



## Northern Nashville Country Music Club

# Summer 2015 Newsletter

Wow can hardly believe it but actually managed to sit outside in the sun today to start writing this without feeling cold or getting blown away, one of the few days you could actually do it this year.

Firstly I must apologise but between one thing and another I just couldn't get round to writing a newsletter last month so just called this one the summer version and incorporated the two months.

Will start with our July club night when we had Buzzard Creek and The Ian Highland Band two brilliant acts playing in front of a very miserable crowd – such a shame – I appreciate the fact that it was holiday time and there were weddings and various functions on, it's always one of our poorer months but we didn't expect to incur a loss of £700...clearly not good for our budget. Aside from that it's hard on the bands playing to such a small crowd with the hall looking empty there's just not the same atmosphere. However neither bands seemed fazed they put on a great show playing what only can be classed as 'pure' traditional country music.

Buzzard Creek, Billy & John from Falkirk are regulars in the club and we know exactly what to expect from them. They cover a wide spectrum of music introducing covers from all eras of country the traditional to the current favourite's classics from Dr Hook and golden oldies like Please Stay. Two cracking guys, who know how to enjoy themselves, and get the crowd on the dance floor doing the same.

Thankfully this time they managed to take all their belongings with them the last time they were with us they left things behind and I had to post it back to them.



Ian Highland and his Band played for us two years ago and thoroughly enjoyed the experience so couldn't wait to make the return trek all the way from London to visit the country clubs in Scotland playing Elgin and Keith along with ours.

Ian and his Band are one of the top acts on the south of England circuit and you don't

have to look far to see why the crowd loved their pure country spot. Ian was brought up on country his introduction to the country scene was as roadie for a popular band of the time.

In the early 90's work took Ian to America where he formed his own band then after returning to England he joined a band before taking some time out of the scene, during this time however he fulfilled his dream and went to Nashville to record an album backed by top musicians. Ian and his current band released their album Pass Me By in 2012 and the track Carmen from it reached number one in the Hot Disc charts and another track Much Too Young made no one for four weeks. Their latest release entitled Pride is doing well for them and during their spots we heard some classic tracks from it including my personal favourites It's Not Love (But It's Not Bad) & Don't You Ever Get Tired of Hurting Me -- all good stuff -- certainly my kinda country.

I'm sure they'll want to come back again and for those of you who missed Ian & the band and enjoy music of the highest standard make sure you catch them and show them what a proper NNCCMC club night can be like.

No sooner was that show over and done with when the August show seemed to be upon us and with it came the problem of a change of band. Big City a four piece outfit from Falkirk had been booked for a long time but however a wee while back frontman Steve was involved in an accident and he is still having on-going problems and needing more surgery which made it impossible for them to fulfil any bookings ---we wish Stewart a full recovery and hope they come and see us sometime in the not too distant future.

However as luck would have it I was speaking to Norman Borland about something else and asked on the off chance that they didn't have anything else booked that weekend would they fancy coming to do the gig for us. We had been trying to get a date sorted out for him to come anyway so both parties were happy when he said he was free and would be delighted to come. Norman made his debut with his new band at this year's festival making a big impression on the crowd and doing the same wherever they have played since.

Clearly all my socialising over the summer has taken its toll it was touch and go if I made it to the club or not I had a miserable week with stomach pain couldn't eat drink or sleep. Ended up in hospital for two days for assessment and scan and as I expected a gall bladder full of stones which had become inflamed and affected my bile duct and liver. Now have to wait for MRI scan and then get gall bladder removed feeling better still tired and peaky but thankfully pain has eased.

Back to the show and a much better turn out for Country Friends and The Norman Borland Band nice to see a few old faces back and also some visitors who come along to the club when they are home on holiday.

Country Friends; Jim & Tom from Livingstone original members of Springfield, I know it's a long time since they were in the club they said 2008 if it's that long ago then it's really scary how quickly time passes. The guys are certainly country fans this was evident by their choice of music for the night, they delivered some great numbers from their heroes in country like George Jones & Gene Watson adding their own twist on them. The crowd enjoyed them and got on the floor quickly the boys interacted with them from the stage and told some funny stories along the way.



As I said Norman & his band who are all very who are all very talented and accomplished musicians did the honours for us by stepping in at the last minute, they were looking forward to their first night playing in the club and were certainly on form. Norman has played for us in the past as part of a duo and also with the Steve James Band, John Forde on lead guitar also no stranger to us he has played until fairly recently with The Duke Boys, Dave Murray on bass who comes across as the quiet one amongst them has a long association with music in the past he has played in many country bands including Ruby Rendell and Tequila. Martin Calson on acoustic and Shane D'Mont on drums both originally from South Africa are the jokers in the pack I'm sure Norman must have trouble controlling them sometimes!!

Unfortunately I missed their second spot as I went home but reports have all been favourable everyone enjoyed them they heard numbers from Norman's Choices & I'm Just Me albums all real country covers perfectly delivered. Although a big man Norman has a mellow voice which lends itself to the traditional laid back style of country he sings from the likes of Don Williams & Jim Reeves; we wish Norman & the boys all the best with their career in music hope they come back and see us soon.

I've been busy myself over the summer although none of it seems to have involved country music but most of it included drinking and socialising I have had something on most weekends time has just flown by. We have had visitors, been at a wedding dance, long weekend in a caravan in Lairg to celebrate Calum's 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday and super few days in Edinburgh, girls trip to Orkney. We got tattoo tickets at Christmas the first time we had ever been hopefully won't be the last thoroughly enjoyed it so professionally done made you proud to be Scottish super experience. The weather was lovely and we had a couple of days wandering around watching the street entertainers and going to some of the festival things which included an audience with Tina C. Well we weren't sure what to expect but it wasn't a beautiful slim figured London drag queen in a white sequined suit taking the p--- (well to some extent) out of country music. He spoke and sang his way through his life story rags to riches story in true Dolly Parton fashion from white trash to a famous country singer in Nashville going on to run for politics and entering The White House. The stories and songs hilarious everyone from Tammy to Taylor Swift were mentioned an hour of side splitting comedy.

As I said very busy but I'd rather it that way all too soon back to the long dark dreary winter nights yes they're falling already when you can't be bothered doing anything on a Saturday night but curl up in front of the box. However I am hopefully going to get another burst of sun before then we are booked to go going to Cyprus late September doc says it will be ok as long as no more flare ups but will have to let the insurance know see what they say and take it from there.

Heard recently that Nashville's golden couple Miranda Lambert and Blake Shelton have divorced following their four year marriage. There have been rumours that things have not been right for some time due to Blake having a roving eye Miranda tried to keep things together and asked for trial separation but Blake disagreed. It can't be easy when both have such busy careers they must spend lot of time apart a test for any relationship.

Another couple who have split are Reba McEntire and her husband manager Narvel Blackstock, they have been married for 26 years they have said that they will continue to work together (I think that would be a total nightmare).

Reba has recently released her first album in four years called Love Somebody the album is a good selection of ballads and up tempo numbers some new and old country sounds about falling in and out of love, getting ditched, or looking for love the mix guarantees it will appeal to all ages.

My favourite at the moment is Alan Jackson's latest offering Angels and Alcohol brilliant album not that I'm biased or anything. Alan wrote 7 of the 10 tracks and it's full of songs in the normal country vein of love, mistakes, redemption the perils of hard drinking. It's in true Jackson tradition and reached the No 1, spot on the Billboard Album charts very quickly after selling over 45,000 albums.

An update regarding that beautiful singing song writing couple Joey & Rory, I told you last time that Joey's cancer had returned and she had major surgery to remove her colon and affected lymph nodes. Thankfully after a slow start she recovered well and went home to recuperate and when she has felt well enough the couple continue to perform and Joey is recording an album. The couple are now in a specialist cancer centre in Atlanta for her to have chemotherapy and radiation treatment I'm sure like me you all wish them all the best and hope she goes on to make a full recovery.

Lynn Anderson of Rose Garden fame passed away in Nashville after suffering heart attack following a bout of pneumonia. For years she had suffered with alcohol related issues and had a list of run ins with the law for drunk driving offences and shoplifting, Although she had her heyday way back in the 70's she continued to make records until shortly before her death she was also a fine horsewoman. I saw a picture of her not that long ago and although she was only 67 she looked years older guess her years of abusing herself had taken their toll.

I read in Country Music People magazine that Luke Bryon has found himself in a spot of bother he apparently said that he wasn't an outlaw singer - he didn't do cocaine or lay about in the gutter - and if folk wanted to hear Merle, Willie or Waylon then they just needed to buy them. Waylon's daughter-in-law took offence saying she had met Luke at his Opry debut and where he said Waylon was one of his heroes. Luke later apologised saying that he was only talking about what he is like as an artist and his own life experiences meaning he's not been part of the hard living lifestyle.

Did you watch the Irish TV Country Music Award Show live on Monday night the 24<sup>th</sup> August from the Armagh City Hotel hosted by Lisa McHugh & Malachi Cush. I managed to catch most of it and fair enjoyed it anyone who was anyone on the Irish scene was there most of them gave a song in between the award presentations. Not a lot of surprises really Nathan Crater received two awards for Best Album & Best Male, Lisa McHugh got the title of Best Female. Delighted to see Philomena taking the Living Legend Award also Johnny Brady for Best Video only one I wasn't sure about was Lee Matthews winning Song of the Year with Cotton Eye'd Joe an old line dance tune out a long time ago think there's much better songs on the go that that.

Newcomer award went to a young cutie called Shane Owens and poor Derek Ryan was out of the country so he wasn't around to pick up his Songwriter award.

Speaking of awards I am sure by now you will all have heard that our 2015 Festival was this year again nominated for the Festival of the year Award by the BCMA, sadly we won't manage to go to London to the show this year as it is being held in October the same weekend as the Triple C's anniversary show. I notice that Raintown are again nominated in a few categories so hope they'll keep the flag flying for Scotland once again.

Anyway speaking of Festival you will also have read that the future of our Festival is undecided the dwindling numbers in particular from within the local area coupled with the increasing costs in regard to setting up the venue, the hire of equipment and everything else which is rising year on year we are unsure if it's financially viable for us to continue. It's highly unlikely we will receive any financial help this time - our local sponsors and businesses are very good to us but sadly that's just not enough unless we can guarantee an increase in ticket sales then we can't go ahead so if anyone has any ideas which would help then please let us know. We the committee are gutted but just don't know what direction to go but we will have to decide as time is marching on so we do need to come to a decision. So guys the Festival future is in your hands what a shame to see the end of an era the Best Festival in the U.K. held on your doorstep.

If you want to see this year's highlights then BBC ALBA have confirmed that they will be screening four one hour programmes on their Ceol Country Series on Sky 168 and Freeview 8, starting on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September repeated again the following Sundays.

Two sad pieces of news recently one the loss of Jeff Walker who died suddenly on August 25<sup>th</sup> in Nashville aged only 65. Jeff was the founder of Aristo Music Association a company at the forefront of marketing country music for the past 35 years, for which he won many awards he was also at the forefront of developing Music Row in Nashville. Jeff was a great help and support to many artists and presenters and reporters over here including Paul from Raintown, Stewart Fenwick & Tony Byworth -- a sad miss for the music business--

Kenny Serrat passed away on the same day after suffering a stroke. Kenny was born in Arkansas starting his career in 1951 going on to perform with many top country artistes including Merle Haggard. It was Merle who wrote and produced Kenny's first album entitled Love and Honor, over his career he made many many records but had no major hits, he was a regular visitor over here in particular making several appearances at the Wembley Festival.

Well I think that's about it for now, remember if you can help us in any way at all to preserve our Festival please let us know.

Until next time

Keep It Country

*Christine*