



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

October 2014 Newsletter

It's hard to take in but since last time I've been to America for three weeks washing & ironing done, had another club night, jet lag just about over sleep pattern almost back to normal – can't use that as an excuse for not getting up in the mornings- still need to start the diet!!

I'll start with the holiday as expected we had a ball seen and done loads not all plain sailing but nothing new there then, on the way out our flight was delayed for five hours due to a mechanical fault. I suppose we should be thankful they discovered it before we took off, they did let us off the plane for a while but to add insult to injury the bar had run out of vodka no it wasn't us we only had one. The delay resulted in us losing our connection to San Francisco so we had to spend the night in Philadelphia missing our first night and most of the next day of our holiday. Second day in San Francisco I lost a temporary filling and part of a back tooth so had to have it extracted as it was infected painful few days of painkillers and ten days of antibiotics but the worse pain was to Ally's pocket...\$500 :(.

During our time in San Francisco we stayed on Fisherman's Wharf and spent our time strolling round it also doing all the tourist things took bus tour across the Golden Gate to Sausalito quaint waterfront town with lovely shops. Did a boat trip to Angel Island then Alcatraz which we found very interesting glad that wasn't our holiday accommodation ,rode the cable cars with Alan & Ally hanging on outside. If I'm honest I enjoyed the experience but now I've seen it have no desire to go back found it quite dirty couldn't believe the amount of beggars and homeless on the streets it was also quite cool particularly when we went out at nights.

Next, we drove the Pacific Highway to Bakersfield quite a long drive but the scenery was stunning really beautiful, our hotel a prime spot right next to Buck Owens Crystal Palace which houses a museum and dance hall with state of the art sound lighting and giant video screens providing live music six nights per week. The weather was lovely so we managed to fit in some poolside relaxation and swimming before going for dinner and the dancing show in Crystal Palace on Saturday night. The place is massive It was very busy but because of its reputation for terrific food the locals all come to eat but don't wait for the dancing.

We had previously browsed round the museum which is full of pictures artefacts and memorabilia of Buck Owens and other great country stars Bucks Elvis Car hangs on the wall behind a fifty foot long bar and also ten larger than life bronze statues of Bucks favourites stars including Willie Nelson George Strait & Garth Brooks. Speaking of Garth he proposed to Tricia Yearwood on the stage in the Palace there's a picture of him slipping the ring on her finger to prove it. Quite often there are big stars performing at weekends but just our luck we were too early to catch Suzy Bogguss & Tracy Lawrence.

However the resident band Monty Byron & the Buckaroos (only one member of Buck's band still plays with them) were excellent all pure country music concentrating on the Bakersfield sound from all country greats they invited guest artistes onstage to perform all who were very professional. We all managed to get a few dances and the singer of the band came over to speak to us we must have stuck out like sore thumbs not sure if it was the amount we were drinking or if it was the fact that we could neither two step or line dance like everyone else – true to form we were last to leave.



Next port of call was Laughlin again another impressive drive parts for parts of it we travelled on Route 66 turned out also a bit of a white knuckle one as we got caught in a thunderstorm and boy did it rain. Cleared up by the time we reached Laughlin a mini Las Vegas in the desert where everything is dead cheap our hotel cost us about £15 per night with massive buffet breakfast included, it also holds some great shows in the convention centre and as luck would have it we missed Toby Keith and Tim McGraw.

We tried our first attempts at gambling although not the big time for us we were happy trying our luck to the cent machines our dollars lasted longer that way but we didn't win either although had good fun. We took a trip out to Oatman this place is an old mining town on Route 66 and now an authentic western village holding amongst other things gun fights the main inhabitants are donkeys or Burro's they are very tame and stroll about meeting all the visitors. There are lots of little shops offering beautiful handmade crafts leather goods and Indian jewellery everyone is very friendly and in one store the guy showed us Waylon Jennings guitar asked us to go and get some beers come back and have a party where his friend would play the guitar—sadly we had to decline.

Holiday finale nine days in Vegas where Bettine & Edwin were coming out to join us en route we stopped in Boulder City, Hoover Dam where the guys took the tour underground visited Clark County Museum got our priority shopping from the liquor store before arriving in Vegas and the Luxor Hotel. Ally and I were the only two who had been before but like us they were gobsmacked by it all the sheer size and glitz and loved it. As tour guides we tried to make sure they saw and experienced as much as they could spending time wandering round the hotels went to some great Vegas shows generally had a blast.

In our search for country music we headed to Toby Keith's 'I Love This Bar' as we had some great nights there in the past well to say we were disappointed was putting it mildly even after making allowances for it being Saturday night and they were busy. The live band were playing when we went in and sounded okay although very loud but during their break and when they came back on well none of it could be classed as country music it was just a noise. They were clearly catering for the younger age group eventually the girls managed to get a seat but the place was a shambles the tables were littered with dirty plates which the staff made no effort to clean up so we left. What a shame used to be a fun place great country music staff doing tricks on the bar etc. we went back another time and despite being pretty quiet the music was deafening think Toby Keith wants to sort things out if he wants his name attached to it since coming back I've looked at the reviews on Trip Advisor and lots share the same opinion as myself.



Up the road Jimmy Buffet needs no need to worry about his establishment Margaritaville no standards dropped there; food entertainment still excellent and of course with a 5 O'clock Somewhere Bar it didn't matter what time it was we had to stop for refreshments. Also recently re-opened this time outside the Treasure Island Hotel is Gilley's dance hall saloon and barbeque grill named of course after the country star Micky Gilley and it's a super venue putting Toby Keith's to shame. It's open from 11.am until 2.am through the week and till 4am at the weekends with live music Friday & Saturdays the band we heard were very good we had a super night but will have to look at the photos again to refresh my memory what all we got up to. I know there was some bull riding involved Alan really looked the part got quite enthusiastic about it they feature bikini bull riding on a Sunday night but the boys wouldn't take us back. We went back one night for dinner and the pulled pork with barbeque sauce was amazing and again had some 5 o'clock Somewhere stops when we needed to increase our fluid intake to stop dehydration.

We did manage to fit in the odd flutter despite not having a clue what we were doing we had fun and goodness knows how I managed to win \$100 at poker so yes a great trip with lots of experiences and memories.

Whilst we were in America we heard the sad news that George Hamilton IV had died in Nashville following a heart attack aged 77years. George who was known as the Ambassador of Country Music was born in North Carolina began his career in 1956 but for the first five years George scored nine hits on the pop charts before returning to his country roots. A move to Nashville in 1960:an induction into the Grand Ole Opry: his first No 1 hit with Abilene followed in 1963: his first visit to England in 1967: subsequent visits followed in particular to the Wembley festival where he hosted the event on many occasions. In recent years George spent his time between country and gospel music he continued to remain busy in the States and also undertaking tours in the U.K. and Ireland, and along with Sandy Kelly George was part of the successful production Patsy Cline ;The Musical. George was a quiet and very humble person both on and off stage who worked with and supported many British country artistes during their career including our own Colorado; yes George will be sadly missed.

Our Friday night show caused bit of excitement we managed to accidentally arrange a visit of the fire brigade, Sandy our compere was celebrating a big birthday so to mark the occasion along with his poem and gift we had a cake with a sparkly candle which set off the fire alarm in the hall - thank goodness we didn't have 70 candles on it or dear knows what would have happened - Of course we had to evacuate the building until the fire fighters arrived and made sure the building was safe.



The very popular duo Jolene and Barry opened our show for us. The couple have been on the road together for 38 years and are as highly regarded and popular now as they were in the early days, when their career saw them touring across Europe and the USA and appearing on many TV shows being part of countless festivals including Wembley. They are a super nice couple who go about things in their own quiet way they are very comfortable and confident on stage and their harmonies are spot on they make it look so easy. During their show they cover all types of music from the traditional country to the up to date all very easy to listen to we enjoy having them with us and always welcome them back.



I think it must have been four years ago that I first started trying to get Trevor Loughrey booked for the club but until now it hadn't worked out so it was definitely a case of better late than never. Trevor was backed on stage by the Martin Cuffe Band who are regulars over here doing a great job supporting many of the Irish singers. Although he's Irish Trevor is different from most of the others as he plays mostly American Country Music his show is very lively and up tempo making sure the dance floor is rocking all night, throwing in the odd number for the romantics. Trevor's idols and influences in country are Alan Jackson, George Strait and Garth Brooks (clearly we have the same taste in music) To date I think he's recorded six CD's and he treated us to a selection of numbers from them during the course of the night from his last album my Kind of Country we heard Blue Clear Sky, Tikkity Boo & The Chair his latest release is the Hits of Garth Brooks and he sang my favourites from it including The Dance & If Tomorrow never Comes. Everyone enjoyed him he's such a nice guy who loves his music and I can guarantee that it won't be another four years before he's back with us again.



I was reading recently that Lynn Anderson was stopped and arrested following a recent car accident in Nashville for being drunk in charge she was released on bail to reappear in November. Apparently it's not the first time she has been charged twice previously for drink related incidents and another for shoplifting and has spent time in the Betty Ford Rehab Centre. I saw a picture of her and she looks dreadful much older than her 66 years life's certainly not a Rose Garden for her then.

I noticed that Glasgow duo Raintown who appeared at our festival this year have recently received the U.K Country Radio Artist of the Year Award things are certainly looking good for Paul and Claire they have had an amazing summer. I notice they have been nominated in four separate categories at this year's BCMA Award Show: Entertainer, Duo, Band of the year and Claire for female vocalist not bad going. The couple recently got married and their wedding photos are beautiful Claire looked absolutely stunning and Paul scrubbed up nicely also.

When we are on that subject our Festival has this year been nominated again for festival of the year and we have been invited down to attend as I said last time I think it's great that we are recognised for our contribution to country music south of the border and yet we can't get the support in this area, hopefully we can manage to go to London we had a great time last year. Speaking of which we are now 99% sure that we are going ahead with our festival again next year it wasn't an easy decision to make but we have been promised some funding which will give us some start-up costs but this will definitely be a make or break event so if you want it to continue we will need to count on your support.

Friday in Wick we had a great night of live country music of the very best with the Moe Bandy Show, I think I told you all last time that the tickets were very slow to sell and to be honest we had a poor crowd which was a shame considering the effort that people had gone to (and the promoter confirmed with us that he wouldn't be prepared to offer bands to us again) I do realise that there was a lot of different things on and folk just can't do it all. Anyway we had a big enough crowd to create good atmosphere and everyone who was at it certainly thoroughly enjoyed the music Nicky James along with the State Of The Heart Country Band opened up and they were brilliant. Nicky is a well-established popular singer who is demand all over the country and abroad currently doing a lot of work with Phil Mack. The band members are probably some of the best and most experienced in the U.K. Barry and Tony were part of Sarah Jory's band and Derek and John J are former members of C'est la Vie, they all worked very hard they were on stage all night For the second part they were joined by John Permenter who has played the club for us a long time ago and to be honest I had forgotten how good he was he is a brilliant fiddle player but also a very talented vocalist. And the finale of course when Moe took to the stage for an hour and a half just churning out song after song of his brilliant country hits. Can I say a big thanks to the Petrie boys Robbie, Mike and young Ryan who did a fantastic job on the sound and another huge thanks to all who travelled from as far afield as Shetland and Dundee to be with us.

I have been listening to the latest release from Lisa Stanley it's simply called Duets and that's what it is an album of duets from Lisa and a variety of others it's mostly country numbers but also contains some Irish tracks. Amongst others Lisa is joined by young Sean McAloon, Sandy Kelly, Glenn Rogers Dave Sheriff and the Queen of Country herself Philomena, a good album.

Did you notice that Lisa McHugh has a new programme on Showcase 191 and Freesat 400 it's shown at 9.30pm on Sunday's repeated through the week but not sure when. I have it recorded but not had a chance to watch it yet it's called On the Road With Lisa and as far as I know it's her chatting to Irish acts as they are on the road maybe quite interesting. Brendan Quinn also has a new album out entitled Feels Like Home which is one of the tracks included on it it's not what can be classed as a pure country album but contains some good tracks and of course with a voice like his – it can't fail!

I am being asked repeatedly who is appearing at our Christmas show and just want to tell you that we have been let down by the line we thought we had so at the moment are desperately working on something that will make a good Christmas show not easy with such a short time left.

Well I think that's about it for now

Until next time.

Keep It Country

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCMC