

EAST/MID DEVON & EAST SOMERSET REPORT



BY OUR CORRESPONDENT FOR
EAST / MID-DEVON & EAST SOMERSET

BILL CRAWFORD

Traditional singer (solo; and with The Claque) & MC - West Country born and bred. He is a regular performer at Sidmouth, Dartmoor and Chippenham Folk Festivals.

The Claque

Phew, what a scorching summer - I still managed to get drenched in Sidmouth though! I am writing this just before setting off 'up north' for **Whitby Folk Week @**. With another festival season nearly over I feel quite exhausted. This will be the fourth trip to Yorkshire this year and the third to a folk event. I was lucky enough to attend the Trad song weekend at **Drax** in June where one of the guests was Dorset's own **John Waltham**.

Closer to home, **Sidmouth Folk Week** was very enjoyable. As well as the major 'Ham' marquee concerts there is always a wealth of smaller, less formal venues. The Volunteer at Lunchtime with some of the UK's finest traditional singers run by George Frampton, the nightly Folk Club in The Kingswood and Devoran Hotel, run by Bob & Gill Berry with capacity audiences and a great selection of floor singers and guests, and morning and evening song/music sessions in the Royal York and Faulkner Hotel. The evening sessions were run by different people each night and so varied in quality. This was largely due to lack of experience, and I find it amazing that people and some performers still don't get Folk Club or live music etiquette (*I feel a rant coming on*). You don't walk within inches of someone's face when they are singing, you don't accompany people without asking, particularly if they choose

to sing unaccompanied, and you don't hog the evening when there are others wanting to perform (*rant over*). On a cheerful note, these problems have been addressed.

From Sidmouth it was down to **Dartmoor Folk Festival @** where for the first time the scheduled song sessions were in a pub - The Seven Stars at South Tawton, they were a great success with some fine singers and beer and a good atmosphere. I hope this will be a permanent feature.

Now looking ahead, the **Exeter Folk and Acoustic Music Club** which I mentioned in the last edition has Paul Downes on 27th Sept, Barron Brady on 12th October and Clive Gregson on 11th November, other dates are singarounds. In Somerset the **David Hall, South Petherton**, has a good Autumn line up including Cara Dillon, The Oyster Band and those brilliant musicians and comedians, Belshazzar's Feast - check out the website for full details. Similarly, **Bridgewater Arts Centre** has the Bob Dylan Story (8th November), and a Simon and Garfunkel Tribute (29th November). I have some photos and a recording of Paul Simon when he appeared at the Jolly Porter Folk Club in Exeter in the 1960's. We paid him £8!!

As well as these venues don't forget all the smaller singaround and music session across the area, many of which will be restarting after the summer break.

I think that about wraps up things for this quarter,

Cheers me dears

Bill Crawford

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© 07815 195863

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• Your news is welcome from East and Mid Devon and from East Somerset clubs and sessions

• SOMERSET 1 • Yer 'tis

for North Somerset and Bath areas, see BATH, BRISTOL, NEARBY

→ **SaDFolk, SOMERSET AND DORSET FOLK DIARY @** www.sadfolk.co.uk Steve Cunio

Subscribe or email via website. The **Somerset and Dorset Folk Diary** (or **SaDFolk**) is based around a weekly email service, listing 'folk' events in Somerset and Dorset. The term 'event' covers concerts, barn dances, sessions, workshops and any other folk related activity.



THE ACORN ACOUSTIC MUSIC CLUB @, Minehead, has now closed:

Dear Friends, as Founder of the **Acorn Acoustic Music Club @**, I am now retiring and the Club will close.

My late husband John was the true founder; since he passed away in 2005, I was able to carry on with the support of Jim Parham and friends. Beginning as *The Acorn Folk Club* at The Hobby Horse Hotel and then The Old Ship Aground, our third and best venue was the superb United Reformed Church Hall. We aimed to uphold top-quality folk and acoustic music in Minehead on a voluntary and non-profit making basis, creating a platform for professionals and amateurs alike.

Over 16 years, we hosted nearly 100 guests from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and internationally from Australia, America, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Greece and France. They were all gracious and charming about the Acorn, and the warm and friendly welcome.

We have had many happy times, with floor spots (some coming since the inauguration), and a steady and enthusiastic audience (some since 2002) and returning holiday makers. There have been delightfully generous bring and share evenings at New Year and on special occasions too.

Thank you all for your support and generosity, and we wish you all well.

Eileen Ann & Jim

**ACORN SHANTY CREW @**

The **Acorn Shanty Crew @** has evolved from the club's main floor spots and will be continuing, so you will still be hearing from us! We are available for bookings for parties, functions, meetings and charity events.

You may like to follow The

Acorn Shanty Crew on

www.acornshantycrew.co.uk, as we have many bookings which can be attended by the public, and you can follow us on **facebook** too.

HALSWAY MANOR @ concerts

and dances, Halsway Lane, near Crowcombe TA4 4BD.

Various dates & times

Gigs unless otherwise stated

- 7 Oct, 5pm **Tom & Barbara Brown, Tom Lewis, Paul Sartin**
- 11 Oct, 8pm **Anne Niepold Workshop Sharing**
- 18 Oct, 8pm **Guitar: Kevin Dempsey, Tristan Seume, Charlotte Carrivick**
- 20 Oct, 8pm **Merry Neet & Late Night Tales**
- 28 Oct, 7pm **Reg Meuross**
- 4 Nov, 7.30pm **Kitty Macfarlane - Album Launch Tour**
- 17 Nov, 8pm **Narthen**
- 27 Nov, 6pm **A Storytelling Supper**
- 1 Dec, 8pm **London Klezmer Quartet**
- 2 Dec, 7pm **Martin Taylor & Martin Simpson**
- 15 Dec, 2pm **Mellstock Band: A West Country Christmas**
- 19 Jan, 8pm **Token Women**
- **Sunday Club**: 1st Sun., 8pm, free.
- **Halsway Manor Sessions**: 2nd Sun., 8pm, free. See **VENUE LISTINGS. @ Rachel Hill**

Contact: Halsway Manor, Halsway Lane, near Crowcombe TA4 4BD.

• Tickets, info **01984 618274**

• www.halswaymanor.org.uk • www.wegotickets.com

○ **Amazing range of courses**, see **LISTINGS: WORKSHOPS DIARY**

ASHILL SINGAROUND / MUSIC SESSION @

Ashill Inn (01823 480 471), Ashill, near Ilminster, TA19 9ND

4th Fri, 8.30pm.

Very friendly unplugged singaround / music session. All styles, all ages, all abilities, all welcome. Free chips for performers!

@ **Tony Watts**, 01823 480414

FW 59. OCT 2018 p12

• SOMERSET 2 •

Yer 'tis

SOMERSET (N. Som ⇒ BRISTOL, BATH, NEARBY): 1-LINE SUMMARIES. For full details, see our online Members DIRECTORY, www.folklife-directory.uk ⇒ our Membership (only £15 a year! see page 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	
Day Varies	Som.	CROWCOMBE	HALSWAY MANOR conc., dances	www.halswaymanor.org.uk	All enquiries 01984 618274
Day Varies	Som.	PRIDDY	KIZZY MUSIC CONCERTS	www.kizzymusic.co.uk	Dean Collier 01749 678949
1st Sun	Som.	CROWCOMBE	HALSWAY MANOR SUN. CLUB	www.halswaymanor.org.uk	All enquiries 01984 618274
2nd Sun	Som.	CROWCOMBE	HALSWAY MANOR SESSIONS	www.halswaymanor.org.uk	All enquiries 01984 618274
4th Fri	Som.	ASHILL	ASHILL SINGAROUND /MUSIC SES	(no website)	Tony Watts 01823 480414
4 a year Sat	Som.	MINEHEAD	ACORN ACOUSTIC MUSIC CLUB	has now closed, see news	

MEMBERS LIST 2: PERFORMERS		Pf.1 Folk Music & Song – Pf.2 Folk Dance – Pf.3 Spoken Word	
Pf.1c	Folk Music & Song - Solo		
Somerset	BILL CRAWFORD	(no website)	Bill Crawford 01278 450838
Pf.1e	Shanty Groups, Duos, & Solo		
Somerset	The ACORN SHANTY CREW	www.acornshantycrew.co.uk	Eileen Ann 07811 744158

MEMBERS LIST 3: MEDIA			
M.1 ONLINE FOLK MAGAZINES & LISTINGS			
Somerset & Dorset	SOMERSET AND DORSET FOLK DIARY	www.sadfolk.co.uk	Steve Cunio
South-West, + part SE	THE ACOUSTIC CALENDAR (was: A.C. for Wessex)	http://sanchobramble.weebly.com	Tony Watts
M.3 FOLK RADIO			
Som	JOHNNY COPPIN (BBC Somerset)	www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire	Johnny Coppin 01453 885088

MEMBERS LIST 4: SERVICES			
S.2 AGENTS, MANAGERS, PROMOTERS, MCs & STAGE MANAGEMENT • for Dance or Concert Series: see "LIST 1: VENUES"			
Somerset	BILL CRAWFORD	(no website)	Bill Crawford 01278 450838

see DIARY-LISTINGS PAGES (follows these news pages) for List 5: WORKSHOP DIARY List 6: FESTIVAL DIARY (NEXT 12 MONTHS)

THE ACOUSTIC CALENDAR® Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester, Hampshire, Somerset, Wiltshire

The monthly calendar of folk clubs, singarounds, acoustic sessions & open mics: all about DIY music (not concerts, gigs, ceilidhs, etc). Its purpose is to keep you informed of all the places where you can take your voice and/or instrument and join in or do your own thing.

It has three parts: (1) monthly Calendar of events; (2) alphabetical Venues List, giving a fuller description & contact details for each venue; (3) list of Festivals for the coming months (updated as details become available). Each part can be downloaded in pdf format. The Calendar can also be downloaded in a Word version so you can customise it according to your local requirements.

If you'd like my more-or-less twice monthly Acoustic Calendar Updates delivered to your inbox, let me know, using the contact form on the website. ® Tony Watts, <http://sanchobramble.weebly.com>

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

As I write, the local session scene has wound down somewhat as the festival season peaks. At least one local session (currently at Charlton Musgrove, near Wincanton) is looking to re-locate due to the landlord's proposal to initiate a £100 charge for the room! No news of a fresh venue yet. My own local tends to shut around 10.00pm most nights due to a lack of late trade, although as yet they've not asked us to finish early or imposed early closure on us. But I guess it's only a matter of time – life's pretty tough for rural pubs.

Which is a roundabout way of suggesting that, if we want to retain the venues we use, then we need to support them, even if you don't feel like singing or playing – go along and have a pint, chat with your friends and come home with a nice, warm feeling. It's far better than driving past a closed pub and remembering the wonderful nights you used to have there! The new session season will have kicked off by the time you read this, and I'm hoping to make it round a few more venues than has recently been possible for me. Among others, I'm looking forward to getting down to Rainer Wittlin's music night at the King William, Barn Street, Crewkerne, TA18 8BP, on the first Monday of the month. Rainer's number is 01460 75576 if you want to know more. Incidentally, Meg Rose put on a superb night in the King Billy a month or so ago with Phil Beer as the guest – sold out, as you might expect.

Another, long-time favourite is Eli's, at Huish Episcopi (Somerset and Dorset have some of the best village names in the country) on the third Saturday from September to May (and not just because the landlady always gives me a kiss!) I think this'll be our 21st season there. If you're looking for concert-type entertainment, try the Wessex Acoustic Folk Club at the RBL Club, Blandford. Always a good guest list – see their website for dates and guests.

Having failed to get down to Sidmouth last year, I took the motorbike

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.

down there for the Monday. As usual, I got little further than the Volunteer, where I was able to catch up with a lot of people I wanted to see, and a few who I'd not expected as well (including Roisin White, who I must get over here again – a really great singer). Will Noble offered me free tickets for the UK Ploughing Championships as it's "down your way this year". Turns out it's in Warwickshire – however big does he think Dorset is??

John Waltham

01963 362890 • jhnwaltham@at.yahoo.co.uk