

The Top Half Times

Editor: A Few Songs Short Of An LP
Sub. Editor: Up The Creek Without A Folkie
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CELEBRATING FOLK MUSIC IN THE CENTRE

EVATORIAL

Ceud Mile Fáilte

One Hundred Thousand Welcomes! I couldn't have said it better myself, (I think you just did...Sub.Ed) welcome to the first Top Half Times since the little shindig out at Glen Helen in June. The feedback from the festival has been very positive, and thank you one and all for being part of it, and making it such a successful weekend. There's something rather special and unique about Top Half Folk Festivals, and the 39th with its mixture of the older and the younger generation of folkies continued the tradition. We must do it again sometime. In fact, why don't we do it again up in The Top End out at Mary River on the Queens Birthday weekend June 11th-14th 2010. (why didn't I think of that...Sub.Ed?) See you there.

Our favourite quote of the festival was from Gareth Evans after hearing Ted Egan say how good it was to see so many younger performers at the festival.

"It's good to see you old people here too"

As many of you know the Festival Committee organised a couple of very successful fundraising events last year, one of which was of course the St. Andrew's Night and so, being predominately traditionalists and because we couldn't pass up the opportunity to have both a good time, top up the coffers, and pay our respects to all things Scottish, here we are again. Enjoy the night, and try not to upset too many of the Scots here tonight, it's not really their fault, it's just an accident of birth.

(Note: The comments of the Editors are not necessarily their own, they just come out that way)

Forthcoming Events

1. We have been asked if we would be interested in hosting Vin Garbutt on the 21st March next year, and we are looking at various options. For those who haven't seen or heard of Vin before, let me just say that he is one of the legends of the folk music scene. An English award-winning singer songwriter, his live performances are nothing short of superb. If you don't cry through laughing too much, you may well cry from listening to one of his powerful and moving songs. We'll let you know if it's a goer or not.

2. On the 11th of April next year it will be the 150th anniversary of John McDouall Stuart arriving in Central Australia. As part of the celebrations a folk concert is being planned out at the Owen Springs Homestead/Ranger Station. Further details will be released nearer the time.

AND NOW FOR THE SCOTS



Scotland for the Uninitiated; Travel...

Travel in Scotland can be a risk taking and arduous adventure. Folks have been crossing the border on holiday since Edward the 1st of England first set the precedence, and Scots have been laying on suitable receptions ever since. A word of warning for present day visitors,

the fitting of snow chains to cars tyres is not obligatory but advisable especially in the months from January to December, and in Scotland, drive in the middle of the road, both ways!

Geography...

Scotland is the oldest rock on the British Isles, proving once and for all that Scotland was here first. It has two great lakes or lochs known as Loch Lomond and Loch Ness, put there by the Scottish tourist board to attract visitors. The others are for the use of absentee land lords who generally reside south of the border.

Scotland has lots of weather and usually all on the same day, apart from public holidays and the Glasgow Fair, when it can be guaranteed to rain pissistantly.

History...

Scotland only existed in British history when she was at war with the English. At all other times she fades into the Scotch mist to come alive again when the British (England) need a war.

Like many places in Europe, Scotland was invaded by the Romans and Sir Harry Lauder's famous song "Roman in the Gloamin" is a record of this, (it is now available on C.D. too) unlike other countries they did not succeed, and decided to honour the bravery of the natives, preserving their country's natural beauty, and to help keep the English out, by building two huge walls across the A1, M74, and the M6. Scotland faded into the mists of history, to reemerge with a system of government built around the family or clan. But families are famous for

falling out, so this system of government became known as the 'feuding system'. The feuding became so bad that the wearing of tartan, identifying each individual member as a member of a particular clan was banned for 36 years. Scots complained bitterly and were eventually allowed to put their clothes back on. Scotland was built by King Kenneth Mac Alpine (that's why Scots are called Ken) who dropped a big stone from a place called Scone. Thus making the Dropped Scone of Stone and monarchs are still being crowned on it today. (or are they??) After him came a great many James' and a women called Mary, (she married a dolphin), and her son took on duel registration, but was only referred to in books by his English registration number.

As we are now up to and past the Union of the Crowns/Parliament, Scotland has disappeared again into the mists. She will re-emerge at some date in the future with the dissolution of this union.

Wild Life...

Scotland is 'midge' country, this insect is responsible for such Scottish delights as the Highland Fling. They appear at only one time each year-when you are on holiday. The female of the species bites so take care only to approach the male.

Whisky...

When buying whisky the following rules apply;

- 1/ Always ask the price.
- 2/ Try to get someone else to buy it for you.
- 3/ There are 3 types of Whisky, blended, malt and someone else's.
- 4/ Always check the date. The locals are always trying to fob visitors off with old stock.

Two popular ways to drink whisky

1. Drive down Cromwell Drive, stop at well known two storey establishment. Knock on front door, enter house, climb stairs, negotiate dog, pass through lounge and kitchen on way through to back patio, sit at table, ask for a blue label with ice and repeat order as necessary.

2. As above, but ask for single malt!!

Religion...

Public opinion in Scotland has decreed that only 2 religions are allowed, Kaflicks and Proddies. So, if you are a Jew, or whatever, coming to Scotland, you must decide if you are going to be a Kaflick Jew or a Proddie Jew. Then you must go to the appropriate place of worship. Celtic Park, the home of the Glasgow Celtic football club if you decide to become a Kaflick: or Ibrox, the home of Glasgow Rangers, if you decide to become a Proddie. If you have decided that neither suits you then you must be a Wee Free and loose any sense of humour you ever had.

To Go and to Do...

No Travellers Guide would be complete without some helpful suggestions of places to go and things to do, so here are a few from Iain Campbell:

1/ Culzean castle, Ayreshire. This building is of great historical significance because it is one of the few places Mary Queen of Scots did not sleep in. Please obtain a second mortgage before entering through the gateway. Alternately park further along the coast and walk along the beach. No one collects money at the beach entrance.

2/ Go Island hopping. Please check the availability before you set out. There are 786 islands around the coast of Scotland (at low tide this number drops to 498). The summer islands are only visible from May till September, and a few others are towed into a sheltered port in the winter.

3/ Go hang gliding over Balmoral

4/ Visit the Victoria Falls at Kinlochewe discovered by Livingston in 1855

5/ Visit the grave of Rob Roy McGregor in Argyll, Dumfries, Aberdeen, Lanark.....

6/ Visit the cave where Bruce saw the spider in Argyll, Dumfries, Aberdeen, Lanark.....

Bide a Wee then Haste ye Back .

5 out of 4 Scotsmen don't understand fractions.

If you are looking to enhance your cd collection, then the Editors of this reputable newspaper suggest you look no further than the following item.



It has been suggested to us that we try and arrange a live concert sometime soon. (We may act stupid but we're not barking mad.....Ed)

Here's a sample:-

Humble Scottie

No more perfect dog exists
Than this humble little Scot.
Other breeds, they envy me
For everything they're not.
My shortness is an asset
When vermin must be found.
The Border Collie, low it slinks.
It still can't go to ground.

That herder has my sympathy.
He's really not quite right.
Moving mutton back and forth all day;
Poor dog just aint too bright.
Low-slung is the Basset,
But those ears are a deception.
They're big but they don't stand like mine
And improve TV. reception.

An Afghan's locks, remarkable,
But who wants a coat to tangle.
One can't be prissy 'bout their looks
With vicious rats to wrangle.
No more perfect dog exists
Than this humble little Scot.
Other breeds, they envy me
For everything they're not.

Further details available from:-

HumbleScottie@woofwoof.dinner.now

Scots hate to see waste, no matter where it is. So when Mary saw the Niagara Falls for the first time she said it was a waste of water - and a plumber in Glasgow could fix them in half an hour.

Doctor, I can't pronounce my F's, T's and H's. "Well you can't say fairer than that then".

After five days in hospital I took a turn for the nurse.

A Midge in Your Hand is Worth Two up Your Kilt.

A young reporter from Glasgow was flown out by his newspaper to cover the after-effects of a particularly violent earthquake in south-east Europe. He filed a graphic story which opened: "God sat on a mountain-top here today, and looked down on a scene of. . ." The reporter got an email back by return from his editor in Glasgow. It said: "Forget earthquake, man! Interview God."

RUMOUR 1

Two well known local Scottish artists have taken up dot painting and are wondering if there is any well known art centre in town where they can exhibit their craft.

RUMOUR 2

Scott Balfour refuses to accept that golf originated in Scotland. "No Scotsman would invent a game in which it was possible to lose a ball."

RUMOUR 3

Mud maps as a means of giving directions to people were first drawn in Scotland. (I would have thought that was obvious.....Ed) And for those who don't know what a mud map is, here's one of Australia.



Weather:- It's snow fair

You know summer has arrived in Scotland when:

The rain is warm.

People open their curtains.

It never gets dark - apart from night time.

The rain clouds are fluffier.

You can take off one of your three jumpers.

Your umbrella gets a sun tan. Locals drive around in their cars with the windows open and the heaters on.

Craft and gift shops unexpectedly appear from nowhere.

Scottish Suntan

RUMOUR 4

A certain JW enjoyed himself so much recently he's contemplating doing another concert soon in Timber Ck. and The Editor has recommended a place to stay.

RUMOUR 5

Well known local "Director Of Frequent Flyers" has been having car parking problems. Her last passenger Morgan Flint is quoted as saying "No worries I'll walk to the kerb."

RUMOUR 6

The Editor is not a full-time Ex - English Gentleman



SGIAN DUBH



The sgian dubh (Scottish Gaelic pronunciation: [ski:n dy:], or lightly diphthongised [skiən dy:] "skee(a)n doo") is a ceremonial knife (Gaelic sgian) worn as part of the modern Scottish Highland dress along with the kilt. It is worn tucked into the hose with only the pommel visible. The sgian dubh is normally worn on the right leg, but can also be worn on the left, depending on whether the wearer is right or left-handed.

Great Scots

John Logie Baird-Invented Television
Alexander Bell-Invented Telephone
John Dunlop-Invented Sandshoes
Charles Macintosh-Waterproof Fabrics (necessity is mother of invention..Ed)
John Napier-Invented Logarithms
Alexander Fleming-Invented Penicillin
Kirkpatrick MacMillan-Invented Bicycle (Leonardo might disagree...Ed)
James Watt-Invented Steam Engine
Humble Scottie-invented bad dog cd

Was the Rabbie Burns song "Green Grow The Rashes" about bacon?

Letter To The Editor

Dear Cur

I would like to congratulate you on your very fine publication, if only that were possible. I have a bone to pick with you, I feel you have been barking up the wrong tree with some of your dogmatic views. I really don't think you can see the wood for the trees, and if you could you wouldn't have a leg to stand on.

Yours sincerely,
Humble Scottie

Sporran wearers may need licence

Kilt wearers could face prosecution if they do not have a licence for their sporran, under new legislation which has been introduced in Scotland.

The laws are designed to protect endangered species like otters, whose fur used to be favoured by sporran makers. The law already applies to other vulnerable animals like badgers, deer, wildcats, hedgehogs, bats, lynx, moles, seals, and humble Scottie dogs

I had a ploughman's lunch the other day. He wasn't very happy.

THE WISDOM OF GRANNIE

“Dinny ask the Almighty- he’s a busy man.”

Don’t pray for something you can do yourself.

“A red nose makes a raggit back.”

If you drink too much, you may have no money for necessities.

“Yir grandpa’s like thi weather-nae pattern.”

The Scottish climate is like your grandfather-completely unpredictable.

“The rain is God’s way o cleanin the coos.”

Even bad weather has its uses.

“Weans wi’ big ears tak it all in.”

Be careful what you say in front of children.

“Dinny get yir knickers in a fankle”

Don’t fret so.

“Stoke up wi porridge.”

Breakfast is the best meal of the day.

RUMOUR 7

Mistakenly identified as one of the performers on the main concert at the Folk Festival & willingly accepting gushing praise, an ex Alice, now Adelaide financial advisor, has been seen impersonating a folk singer in various North Adelaide pubs

Sword Dancing

For almost a thousand years, it has been a demonstration of courage and dexterity, the successful completion of which heralded victory in battle.

But the Ghillie Callum, or sword dance as it is better known, has now been defeated by red tape, according to dance judges who have cancelled its performance at a Highland games, claiming a licence is now required to "transport a dangerous weapon".

Not so here in Central Australia and once again our thanks to our very own Zanerin Rumbal for giving of his time to entertain us tonight.



Piping

There are many stories and jokes about bagpipes such as:-

An old Scot, after living for many years in a far-away land, was dying. He called his doctor and asked for one last favour. The doctor agreed and the old Scot said he wanted to hear the pipes played one more time before he died. A piper was duly summoned, and marched up and down the hallway playing mightily. In the morning, the old Scot was so invigorated he arose, dressed, and went home. All of the other patients were dead.

We wouldn’t dare make any jokes about our very own local Piper Neil Ross, he’s a living legend and very much part of our folk family. Thanks Neil



Painters

There was a Scottish painter named Willie Beattie who often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further. he got away with this for some time, but eventually the Congregational Church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings. Willie put in a bid, and, he got the job. Well, Willie was up on the scaffolding, painting away, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Willie clear off the scaffold. Willie was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried: "Oh, Lord, Oh, Lord, forgive me; what should I do?" And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke. **“Repaint! Repaint! And thin no more!”**

Chopsticks are one of the reasons the Chinese never invented custard.

DON THE BRUCE Tonight’s Special Guest



As you know there are plenty of Scots living here in Alice Springs however, quantity is all very well but what about quality! Hard to find these days, but we will keep looking. In the meantime, we went to South Australia, and for one night only, at great expense to the management and fresh from his triumphant appearance at the last Top Half where he graced both the stage and the bar we are pleased to have with us the wonderful Mr. Don Bruce. A terrific singer and fabulous guitar player. (I know he works for a wine company in the Barossa and he’s a friend of yours, but there’s no need to go over-board.....Sub Ed.) (Yes there is I’m running out of shiraz..Ed.)

Here’s what he has to say about himself.....

- I have been around folk clubs and festivals in the UK and Australia since big Jock was a boy, and have been playing at these for 30 years. I tend to play finger style guitar and have been strongly influenced by the likes of Ralph McTell, Richard Thompson and Stefan Grossman. In addition I have always been passionate about Scottish folk music, and this was the original inspiration for me to pick up guitar. I tend not to take myself too seriously and love a bit of a laugh. I was in WA from 1979 to 1996 and played at all the folk clubs and festivals (including the National) either solo, or as a member of a couple of bands.

o **Ten Pound Tourist.** This was a pub bush band that did the WA circuit in the early to mid 80's. This band specialised in good time driving bush material, that was great to drink to! We also organised regular bush dances around the State.

o **Harvey, Harper and Bruce.** This trio performed around the State doing melody driven folk and blues based material, both original and standards.

o I also did many years of restaurant gigs including a season as a Minstrel in tights at "Dirty Dicks" but we won't go there!

o Was delighted to be the guest performer at a Scottish Burns night celebration in Perth for 5 years. This was new to me as I had never been invited back to anything!

o In SA I have played a couple of times at the now defunct State festival at Victor Harbour and at the Kapunda Celtic festival. Recently in the Barossa I have been back to playing in restaurants and having a wonderful time jamming and having a few beers with the locals at acoustic nights.

To conclude, it has been my absolute pleasure, though never invited, to have played at the Top Half Festival on 3 occasions.

Note: The Editor wanted to respond to Don's last comment about invites, but we can't afford the legal fees....Sub Ed.

Haggis Myths



- **They have one leg shorter than another.**
- This misconception originated with a respected English commentator. However, the haggis's legs are all the same size. Any apparent difference in length could be due to the haggis's habit of standing in a bog to confuse predators. Quite why this would confuse a predator is unclear as the haggis would be unable to run away, being as it is stuck in a bog.

Haggii live with the monster in Loch Ness.

This is nonsense. Haggises are not aquatic. They are also extremely wary of any creature larger than them and would not consort with a large carnivore, even one supposed to be mythical. There is also nothing to suggest that there is any truth behind the rumor that swimming with haggises strapped to your feet will prevent monster attacks. There have been no recorded attacks on anyone by the Loch Ness monster, haggis attachments notwithstanding.

"Contraceptives should be used on all conceivable occasions."

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

Why do bagpipers leave their cases on the dashboard?
So they can park in a handicapped zone.

Entertainment



If you enjoy the entertainment tonight then raise your glasses to the following:-

- Scott & Sally Balfour
- The Swinging Sporrans
- Don Bruce
- Neil Ross
- Zanerin Rumbal

If you have a problem tell someone who cares!

Sponsors

As we all know there are some terrific people out there that help to make such nights possible and our thanks go to:-

- Bruce & Di Deans..Beautifully Dressed
- Barry Skipsey.. Picture Perfect
- Daran Rumbal..Music Legend

Mel & Neil Phillips..Very Sound People

Jenny Pender..Printer supreme
Karlo Amanono & the staff of the All Seasons Oasis..Hospitality Plus

" Mrs. Campbell could you give something for the home for alcoholics?" " Certainly, come back about 10pm, my hubby should be home by then."

The English General got a case of cold feet before the battle against the Highlanders. Calling his command together he said: " Men, we're going to get beaten, but, we must fight as bravely as we can. If worse comes to worse, run for it; as for me, I'm a little lame so will make a start now."

RUMOUR 8

The back page of this unbiased publication has been reserved by the Scottish "Victories Over The English" Organisation
(Bang goes any extra revenue....Ed)

Old Scottish Saying

Money is flat and was meant to be piled up.

In Conclusion

The organising committee of the Alice Springs Folk Club would like to thank you all for supporting tonight and helping us raise funds for future festivals and events. If you want to drop us a line any time we can be contacted on

tophalffolkfest@gmail.com

In the meantime we would just like to say:-
Slàinte mhor a h-uile là a chi 's nach fhaic

Great health to you every day that I see you and every day that I don't.

Ith gu leòir!

Bon Appetit

.....**And**

"Mar sin leibh an dràsda."

McHooroo For Now