



# Northern Nashville Country Music Club

## September 2012 Newsletter

I know... we can hardly believe it's September already, but looking out of the window tonight you would think it's November! All hope of a summer is gone... there's a distinct autumn feel, and the nights are getting dark - what a thought!

Anyway, I thought we were all set for our show last Friday night. We were all looking forward to welcoming back Jesse Conlon, and a first appearance in the club for Blue Horizon.

Jesse from Sligo was very popular with the crowd when he was with us last year; despite the fact that he had a dreadful cold and was struggling to sing, so we hoped this time he would be fighting fit and we could hear him at his best. However last week we heard that Jesse had cancelled his Scottish dates due to band problems – so that left us with a problem getting a band at short notice. We were delighted when Robbie & The Brothers agreed to step in and play for us, so a great big thanks to them for helping us out.

Although Blue Horizon have been to Caithness before, playing a couple of times in the Triple C Club in Wick, this was their first visit to NNCMC. I had heard them myself in Aberdeen and was impressed by their performance, and knew they would go down well in our Club; I wasn't wrong. Unfortunately this month again I missed some of the night being out for dinner with ex-colleagues, but when I arrived the place was buzzing, the dance floor busy, and there was a great atmosphere. The boys said that both bands had provided a pure country cabaret spot which had been well received by the members.

Blue Horizon, who travelled all the way from Darlington to be with us, gave the best of all worlds: country standards, ballads, western swing, line dance and definitely the cream of new country, proving how versatile and musically talented they are.

Christine, on lead vocals and rhythm, is a big fan of Merle Haggard and delivered some of his numbers; not very often a female singer can do Merle's songs justice, but Christine did. She has been on the scene for many years, and aside from having a great voice she has a warm friendly personality, with great enthusiasm for her music.

Dave is well known on the country circuit having played guitar in many bands. He is a sought after session musician and told me he was in the Club many moons ago playing with Ruby Rendell.

Mark, on bass, has been in bands of different musical styles since he was 14 years old, playing country since '96, and during his career he has performed on many recordings.

As a bonus Christine brought along her husband who did a great job of playing mandolin - poor man has badly injured his Achilles tendon so it was a good job he could sit to play!

The Brothers need no introduction to us in the north - they have been regulars in the Club for many years and also played a spot in the Festival this year. On Friday night they had a slightly different line up: Robbie, Darren, Ryan & Ian had a new guy with them - terrible I know, but I am having a senior moment and can't remember his name.

Anyway as per usual they couldn't go wrong with the crowd - they did their utmost to ensure everyone enjoyed themselves, and had the dance floor full with their up tempo dance numbers, along with country standards and some great ballads.

Both bands thoroughly enjoyed their night which came across on stage. They have played together in the past and another connection is that Dave (from Blue Horizon) and Ian (from The Brothers) are actually brothers, so it was nice they could catch up. There was a lot of banter between the two bands, and good to see both of them together on stage for the finale having good fun and bringing another great night to a close.

Robbie was flying to Florida on the Saturday so had to be in Glasgow airport to check in at 9.00am for a midday flight. He didn't seem bothered and was still in the club at 1.30am saying cheerio to everyone. He had to pick Jackie up in Aberdeen plus get showered & changed first - hope there were no hold ups en route.

On Saturday night we were at a wedding in Wick where the music was provided by the Chicken Pickers. The boys didn't play a totally wedding spot, but did what they are good at (and what they were booked for) - a cross section of dance and country numbers.

I didn't get a chance to speak to the boys at the end of the night but I guess that will be Mikie & Andrew away to uni now so I hope all goes well for them.

Heard some sad news couple of weeks ago that Cactus Moser, the brilliant drummer with Highway 101 who have appeared at our Festival a couple of times, was involved in a serious accident on his motor cycle. I think I told you that he had recently wed Wynonna Judd in Tennessee. Well apparently Wynonna was in the middle of a tour and they went for a run on their bikes prior to her going on stage. Cactus hit a car head on and, as his left leg was almost severed, they had to amputate it at the knee, and he also needed surgery on his hand. He is now receiving intense rehabilitation therapy and, knowing Cactus, he will push himself and hopefully be back playing before long. What a shame as he's a real character.

Nigel & Colin (Nashville Union) have just returned from America where they were providing backing on tour with The Calhouns, the husband and wife duo from the USA who were booked to return to the north this month. However on getting there they discovered the couple have split - Chris was no longer around and Jim had another vocalist with him. They have pulled out of their dates across here apparently, including the Triple C club on the 21<sup>st</sup> September - Sandy said Remix will now be covering the whole show.

Hope you are all remembering that the highlights from our Festival will be shown on BBC Alba's Ceol Country programmes starting on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> September, for four consecutive weeks, they will then be repeated on the following Sundays all at 9.00pm. They can be viewed on Sky 168, Freesat 110, Freeview 8 and Virgin 188, so please pass the word around to make sure everyone who was there has a chance of seeing themselves, or to those who might want to come next year.

Talking about next year we have almost finished the line up of acts - thought we had it all tied up, but sadly some changes to be made already. Will let you all know as soon as possible.

Back to the next couple of months and busy times for us at NNCMC - on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September we have Irelands Sweetheart of Country Music Lisa McHugh with us. The 23 year-old songstress from Letterkenny is certainly making a name for herself on the country music scene, and whilst with us she will be presented with our Artiste of the Year Award for 2011, of which she is a well deserved winner. On the bill with Lisa is another popular east coast band Broken Wing - looking forward to having them back with us also.

Come October we have our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary show which, I'm sure, will be a party from start to finish - with entertainment provided by Nicky James, Johnny Brady & Gerry Guthrie we can't fail to do anything else. We were planning to display memorabilia, funny stories, photos or anything relating to the club over the years but sadly no one has given us anything as yet.

We are also devoting a lot of our time to produce a commemorative booklet for the members to have as a souvenir, and circulated a request on Friday night at the Club asking folk to write a comment which we could include in it and display on the night. Thanks to the one person who responded!!!! We were disappointed that we got no feedback - maybe reaching 25 years is not as special as the committee think.

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September as part of his 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tour, Mick Flavin will be holding a concert in the Royal British Legion, Thurso. Mick has just returned from his very first tour of Australia which was a great success. He has always enjoyed coming to Scotland so was delighted to include some dates over here to celebrate his 25 years on the road. On the night Mick will be supported by comedian Frank Forde, plus Manson Grant & The Dynamos. In Eden Court Slange Ava will be appearing alongside him, and in Orkney Mick will be joined by Arthur Pottinger. Tickets can be purchased from the Legion on 01847 893417.

Speaking of Australia I had an e-mail the other day from Gerry Ford. He and Joan are both enjoying the easy pace & warm sunny days of life Down Under and, of course, the best is being round the corner from the family. Gerry is still doing 3 hours per week on the radio and the odd gig - I didn't think he could retire! He sends regards to all his friends in Scotland.

Late piece of news... Remember I have been telling you that the fantastic young country singer from America who took Wembley by storm last year, and was booked to play in Invergordon on the 25<sup>th</sup> September as part of his British tour? Well we have just had confirmation that the gig is now cancelled due to lack of interest, but think his English dates are still okay.

What a shame people go to all the trouble of booking and arranging top class country acts to come north as people moan there's nothing on, and then no one bothers to come and support it. This is probably due to the fact that he is not a well known name at the moment, but once he is he will become too big for us to afford.

Anyway for those of you who were looking forward to seeing Will, you can see him in Halkirk as he will be joining us as part of our Festival at Easter. I have his CD *Turned Her On To Country* and its brilliant - why not listen on Facebook and YouTube and you'll see how good he is.

Well I think that's about it for now. Until next time, keep it Country.

*Christine*

Christine Gray  
Chairperson NNCCM