

NORTH DORSET & SOUTH SOMERSET REPORT

BY OUR CORRESPONDENT FOR
NORTH DORSET & SOUTH SOMERSET

JOHN WALTHAM

Dorset born singer, song collector and organiser of Trooper Song Sessions, Dorset Song Weekends and occasional one-off events, as well as guesting at a few Scots and Irish festivals.

Trooper Song Sessions

I'm writing this a couple of weeks early, as I'm off to the Emerald Isle for a couple of weeks, should catch a few songs and a fair bit of fiddle music while I'm in Donegal (I understand that other parts of Ireland exist, but why settle for second best?).

The sad news of **Bob Patten's** death came as a shock – I knew he'd been ill, but had heard nothing since the early summer, so Jackie's call came out of the blue. I always enjoyed his company, and the contribution they both made to the documentation of the South West's folklore was immense. I understand there is another book on its way and will look forward to it. Many years ago he was a terrific help to me when I foolishly accepted an invitation to speak at a folklore seminar, and he always had an interesting and sometimes controversial viewpoint. The large attendance at the service was a tribute to the man and his broad interests.

The session season's in full swing and there would appear to be new ones starting all over the place. At our own music session a couple of days ago I was told of one fairly new one, at the **Manor Arms, North Perrott, TA18 7SG** on the second Tuesday of the month. It caters for all levels of musicianship and singing, and the pub's a good 'un, so if you're in the Crewkerne area, give it a go. Another one I've yet to try is held every Sunday in **Dorchester at the Convivial Rabbit**, DT1 1TT. For the last year or so there's been a quarterly "solstice/equinox session" at the **Mitre at Sandford Orcas**, DT9 4RU, on the Thursday nearest to the relevant date. Now another session's started to fill up that third Thursday slot during the remaining months, but this one's at the **Gaggle of Geese, Buckland Newton**, DT2 7BS. It won't run in July or August (are you still with me?). Nice to see people making the effort to avoid treading on each others' toes. Having said that, I'm told that there's another evening starting at the **Blackmore Vale Inn, Marnhull**, DT10 1JJ on – guess what – the third Thursday! I believe there's still a session on that date running in **Sturminster Newton, at the Bull**. I live roughly equidistant from these venues, so choices will have to be made. I hope there are enough attendees to go round.....

That sounds a bit reminiscent of the **Bridport area**, a Mecca for session enthusiasts, and (particularly on Tuesdays) seemingly filled with sessions, acoustic nights and open mics (for those that will – I'm no fan of mics in pubs). Here's a small selection: on the 1st Tuesday, pop

North Dorset & South Somerset Clubs & Sessions: your details welcome

King William, Barn St, Crewkerne, Somerset, 1st Monday of the month. Music session, but they did allow me a song! And the music's lively.

Baker Arms, Child Okeford, Blandford, Dorset 2nd Thursday of the month, charles@childokeford.plus.com. A long established and usually very enjoyable evening of music and song

The Plough, Manston, Sturminster Newton, DT10 1HB. 4th Thursday of the month. 01963 363816. Popular evening of mixed music and song.

Eli's (Rose & Crown), Huish Episcopi, Langport. 3rd Saturday of the month, not June, July, August. 01823 481253. "And on the 8th Day, He created Eli's, and Lo! there was singing"

Camelot Music Nights, Davis Hall, West Camel, Yeovil. See the web for details. Concert nights to a high standard, pre-booked slots only, but good listening and a broad range of material.

Wessex Acoustic Folk Club, RBL, Blandford. See web for details. Fridays monthly. First rate guests with excellent support acts. Not cheap, but worth it.

Chalk & Cheese, Maiden Newton. 3rd Sunday, usually. Starts around 5.00pm for an early finish - check with 01300 321396. Mainly music, with some songs. Always interesting and fun.

Unicorn, Bayford, Wincanton, BA9 9NL 1st Wednesday of the month, music only. 07788 517827. Can be very good, and the cider's excellent.

The Trooper Inn Stourton Caundle, near Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 2JW. 2nd Sunday of the month, **The Trooper Folk Song Night** ®, 8.30pm. not July or August. John Waltham, 01963 362890, jhnwaltham@yahoo.co.uk. Songs mostly - but musicians welcome too. Contrary to popular belief, John does not lynch anyone who sings non-traditional stuff!

And 4th Sunday of the month, **The Trooper Folk Music Night** ®, Mandy Waltham, 01963 362890, jhnwaltham@yahoo.co.uk Emphasis will be on tunes rather than songs. All welcome, to join in or listen.

out to the **New Inn, Shipton Gorge**, DT6 4LT – mainly singing; on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, at the **Woodman**, DT6 3NZ, there's songs and music; on the third Tuesday, the **Lord Nelson**, DT6 3LL hosts an evening that's traditional music based, while the **George at Chideock** has a mainly singing evening the same night; the following night (3rd Wednesday) takes you up the road to **Beaminster** and the **Fleet Club**, DT8 3EF; and on the 3rd Thursday you can stroll along the road to the **Beach and Barnicott**, DT6 3NQ. Just for a change, try the **Anchor** out at **Salway Ash**, DT6 5HU on the 4th Tuesday. My thanks to **Alan 12T** for much of this information. And that's by no means all that's going on in that area. *Asking around at one session that you've enjoyed will usually lead you to another one!*

John Waltham

01963 362890 • jhnwaltham<at>yahoo.co.uk

**Dorset 1-Line Summaries** (= 1st line of detailed online listings)**DETAILED LISTINGS** in www.folklife-directory.uk/West-Country — our **online Members DIRECTORY**⇒ our **Membership** (only **£15** a year! see p 3) includes **listings & your publicity & FW** posted to you

❖ MEMBERS LIST 1: VENUES ❖	Song — Music — Poetry — Story — Dance ❖ Clubs — Concerts — Singarounds — Sessions — Dance Clubs & Ceilidhs ❖			
2nd Sun Dorset STOURTON CAUNDLE	THE TROOPER FOLK SONG NIGHT	www.thetrooperinn.co.uk/events	John Waltham	01963 362890
4th Sun Dorset STOURTON CAUNDLE	THE TROOPER FOLK MUSIC NIGHT	www.thetrooperinn.co.uk/events	Mandy Waltham	01963 362890
<i>and (not listed online in our Directory because various events pop up from time to time - please check their online calendar)</i>				
various Dorset BRIDPORT	FESTIVAL EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS at various venues www.bridportfolkfestival.com/events.html			

❖ MEMBERS LIST 3: MEDIA ❖ MEMBERS LIST 4: SERVICES ❖

M.1 ONLINE FOLK MAGAZINES & LISTINGSWest Country [+ W Mids, Wales] **FOLKLIFE MEMBERS' ONLINE DIRECTORY** www.folklife-directory.uk Sam Simmons 01684 561378❖ see **DIARY-LISTINGS PAGES** (follows these news pages) for ❖ LIST 5 : WORKSHOP DIARY ❖ LIST 6 : FESTIVAL DIARY (NEXT 12 MONTHS) ❖**BRIDPORT FOLK FESTIVAL @ FUNDRAISERS**, various dates & venues

Please check the website for various Festival fundraisers. All proceeds go towards putting on Bridport Folk Festival. We're starting the year with a belter of a fundraiser! The Churchfitters Trio, Bridport Town Hall, January 31st, at 8pm. With support from Bridport's own Elfentale. Tickets £12 + 50p booking fee, advisable to get them in advance from Bridport Tourist Information Centre or Bridport Music.

www.bridportfolkfestival.com/events.html**★★★ BRIDPORT FOLK SONG & DANCE FESTIVAL**

Back for its third year on 26th-28th July 2019. Plenty to see and do including outdoor stages, workshops, sessions and headline concerts, more details coming soon!

www.bridportfolkfestival.co.uk ⇒ See **FESTIVAL DIARY PAGES**