



# Northern Nashville Country Music Club

## November 2009 Newsletter

I just had a feeling when I got up on Friday morning that it could be a bad day I kept doing stupid things like going to the fridge for the milk taking out the butter. I knew I had a meeting for most of the day which was going to be about budgets and all sorts of equally boring subjects so this didn't help my mood in the morning.

Anyway I wasn't that long in work when I got the dreaded phone call to say that Texas Renegade were stuck in Germany so wouldn't be able to get here until 11.00pm - no use to us! Apparently the check in gate had closed by the time they got there so were unable to check their instruments in. I know these things happen but check in is open for three hours prior to departure so unless they have good reason for not being there on time knowing they had a gig in Scotland it's a bit irresponsible. Anyway Davie, I'm sure, will contact them and find out what the story is.

Immediate panic! What on earth were we going to do knowing I had only got a half an hour until I had to go this meeting, no contact numbers with me, Davie travelling back from holiday. I tried a couple of local bands but had no joy. I rang Kenny who wasn't working and gave him another couple of numbers and ideas that might have worked and left him to get on with it. However as I said luck wasn't with us so as I expected no joy with getting another act. Kate Bain and the Kate Bain Band were our support act and they very kindly agreed to help us out and do the whole night - once again an example of the great support we get from our local bands. I know Richard had also been put out a bit during the week as he had chased around gathering amps etc. which Texas Renegade wanted, so again big thanks for that.

No point in worrying about it any longer. I knew things would be fine and we just explained to the members at the door what had happened, charged everyone a fiver and got straight on with the dancing. Sandy Gordon was away at the country weekend in Aberdeen so I tried to delegate the compere job to the rest of the committee, however as expected there were no takers so it was down to me to struggle my way through that part of the whole night also!

Anyway the night went very well. The band worked very hard and the punters had a great time, the dance floor was full all night. Kate and the boys covered a wide range of music - modern country, old favourites, some Scottish thrown in alongside some mandolin numbers from Gordie just what was needed for a great night. Therefore a big thanks from myself and the committee must go to Kate, Richard, Gordie and Andrew for stepping in and providing us a full night's entertainment for us.

Have you all managed to see the first two TV recordings of the Festival? What do you think? On the whole I think it's been very good and looks very professional. Most of the feedback I have received has been positive and it can only do us good for next year. I thought the sound wasn't always as good as it could have been and maybe let some of the acts down.

My biggest criticism and this is just my personal opinion is the choice of songs they have selected for some of the bands I don't think it's done them justice. Imagine Frank Jansen singing *Johnny Be God* when he could have played some of his own brilliant numbers. I'm not just picking on him as he's one of my favourites; there were several I felt the same about. Anyway not to dwell on that fact but I wonder what they are going to show on Tuesday, as they have already featured a large percentage of the acts so that'll be interesting - as I have already said it looked very professional.

Have you all managed to pick yourselves out? Every time I watch it I see different people, some I didn't even know were there! And of course some get in on the act constantly as usual - not mentioning any names...Jenny, Darren, Nicolle and Lesley. Think the camera liked Catherine and Dennis, Bruce and Anne, also Jimmy Nicolson.

I know what it's done for me to go on a diet and get elocution lessons anyone know where I can find a good teacher!!!

The phone has already started ringing for next years tickets. Hopefully we will soon have them from the printers - the guy who prints them has had a family bereavement, but he is hopeful for next week and then it will be all systems go.

As I said last time we were away at the Manson Grant & The Dynamos fan club weekend in Aberdeen and as usual a good time was had by all. Everything went smoothly - the hotel is now fully refurbished and is lovely, the food was great mind you they still haven't taken down the price of drink!

Robert Manson and Keith played a spot every night and, as expected, played to the crowd in their usual professional manner covering a wide range of material.

Also on the bill for the second year running was Frank McCaffrey, a very fine solo artist who has been on the road in Ireland since 1983. Frank has a cracking voice, he also plays the trumpet, and his story telling isn't too bad either.

Paula Macaskill is a regular at these events she gave her usual very lively bubbly performance - certainly gets the crowd going but dare I say not country enough for me.

Returning again from last year Arthur Pottinger is no stranger around here as he played with the Dynamos many years ago. He has just released a new album featuring all Hank Snow songs.

Making a welcome return was Mackie & May and the M&M Band - a top quality act from Shetland. However we'll take ownership of Mackie being a home grown musician and also a past member of the Dynamos. They have recently been taking part, as has Arthur, in the BBC TV programme on Thomas Fraser (May's dad). The show, featuring the music, toured Scotland last month and played in Thurso a few weeks ago. I enjoyed their spot very much. It was great to hear some golden oldies, but also a refreshing change to hear some of their own self penned songs.

Local to the Aberdeen area Kenny Watson is an easy listening country singer who proved to be very popular with the crowd. He is also the tour guide on the bus trips over the weekend. Kenny has recently released his first CD called KW's Country and it's doing very well for him. It's a pure country album with backing provided by Philip Anderson, Gordie Gunn, Keith Macleod & Robert and Manson - he can't go far wrong with that line up of musicians.

The duo I really wanted to hear unfortunately were forced to cancel due to illness - they were O'Hare and Chambers. Michael O'Hare was once a member of Susan McCann's band The Story Tellers, John Chambers we have seen with the Bill Conlon Band, however these things can't be helped.

Once again a local band to the rescue Slange Ava stepped in to cover their spot. What a show they put on - they very quickly had us on the dance floor working our dinner off. No offence to solo artists but for me you just cant beat a live band, and this band just gets better every time I hear them.

Again this year Robert and Manson included young Daniel Macphee in their line up. Daniel, as I'm sure you all know, is a 12 year old who has an exceptional talent for playing the button key accordion and boy can he play it. His second CD will be released very shortly - definitely a confident young man with a promising future.

Apart from the music a major part of these holidays and weekends is meeting up with old friends again and of course making new ones - it's now just like one big happy family.

Reading through the line up I realised that, apart from missing out Nancy Foggo, we had our Christmas Show artists all playing at some stage over the weekend.

I've just been reading the results of the British Country Music Awards and noticed that Katie Rhodes won the title of Best Female Singer. Katie was the attractive and very pleasant blond girl who played guitar and sang backing vocals for Heather Myles during her festival spot. Apart from the odd one or two I didn't know the rest of the award winners, as up here we are not really up to speed with the English country music scene. I did notice however that Thomas Maguire & Fhiona Ennis won the award for the best cover song with their version of *Solid As A Rock*.

Just after I had written the last newsletter I noticed that Rural TV was showing for the next 26 weeks a new series called Hot Country. The show goes out on Sky Channel 279 or Freestat 403 and the first showing is on Monday at 5.00pm, repeated at 10.00pm, then repeated a further four times through the week - Tuesday at 4.00am and 10.00am, Saturday at 2.00pm, and Sunday at 8.00pm, so surely you can catch it sometime. The programme features hottest country acts from Ireland, UK and America plus giving us the latest news items regarding the country scene.

Amongst others we have already seen Robert Mizzell, Mike Denver, Jimmy Buckley, Daniel O'Donnell and of course Big Tom especially for Davie Mac. This alongside all the top country stars from across the pond, remember the other programmes are also still on. Delighted to see some country music programmes being aired and it's not before time that us country music fans were being catered for, since the demise of CMT there have been very little. I also notice this year again that there is to be no TV coverage of the CMA awards.

I see that Ruby Rendall has brought out a CD called *From Where I Stand*. It's a long time since we have had anything from Ruby; her material is the Patty Loveless, Joy Lynn White, Nanci Griffith style of country. Along with her other band members, hubby Sandy is still playing drums and son Robbie adds his guitar skills to some numbers.

I got an e-mail from the Frank Jansen Band - they now have a replacement lead singer for Frank and are ready to go on the road under the name of Ashville. They will send some demo music when they can so I will let you know how he sounds when I hear it.

I heard that Garth Brooks has confirmed that he's officially ended his ten year retirement and is to begin a lengthy residence playing at the Wynn Resort Hotel in Las Vegas. His first shows will start in December running over 15 weekends per year. The hotel boss has had to buy a jet to allow Garth to travel back and forth - as if he couldn't afford one himself!

The Ryman Auditorium (the mother church of country music) has put together an exhibition to honour Johnny Cash and June Carter. The curator is putting together the exhibit which will include instruments played by June also many of her outfits. There will be footage from The Cash Show which was taped at the Ryman, footage from grand Ole Opry appearances and much more to interest fans.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup> the Bellamy Brothers are set to release *The Anthology Volume 1* which is to include all their hits plus several new songs. Also included will be a duet with Cliff Richard who the brothers met when he was in Nashville. The CD, released on Bellamy Brothers Records, features a collection of songs from their 35 year career including, of course, *Let Your Love Flow* and *If I Said You Had A Beautiful Body*.

The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum wants to double its size. The hall moved down town from Music Row in 2001 so it could have more size to attract visitors. The current 140,000 square foot building cost \$37 million to build and it receives 5,000,000 visitors per year. It takes long enough as it is to walk round it - if it doubles in size you could very easily spend most of the day in it if you were to really look at all the exhibits and watch the recordings.

Before I go a couple of dates for your diaries

Inverness Club being held in the Waterside Hotel had a very successful first night, the next one will be on the 13<sup>th</sup> Nov music that night will be provided by The Jacks.

November 20<sup>th</sup> Triple C club in Wick have Nickels and Dimes

Our next Northern Nashville club night will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> November and we welcome back Lemon Grass. They were very popular last time in the club which was obvious as they were runners up for our Band of the Year award. Supporting them will be Collette and Country Flavour so another show not to be missed.

The following one will then be our Christmas nights Friday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December so if you are planning your works night, why not come along and join us - this one will be a show with a difference.

Until next time

Keep it Country

*Christine*

Christine Gray  
Chairperson NNCMC