



Northern Nashville Country Music Club

Christmas 2014 Newsletter

Back to normal this time, last month as you remember was a bit different I did an intro to the Festival which I hope you all enjoyed and agree that we have a fantastic line up of acts for next year and you're getting your early bird tickets for the excellent price of £85.

We have now come back down to earth following our trip to London and the BCMA Award show and as I am sure you all know by now that we were lucky to have been awarded Festival of the Year 2014.

The event was again hosted by Steve Cherelle however no Charlie Landsborough with him kind of missed his humour I thought last time he was a very funny guy totally different to what I thought.

Aside from the award presentations there was also entertainment top of the bill this time round from the USA was Steve Wariner who performed an excellent spot which brought the evening to a close. I hadn't heard Steve play live before and didn't really know much about him except that he is known for his guitar playing and was once a member of Chet Atkins band. Steve started off his career at the age of 17 when he played in Dottie West's band going on to have a string of hits with his own band in the 80's his first No 1 being All Road Leads To You. He continues to churn out songs and along the way has a collection of awards including a CMA one for Vocal Event Of The Year he is also a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

Prior to that also from the USA we heard three young ladies who were at the time touring over here Katie Armiger, Holly May & Madeline Smith the girls performed their own self written numbers but although they were lovely singers it was all too modern for me. The UK was represented by Luke & Mel & Richard Palmer and award winning Irish man residing across here Gary Quinn also from Ireland Lisa Stanley of course not forgetting our own Raintown and from Europe Hicks.

Apart from the BCMA winners there were also awards for international Services and among the winners in that category were Chris Young, Eric Church & Brad Paisley. Among the BCM winners were Richard Palmer, Luke & Mel, Darren Busby, The Shires, Gary Quinn, Ward Thomas the Irish Act Of the Year went to who else but Nathan Carter and the People's Choice went to the Henry Smith Band. Uk Services to the Industry and a justly deserved award went to Lee Williams the current president of The BCMA who works constantly promoting country music especially British Acts.

The 2014 BCMA Hall of Fame Inductees this time round were Stu Stevens who has enjoyed a long career as a singer songwriter, Vic Woodhouse who until he retired had a long association with country music as a radio presenter bandleader and promoter he still runs a country club. Sadly the last award was posthumously received by the daughter and granddaughter of Alf Roberts who sadly passed away earlier this year he was a larger than life character who organised country music holidays and events and wrote for many country publications.

Along with us keeping Scotland on the map were Raintown, Claire herself picked up the title of Female Vocalist of the Year and the most prestigious award of the night Entertainers Of the Year went to the band. What a year it has been for Paul and Claire how they found time to fit in getting married in the middle of it I don't know. They are the best band to come out of Scotland for a long time and they are heading to the top, the couple love what they do and do it with a passion.

The couple launched a campaign in November to raise funds for their new album if they do not raise 100% then the new album will not go ahead check it out and help if you can on www.pledgemusic.com/projects/raintownalbum2. they sung a couple of tracks from it.

All weekend the rest of the troops had been asking me if I had my speech ready I told them don't tempt fate but of course didn't think we had a hope of winning so didn't really think about it but when we were given seats up front not like last time at the very back I did wonder!!! When we were announced the winners I think we probably over reacted a bit and I went running up on stage thinking Alan was coming behind me only to discover I was on my own so waffled through as usual -- which most of you will have seen thanks to my sister and Facebook - Joking apart it was a great honour to take the title back to the north of Scotland and be recognised for our contribution to country music it also gave us a boost to get on with organising next year's event now that the Council has been kind enough to give us some funding. Everyone made us very welcome and seemed pleased that we had made the effort to travel down to be part of the night we met up with some folk we knew and were introduced to many more.

We thoroughly enjoyed our weekend in London but oh was it busy how can folk cope with that on a daily basis, on the Saturday night we went to see the Jersey Boys which currently appears to be one of the most acclaimed musical around. It tells the story of the popular group Frankie Vali and the Four Seasons and their rise to stardom which certainly wasn't without its ups and downs. The band went on to have top 100 hits in all decades from the 50's through to the 90's the music was brilliant even the younger ones enjoyed it.

Sunday morning was miserable but we managed to wander around Covent Garden market keeping ourselves fairly dry the former fruit and veg market of course houses the famous Opera House but the Jubilee Christmas market was in full swing. We browsed around the quirky and crafty stalls watched the street entertainers and of course not resisting the odd bargain.

Monday was nice and dry (a bit like ourselves, but no hangovers) so we walked down to the docks and took a boat trip up the Thames where the very funny guide pointed out the landmarks filling us with useless information. We got off at tower Bridge and went to see the poppies they were amazing and that was with some of them away it would have been spectacular to have seen them all -shame that didn't keep them a while longer for people to see also thought they should have had some where for donations for the British Legion I am sure everyone would have left something.

Then after looking at the beautifully decorated Christmas shop window displays and browsing around Harrods we ended up in Hyde Park and the Winter Wonderland. Helped to keep warm by the occasional mug of mulled wine and hot cider we spent a very enjoyable few hours soaking up the atmosphere watching the skaters, thrill rides (not for us) Santa Land a magical experience for young ones and us old ones alike we browsed the market 200 stalls of handmade crafts and Christmas decorations stuffed our faces with pulled pork rolls. With sore feet we were only too pleased to kick off the boots and have a few drinks back at the hotel.

The weekend before we went away we went to the Triple C Club in Wick to hear Manson Grant & the Dynamos and had a great night (I wasn't the driver Kenny did the honours) Sadly I just haven't been able to get along to many of their club nights this year at all. They had a really good turn out the music was brilliant with the band on form. It's not hard to see why Manson Grant & The Dynamos were North Highland Radio's winners of Scottish Artist of the Year. More worthy winners Keith Macleod and Shannon Petrie who took the Song of the Year Award for their duet of Lay Down Beside Me the Don Williams hit first recorded by Kenny Rogers. U.K Act of the year went to Raintown and joint winners of Irish Act were the Davitt's and Stephen Smyth.

A couple of friends were at the Patsy Cline Story recently in Glasgow and they really enjoyed it and said they thought George V did an excellent job in replacing his Dad George IV who sadly passed away recently. George joined Sandy Kelly (as Patsy) taking over his Dad's part with very little time for rehearsals which under the circumstances couldn't have been easy for him.

I notice that there are some of the American stars coming to the Clyde Auditorium in Glasgow when they are over here for the Country 2 Country in the 02. On the 3rd March Luke Bryan with support from Florida Georgia Line appear and on the 7th we have CMA Nominees Kip Moore and Brandy Clark – me personally will stick to Charlie Pride in May.



At the end of November we had another cracking show, bands who provided the music for the night were Mustang also Shaun Loughrey and the Countrysiders.

Mustang from Elgin haven't been with us for a while and have a change of line up together they have a lot of years' experience behind them lead singer Andy and Ron on bass used to play with Reno and Finlayon drums and of course one of our top steel players Alan Thompson have been past members of Colorado. They covered all styles of music with something a little bit different thrown in which was a welcome change enjoyed their versions of Till I Can Gain Control Again & Lipstick Sunset: the boys went down well with the members nice to hear some good country music.

As expected Shaun, who is becoming a regular with us now and very popular, pulled a good crowd; we had lots who travelled to see him and they looked as though they were having a good night and nice that everyone made them feel welcome. I don't need to introduce Shaun to you by now you all know who he is originally from Manchester now living in Ireland, son of the very famous Irish singer Johnny Loughrey, married to Carrie Benn one half of the duo the Benn Sisters.

Shaun has released some brilliant CD's and DVD's and treated us to a selection of numbers from them ensuring all genres of music was covered. From Shaun's latest release called Look at Us we heard lots of tracks including the title one which is one of my favourite Vince Gill numbers. Also a medley of Don Williams and Elvis hits a dance mix with songs like Some Girls Will & Tie A Yellow Ribbon, Garth Brooks classic The Dance and of course a selection of Irish songs. He certainly made sure he gave us something for everyone and ensured the dance floor was packed all night – a great night what an atmosphere-

I read the other day that sadly Nashville singer Dawn Sears had passed away aged only 53 what a tragedy she had been fighting lung cancer since 2012 but lost her battle. Dawn was a lovely person with a beautiful voice but for some reason never quite got the recognition she deserved. She was recently playing as part of the Time Jumpers loved her singing Ever Get Tired of Hurting Me and she also did a did a great version of Look At Us dueting with Vince Gill – a sad loss to country music.



Friday & Saturday nights and our Christmas shows what a couple of crackers they turned out to be on Friday night playing to a capacity crowd were Double Trouble and Barry Doyle & the Country Band also a couple of impromptu acts.

From Brechin, father and son duo Drew & Terry both sing lead and harmony complementing each other they cover everything from traditional country to middle of the road and 60's numbers. The guys certainly tried to get the party going right from the start by coming on stage dressed in Christmas T shirts and hats singing jingle bells. However the festive spirit hadn't kicked in yet took the crowd a wee while to get warmed up but once they did they certainly got going.

Drew has been in the business for many years in the past he has played as part of the Ruby Rendall Band, the Duke Boys & The Brothers then playing solo before son Terry joined him as a young lad about 6 years ago. Drew and Terry are great guys they are enthusiastic about what they do they certainly aim to please the crowd and that's what they did. We really appreciate them travelling all that way and then straight back down again especially with the weather being as it was they didn't get back home until 7.45 am they must have been exhausted, so thanks boys.

I think it's three since years since Barry Doyle played for us in the club as the Barry Doyle Duo and a few years before that as Farmer Dan so it was a welcome return for Barry along with his four piece Country Band.

There were a few familiar faces in his band Eugene & Noel were both with Thomas & Fhiona as part of their band, Marty appeared with Barry when they played as a duo. I hadn't seen the key board player Ivan before and despite suffering badly with a sore throat he sang very well and had a wicked sense of humour. Barry himself is an entertainer and a fun filled character he provided a real Christmas party atmosphere covering all kinds of music but for most of the night he covered some great country numbers from the likes of George Jones and Merle Haggard. Naturally not to disappoint the Farmer Dan fans he threw in some of that and also told a few good jokes and stories.



As I said we had some guest artistes the first was young Lewis who has been a Farmer Dan fanatic since he was tiny he was delighted when mum Nicolle and dad Lesley told him he was welcome to come along and watch the first part of the show. Barry made his night by calling him on stage and together they sang The Auctioneer. Lewis was delighted he helped Barry out had the crowd behind him thoroughly enjoyed himself and went home happy.

Later Barry told us that when he played at a country dance in Caithness many moons ago a very young lad joined him on stage and they sung together. Well action replay a not so young Graeme Mackay (Buldoor) once again joined Barry on stage and they sung My Granny Is A Pheasant Plucker. As you can imagine not an easy song to sing but they managed it without too many slips of the tongue. Graeme looked the part sailing through it like a true star even managing to dance throwing his legs up (but he's used to that we've all seen him dancing) so I guess another 'little boy' went home very happy.



We also had a special birthday to celebrate at midnight our Darryn turned the big 50 so of course he had to receive the customary NNCMC 'poem' which he took very well. The committee also presented him with a framed 50 Years Of Darryn containing captions we felt was relevant to him and our relation with him. As it was Christmas we also presented the bar management and staff also our raffle sellers with a gift as a thanks from us.



We certainly had lots of fun and of course not forgetting the brilliant music provided by Barry and his Band which kept the party going, and the dance floor full ensuring we all had a great night finishing with the customary conga.



Well of course we had to do it all again on Saturday night it was a later start and folk were slower to arrive as they had been out for meals etc. Darryn and his friends and family were back with us for round two of the Birthday Party and we the committee chilled out and took a drink (mind you some had on Friday night also). Another great night Barry and the boys put on another great show everyone had a ball.

Well folks I think that's it until the end of January better go and get something done I hope that you are all organised for Christmas never seems to work like that doesn't matter how organised I am I still seem to be rushing around at the last minute.

Until then have a very Merry Christmas & Happy Healthy 2015. Hope Santa is good to you all

Keep It Country

Christine

