



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

October 2012 Newsletter

Friday 28th September - a very special night for us at NNCMC. Aside from being my birthday it was our award show for 2011, the worthy winner was Ireland's 'Sweetheart Of Country' Lisa McHugh and her band.

As you would imagine the show was a total sell out, sadly people turned up without booking tickets and unfortunately we had to turn them away.

Great seeing so many country fans in the club pity we couldn't have that on a regular basis as we could then book acts like Lisa more often.

I must admit to being a bit worried when Ally came in at tea time after being down setting up the hall saying the band had huge speakers, lighting system and sound desk which meant we lost tables and seats.

I was also hoping that Lisa's band hadn't used the whole stage and that they left room for our support band, Broken Wing.

The floor was still like a battle field when I got there but of course everything turned out fine in the end and we had a great night.

We had just let the crowd in when the fire alarms went off - nothing for it but to evacuate the hall, wait until the fire brigade came and checked things out before giving the nod it was safe to go back in.

The problem being a smoke machine that the crew were testing, so needless to say that was the end of that - thank goodness!

We had some first time visitors with us who had travelled from Orkney, Ellon, Newtonmore, and lots of Wickers; they all said they enjoyed themselves so hopefully they will come back and see us again.

Also good to see so many young folk in I was a bit worried we might have had some trouble with them trying to get served at the bar but to their credit we had no problems, they all had a ball and loved the music.

Broken Wing, Alisa Mike, Ian & Mikie from the Elgin area, opened the night for us in fine form - three super guys who always go down well in the club and this time again was no exception.

Poor Mikie had an awful cold and no doubt the heat from the stage lights didn't do much to help, but despite that they did a great job put on a brilliant show. Over their three spots the boys shared vocals and covered all genres of music, treating us to great country standards, some new country, also middle of the road and easy listening numbers.

The crowd warmed to them right from the start, they got everyone on the dance floor setting the scene for one of the most memorable nights we've had in NNCMC for a while.

I thought it was really nice of Mike to congratulate Lisa on winning her award, saying that he knew it was hard for female singers to become successful and get the recognition they deserved, but was pleased that Lisa, a Scottish lassie, had made it.

Well I don't know what to say about Lisa's performance apart from WOW! It was easy to see why the members had voted her their Artiste Of The Year Winner for 2011. She is the full package and has it all the looks, charm, personality and of course the voice.

Lisa has come so far since she was with us in February last year and justly deserves the way her whirlwind career has taken off making her one of the busiest and most popular country stars in Ireland at the moment.

The title of her latest CD *Dreams Come To Life* is very appropriate for Lisa and I am sure her dreams will continue to do so for a long time.

We have currently been watching Lisa on Hot Country singing her latest single *Why'd Ya Come In Here*.

To film the fun video Lisa donned a uniform and went back to school, when I asked her what that was like she told me her dad said she was never keen to go when she had to, but she thoroughly enjoyed it. Maybe to the disappointment of some she didn't have on the school uniform but instead was beautifully dressed in a white and silver dress.

Lisa's band - which includes her Musical Director Ray McLoughlin on piano and accordion - are all very experienced and acclaimed musicians. On Friday night she had a 'stand in' drummer with her - the poor guy only had a few days to learn her playlist. To complete the show she now has a very accomplished sound technician and lighting engineer, and not forgetting her tour manager Cathal, who was showing his dancing skills, he's brilliant no wonder we see him in all the videos on Hot Country.

With Lisa were her proud parents, Joe and Sally. They were in great demand as dance instructors to all the young girls poor Joe was tutoring two at a time.

Lisa's performance was non other than outstanding and we can see why she has recently been awarded Female Vocalist Of The Year at the Hot Country Awards, and also New Female Vocalist Of the Year at the Irish Country Sound Awards, and has performed on the Grand Old Opry stage with Gene Watson.

She sang her way through some of her favourite songs, some tracks of her new CD and a selection of Irish numbers.

I thought she came across much better than she did at the Festival she looked very relaxed and confident, the crowd just couldn't get enough of her.

Yes it's a long while since we've had such a great atmosphere in the club, both bands must be congratulated on putting on such a great show for us.

We were away earlier in the week to see Mrs Browns Boys in Glasgow; boy did we enjoy it we were sore with laughing - I know some folk are put off by the bad language even though it is funny.

Sandy Gordon was missing on Friday night - he was away at the Hooley In The Sun in Santa Ponsa and, coincidentally, Lisa had been performing there during the week. I asked her how much he had paid her not to tell us any stories...she said he was behaving but I don't believe that one !!!

Lisa said that the weather wasn't that great it had been cloudy and wet. Typical as Ally has booked us a week there next week! Me being the pessimist I said I wasn't going if the weather was bad, and him being the optimist said better get the bad weather out the way now and it will be fine for us going. We'll see, if it rains just have to spend the time in a bar listening to country music.

As I said with Sandy being away we needed a compere which, for some reason, is not a popular job amongst the committee - however Alan volunteered and did a really good job - think the bands were delighted they got finished earlier!

I have now seen two episodes of Ceol Country featuring our Festival highlights and have really enjoyed them (well most of it), and am looking forward to the other two. I thought they have made it quite lightsome - the bands have all come across very well.

I don't think it really captures the atmosphere of the weekend but it's definitely good publicity for us - today again I have had four e-mails from people who watched it and would like details for next year.

Ally says if I'm going to make a career in front of the camera then I'd better get a face lift or use more anti wrinkle cream... no offence meant but I'm not as bad as some ...sorry Geordie...

Speaking of Festivals we have now almost completed the line up for next year - here's a run down of who we have, but will get full details out very soon

From America : Connie Smith, Will Banister, Bobby Flores, Kimberley Murray & Bob Manning, also Rance Norton.

From Holland : Music Road Pilots

From Faroe Isles : Evi Tausen

From Ireland : John McNicholl plus waiting for confirmation of other Irish act

Not forgetting our local bands of course.

I heard on Friday that Larry Cunningham had passed away at the age of 74. As you all know, along with his band The Mighty Avons, Larry was part of Ireland's show band scene.

He grew up in Ireland but moved to England when he was 16 to find work as a carpenter, and whilst there he played and promoted Irish traditional music.

He returned to Ireland in the early 60's and, along with the Mighty Avons, gained recognition when he supported Jim Reeves on his tour of Ireland in '63.

During his career Larry performed as part of the Wembley Festival, and drew the biggest ever crowd when he played at the Galtymore Ballroom in London.

His major hit was *Lovely Leitrim*, and along with his band Country Blue Boys he continued to record and tour until two years ago.

Following the disappointment of the cancellation of the Invergordon date on Will Banisters tour I received a copy of his new CD *Turn Back Time*. I have only had the chance to play it a few times but its great. The album features 11 original numbers, most of them written by Will himself, and clearly some very personal songs.

Will has recently performed at Channel 5's launching of the new series of Dallas. He was delighted to have been asked to do the honours and met some of the cast including J.R., Bobby, and Sue Ellen.

I read that George Jones has made the decision to stop touring - I suppose we forget he is getting on. Aptly called The Grand Tour he will play in 60 cities, sadly none across this side of the pond, and he also plans to record a new studio album, with Dolly Parton known to have been writing songs for inclusion on it.

Tracy Pitcox has been in Nashville recently along with some of his Heart of Texas recording artistes and they played in the Troubadour Theatre.

I read that some people in Nashville were up in arms as it just hadn't been advertised or promoted. He went on to say that radio stations don't play traditional country music any more and that Nashville is only interested in the young 'pop' country acts, real country music seems to have moved to Texas.

I heard that the popular trio Arizona have decided to go their separate ways. George is going solo, Neil is leaving country music and joining a 50's / 60's band and Steve might be looking to start a country band again.

Ellis County have also split - Dan who played with Willie has decided to return to the States, and Willie is going to be joining Brian Hughes band, we wish them both all well for the future: Two great acts who were regular visitors to our clubs in the north now gone.

I have been reading in all the magazines the results of the BCMA Awards - looks like they all had a great night but fail to see why they are called British...sadly not a lot of mention of Scottish acts, but well done to Brian Hughes who won the best U.K. song.

Well I think that's about it for this time. Next month in the club sees us holding our 25th Anniversary show. The entertainment for this special night will include Nicky James, Johnny Brady and Gerry Guthrie and with a line up like that we can't fail but to have a ball.

Remember it's a ticket only show, so please don't turn up at the door if you haven't booked tickets.

Better go and get the bikini & wellies packed! Until next time, keep it Country.

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCMC