



The Cutty Wren Newsletter



www.cuttywrenfolkclub.com

Hi, all!

The Club continues to go steadily on. We're well into our 60th year now, and we'll have a celebration later in the year. But let's see what we have coming up:

January 28th is when we will be celebrating Burns Night, our host, as usual will be **Gordon Mallory**, who knows a thing or two about Burns and Scottish song. We will have the traditional repast of haggis, neeps and tatties – so make sure you put your order in. Scottish songs and tunes are the order of the night – but feel free to perform something else – we are sure Burns wouldn't mind.



For **February 4th** we've sent an invitation to members of local community choirs to come along and see if our singaround evenings might appeal to them. Several local clubs are doing the same around this time, in partnership with Saltburn Folk Festival and the Access Folk project. So we'll make any visitors welcome, as I believe we usually do, and ask if our performers can perhaps do something lively to appeal to them. It's free admission for everyone that night too!



We have a **Hot Spot** on **February 11th**, an evening when a performer is offered the chance to put a set together.

George Featherston, (yours truly) has volunteered to have a

go, and I intend to sing some of the traditional rural folk songs our great-great grandparents knew, and say something about their origins.

February 18th will be "**Singers and Musicians**", that is, Club regulars and visitors who will get up and perform a couple of numbers, and perhaps more if time allows. When the club started we relied more on the guests for the songs, but it's a tribute to the folk scene that more and more people were inspired to learn material and have a go. We have a very diverse range of song from old British traditional to Americana via material brewed up by some of our talented members. All are welcome and audience are needed as much as performers.

We welcome **Janice Burns and Jon Doran** on **February 25th**.

This Anglo-Scottish duo very much has roots in traditional song, and use guitar and mandolin to enhance their personal take on it. They've two CD's out now. I've listened to them online, was impressed by their lyrical performance and am very much looking forward to seeing them live.



We've an extra guest night on **March 4th** when we have old Redcar friend **Martyn Wyndham-Read**.

We've booked him as he may not be touring much now and we couldn't let this chance slip. Famed for promoting the Australian bush songs he learned over there in the late '50's and writing many great songs of his own, he's always been a promoter of the songs of late local icon Graeme Miles. If you've seen him you don't need to be told more and if you haven't, DON'T miss this chance.

Our own **Ian Tyzack** has a **Hot Spot** on **March 11th**. Ian is a fine interpreter of modern folk, covering a wide range of songs that mean something. He's also written his own, and they're very good. He has his own take on his material and is a genial performer with a clear delivery backed by fine guitar work. You'll enjoy this!



It'll be **Singers and Musicians** on **March 18th** and any other dates I don't specifically mention, and then we have

Tom McConville and Andy Watt on **March 25th**. Tom

has been on the scene for many years and may be unique as having done many a solo gig with only his fiddle to accompany his singing! He's been in plenty of well-respected groups as well and this time he's with guitarist Andy Watt. You'll get great songs in Tom's own style, some amazing fiddle playing and a large dose of humour. Serious entertainment!



Reg Meuross is a singer-songwriter who was born in Stockton but now based in Somerset, and he will be our guest on **April 8th**. He's an influential figure who has been around long

enough to have 15 albums to his credit. His songs are powerful and make you think. "And Jesus Wept", about one of those Shot at Dawn in WW1, is heart rending, while "Lizzie Loved a Highwayman", looking at Dick Turpin from his lover's point of view is poignant. I've seen him recently at Stockton, and I reckon this will be a good night.

April 22nd brings a **Theme Night of "St. George"**. We used to do a lot of such evenings; they encouraged us to dig into our gander-bags (to quote Rambling Sid Rumpo) and find something to match the idea. It's not actually compulsory and there is a loose connection clause (!) but it can be fun. St. George was martyred for his faith c. 300 AD and is the patron of many countries and cities beside England. Sadly some unpleasant people have hijacked his flag in recent times, so perhaps we could think of something to show the positive side of our land and its people?



Image by Freepic



The trio "**Other Roads**" will guest on **May 11th**. They are Pete Abbott, singer and mandolin player, Gregor Borland, fiddler (eight times Scottish Champion!) and Dave Walmsley, singer-songwriter and multi instrumentalist. They're a high-profile band, but Pete says his focus is always on being an entertainer, while Dave has a serious sense of humour. I looked at their repertoire online as well, and I reckon we'll have a great time!

On **May 27th** our own **Trevor Taylor** has a **Hot Spot**. Trevor is a long-time member and performer at the Club with a wide repertoire and a special affection for the



old Music Hall and those singers our parents loved to hear on the radio. Trevor's a lively performer who always engages with his audience and I know this will be a very entertaining night.



Looking ahead we have **Fil Campbell and Tom McFarland** on June 3rd



With a **Hot Spot** from long serving local folkie **Ann Gurney** on June 17th.



Looking back, we've had some excellent special nights. I've very much enjoyed **Gordon Mallory's** Hot Spot in September, and

especially because he does songs related to Yorkshire, like Fred Moorman's "Miller by the Shore."

Lynne Heraud and Pat Turner

were as zany and funny as ever in October, but as sharp and perceptive as well. "What The Heck's Your Name?" struck chord with a few of us!



The Hot Spot with our old friends **Paul and Alan** on October 29th was a very enjoyable occasion, with our favourite songs from their repertoire. I always love "A Sailor Home".

We had a very good turnout for "**We Will Remember Them**" in November and a good number of powerful songs. We didn't go for the "glory" of war; rather so many songs were a wish for peace. We keep hoping.



Image by PNGtree.com



As expected the **Brothers Gillespie** drew a good crowd and were as lyrical and evocative as ever. They have a personal view that they put over and they do it well;

what interests them is people and their quiet lives.



We'd booked **Plumhall** – Nick Hall and Michelle Plum - for December 3rd, but at the last minute Michelle wasn't well at all, so we had Nick playing solo. He was very good as well, with a lot of unusual songs. When I look at my notes and see his finisher, "What's so Funny about Peace, Love and Understanding?" I find I'm still moved.

Our **AGM** on the 12th December showed that we're still solvent and doing well.

However our **Treasurer Marj** is standing down from the job as she's carried this burden long enough.

It will take more than one person to do what she's done for so long, so if there's any aspect of this role you can do, see me or Nigel. Without her dedication and efficiency we'd have found it much harder to carry on after we sadly lost John Taylor.

And finally our **Christmas Party** was a grand occasion with an excellent buffet efficiently organised by Marj.

It was a treat to have **Vince' grand-daughter and friends** along to play as well. They're lively and fine musicians and it's good to see youngsters taking to the music. With so many friends and great songs it was a lovely end to the Club year.



"Singers and Musicians"

nights continue to go well, sometimes busier than others but we always have a good time. It's the regulars who make it possible, but we do have some very interesting visitors as well. Although not mentioned in the title, there's scope for poets and storytellers to contribute too!



Sadly we recently lost another folk friend, **Di Henderson**. It was only in the summer that she was guest at the Club, and we'll miss her powerful singing, great songs and her commitment to the world's underdogs. Quite a few Club members were able to go to the funeral and the gathering at the Bowls Club afterwards.

So the detail:

We meet **every Tuesday evening at the Redcar Borough Park Bowling Club, Thwaites Lane, off Redcar Lane, Redcar TS10 2FD.**

Turn off Redcar Lane at the big red Racecourse sign. Thwaites Lane runs between two sections of the cemetery and we're at the lane end a bit to the left. We've a fine modern and accessible room and a good bar run by our capable hostess Gemma.

Doors open at 7.15 p.m. Please don't arrive before this as it takes time to set up the room before people can take their seats. **Singing starts about 7.45 p.m.** and we finish at **10.45 p.m.**

For those who want more or can't get out now we still have the **Cutty Wren Singazoomaround on Thursday evenings**. These open **at 7-45 p.m.** and the singing is **from 8 p.m. to 9.45 p.m.**

They are hosted by the inimitable **Tony Morris** and there's now a lively online community from various parts of Britain and abroad. Contact our Secretary **Nigel Carden** for the link on info@cuttywrenfolkclub.com.

That's our usual contact point for queries and we have a website at www.cuttywrenfolkclub.com. You can ring me on 01642 471769 as well.

Thanks, then to all of you who keep the Cutty Wren such a good place for this music, especially **Gemma, Nigel for editing this, Alison** for making it attractive, the committee, the MCs, and the regulars for being our bedrock.

See you soon
George F

