

The Worn Fret

May 2011

Occasional voice-piece of the NI Shadows Club

Report on the May 2011 gathering at the YFC, Newtownards. From our resurrected rock & roll correspondent - 'Ed' Banger, the man with more axes than Jamison & Green, Ironmongers to The Gentry.

Enrico's Lament

Head Note : The eagle-eyed amongst you may have spotted that the *Broken String* did not publish this week as its proprietor/chief reporter was either brushing up on 'AV' (another little known Lorden/Marvin composition from that seemingly endless 1st Shadows album) or was round the back of the bicycle sheds practising his back-hand cross-court off-breaks. The *Fret* would like to thank Enrico for raising the bar in the standard of presentation and we hope that he will perhaps in future share the onerous task of attempting to bring some brevity & sobriety to the serious subject of rock and roll – meanwhile the *Fret's* previous minimalist presentation will continue in order to avoid both highlighting the shortfall in its staff's IT skills and over-consumption of the proprietor's printer ink.

And so to the music.....

King George X

On a sunny May Day at the back-end of a Royal wedding week-end, with all the bunting and red carpets in place, trees planted and floral bouquets resplendent, King-for-the Day, George T, moved graciously from the gold-topped carriage to the rostrum with humble hurrahs of "Bout-you, Old Chap" ringing in his ears. Flanked by Prince Tully, 1st Tensioner of the Tremolos, and Duke Desmac, 1st Polisher of the Plectrums, to keep him on the straight & narrow HRH led us through an opening quartet of Shadow's numbers, 'Frightened City', 'Nivram', 'Song for Tony' and 'Guitar Tango' – particularly fine to this humble ear-hole was the musical jousting on 'Nivram' between the two lead scimitars & the bass cudgel which created their own musical picture on the ceiling & walls of the old YFC, just below the picture-rail cobwebs and frayed wallpaper.

Prince Charms Loyal Subjects

Following this stupendous salvo of sumptuous sound Prince Charming & King Kong changed crowns for a quick-fire 'High & Mighty' (suitably apt, given the occasion) followed by 'Tonight', slightly incongruous at 2.47pm but then I don't write the play list on this show. The opening 'meandering' in the lead department on 'H&M' just proved that even the greatest axe-wielders can have their 'senior moment' – the mark of class is that they can see the funny side of the old fish-heads & tomatoes projected by the crowd of merciless know-it-alls who could always do it perfectly, every time.

Pair of Wellies (not wallies)

After the senior Royals had retired to their bath-chairs the Hunter Duo, future of the Ards Rock-&-Roll Dynasty, leapt to the stage to a mighty crash of cymbals, blinding lights & dry ice – in your dreams, boys, this was N'ards - not the O2 Arena! So we had SH leading us on 'SOTB' & 'FBI'

followed by Paul, on Burns, with 'Peacepipe' and the 'Three Blues' – piggies-in-the-middle of this genial sibling rivalry were Jimbee on rhythm and DavidTee on the bass riffs with 'Fingers' Chris on keys giving way to Brian Boru for Paul's set.

It's the Miss Piggy Show

The young fellows returned to their play-pens to be replaced by two greying Muppets perched on their balcony seats, never afraid to give a jaundiced view on any subject. Statler gave us 'Genie', 'Shindig' and 'Lost City' with Waldorf on rhythm & Terry hammering out bass lines after which Brian lead on 'Dance On', 'Apache', 'Spring is N/Here' and 'Some Are Lonely' with backings shared Mike/ JT and Terry/Des.

The Mad? Professor and Two Bees

Following on Prof Phil donned his mortar-board and gown to guide us down 'Golden Street', 'The Savage', 'Geronimo' & 'Round & Round' with Mike on acoustic rhythm and all 3 bass-men taking turns at making the building hum. Jimbee then returned in the leading-man role to give us 'Atlantis' and 'Toopfatter' with George backing, along with Dee '4strings' Tee, following which Johnbee on his Burns offered 'Shazam', '1861' & 'The Rumble' with JT backing & Terry/Des twanging the fencing wires.

Please, Sir, can we have some more?

At this stage the new boy in the class, Oliver, arrived fully resplendent with 2 sharp HB pencils, soup bowl and personal stool, much to the envy of the geriatrics on the playing staff. He then proceeded to give accomplished renditions of 'Cozy' and 'Albatross' with GT on rhythm and Sam doing his Peter Green impersonation on 2nd lead.

Now you see it

Following the 1st part of the Wedding Ceremony the assembled multitudes swarmed into the reception banquet and scoffed the lot before Hall could hobble from his drumming stool to grab his serving – such is the dog-eat-dog attitude towards half-time refreshments at Shadows NI.

Muppets Mk 2

After the commercial break Muppet madness continued, this time Waldorf leading on 'Place in the Sun', 'Blue Day' and 'TFYL' with Statler playing 2nd lead, & HRH GT as rhythm-king, on PITS – DT & Desmac shared the bass-lines here.

Stimagine

Stanley then rocked the hall with his usual white-Strat booming sound on 'Guitar Boogie', 'True Love Ways', 'Mustang' & an amazing 'Imagine', the latter song allegedly written by some Scouser fellow from another moderately successful 60s 4 piece boy-band – JT & DM provided backing throughout.

Tully & Mark

JT leapt back onto the throne to play 'Time is Tight' and 'Kon-Tiki' with George & Terry relegated to the footstool after which Mark gave us 'Wonderful Land' & 'Atlantis'.

More rubbish over page...

More Wallies & Jim B close the show

Following this the young Hunter bucks returned to taunt the older brigade with their renditions of 'Parisienne W'ays' & 'Diamonds' (Sam out front) and 'Walk Don't Run' & 'Wonderful Land' (Paul in the spotlight). The wedding celebrations drew to a close with Jim B playing, 'Blue Star' and 'Midnight' after which the traditional 21-gun salute and *Last Post* were replaced by the Tully trade-mark 'dum diddly um tum, bing bang'.

All Orf

The Royal Party subsequently left by Transit Van for their post-wedding banquet at 'Caps' in Bangor while confetti and horse droppings were removed from the Abbey and the crowds sent on their way to reflect on another successful event during which 45 tunes were abused by 17 players in some 21 differing lines-up.

Thanks Gals & Guys

Thanks as ever to the supporters' club for their commitment to the cause and to Margaret and Andrea for the yummys. Also Chris for long finger-service on keys.

Footnote (geddit?!):

The paper would also like to record its extreme thanks to drummer-boy Hall for battling through the pain barrier in bringing his kit all the way from the Arctic Circle (close to Islandmagee) to hammer the bass drum for over 3 hours with one foot held on with gaffer-tape. For those who were unaware of Hall's condition, the story goes that a frisky 2 tonne pony took exception to being sold a dummy in the 6 yard box during a recent keepy-upy game in the stable-yard and stuck the hoof out in true Norman Hunter style (over 50s will remember that subtle member of the Leeds United side of the Mesolithic Period). With true Ulster grit, Hall got up from the mud, taped the injured foot back onto his leg and drove straight to Ards to permit 'the show to go on'. – what a man.....!

Dublin Tour – 15th May 2011

See you in Dublin where hopefully UlsterShads will rool KO. Forget 'Glastonbury' or 'North By Northwest', this is **THE** event of 2011.

mrc May 2011

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