



NEWSLETTER APRIL 2005

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Hi,

Well, Spring finally seems to be around the corner. The sun is shining, the daffodils are giving it their best shot, the birds are singing and the 606 Club is rammed full of great gigs. What more could you ask for?!

COMING UP THIS MONTH



Sunday 3rd - Frank Holder's 80th Birthday Party. This is a gig particularly close to my heart, as I have worked with Frank on and off for over 20 years. A fantastic singer in the classic Frank Sinatra mould he is a legendary character on the UK scene. Probably best known for his work with John Dankworth and Cleo Lane he is a remarkable guy who still goes to the gym every day and who performs as if he's only just turned 20! Expect plenty of guests and a night full of great music.

Monday 11th - The John Bennett Band with Baba Gough. This is fast becoming a regular gig for these guys, and a marvellous gig it is too. John leads a terrific 12 piece Big Band playing really exciting arrangements of originals and Jazz standards, but when Baba gets up to sing in the classic Blues/R&B style the whole thing just moves to another level. It's brilliant stuff, very reminiscent of those 70's "power" bands like Earth Wind and Fire, and quite unique on the scene.

Tuesday 12th - Jeff Young. Jeff (pictured opposite) has been a friend since the late 70's, when he came over from the States to study. On returning to the US in the early 80's his fine keyboard playing and brilliant singing ensured a long and

impressive career. A regular with the Jackson Browne band for over 20 years he has been the featured vocalist with a host of great performers, including Bonnie Raitt, Curtis Stigers, Randy Crawford, and most recently touring with Sting. He will be performing his fantastic set of Funk/Soul/R&B originals supported by a British band led by 606 regular, and old friend, bassist Paul Carmichael. A rare visit from this great performer – not to be missed!

Monday 18th – David Migden. David is the new "voice" on the scene, and what a voice it is. An ex-pat American, in the short time that he has been here he has made a real impact with his husky, Blues soaked delivery and powerful stage presence. His material is a mix of really strong originals, and classic Blues and Jazz standards, delivered in a style reminiscent of his self-confessed influences Tom Waits, Dr John and Randy Newman. This guy, a real character and hugely talented, seems set for stardom so see him at the Club while you still can.



Sunday 10th – Liane Carroll. Liane is just sooo good I can't resist mentioning this gig. To my mind one of the finest singer/pianists in the world, her set of jazz standards, melodic originals and fiery contemporary songs is just magic. A unique and remarkable performer she just demands to be heard. You have to check this gig!

In Brief: Mark Crooks/Jim Tomlinson - Thurs 7th Two really fine mainstream tenor sax players, including Stacey Kent's saxophonist (and husband!) Jim Tomlinson on a rare outing away from home.

Liliana Chachian – Sunday 17th Sao Paulo ex-pat who is unquestionably one of the finest exponents of Brazilian music in Europe. Great fun this gig. **Jacqui Dankworth – Sunday 24th** Daughter of John and Cleo and sister of Alec, Jacqui maintains the Dankworth musical tradition. An exceptional singer she performs a mix of Jazz standards and the occasional original with sophistication and wit. **Jim-Jam – Monday 25th** Hamish Stuart and Jim Mullen strutting their stuff in a

fantastic band that also includes pianist Graham Harvey, drummer Ian Thomas and bassist Pino Palladino. A "Supergroup" if ever there was one.



SUNDAY 10th LUNCH TIME – "GGG" GOSPEL GIG WITH THE KINGDOM CHOIR

These Gospel lunch gigs really are going from strength to strength. We are establishing a great rapport now with the UK Gospel scene, and I was really pleased to hear from one of the artists the other day that apparently the Club gig is rapidly becoming the "gig to do". And by way of proof, this month we have one of the country's leading gospel choirs, the Kingdom Choir, guesting with our resident band, "GGG". This is a powerful 12 voice award winning choir that has an International

reputation. Their cv is vast, including regular work on TV and radio, as well as appearances at venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, St Paul's Cathedral, St Martins in the Field and the Millennium Dome. An enlarged version was the featured choir at the processional as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, broadcast live on the BBC. These guys are definitely the real deal, and it was no surprise that their choir director, Karen Gibson (a major player on the UK Gospel scene and a very, very nice person), came down to "vet" the Club before agreeing to do the gig. Fortunately she loved the place and this gig is the result. Children welcome - booking definitely recommended.



SUNDAY 24TH LUNCH TIME – DON WRIGHT'S "WRIGHT STUFF" with ANITA WARDELL-vocals.

This band, lead by saxophonist Don Wright, comprising of a 5 piece sax section with trumpet, trombone and full rhythm section is something quite special. What makes it so unusual is that they specialize in playing orchestrated arrangements of solos by the great be-bop saxophonist Charlie "Bird" Parker. Originally made famous by the Grammy Award winning American band "Supersax" (whose name gives some idea of what we're talking about here!), these charts are fearsomely difficult to play, but quite wonderful to listen to. I don't know of any other band in Europe who are performing this material to the standard these guys achieve. And

just to add to the mix the fabulous vocalist Anita Wardell, one of the finest Jazz vocalists around, is heavily featured throughout the gig as well. Special gig this, put it in your diary. And don't forget Children are very welcome.

SOME 606 MOMENTS.....

Valentine's night was very special this year. JP excelled himself with a terrific menu and the staff spent some time putting tablecloths, new candle-holders and roses on all the tables to make the Club look very romantic. But the highlight was unquestionably the performance from Gwyneth Herbert. A Universal recording artist now, she has matured in to a wonderful singer with an eclectic but constantly tasteful repertoire that entranced a packed house. And true to 606 tradition I got to sit in and play a number or two as well! And the other Wednesday it was just wonderful to see Mick Hutton on stage again after the awful problems that he has had recently. A friend and regular since the "Old Club" days Mick, one of the finest bass players in Europe, is enormously popular with the staff and fellow musicians here. So everyone was shocked and upset when he announced just before Xmas that, due to damaging his hand in an accident, he would no longer be able to play the bass. However, in typical Mick style, he went off to polish up his steel pan playing, which is now, not surprisingly, brilliant. So it was with enormous pleasure that we welcomed his band back to the Club with Mick still leading, but this time on steel pan! And more exciting "sitting in" on my "Samara" gig. Singer Kim Chandler turned up with a bunch of friends, one of whom turned out to be the pianist currently touring with Daniel Bedingfield. By coincidence my guitarist, Mark Johns, had just been working with Mr Bedingfield the week before, so lots of hugging went on, and we naturally invited this impressive looking American up to join us for a number or two. And what a player he turned out to be. We powered through one of his originals (no music, he just sort of hummed the melody to us!) and it all just worked so beautifully someone in the audience thought we must have rehearsed. They could hardly believe we'd only met the guy about 10 minutes before! Great player, his name is Don Wyatt, keep an eye out for him, I'm sure he'll be back.



SMOLLENSKY'S ON A SUNDAY



I'm really enjoying organising this, particularly since we moved the stage and re-organised the sound and lighting. The staff and management are a very enthusiastic about the gig, and the musicians are universally enjoying themselves. This month we have a nice mix of the new and the experienced.

Sunday 3rd we have Vanessa Freeman, a really talented Soul/R&B singer named "voice of the future" by the Evening Standard, and on Sunday 24th my pick for young singer of the Year, Polly Gibbons. Polly is a quite special talent and is destined for great things. On the 10th we have the "King" of the UK Salsa scene, Colombian percussionist Roberto Pla with his 8 piece Salsa band (also at the Club on Friday 22nd), and on the 17th the truly great singer/pianist Liane Carroll with her trio. I have enclosed a flier with the newsletter, so if there's a Sunday at the Club that doesn't "grab" you, try out Smollesky's. At £5 entry for 606 Club members it's a great deal and worth the effort.

LAST WORD.....

From the mind of US stand-up Steven Wright (great stuff):

"Right now I'm having amnesia and deja vu at the same time. I think I've forgotten this before."

"My theory of evolution is that Darwin was adopted."

"I bought some powdered water, but I don't know what to add to it."

Thanks for your support. See you soon,