

The Balladeer

Monthly newsletter of Acoustic Routes, Wellington's folk music club

Acoustic Routes

www.acousticroutes.org.nz

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NOTE: This newsletter can be printed out from a pdf located on the website
www.acousticroutes.org.nz

1. Acoustic Routes Christmas Party, 9 Paisley Terrace Karori, December 12 6pm

Due to the dramatic turn of events at the Ruby Lounge, the venue for our Christmas Party has had to change. It will now be at 9 Paisley Terrace Karori from 6 pm on Sunday 12th of December. Party will be on, rain or shine. Please bring: food, grog, instruments, and a small gift for Santa's Sack!

Just a wee warning: parking is not brilliant. The road is a narrow cul-de-sac with a cliff off one side! There are some parks, but you may have to park in Seaforth Tce, opposite Paisley Tce. There are about 20 steps up to the house . . . but it's great once you are there! Also to note, houses are numbered consecutively on the same side of the street. There will be balloons on the letter box.



Mary
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2. Note from the president



Hello Everyone. It's already that time of year when most of us become increasingly glazed over with food, beverage, socialising and of course figuring out what to buy the in-laws for Christmas all over again. The team has been blessed. We have had two offers from members to help out on the Committee. First, I am really thrilled to announce Monica Cartner as our new secretary - welcome aboard Monica! Another kind gentleman has also

indicated his willingness to assist, and discussions on what form that might take are under way (I won't say who yet in case he changes his mind).

With the sudden and rather brutal closure of the Ruby Lounge, our plans for concerts and blackboard concerts for 2011 have taken on a level of uncertainty. It looks like if it's back to the drawing board looking for a venue, but it may well be. Sigh. At least all your suggestions and thoughts have been duly stored for resurrection and are available to help us through this double whammy. We will address it again in the New Year once things become clearer. In the meantime, we know that 2010 has been a struggle for the team at Ruby, and the Committee is very sorry that such a lovely venue may no longer be available to music lovers in Wellington.

On the bright side, we have come up with a solution for singarounds that seems to work very well elsewhere in various forms, and that is to hold them in member's homes, on a rotational basis. (See item below.) Let's see if it can work for us.

This year has been a year of many colours and we have weathered most of them well. Events have been well attended, and for the most part there seems to be enjoyment of the current fluidity and flexibility on the acoustic music scene. There are so many options now, that the main complaint seems to be how on earth to find the time and the cash to get around to everything. In my view, we are continuing to offer members a good deal in terms of discount entry to our events, much-reduced membership costs, and access to some fabulous musicians who would not otherwise be stopping off in Wellington.

I also find that the spirit is still there. The audiences at our concerts have been fabulously responsive and our guests have told us throughout the year how attentive and friendly they have found you. Friends seem to enjoy the opportunity to catch up and chat in between sets. The blackboard concert nights at Katipo worked really well while they lasted, attracting some new faces, as well as a warm crowd for all those who wanted to give their music an airing. It was lovely to have the occasional visit from performers from other parts of New Zealand too. Jamming and singing opportunities have been in abundance in the region, but I am also looking forward to trying our new-look home-based singing circle for the club.

Do come to Christmas Party at my place if you are able, and I stress that everyone is welcome. Santa will be attending again . . . so bring a gift (small \$\$) if you want to join in the fun.

Happy Christmas everyone, and a prosperous New Year!

Very best wishes from

Mary and the Happy Shepherds at Acoustic Routes!

PS We will send out an email in mid-December with an update of Acoustic Routes events for January/February 2011. While most of you are already planning your summer holidays: a full list of summer festivals can be found at www.kiwifolk.org - the nearest local festival is Laftah Festival (see below).

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3. Laftah Fest, Otaki Bridge Lodge, 27 December 2010-2 January 2011

Laftah Fest is a relaxing week with friends and family where you can play music, go to a workshop in something else creative, listen to music, swim in the river, play more music, or just hang out. This is the 5th Laftah Fest and New Year's Eve will be an evening you won't forget - the theme for the feast is The Great Gatsby. The dancing and socialising continue until close to midnight then we all move to the fire pit to drum in 2011, complete with fireworks.

Bridge Lodge is a fantastic all-weather venue with lounges for jamming, a concert hall, great cooking facilities (shared evening barbeques are an option), lots of campsites (some powered) and comfortable private rooms available.

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Adults rates: | Camping (no power) | \$120 for 6 nights | \$22 per night |
| | Camping with power | \$130 for 6 nights | \$27 per night |
| | Rooms | \$200 for 6 nights | \$35 per night |
| | Day pass | \$10 | |
| | New Years Eve Feast only (no accomm.) | | \$35 |
| 5-15 years: | Camping | \$75 for 6 nights | \$15 per night |

Rooms

\$80 for 6 nights

\$15 per night

Under 5s: Free

To register, please contact Anne McGregor annemcgregor@xtra.co.nz (04)233 8567, 21 Gordon Road, Pimmerton
Cheques payable to Laftah Fest

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4. Singarounds and blackboard concerts for 2011

Lots of members who attended the AGM 2010 expressed a desire for our singaround sessions (ie where people sit in a circle and take a turn to perform an item) to be reinstated. (Singarounds were dropped for 2010 due to low attendance during Aug-Dec 2009).

We have been exploring options but have not found a public venue of cosy ambience that is quiet and sufficiently private. So, we would like to float the possibility of holding singarounds at people's homes to see how it goes. We are seeking volunteers (perhaps 4 or 5 members) who would be willing to host such an event once every few months or so, by rotating 'house' on the 2nd Sunday of each month, starting in 2011. The house directions address and so on would be advertised in the Balladeer each month.

To kick things off, the first one will be at Mary's house at 7.30pm on 9th January, starting with a BBQ at 6 pm for those who would like to eat together first (see above for details). We have one other volunteer at this stage. So do send me an email if you are keen.

Blackboard concerts: the troubles at the Ruby Lounge have sent us in search of another venue. Expect news by February, if not sooner.

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5. Acoustic Routes events coming up in 2011



The calendar for the first few months of 2011 is a bit irregular, partly because of all the changes but also because there are artists passing through that we thought you would be disappointed not to see, and Easter has thrown a spanner into April. At this stage the following events are confirmed.

January 2011

Singaround: 7.30 Sunday 9th January at 9 Paisley Tce Karori. Shared BBQ from 6pm. ALL WELCOME - you don't have to be a member. No charge.

Mid-January Steve Turner Concert: 7.30 Wednesday 12th January. Venue to be confirmed. First half will likely be a blackboard on a first come first serve basis. Steve in second half. Charge: \$10/15.

No other events in January because of festivals and holidays.

February 2011

Waitangi Day party: Sunday 6th February at Annie McGregor's and Roy McGuinness's house. Details to be circulated in January.

Singaround: 7.30 Sunday 13 February. Venue to be announced. ALL WELCOME. No charge.

Mid-Feb Phil Drane concert: 7.30 Wednesday 9th February. Venue to be confirmed. First half will likely be a blackboard on a first-come first-served basis. Guest artist Phil Drane in second half. Charge: \$10/15

End-of-month concert: Tim O'Brien (as part of Fringe Festival). Evening of Sunday 27th February. Paramount Theatre, Courtenay Place. Ticket details and time yet to come.

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6. Changing of the guard, Acoustic Routes secretary

Many thanks go out to "Maestro" **Mike Maguire** for his work as secretary of Acoustic Routes. We have been fortunate to enjoy his awesome ukulele and compere skills, as well as his wonderful company.

In Mike's own words: "Ros and I are getting married in December in Abu Dhabi and I will be staying on over there until she finishes her contract in July next year. I hope we will then return to Wellington but that is a bit up in the air at the moment. It has been wonderful living down here, developing great relationships, enjoying the music and the friendships - which won't change of course simply because of this interlude! "

Very best wishes to Mike and Ros, and do come back to Wellington!

And many thanks go out to **Monica Cartner** for stepping in as the new secretary of the club.



Monica came to New Zealand from Hong Kong, but originally fares from Tyneside. She was offered a job here on holiday twenty years ago, then picked up a community directory and found the folk club.

Holland Street seemed a long way from her memories of the 60s folk scene in the London squat where she came across Alex Glasgow, Jake Thackray, and The Animals. She recalls being very warmly welcomed by Ruth Birnie on her first visit, and has been a member ever since.

Club highlights for her include the Tahora, LAFTAH, Hamsterfest and Ohau Festivals, as well as the contributions of characters such as Debbie Gillanders, Kerry Turner, and Jill Poulston.

Although she considers herself mainly an appreciator of music rather than a performer, she enjoys singing and grew up playing the clarinet and recorder. She loves a variety of music, including blues, and says she could listen to Julian Ward playing guitar and Mary Hubble and Celia Briar playing flute and harp for hours.

Monica brings a wealth of enthusiasm to whatever she does, and her vision for the club includes offering a variety of opportunities for people to participate, whether performing, jamming, or listening.

She also enjoys painting watercolours (along with Julie Kilpatrick), playing bridge, writing and telling stories, her beautiful cat named "Pandora", and last but not least her two daughters who live in Scotland and Spain.

Cathy Dyer

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7. Welly Fest - notes from a first-timer

What a stunning weekend. This was my first-ever Welly Fest - having "married into" the folk community and moved to Wellington. I have to admit the last time I went to a folk festival was in 1968.

From the moment we arrived on Friday afternoon until we dragged ourselves away Monday lunchtime there was so much going on. It was sooooo hard to have to make choices all the time!

As soon as we'd got the tent up we were off to check out all the groups making music and listen to the sessions going on all over the place. Folkies everywhere who just couldn't wait to start making music. The Friday night concert was great because of course it was all people we knew from Acoustic Routes - but in different combinations than I normally hear.

While making some coffee the lilt of beautiful fiddle music drew us into the hall at the far end - where we found Enda and Lindsay and a group of spellbound listeners - Enda eventually persuaded others to join in including some of the guys from Coolgrass and I reluctantly left only when falling

asleep on my chair.

Drifting off to sleep with music playing faintly in the background, we were woken on Saturday with the different music of a crowd of very noisy tuis at daybreak! One of the delights of the festival is the glorious setting in Brookfields, what a treasure.

After a cuppa, a quick shower and bacon butties for breakfast (aka bacon sandwiches) we rushed about setting up our CD Stall, then off to listen to Helen Dorothy with Fiona and Richard. A great concert to start the day - thoughtful words and beautiful music.

Then it was choices all day. An advantage of being on the stall was meeting most of the performers. And how friendly they are - one of the enchantments of the festival was the lack of ego from the performers. They were having just as good a time as everyone else joining in the sessions and the workshops. Everywhere I walked there was music and people enjoying themselves.

There was such a range of age groups with teenagers and little kids and big kids all having a good time. More decisions - in fact lots of decisions didn't get made. I ended hauling Niels on to the floor for a few dances at the ceilidh and then going up to the invitation concert - just in time to hear Robbie Duncan play what he calls his experiments and I call spellbinding, followed by a couple of young ladies, who sang Coldplay's Yellow and seemed surprised that the older members of the audience knew it! Then it was Finn and friends. Finn had recruited a backing band shortly before his spot, some of his band seemed to be slightly surprised to find themselves there. Wound up the day sitting round a brazier chatting to Col and a few others with music drifting in from all sides.

More choices on Sunday - having made a good start to the day with a filled croissant from the on-site cafe. Really appreciated the cafe - it was great to have the choice of grabbing something rather than cooking something - although we ended up sharing meals especially on Sunday night when our basic ingredients were whisked off by David Pawson who managed to make them into a yummy contribution.

More concerts and workshops and just listening to people making music. Early evening sitting outside our tent with Derek playing double bass and Kim singing country songs with Niels.

The final concert was wonderful, highlights for me were BB & Alex - incredible talent, Coolgrass having the place rocking, and Enda and Lindsay with their spellbinding set. We have world class performers here in NZ and Australia. It was a great way to end the festival official programme but it wasn't the end of the festival!

After the concert Niels found a group of young people to sing harmonies with. Always strikes me how music manages to fill in the gaps between different groups whether it's age, ethnicity or wealth - it really is a common ground. Groups of people making music everywhere again, not many people interested in going to bed. A group playing Irish music in the kitchen, another group playing bluegrass. I even heard about a double bass player who was joining in from outside the caravan as they couldn't all fit inside. (Double bass players must have muscles and determination!)

Ended the day round the brazier again singing Scottish folk songs - I seem to remember doing something like that in '68! Yep, folk festivals are fun and very satisfying, you don't have to play an instrument or sing or do anything - just appreciating the music and the good company is enough. And next year - I'll be there but maybe I'll plan my programme a bit better - then again maybe I'll just wander round again letting the music draw me in.

Janette Wallace-Gedge

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8. Eric Bogle with John Munroe - Ruby Lounge, October 31

He came... we saw... he conquered.

That description is not about Leonard Cohen, although I'm sure it applies equally to him.

It's how I felt after seeing Eric Bogle's Wellington concert, during what he says was his last performing tour of New Zealand.

His appearance clashed with Leonard coming back to town. Eric declared he'd take his chances, as he could be just as depressing as Leonard. As it happened, he got a great turn out, and he wasn't a bit depressing.

I've seen Eric Bogle three times during his visits over the years.

While the voice may have developed the odd crack with age, this final concert was the best. There was a lovely warm feel to it and a real connection between artists and audience.

Eric, with his regular side-kick of many years, fellow Scot John Munro, was in relaxed mood and both appeared to enjoy themselves very much.

We got the essential Bogle songs we expected to hear: "No Man's Land", "Leaving Nancy" "A Reason for It All" etc, interspersed with the quirky and humorous numbers that are equally a trademark of his - "The Dalai Lama's Candle" for example.

And the second encore delivered "The Band Played Waltzing Matilda", leaving us with a reminder of the emotional power of those songs.

In short, it was a classic Bogle concert, with all the essential elements, including John Munro's beautifully flowing guitar and mandolin accompaniment and back-up vocals, and on-stage banter.

John Sutherland, another ex-pat Scot who opened the night, set the scene in just the right way, I thought, with a nicely-crafted set of songs and the impeccable guitar work that we know him for.

The sound was the best I've heard at a Bogle concert, too, delivered by The Ruby Lounge's sound man, Gary on the desk.

Kevin Ikin.

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9. Overheard conversation in Wellington on Halloween night

First fan: Nice to head home together after such a great concert tonight. What did you think of it?

Second fan: Amazing, great show.

Yeah, good to see a full house too: packed to the rafters!

And then to think he's been going so many years already.

And not the first time in New Zealand either.

Possibly his last though, he's getting on a bit.

The audience couldn't get enough eh, two encores!

Quite strong opening acts as well.

You're right, real audience pleasers.

Lots of fresh faces in the crowd too, not just the usual regulars.

And good support players - nice to hear them share the credit.

I was so pleased he did "Suzanne" again; I love that song.

Suzanne? I thought it was about Nancy.

Nancy?..... anyway, would you go and see him again?

Sure I would - Eric rocks.

You mean Leonard.

Who? Leonard?

Yes, well, whoever - very pleased to have seen one of them anyway!

YY & HdaG

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10. Performance opportunities

Are you ready to perform?

Opportunities are available for support acts for many of our monthly concerts. You'll do a 20 to 30 minute spot in the first half of the show, before the main invited guest. It's a great thing to work towards and can stretch you on your musical journey.

Current Acoustic Routes members will be given priority, but we have not excluded non-members. We don't always know who is keen to have a go, so do please tell us if you want to give it a go. Talk to a committee member, or drop an email to president@acousticroutes.org.nz

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11. For Alan



Alan Waites, dearly loved husband, companion and soulmate of Karen Clarke passed away suddenly three weeks ago. Alan's untimely death rippled a shadow through the Kapiti Coast community, and has once more touched the hearts of folkies and musicians throughout the land who lost another friend. Karen and Alan had been married for just two precious years, and in this short time, they generated a lifetime of memories. Farewell Alan. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and Karen, and with your families. *Arohanui ki a koutou katoa.*

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12. About Acoustic Routes

Acoustic Routes (Wellington Folk Centre Incorporated) is a club for people who enjoy playing and listening to folk and acoustic styles of music.

In 2011, we aim to average three main events each month: an informal singaround (home-based), mostly on the 2nd Sunday of each month; an open mic night (venue yet to be decided), and a more formal concert towards the end of the month: usually the 4th Sunday of the month at 7.30 pm, with featured performers and support acts. The concerts are already agreed, but the venue yet to be decided. Changes and extra concerts can arise though, so do check the website, the Balladeer and email circulars for updates and extra information.

Membership costs \$25 a year for individuals, \$40 for couples or families, or \$15 for students and beneficiaries. It entitles you to door charge discounts at Acoustic Routes events and also at events put on by most other folk clubs. Members get priority access to performance opportunities, and can have input into the club's activities. To join, see Peter Denee, who's usually on the door at club events, or email him at treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz.

Acoustic Routes publishes this newsletter (The Balladeer) at the start of every month, and also an acoustic gig guide for the Wellington region (Acoustic Routes update) in the middle of every month. To subscribe to either, contact publicity@acousticroutes.org.nz

Acoustic Routes contacts

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Acoustic Routes update email: publicity@acousticroutes.org.nz

Postal address: PO Box 27-191 Marion Square, Wellington, New Zealand.

Website: www.acousticroutes.org.nz

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13. Other regular folk events/contacts in the region

Pukerua Bay Folk Club

When: 1st Thursday of month, 8 pm

Where: 9 Donlin Rd, Pukerua Bay

Contact: Murray or Julie Kilpatrick, (04)239 995, julmur@paradise.net.nz

Mainly Acoustic Music Club

When: 2nd Tuesday of month, 7.30pm

Where: Mayfair Cafe, 166 Main Street, Upper Hutt

Contact: Kevin & Sue Meehan (04) 970 4008

John & Susan Sutherland (04)528 2016

Wellington Bluegrass Society

When: 3rd Friday of month, 8.30 pm

Where: 54 Richmond Street, Petone

Contact: Andrew Bicknell, (04)477 0069, bluegrass@paradise.net.nz

www.huttcity.com/wellingtonbluegrass

www.myspace.com/thebluegrassclub

Mojo Acoustic

When: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Friday of month, 7pm

Where: Mojo Invincible, Willis Street

Contact: Ruth Birnie 04 905 3838, ruthbirnie@clear.net.nz

Niels Gedge 970 1170, n.gedge@xtra.co.nz

Acoustic Welsh Dragon

When: Last Thursday of month, 7.30pm

Where: Welsh Dragon Bar, Courtenay Place

Contact: Roy McGuinness

Niels Gedge 970 1170, n.gedge@xtra.co.nz

Welsh Dragon Unaccompanied Singing Session

When: Every Tuesday from 8pm

Where: Welsh Dragon Bar, Courtenay Place

Contact: Dave Barnes www.myspace.com/davidbarnesnz/

Morris dancing: Dave Barnes <http://www.morrisdancing.org.nz/>

Kapiti Live Music Club

When: 1st Wednesday of month, unplugged, acoustic rounds: 7:30 till 10pm

3rd Wednesday of month, blackboard, 7.30 pm, guest 8.30

Where: Valhalla Lounge and Garden, Poplar Avenue, Raumati South

Contact: Craig Talbot, enquiry@klmc.org.nz, www.klmc.org.nz

Ceol Alba Scottish Music Club

When: 2nd and 4th Fridays of month

Contact: Lynne Scott, 565 0164 lynne@scott.gen.nz

Levin Folk Club

When: 2nd Friday of month, 7.30 pm, blackboard concert plus guest artist. \$5 entry includes supper

4th Friday of month, 7.30 pm, acoustic night. \$2
Where: Horowhenua, Scottish Society and Pipe Band hall, cnr Bartholomew Rd and Middlesex St.
Contact: Anne Campbell annemc@ihug.co.nz

Wairarapa Folk Club

When: 2nd Friday of month
Contact: Remco de Ket, or Jenny Fremantle 06 370 1021. Email wairarapafolkclub@paradise.net.nz

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