christmas shows.

The guys played Lybster on the Saturday and Harpers Bar Wick on the Sunday and they were excellent I was disappointed I couldn't make it but am looking forward to hearing them when they come to the club.

The Triple C Club in Wick had booked Gary Gamble to play on Friday 19th July another one I had to miss. Worse than that Gary almost missed it himself apparently he was double booked and had scheduled an appearance on Irish radio the same afternoon.

Gary didn't want to let the folks in Wick down so he chartered a light aircraft and flew into Wick airport, he said that the scenery coming up was amazing and he enjoyed the trip.

Sandy met him when he arrived and he made it on to the stage by 10.00pm his band the Gamblin' Men had entertained until then.

He put on a great show the Wick crowd really enjoyed him - he hadn't played their club before so his Daniel O Donnell spot was new to them.

Good on Gary for pulling out all stops to get there, he then headed a little bit down the road to play a Saturday and Sunday spot at the Invergordon festival.

The folk who were there said they all enjoyed the festival although it was maybe a bit quieter than usual which seems to be the norm at the moment.

Speaking of festivals after much deliberation and not a decision we took lightly we have decided to go ahead with our event next year.

Until we see how things go we don't want to make too many changes to redo all our paperwork would be a nightmare, but we will have to keep a tight rein on the budget hopefully without lowering the standard of entertainment.

Something we have been considering is to start later in the day and run right through this would mean you wouldn't have to leave the building at tea time stand outside queue for seats again. Starting later would allow us more time in the morning to get organised sound checks out of the way – lets face it you could all get longer lies—

Not sure yet how we would get round afternoon tickets perhaps like most other events you could purchase all day tickets anyway loads to think about yet only looking at options --- feedback greatly appreciated, would it work!!!!

Easter is later next year so hopefully we won't be subjected to the severe cold we had this time the guys are seeking advice on an alternative heating system in the hope of combating the problem but is such a draught hole of a place dear knows but we will try.

For our July show which is normally one of the quieter ones we decided that we would just have dance and start at 9.00pm.

As I mentioned earlier George Malcolm should have been the support act but as he did the honours the month before we asked Neon (our own Colin & Nigel) if they would play for an hour to give Ian Highland and Twilight Country a break and thankfully they agreed.

Ian and his band travelled the length of the country to play for us as they all live around the London area, they were very excited about coming to Scotland and had brought their wives with them to make a holiday out of it.

The boys travelled up during the day on Friday after playing in Elgin on Thursday to a sell out crowd who enjoyed it very much.

Although the weather was very warm it was misty a shame they didn't see the scenery at it's best and the Orkney's were covered in mist.

Luckily it was better on Saturday for them heading south to play in Keith after first paying the customary visit to John O'Groats.



Ian was brought up with country music and has been part of many bands, he worked and lived in the States for a number of years and whilst there he recorded an album in Nashville. Ian and his band have now been playing together for 3 years; they play mainly classic country numbers which everyone is familiar with. Ian was supported by a very professional band called Twilight Country who between them have many years experience in the business. Dave on pedal steel has been around for 35 years he is clearly a very accomplished steel player and also has a fine singing voice. Bob is the drummer and Aaron the youngster of the group plays lead and also shares vocals, when I said that it was the boys first visit to Scotland that's not entirely the case Terry the bass player was here along with Frank Jennings & Syndicate when the club was still in the Pentland Hotel probably in the late 70's.

They certainly lived up to their reputation of being pure country and proved to be one of the best country bands we have seen in the club for a long time.

Their latest album is called *Pass Me By* and during their spots they featured many songs from it including the title track, also *Carmen*, *On The Other Hand*, *Much To Young*, *Does Fort Worth Ever Cross Your Mind*. Throughout the night we also heard some modern country but lots of classics from George Strait, Merle Haggard all songs we knew.

Despite looking a bit serious on stage they said they enjoyed themselves they certainly impressed the crowd, feedback was all very positive with everyone saying they enjoyed the music very much and not a *Galway Girl* in sight.



Neon did very well provided an excellent spot for us; all live without the help of backing tracks and covering all types of music although they also stuck to predominately country. They played some numbers from artistes like Radney Foster which we don't hear very often again a change from the norm, Colin gave us all the numbers we missed when he was off the scene great hearing them again sung the way only Colin can do. Thanks to Nigel and Colin for stepping in at short notice to help us out, incidentally we heard them again with the rest of the band Frayed Edges on Saturday night totally different repertoire but again we enjoyed what we could hear!!!

The only downside to the night was that we hadn't got a very big crowd disappointing after the pleading for tickets for the last two shows with promises to come regularly. Shame more folk didn't make the effort but as the ones that were there said 'it was their loss they missed a brilliant night and we do need a change now and again'

A few of our club members have been to Ireland recently, they all seem to have had a good time saw some great acts, everywhere was busy apart from the Clanree weekend which was very quiet certainly not the crowds there used to be, shame that will probably be the end of that to.

I also heard that Kenny Rogers gave a great performance during his farewell tour concerts including Glastonbury, not bad for a 73 year old who has been 50 years in the business. I thought he might be planning to take things easy but no he has a young family who he plans to spend more time with.

Eden Court also has some country concerts coming up - Nathan Carter is playing there on the 1st of September and Mike Denver is coming later in the month.

Maybe you had heard that Randy Travis has been very ill recently he was admitted to hospital on the 7th July suffering from cardio myopathy which is a weakening of the heart muscles; on the 10th he had a stroke which required surgery to relieve pressure in the brain. However he was released from hospital yesterday and is now in a therapy/rehabilitation unit. Poor Randy hasn't had it easy recently he has been battling with alcohol addiction for some time which led to his marriage failing and a spell in prison. Let's hope he makes a full recovery soon.

Well I think that's about it for this time, hope you all enjoy the rest of the summer. Again my apologies for last month's letter.

Until next time.

Keep It Country

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCMC