



# Northern Nashville Country Music Club

## November 2008 Newsletter

Friday night started off quiet and I got a bit worried knowing that Brendon Shine was playing in Lybster; Aidy Quinn was in Wick at the Triple C's club night & Dominic Kirwin in Inverness. However thankfully it didn't make any difference to us! I knew one or two of the regulars were going to Lybster, and the Wick contingent were missing, but otherwise it was business as usual.

Our entertainment for the night was provided by Western Rhythm - two very nice guys John and Ivan from Galashiels - alongside Gary Gamble who now has a very attractive young lady as part of his show, she goes under the name of Elaine Boyle. Not forgetting of course the unexpected visit from Daniel O'Donnell who popped in to do a spot for us!

Western Rhythm haven't been in the club for a couple of years, they deliver a predominantly country spot that ranges from great standards to new country which includes numbers by artists such as Garth Brooks and Alan Jackson. Then to keep the crowd on their feet they also do some Scottish tunes on the accordion. The duo were heading off to Orkney on the Saturday morning boat to play on Saturday and Sunday - hey have a big following in Orkney some of whom were over to see them (including our friends Colin and Maureen Kirkness).

Gary Gamble and his band from Donegal are currently on a Scottish tour which included them being part of A North East Country Jamboree in Aberdeen last weekend. The weekend was run by John and Muriel Mutch (they were the couple who started the very successful Embo Weekends) with all the proceeds going to Cancer Research. Western Rhythm were also on the bill while other artists included Brendan & James Quinn, and Broken Wing. I had previously spoken to some of our members who were at the event and they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves, John Mutch was with the bands on Friday nights and said he was pleased with the way things had gone. Some of Gary's fans had also travelled to join him from as far afield as Fort William.

Gary sure delivers a varied programme ranging from Irish, to old and new country, not forgetting his Daniel O'Donnell spot - he is certainly an all round entertainer. When he puts on the white suit and the wig he looks and defiantly sounds like the man himself - I was reading somewhere that Daniel joined him on stage recently and they had a ball.

Elaine has a great voice to match her looks (she started her career as part of the Declan Nerny show) she did some great cover versions including numbers by Patsy Cline, and of course herself and Gary did a few duets.

As I mentioned the night was slower to get started but once warmed up the atmosphere was brilliant the dance floor packed all night.

No engagements this month but we did have a wedding celebration - two of our members Minnie and Brian Mackay got married recently in Florida and we wish them all the best for their future together.

Our long term regular Billy Swanson retired from Dounreay on Friday and arrived at the club along with some of his work mates to finish off his night.

He looked like he was having a good time but shame he couldn't remember anything about it! He asked me on Saturday if he made it, cue for Ally to wind him up saying he was barred but wouldn't tell him why!!

I have had a few people recently asking me about festival tickets, they will be on sale very shortly via Bettine who will be the seller this year again on 01847 892624. I am trying to get a preview of the event and a brief introduction of the acts written for the web site and hopefully will get time to finish it soon.

Another frequently asked question these days is regarding the Christmas show; well it's on, on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December. The main band will be our own Manson Grant & The Dynamos who were fourth in this years voting for band of the year award. They will be supported by a duo, Florence and Robbie, who go under the name of Country Features. I believe they have released a CD which includes a self penned number by Florence. They were with us last November and had a great time, so are certainly looking forward to joining us again.

Last month I told you we were going to the Menzies Hotel in Aberdeen for the Manson Grant & The Dynamos fan club weekend and, as expected, had a ball. The hotel is in the process of having a complete refurbishment, and we were lucky enough to have been allocated one of the rooms that had been done up. They are beautiful, as is the reception, the bars, and the function room.

The entertainment for the weekend as per normal was spot on; the acts included Jolene and Barry the very popular husband and wife duo, who as usual gave a very polished performance.

Paula Macaskill gave her usual very lively and bubbly set maybe not quite country enough for me personally but she certainly enjoys entertaining and always goes down well.

The first time I saw the next performer Frank McCaffrey was when he opened for George Jones in Ireland. I enjoyed him very much then as I did in Aberdeen. Frank has been working as a solo act since 1983 and is very popular in Ireland but pretty much a newcomer in Scotland.

As usual Robert and Manson came up with something different - they introduced an 11 year old called Brandon Mcphee. He has only been playing the button key accordion for 18 months and boy can he play it. He has an extraordinary talent, was awarded a first in the Caithness Music Festival this year and has just recorded his first CD.

A blast from the past Arthur Pottinger took me right back to my young days. Arthur played with the Dynamos way back in the early days before leaving Caithness and settling down in Shetland. It may have been a while since I heard him but he can still sing a ballad.

Crawford Bell was part of the Dynamo's weekends and Benidorm trips when he played with the Galaxy Showband, and then along with Ivan Black. He has recently been touring America as part of the Daniel O Donnell show and supporting Van Morrison. However he is now back in Ireland and tells me he will still be working so that's good, he is a great musician and singer. His wife Hazel was with him so it was nice catching up with her also.

Now we all have our favourites, and I'm sure you all know by now that one of mine is Frank Jansen and his Band, so I was delighted when they were on the bill this year. They played a brilliant spot treating us to all the popular songs from their albums and singing many other country standards. They went down well, received a great reception - even from an audience who enjoy the more traditional style of country music. Frank and the band will be over in Scotland again very soon they are playing at the Craig Tara Festival in Ayr this weekend; unfortunately I won't manage to get along to that one. On Sunday Frank and the Band went along to the market and the young guy in the band came back with the full kilt outfit he looked very smart and it really suited him, however we didn't find out whether or not he was a true Scotsman.

When we heard Arthur singing with the Dynamos, Kenny and myself were sitting trying to go through all the people we remembered playing with them - we came up with a good few. Must ask Robert just how many there has been, maybe we could have a competition or what about a reunion night - what a blast that would be!

Sandy Swanson was in Inverness on Thursday to see Dominic Kirwan who had his two sons with him - Sandy said they were very good. We certainly enjoyed hearing Colm when we saw him in Ireland.

Great to hear Caithness FM back on air this weekend - Sunday nights have not been the same without All Round Country from Davie and Robin. They took a lot of stick from Sandy Gordon on Friday night - you can imagine how it went, not getting their ariel up etc!

When sitting working on the computer at nights I often listen to Susan McCann's country show - it is transmitted on line five nights a week Monday to Friday 7.00pm-9.00pm on [www.fivefm.co.uk](http://www.fivefm.co.uk). Its is very good and covers all kind of country music - well worth a listen.

Well I think that's it for another month

Until next time

Keep it Country

*Christine*

Christine Gray  
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