



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

October 2013 Newsletter

Seems to be a regular occurrence these days bands cancelling doesn't happen for ages then it's one after the other, our September show as you know was supposed to be The Outlaws supported by Ellis County. Two weeks ago we got a phone call to tell us that The Outlaws were unable to make their bookings in Scotland due to illness and at very short notice the Murphy's stepped in to cover their dates.

I knew the Murphy's were made up of three young girls and their dad but didn't really know anything very much about them so along with everyone else went along on Friday night not knowing what to expect. The show was opened by Ellis County last time they played for us was in January 2012 when Willie Mac was accompanied by Dan from America on guitar, well Willie was here but with him this time was Brian Hughes who on his last visit to the club was fronting the great band Brian Hughes and the Lonesharks (hope you are following –it's a bit complicated)

Like last time Ellis County went down well with the members apart from throwing in a couple of Irish numbers they stuck to pure country music covering old standards but also some up to date material both guys have good country voices and knew what would go down well with the members keeping them dancing.

Brian is finding playing as part of a duo a bit different however he still plays all the major festivals along with his band but he was just so disillusioned with the way the clubs were going in the south that he felt it was no longer feasible for him to keep the band on the road, the clubs were only interested in line dancing country music just didn't come into it.



The Murphy's dad Paddy and sisters Cindy, Candy & Katy from Country Kerry in Ireland were making their first visit to Scotland; mum was also with them for babysitting duties.

They are indeed a very talented family Pat, Candy & Katy combine to play a variety of instruments but on Friday night Pat concentrated on keyboards, Candy was brilliant on the guitar, Katie was on the fiddle whilst Cindy was lead vocalist and together they harmonised as only a family can do.

The girls specialise in writing their own music: Candy wrote the hugely popular Irish ballad *My Connemara Marble Ring* sung by many songbirds including the Benn Sisters but good to hear the original version their new song *Streets of Promise* was also written by Candy & Katie.

The family band represented Ireland and the U.K. at CMA Global Artists party in Nashville 2008, and were winners of the Irish Farmers Journal Rising Stars 2013 Award and received European and U.K. chart success with their song *Working Mom*.

If you watched our festival highlights on BBC ALBA last week then you might have caught a glimpse of The Murphy's on stage behind Evi Tausen when she received her award at the Irish Farmers Journal Award Show.

They are in the process of putting their own full band together and hope to go on the road and establish a career in the music business, but joining them on drums on Friday night was non other than Philomena's son Aidan Quinn who also treated us to some songs including *Come Home Paddy* a brilliant song from his latest album *Overworked & Underpaid*. We couldn't remember how long ago it was since he appeared in the club it seems a while back, however he will be back to play at the festival along with his band and not forgetting his Mum and I'm sure we will be able to get him back in the club before too long.

The Murphy's were well received by the members despite their sets being very Irish orientated, they were a bit nervous to start off with but soon settled, and they looked like they were really enjoying themselves certainly putting everything they had into their singing and stage performance, and once they get together with their own band I'm sure they will soon establish a name for themselves. They are a super family the girls are all chatty and really friendly, they were delighted to have been asked to play in Scotland, they loved Thurso spent time at the beach and wandering in town luckily it was a nice day warm and sunny, they also were really impressed by how friendly the people were to them.



Well the run of bad luck with bands hasn't ended: fingers crossed that we will be okay next month with Lisa Stanley and Two Card Trick, but the November and December line up has also had to be changed. November saw us featuring Justin McGurk on his first visit to Scotland I was really looking forward to him coming to the club since hearing him in Ireland two years ago and thoroughly enjoyed his music something new for a change, we had been trying to get him to come over for ages and know he was as delighted as we were it eventually worked out.

So when he phoned to say that there had been a mix up with bookings and he really couldn't justify him and the band coming for one night we had little option but to cancel, he thought he had another two nights secured but apparently not, it was made worse by the fact that he said he wouldn't be available until 2015.

Now although we were really disappointed that Justin couldn't make it we were over the moon when we managed to get Jason McGilligan to step in at the last minute pure luck he was coming over that weekend (hence the reason we couldn't get other dates for poor Justin)

You ones who were at the festival know what a fabulous entertainer he is, for some the icing on the cake certainly providing a fitting finale to our weekend, so I am sure he will go down a storm in the club also.

Christmas show, The Davitts I know that lot's of you had asked especially for us to book them for the club, so again we were happy the booking was made almost a year ago we just sat back happily thinking that was Christmas sorted until another dreaded phone call saying that once again there was booking confusion they were due to play at a wedding in Ireland on the Saturday so couldn't come.

Panic what on earth would we do now not a lot of time to sort out a Christmas show, after many phone calls and negotiations they agreed that if we could get them another gig on the Thursday night then they would play for us on the Friday night only : well that was better than nothing. Again after many phone calls Peter Sutherland said he would put them on in Wick on Thursday night so a huge thanks to Peter for saving our Christmas show, we certainly owe him one.

On speaking to all these guys about cancelling bookings up here I said I understood their position they just can't do it financially for one night and there are only so many clubs who can accommodate them but although a lot of it is down to agents it still comes back on them their reputation at stake. Oh and by the way we have only heard today that they can't make the festival booking either!!

We still had the problem with the Saturday night but wasn't too worried about that as we knew that Slange Ava would give us a super show get the crowd going however we then received the news they have decided to call it a day and come off the road, but are pleased to say if they have to have a final appearance then I am glad they chose it to be our Christmas shows.

Since then George Malcolm has agreed to help us out once again and will play with Slange Ava on the Saturday night, hopefully that's it all sorted.

What a shame about Slange Ava a great band we had many a good night with them. Keith, James, Donnie & Chris were our Local Band of the Year in the club for two consecutive years and will certainly be a sad miss locally.

Not sure what the reasons were but Keith maintains the split is very amicable and he will be continuing to play as part of Manson Grant & the Dynamos all talented musicians seems such a waste, but perhaps they will all appear again in some shape or form.

As I said the bands final appearance will be at our Christmas shows on the 13th & 14th of December, (so no festival) I was getting a bit of a complex and said to the boys we better watch what we do next Christmas that was the Jacks last Christmas and Slange Ava this one, anyway we wish the boys all the best with whatever they decide to do in the future

And sadly another door closes locally as we now no longer have Nashville Union, but we still have Nigel in many forms and hopefully Colin as part of Neon. We were just getting used to Colin being back on the scene after a long absence so would hate not to have 'that voice' around again.

However another one opens as we see the Duke Boys reformed, formed originally by Nigel & George Malcolm as the Dukes of Hazzard way back in 1981, then a little changing names to the Duke Boys. The duo released their first Album in 83 called *Back In Love By Monday* in 83, and the next one *Broken Hearts, Broken Dreams* in 84, the guys went on to play both the Peterborough and Wembley Festivals having their own spots and also backing some major stars such as Freddy Fender. Local musician Alasdair Wordie has joined Nigel & George to make up the New Duke Boys, great to see them back just like old times,--- but 'Boys' well that's pushing it a bit---

Last Saturday, 16 of us all females went to Eden Court to see Mike Denver, as you can imagine lots of wine was consumed so we were in fine form and raring to go by time it started, the show was a sell out with loads of people from Caithness there: we also met lots of folk from out with the area who travel up to our festival along with some of the country music radio presenters.

Hugo Duncan opened the show he sang a few songs in between telling some gags and stories, Mike and his band put on an excellent show despite him suffering from a bad cold and sore throat he never stopped all the time he was on stage, he covered all genres of music treating us to all our favourite Mike songs. There was no doubting the fact he gave the audience what they wanted, first class entertainment a polished performance perfectly delivered, but what does annoy me is that we spoke to Caithness folk who don't come to our festival as they say it's too expensive.

Well we paid £20 for tickets & £20 before we spent anything on drink, food and the shops, last year our festival cost £75 for five shows so add it up for your selves what's better value.

I know that people's taste in music differs we all like and enjoy different kinds and style of music, personally I can listen to anything and if it's live then all the better, but I do get on my soap box when I hear folk saying that acts like Mike Denver put on a great country show he put on a great show and included some country songs ; then I hear our festival is not country enough it's Americanised, well I think country music originated in America – better stop before I go too far—

It's like the on going debate on Facebook regarding the T.V. coverage of our festival on BBC ALBA it's their programme so they are entitled to go and film where and what they like despite what some people feel we are fortunate to have been chosen as the festival they wanted to showcase and the publicity to date has only done us good. Everyone is entitled to their opinion and as I have said we all have different tastes in music.

Speaking about acts retiring George Strait may have played the last gig of his Cowboy Rides Away tour at the beginning of September in Houston, Texas (no never got to se him live) but good news is he is not giving up his recording contract and recently signed up to his label for five more albums.

George signed with MCA in 1981 and since then has recorded 40 albums including his last one *Love Is Everything* released in May, and his recent offering a 3 C/D set of George's 50 greatest hits.

It's a great collection of all his hits the worst of it is I have most of them as part of my C/D collection but might be good to have them all together, excellent value for under £10.00 from Amazon so for anyone that missed them first time round it's a must – couldn't resist just bought it but haven't had time to play it as yet. ---

Former American idol winner Scotty McCreery has just released his new album called *See You Tonight* , the North Carolina University student has written 5 of the 13 tracks and although a bit contemporary country sounding good to see he's staying true to his country roots.

I noticed that Alan Jackson has *The Bluegrass* album coming out this month and in preparation for the release of the album he performed a sell out concert in New York. Looking at the tracks he has included some traditional bluegrass numbers like *Blue Moon Of Kentucky* & *There Is A Time* I'm not really a fan of bluegrass but I'm sure he will have included some country influence in there to make it work.

Poor Alan is having some family problems again, his 20 year old daughter Alexandra was recently arrested for under age consumption of alcohol, (legal age is 21 in America) and resisting arrest. I think she became lippy with the police officer and struck him saying that her dad would sort it out for her at any cost.

Her court case was heard on 23rd September but I haven't heard a result ironically much the same thing happened with her sister in 2012 she was charged with reckless driving.

No wonder he was looking older last time I saw him think it was at George Jones' funeral service when he took the Stetson off he looked thin on top the long golden curls gone !

Pam Tillis and Lorrie Morgan, two of country's most talented ladies daughters of country music legends Mel Tillis & George Morgan have been performing together since 2009 putting on what they call a Grits and Glamour Show.

The girls have recently released their first offering called *Dos Divas* which is one of imports best seller this month on it they sing 4 numbers each and then 6 together and review of the album states ' It's a mix of traditional and elective music from two artistes with a keen eye for detail and a sharp sense of humour' however I can't comment as I haven't heard it.

Incidentally and agent offered the Grits and Glamour show to us for the festival as much as we would have loved it we had to decline at \$ 60,000 plus 10 air flights and accommodation.

Another lady of country music with a new album out is Suzy Bogguss and she will be coming to our festival, singer songwriter Suzy first attracted attention when she was employed as a singer at Dolly Parton's theme park Dollywood in the mid 80's.

Suzy's debut album called *Something Between* was released in 1988 and was a blend of old and new country music, this latest one cut early September is entitled *Give Me Some Wheels + Nobody Gets Hurt* is two albums on one C/D I have ordered it but the release date has been postponed.

Our Kate Bain sings some of Suzy's numbers during her show and has recorded one on her last album it'll be good for them to meet up at the festival.

I received a copy of young Simon Peters latest C/D through the post from his mum which was very kind of her, Simon you will remember appeared twice at our festival and was well received by the crowd. Not quite so cute now he is a tall 13 year old looking and sounding very grown up, the album his second is called that *Good Ole Country Sound* and the title track written by Simon himself mentions all the popular acts around at the moment including Declan Nearn, Jimmy Buckley, Nathan Carter, Gerry Guthrie and lots more and it's a real catchy number.

Another self penned track on the album is *All I Ever Wanted* although Simon has included some Irish numbers most of the songs are country based he has selected one by Rory (from Joey & Rory) and one from Billy Yates also a great number *Never Loved Before* a duet with his sister Amy.

All in all a great offering from a young man with a big future in country music.

Well I think that's about it for the moment I am going away to Cyprus tomorrow catch some last minute sun so must go and get packed etc .

Until next time.

Keep It Country

Christine

Christine Gray
Chairperson NNCMC