

The Balladeer

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

Acoustic  *Routes*

www.acousticroutes.org.nz

Take advantage of technology

Would you be interested in receiving a text reminder on the day of Acoustic Routes events? If so, please email your cellphone number to the treasurer, Anne McGregor: treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz

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This newsletter pdf can be found on our website www.acousticroutes.org.nz/balladeer

1. Lava concert: Meow, 27 November, 7:30 pm



Lava is the O'Connor family (Amanda, Sean, and daughters Acacia and Rosie) joined by Canadian composer/pianist Vanya Popov, and they describe themselves as a versatile, eclectic folk/pop/rock band. All are fine singers, and the instrumental lineup is Amanda on flute, Sean on rhythm guitar, Vanya on piano and keyboards, Acacia on violin, and Rosie on keyboards, with everyone turning their hand to percussion to add some extra spice.

With four composers in the group, they focus largely on their rich original repertoire. Their original songs have been described as "moving and powerful" (*Hawkes Bay Today*), and "unique and beautiful" (Bluebird Café, Nashville), with "emotional and intellectual depth, able to reach the audience's heart". Recently returned from 6 months in North America and Europe, this is a lineup not to be missed!

OPENING ACTS

Full Fathom



Full Fathom arose after a number of session singers figured it'd be kind of fun to sing together occasionally, wound up making a CD, and found

they were a group. Dave Barnes, Dick Willard, Peter Denee, Eric Bell and Grant Wright, and now Andy Lawton, enjoy the whole scene of singing with others, and bring a range of songs that audiences can't help but joining in with. Their repertoire is based in the world of trad songs, shanties and the like, but also likely to turn out a more recent song or two.

Matt Pickering

Matthew Pickering released his debut full-length album *The Burnside Church* earlier this year, recorded at the Braeburn Studio with Robbie Duncan. It is part lament, part new season. It is intelligent, personal, honest, and Wellington-centric: think fingerpicking in alternate tunings, stories put to song.

Matt missed out on the New Horizons concert due to illness, so we are delighted that he is able to take this spot.



ENTRY \$15 (\$10 Acoustic Routes Members)

And a fabulous way to get in the groove for the Lava concert – Richard Klein and friends will be having their usual **Americana jam session from 4 to 7 pm**. You can hear some of the Wellington region's finest players and singers of country, blues, Cajun, old-timey, boogie-woogie and all-around good-time American music, and it's an open session so you can join in.

2. The Prez Sez

Another Wellyfest has come and gone – another real good one too, thanks to the hard work and planning of the dedicated bunch who organise it. Brookfield is the best place to be over Labour Weekend, no matter what the weather may throw at us. It was mostly kind to us this time.

One of the best experiences is feeling the city disappear off the radar as you head up Moore's Valley and start to slip into festival time. One of the worst is having to head out of Brookfield and back into the old routine again. It seems to take about a week.

But that's the time to sift through the experiences and sort out a few highlights.

One is the participation by so many people in so many ways. Like the opening concert on Friday night, featuring the combined efforts of clubs in the wider Wellington area, extending up the Kapiti Coast to Levin. It was a bright and buzzy way to start the weekend, I thought. That same high level of participation ran through all the blackboard concerts, workshops, dancing and numerous sessions, in halls, camps sites and sheltered corners.

The other big thing that struck me about Wellyfest (again!) is its youthfulness. It's the biggest buzz to see the new generations of performers springing forth, acknowledging the traditions but breaking new ground too. That influence is growing by the year.

That was epitomised in the superb performances of the String Contingent who explored the musical boundaries in their original pieces and then poured their energy into a powerhouse ceilidh.

It was uplifting to watch two young Wellington musicians who seem set to head along the same path. Rennie Pearson and Oscar West, as Polytropos, filled us with delight in the last formal concert of the festival programme. They, with a Celtic based repertoire of tunes and songs, played on an ever-shifting combination of fiddle, flute, guitars, small-pipes, mandolin and bass, with mouth percussion, beat boxing and a little rap thrown in for good measure.

All those experiences certainly refreshed the spirit, although the late nights may not have refreshed the ageing body.

So, now it's back to the old routine, but not quite, with heaps going on for the rest of the year and spilling into the new year – concerts, parties, more festivals. So much music... so little time.

Good folking, everyone.

Slainte, Kevin.

3. Monthly blackboard sessions, Mojo Invincible, 4 November, 7-10 pm



The Acoustic Routes open mic on the first Friday of the month at Mojo Invincible is now a regular feature, so come along and put your name down. It's informal and friendly and a good way to introduce yourself and your songs to a supportive audience.

The format is one item each, followed by a short break. Then a second turn for those who are keen and/or a jam session, depending on the mood on the night.

Mojo Invincible coffee bar, 161 Willis Street.
No charge, but we have a koha jar.

4. Monthly singaround, 6 November, 7.30 pm



Come and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of our home-based singaround session (join the circle and take a turn to perform if you wish) at Monica Cartner's place, 28 Lincoln Avenue, Tawa.

Lincoln Ave is off Main Rd (Tawa) just north of the main shopping centre (a left turn after the shops if you are travelling north on Main Rd, a right turn before the shops if you are travelling south). Number 28 is about 500 metres up Lincoln Ave on the right, roughly opposite the 1st left turn into Roy Street.

You are welcome to bring your own beer or wine. There is no door charge, but a koha is requested to cover tea and coffee, etc. This is a great way to build your confidence as a performer or get to know a few people if you are new to the scene.

Tel: 232-3717

5. Acoustic Routes Christmas Party, McGuinness Classics Seaview, 11 December, 6:30 pm

Mark the date now – this will be a fantastic event! More details in the next Balladeer.

Check www.mcguinnessclassics.co.nz for directions

6. Reviews of the 2011 Wellington Folk Festival, 21-24 October

Another great "Wellyfest" Festival at Moore's Valley over Labour Weekend. Well done the organisers! The opening Friday night concert, hosted by our club, was a nice mix from all the local folk clubs. 10DD gave it heaps, shining as the final act with the audience begging for more.

The weather for the weekend was not too bad, so those gumboots didn't get very dirty at all. There was a very good range of headline performances and workshops. Stand-outs for me were The String Contingent, the Le Blanc Bros Cajun Band (and their workshop), and AJ Clarke and Hard Candy (being Karen Clarke and friends, who launched a new CD which really is a must-buy).

As always it was lovely to meet and re-greet old friends from all over New Zealand, to make new friends, and to share their music, morning, day and night. Hats off to all those who ran workshops, "main guests" but also many of our own

members. Good coffee and food, and the usual eclectic mix of stalls selling everything from organic soap to fine musical instruments and rocking chairs. When you combine all the above, it was quite simply another superb festival.

Peter Denee

Songwriters' session

As I write myself I suppose I was bound to be drawn to the songwriters' session on Saturday afternoon at the festival – it's great to hear new material, and to see those producing it getting a good hearing. And what a terrific session it was – each of the invited songwriters had been asked to come prepared to speak for 15 minutes on what motivates them to write, and how they go about it, and then to sing a song.

We heard from Mary Livingston, Mike Moroney, Anthony John Clarke, Helen Dorothy, Paddy Burgin and Laura Collins – some of our members and some visitors.

It was a real treat to hear about the passion and inspiration that sometimes result in the genesis of an idea, and the various processes that lead to the moment when it gets aired in public as a song. Many thanks to Pat Higgins who organised and compered the event, and to the songwriters who shared their thoughts so willingly.

Janette Munneke

7. Obituaries

Piers Hayman (8 July 1938–25 September 2011)

Piers Hayman, who performed at our club's Winter Blues Concert on 24th July this year, passed away at Auckland Hospital on 25 September 2011 at the age of 73, having finally lost an 8-year fight with prostate cancer.

He traded his violin for a guitar as a child, and started his musical career in a skiffle group, then formed a duo with Peter Cox in the '50s and performed at folk clubs all over the UK. He moved to the Netherlands in '73 and formed a duo with Dutch guitarist John Kuiper, all around Europe, eventually producing three albums in the late '70s.

He moved to New Zealand in 1982 and made many friends during his varied careers, which included folk singer, artist, art educator, TV and radio host (including in recent years the Waiheke Island radio under his pseudonym "Arthur"), newspaper columnist, ornithologist and author. In 1995 he stood as a candidate for the local council. Notable among his publications as a painter of birds was *Discovering the Birds of New Zealand* (1984). He was a founding member of the New Zealand Bird Rescue Trust. His last book was his folk music autobiography, *A Few Grains of Sand*, and a CD of the same name in late 2010.

Despite taking a break from folk music for several years, he came back into the fold in the last couple of years of his life (encouraged by the Devonport Folk Club and Roger Giles in particular) and his July concert at the Meow Café for Acoustic Routes was to be his first solo “public performance”, and that meant a great deal to him. It was also to be his last.

Peter Denee

Bert Jansch (b Glasgow 1943 – 5 October 2011)

Sadly Bert Jansch died recently, and rather than list his achievements as one of Britain’s music royals (check Google), I thought I’d talk about how he influenced me.

As a guitarist there was something about Bert’s playing that was very understandable, simple and yet almost impossible to work out. Ever since his duo albums with John Rembourné in the late sixties I have been captivated by his style. He never multitracked or used electronic tricks and his playing was always pure and reachable for novices like me.

“Blackwater Side” (a regular folk song for most of us) became one of his theme songs, and an example of his counter-rhythms winding around what is a simple melody. Underneath this complexity are four basic two-finger jazz chords in open tunings. He could magically find the melody by hammers and lifts of the open strings. Varying rhythms would pour out of him and his fingers played tricks with my brain while he sang in a plain raspy monotone. All the makings of a fine Scott/English style folk singer, and at one time he was even called the British Bob Dylan because of his voice. As stupid as that comparison was, Bob and Bert are still two of my gods.

In a recent interview (with Eric Clapton – one of many fine musicians he influenced) this shy and reclusive man explained that folk music was at the root of all his work, and his first love. How true is that – keep on hammering, my man!

Julian Ward

8. Alex and BB, Wellington Bluegrass Society, 18 November, 8:00 pm

Forget all your preconceptions and prejudices, Alex and BB (aka Alex Borwick and Catherine “BB” Bowness) will redefine your view of the banjo, with their exquisite combo of 5-string banjo and Irish tenor banjo. Their virtuosity will astound you, as will the variety of styles and emotions their music encompasses.

\$10 at the door.

Wellington Bluegrass Society, 54 Richmond Street, Petone

9. Subs reminder

Subscriptions have been coming in steadily, so many thanks to all of you who have signed up for the year (1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012). To those who haven't, please show your support for this great community that we all derive so much pleasure from.

\$25 Single

\$40 Double/family (children under 18)

\$15 Student, life member partners, beneficiaries

Payment options

1. Post cheque (made out to "Wellington Folk Centre Inc.") and your details (below) to Acoustic Routes WFC : P.O. Box 27-191 Marion Square WELLINGTON 6141
2. Pay by internet banking to account payee "Wellington Folk Centre Inc.": ANZ account 01 0505 0182241 00 (*ensure your name is included for reference*) and simultaneously forward your details to treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz .
3. Speak to a committee member on the door at an Acoustic Routes event.

Many thanks.

10. Are you ready to perform?



Committee Member Diana Bastion is compiling a directory of people who are interested in performing at Acoustic Routes events, including support acts for our monthly concerts.

We don't always know who is keen to have a go, so do please tell us if you want to step up. president@acousticroutes.org.nz

11. 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.

We have several regular events each month. The first Friday of the month is open mic night at Mojo Invincible, 161 Willis Street.

The second Sunday of the month is the singaround. This moves to a different member's home each month and is a relaxed opportunity to share your latest song or tune, increase your performing confidence, and enjoy the company of other folkies.

The fourth Sunday of the month generally features a concert, usually with a visiting artist and support acts from amongst our membership. These concerts are at Meow, 9 Edward Street, Wellington, until further notice.

Membership of Acoustic Routes 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, email 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

12. Acoustic Routes contacts

President: Kevin Ikin president@acousticroutes.org.nz

Correspondence: Monica Cartner secretary@acousticroutes.org.nz

Publicity: publicity@acousticroutes.org.nz

Membership: Anne McGregor treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz

Balladeer: Philippa Boy, Jaap Jasperse balladeer@acousticroutes.org.nz

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

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

Website: www.acousticroutes.org.nz

Facebook: www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Acoustic-Routes/89128457590

13. Other regular folk events/contacts in the region

Ceol Alba Scottish Music Club

When: 2nd and 4th Fridays of month

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

International Folkdancing

When: Every Wednesday from February to December, 7.30 to 9.15

Where: Tarrant Dance Studios, 125 Cuba St, Wellington

Contact: Cashy Yates (04) 569 1618 cashy@ihug.co.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: The Dog and Duck Jazz Bistro, Lindale

Contact: Ruth Birnie, enquiry@klmc.org.nz, <http://www.klmc.org.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

Mainly Acoustic Music Club

When: (Mostly) every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm
Where: Mayfair Cafe, 116 Main Street, Upper Hutt
Contact: Kevin & Sue Meehan (04) 970 4008
For enquiries or news letter email harrier@paradise.net.nz

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

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

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

Wairarapa Folk Club

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

Wellington Bluegrass Society

When: 3rd Friday of month, 8.00 pm
Where: 54 Richmond Street, Petone
Contact: Andrew Bicknell, (04)477 0069, bluegrass@paradise.net.nz
www.huttcity.com/wellingtonbluegrass
www.myspace.com/thebluegrassclub

Welsh Dragon Unaccompanied Singing Session

When: Every Tuesday from 8pm
Where: Welsh Dragon Bar, Courtenay Place
Contact: Dave Barnes www.myspace.com/davidbarnesnz/