

The Crackly Valve

Editor in Chief: The Prof



September 2011

It seems like no time since the last time but here we go with another issue of The Crackly Valve. As previous editors of the variously-named Northern Ireland Shadows Club periodicals will testify, it get's more difficult to come up with something original each time. This month seems even more so as the standard of playing was generally so high that it could turn into a list of who played what and they were all great but, thankfully, there were one or two interesting 'incidents' and occurrences that are worthy of mention. In fact Eric may get a whole chapter to himself!

Granddad, We Love You

Last month Simon became the proud owner of a new guitar and this month he became the proud 'owner' of a new grandson. Congratulations 'Growler' and best wishes to your son and daughter-in-law and the new arrival. Sorry for omitting the young chap's name but my 'source' let me down!

Simon's tunes, played with his usual impeccable touch, were **Return to the Alamo**, **Find Me a Golden Street**, Des' 'favourite', **The Rise and Fall of Flingel Bunt** and **The Lonely Bull**.

Mike Leads

Mike played the rhythm for the first four numbers for Simon then the two chums swapped places for **It's Been a Blue Day**, **Theme for Young Lovers** and **Dance On**. As reported last month, Mike has recently started playing lead but this was a first for Simon as he was on rhythm duties for the

first time at the Club. Taking a leaf from Ollie, and even borrowing his stool, Simon remained seated for Mike's set while he provided a steady rhythm on his beautiful Garrison acoustic.



'For My Next Trick'

Simon remained in the rhythm pilot's seat while Eric took to the stage with his Burns Marvin to give us **Santa Ana** and **Blue Star**.

Eric kept smiling despite a little trouble with the muted part of Santa Ana and he chickened out of using the James Burton style metal finger pick on Blue Star which he had been practicing with – maybe next time? For those unfamiliar with the

technique of hybrid picking, Burton wears a metal fingerpick on his middle finger and holds a normal plectrum between his first finger and thumb. Eric will gladly explain the advantages of this if you ask him next time.



"I'm only playing this for a laugh!"

Prof Joins Jet Set

Professor Phil opened his account for the day with two Jet Harris tunes which he was playing for the first time in public. **Theme for Something Really Important** is apparently Maggie's favourite and also is a favourite of Phil's wife Carol – good job she likes it due to the number of times she had to listen to it when he was rehearsing! Thanks to Bernard for playing the second lead fills and I hope Maggie enjoyed it. Philip's first set was completed by the Jet Harris and Tony Meehan hit **Diamonds** with excellent drum solo by Hall.

Bernard Takes a Short-Cut

After an excellent **36-24-36** Bernard launched into **Man of Mystery** – twice! Apparently he missed out an entire verse the first time but, after a restart, he really nailed the tune in Take 2. Jim and Des did the needful on rhythm and bass.

Feds Go South of the Border

Jim Tully, backed by namesake Jim Bennett on rhythm and David T on bass took a trip **South of the Border** pursued by the **FBI** which finished with a stylish kick from Mr T to show he can still strut his stuff with the best of them. Meanwhile at the back of the hall Eric was seen trying to teach The Prof

how to do the Shadows walk, with limited success.

Ollie Sets Sail at Midnight

Ollie played the lovely **Midnight** with George, Des and Chris providing the accompaniment and then there was a bit of a hiatus whilst Paul was dragged from his comfy chair at the rear of the hall to take over on rhythm for **The Windjammer** which eventually sailed serenely into the sunset.

Paul Walks It

Paul switched sides as he walked, not ran, across the stage to take over on lead for The Ventures **Walk Don't Run** with brother Sam on rhythm and Terry on bass. Paul then played an excellent rendition of **The Lost City**, which was a first for him, helped or maybe hindered by Philip on rhythm, which was a first for him too!

Heading for Atlantis with Jim

Jim B played excellent versions of **Atlantis** and **Geronimo** backed by Mike, David and Chris. Jim's nerves have certainly settled and his playing is going from strength to strength as demonstrated by this set.



I got stripes ...

Who You Gonna Call?

Ghostriders was the answer provided by Sam as his excellent playing conjured up an image of the ghostly cowboys riding across the stormy skies behind Scrabo Tower. George and Terry ably assisted in the rhythm section and stayed with the young

'un while he performed **Perfidia**, yet another first time in public for Hunter Minor.

Spring Turns to Autumn

Well it does when John Bell takes to the stage with his original composition **September Time** which is played to the backing of Spring Is Nearly Here, a good challenge for the backing group which on this occasion consisted of Jim T, Des and Chris and they passed the test with flying colours. **The Miracle**, John's second number, went equally well.



"I really should copyright this tune"

Chris B and The Boys



Young Chris got the tempo back up with the 1963 hit **Shindig** then stepped back a year for **The Boys** from the EP which reached number 1 in 1962. Chris's version employed a clever false start which confused Jim T and David T a little at first but all was well

on the second pass through. Maybe they thought they were playing the similarly titled **Theme From the Boys?**

Newtownards Lunch Club!



Fruit loaf - Yum, Yum!

After a brief interval when the hard working rhythm section grabbed what was left of the food kindly provided once again by Maggie and Andrea, we were treated to an unscheduled rendition of ...

Besame Mucho

This tune unusually featured twin bass guitars with Terry on bass (bass) and Des on lead (bass). This was the first time any of the guys had played the tune together and Des last played it in 1963, he claims. It was completely unrehearsed and 'performed without a safety net' and to be honest, you wouldn't have known as the end result was brilliant. Well done guys - Chris, Mike, Hall, Jim T, Terry and Des - next month we'll expect more of the same!



Two basses – that's a lot of loooooow notes

Birthday Boy

Bernard was celebrating his birthday and, thanks to Eric revealing this information, the assembled band and audience joined

together for a rendition of Happy Birthday, much to Bernard's embarrassment.



"I hope they don't sing Happy Birthday ..."

This adoration didn't seem to put him off his renditions of **Kon-Tiki** and **Peacepipe**, the latter being another first at the Club for Bernard, I believe.

How do I turn this thing off?

Eric returned to cause more mayhem on the stage. **A Place in the Sun** is a lovely tune that requires the use of the tremolo on the AC30 as well as subtle use of the volume pedal. Unfortunately Eric discovered that, once he hit the footswitch to turn the tremolo on, it wouldn't go off again! After a quick swap to the other side of the stage to use a different amp young Boal resumed his tap-dancing routine on the floor pedals and pulled off a fine rendition of this lovely tune, aided on harmony lead by Bernard, George on rhythm, Des on bass and Chris on keys.

Eric's final number of the day, **Don't Cry for me Argentina** was an oasis of calm in comparison.

Imagine That

George's smooth style really suited the **Imagine/Woman** medley and he was ably helped along by son David on bass, the first time he had played the bass on this tune.

George completed his set, again with David on bass and Mr T on rhythm for the **Theme For Shane** which had everyone doing their

horse riding impressions at the rear of the hall. The only horse-fly in the ointment was Mr Boal's interjection "If you're going to bob up and down, do it in time with each other", a wise piece of advice if riding a horse, as our drummer Hall will testify.

Is it a bird, is it a plane? No it's Tullystar

Now is the time for Jim Tully to twiddle the knobs on his Binson and conjure up that distinctive echo for the lead guitar in **Telstar** with Chris J featuring on keyboard.

Chris' keyboard playing was also a vital part of Jim's final number, the classic **Time is Tight** originally recorded by Booker T & the MG's and now rendered excellently by Jim T & the NISCHB. (Can you figure that one out?)



NEXT MEETING

Sunday 2nd October