



Island Songwriters Showcase
Newsletter

www.islandsongwriters.org

August 2000

ISS'ers Sizzle!

ISS'ers To Perform At Heckscher Park Aug. 11

ISS singer-songwriters **Jane Ross, James Yarsky, Jim Dexter** and **Paulette Boucher** will be performing in the round as part of the **35th Annual Huntington Summer Arts Festival** at Heckscher Park in Huntington on **August 11**. The show is produced by the **Huntington Arts Council** and starts at **8:30 PM** and will be hosted by **Scott B. MacDonald**. This is a **FREE** event! Please do not miss this wonderful array of talented artist. Get there early to get a good spot.

The ISS Showcase At The Wrong Way Inn

We are continuing strong on the open mike scene at The Wrong Way Inn in Amityville. This night we heard performances from our director **Sonny Speed, Bill Anacker, Andrew Kirschner, Mike Mattel, newbie Russ Seeger, Jeff Curtis, Silent Bear, Sarah Haddock, Mike Mattel, Vinnie Crici, Shari Diamond, Vitamin D, The Tone with John Robillard on drums, Dominique, Sevi, Anita Birk, and Patty E. Paul**. Next and last showcase is August 21 so be there with a song and sing your heart out. You may be on the next upcoming ISS compilation. See the back page for details.

Jane Ross' Songbox

The next songbox is August will feature **Jane Ross** and her band *Wild Ginger*. Before the show, there is a potluck cookout, with a grill available for hotdogs, hamburgers, corn, . . .whatever. Jane is also collecting canned food for **Island Harvest**, so bring something to contribute. At the first show there, 250 pounds (yes, 250) of food were gathered. The cookout will run from 6-8 PM, then the performances start. The admission is \$10, all of which goes to the performers. The Song Box is located at **14 Barkers Lane** (NOT Bankers), which intersects with Jericho Turnpike in **Huntington Station**. It's on the south side of Jericho, east of Rte. 110, and there's an Enterprise Rental Car place and a Chinese food place opposite one another at the intersection with Jericho. After you turn off Jericho, the house is almost immediately on your left, set back from the road a bit. To find out more info about upcoming dates and performances, please call Jane at 631-385-7545.



UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **August 7**
OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **August 3**
OPEN MIKE @ WRONG WAY INN: **August 17**
OPEN MIKE @ CONKLIN BARN: **August 14 and 21**

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND:
@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK **August 10**
@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **August 18**

Sonny Speed Interview on WGBB

Sonny Speed was the feature artist of **Stephanie Regis'** radio show on **WGBB, (1240 AM** on your dial) July 19. He spoke about the benefits of belonging to the group and its sense of community. He got to play a couple of his tunes, which sounded great over the airwaves. Stay tuned for future radio performances.

Melvin Glazer's "Top 10 Songwriting" Course

Next month, there will be two opportunities for songwriters to work along with **Mel Glazer**, top 10 lyricist. The basic course, "**HOW TO WRITE AND MARKET COMMERCIAL SONGS**" (craft plus business) will be held at **Hofstra** on Saturdays, **Sept. 16 through November 11th, 10AM-NOON**, (No class on September 30th). The course is 8 sessions, \$215.00.

The second course, just added to the schedule, is a **SONGWRITING CRAFT WORKSHOP**, which concentrates on the craft only and is committed to the development and honing of skills inherent in each individual student. This course is 6 sessions, **NOON to 2 PM**, Saturdays, **September 16th-October 28th** (no class on September 30th), \$160.00.

A \$25.00 discount will be given to those students registering for both classes. There is limited enrollment so early registration is suggested. Call **Hofstra University** at **516-463-5993**.

ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

Frank Gambino's house

July 3, 02000

By Mike Mattel

It was 7 PM on a rainy, miserable night. It was the night before the July 4th holiday and I had taken the day off from work. I was really considering skipping the ISS meeting tonight; but alas, I promised Shari I would write the workshop portion of the newsletter this week and I didn't want to disappoint her. But more importantly, she promised to skew the writer's choice votes in my favor if I did -- too bad I didn't have a song to do.

Anyway, I braved the miserable weather and headed for Five Town's college. There I found **Sonny Speed** standing in the parking lot, soaking wet, mumbling "the doors are locked" over and over while staring catatonically at a wet leaf on the ground. I tried to snap him out of it, but he kept mumbling. So I slapped him twice across the face (because I like him) and shook him three or twenty times. As I was about slap him again he grabbed my hand and said, in very controlled manner, "that'll be quite enough, Michael!" It was then that I knew he would be all right.

So more and more ISS members showed up and were explained the situation. We stood around in the rain and began to suggest things we could do to salvage the evening. The ideas ranged from looking for open mike somewhere to going to a bar to torching the school. I was kind of getting used to the idea of not having an official meeting -- my portion of the newsletter would be a breeze. I could write some silly stuff about how we stood in the rain for an hour and had a few beers at a local bar and be done with it. But just as I was deciding whether to have a bass-ale or a Shirley Temple, **Frank Gambino** offered to have the meeting at his house. Oh well, I guess I'll have to write after all.

We arrived a Frank's house at about 8:30. He has a lovely home, with a huge living room and a piano, which was perfect for the keyboardists of the group. Frank has a dog and a cat, **Shadow** and **Misty**. What made the evening even more fun-filled was that Shadow, for some unknown reason, would chase Misty whenever he heard applause. So you can imagine how much fun we had watching Shadow pounce on Misty after each song.

Anyway, **Andrew Kirschner** began the festivities with "*Everything But The Rosebud*" on tape. Andrew explained the reference to Citizen Kane. Apparently, "Rosebud" referred to the writer's favorite part of his wife's body. Shari suggested Andrew change "Everything but the rosebud" in the last part to "Everything but her rosebud". Other lyrical and musical suggestions were offered. A well received song overall.

Bill Anacker then performed the sweet "*The Smile On Your Face*", about losing a love. Andrew thought it was beautiful, but could be a verse shorter. Others felt a pause in one verse didn't work. Rick felt the tag line "the sun in the sky..." could have been set up better. Other's pointed out some lyrics they considered particularly outstanding.

Mike Clark then performed "*Lost In Your Green Eyes*". Many commented on the great chorus. Others felt the first verse was weak compared to the rest of the song. Mike should clarify the relationship. Sarah loved both the music and the lyrics. The Tone wanted to know if it was about his (the Tone's) ex-girlfriend.

Sarah Haddock then performed "*Ride*" on piano, a bouncy, bluesy song about the high expectations of a new relationship. Andrew considered it a sexy song. Some debate began on whether or not the title should be changed to "Hell of a Ride", which is the tag line at the end of each stanza. Very little criticism was offered. Universally, it was considered a great song.

Charlie Ward brought "*Help Me*" on CD, a collaboration of himself and three others. Many considered the music great, but felt the lyrics need work. . Rick thought it was a good formula song, but he couldn't latch on to the groove. He felt it needs a "feel". Sonny S. felt a good production would fix those problems. Others thought there were sections that need work both lyrically and rhythmically.

Bill Ryan then performed an instrumental "*Night On the Sound*". Bill narrated while playing -- describing the scene, which included crabs, couples and sharks. Some liked the narration while others didn't. Although most considered it a clever piece, several felt he could go a little further with it.

Walter Sargent then performed the poignant and melancholy, "*Falling Apart*", about saying good-bye to a loved one. Some suggested changing the end-- either repeat only the first three lines of the verse or repeat the first three and change the remaining ones. Other lyrical and melody changes were offered, but a well-liked song overall.

The Tone then performed "*Goodbye Colorado*", about an aspiring singer who left Colorado to go to NY and pursue her muse. Many considered it a great song that most of us could identify with on one level or another. One verse, however, stood out as being cliché to some. It was suggested he work on that one. Of course, others liked it as it is. Varying the melody in some places was also suggested.

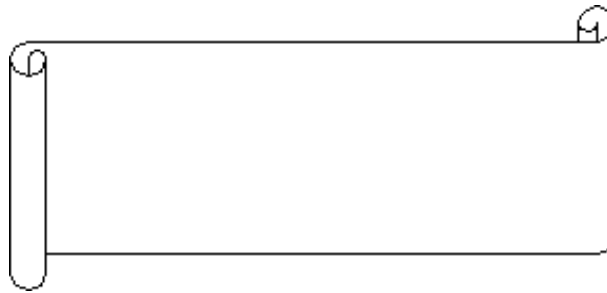
Sonny Speed then played a **Jane Ross** song, "*Ribbons In The Wind*", off a CD he recently mixed, hoping for some production commentary. Production commentary, however, is a violation of the ISS edict, which states: "...production commentary is a no-no". We had to restrain Bill Anacker from slugging Sonny. Since Sonny is the director of the ISS, we decided to let him slide. Anyway, most loved the song, but felt the vocals were buried and needed to be brought up, or the guitar needed to be brought down. Other minor comments were offered.

Frank Gambino then performed "*Demons Who Won't Fight You In The Ring*", about the tragedy of vices uncontrolled. The Tone liked the fact it made him laugh and feel sad. Some commented on the lack of a hook. Others felt the music didn't fit the lyrics -- should be more of a story style song. Many commented on the great lyrics and story.

Shari Diamond ended the evening by playing a revised version of an instrumental, "*Flying*", she played at a previous meeting. Many commented on how improved the piece was with the changes Shari made. Some felt it would work better if it were shortened a bit. Overall, this was considered a dynamite piece that really benefited from ISS commentary.

We all would like to thank Frank for use of his house and to wish Misty a speedy recovery.

Next meetings are August 7 and September 11 (note date change due to Labor Day holiday)



SONGWRITER'S CHOICE

Walter Sargent
"Falling Apart"

by Shari Diamond

It was an intimate setting this evening at **Frank Gambino's** house (thanks again Frank), and even with a smaller crowd, we still had lots of top-notch original music this night. I always find it difficult to pick my favorite song of the evening since there are so many diverse styles of music presented. This month, **Walter Sargent** presented his song "*Falling Apart*" and it blew most of us away. This is a heart-wrenching, soulful song about missing someone you had loved so much. The melody matched the sentiment perfectly. We don't see / hear Walter that much but we were all very glad that he came and contributed his song.

Coming up right behind Walter though was **Sarah Haddock's** song "*Ride*". A very different type of song presenting an entirely different mood but this song was hot! She has only been with the ISS a short time and has proven time and time again that she is quite an exceptional songwriter.

Other mentions include **The Tone** ("*Goodbye Colorado*") and **Mike Clark** ("*Lost In Your Green Eyes*"). A truly great night of music.

BORDERS RECAP

Borders Syosset
July 6, 02000

By Mike Mattel

ISS IS MORE POPULAR THAN GOD!

It was another great night of music and comedy at Borders in Syosset. The Borders patrons were entertained by **Bill Ryan**, **Bill Anacker**, **Vince Crici**, **Mike** (some guy who comes often attempting to get an audition from Borders), **Geradine Brockwell** and myself. In fact, someone was over heard saying "they're more popular than God", or it might have been "they're more popular than sod". Anyway, we all had a great time and we were well received by the patrons. I also brought my daughter, Allegra, along to hear us play. When I was up I played a song I wrote for her – big mistake!! She burst into tears because I embarrassed her – just try to figure out girls.

Next Borders events are August 3 and September 7. Support the ISS and original L.I. music.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK

July 13, 2000

Barnes & Noble – Commack

This month we heard performances from host **Sonny Meadows, Geraldine Brockwell and Jonathan Ames**. As Geraldine noted, Barnes & Noble has delicious coffee and desserts available in addition to great live and local acoustic music! All shows are free so come on down on the second Thursday of the month.

Next events are *August 11 and September 14*. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - WESTBURY

Borders - Westbury

July 21, 2000

This month we heard performances from host **Rich Stein, Brian Sendrowitz, Greg Fine, and Bill Meehan**. Rich's event continues to be well-received and highly regarded drawing nice size crowds and lots of audience participation, not to mention learning more about some of our colleagues.

See Rich Stein at meetings or gigs for more info or call him at 742-2817 or e-mail him at clearsteer@aol.com.

Next Borders roundtable events are August 18 and September 22.

OPEN MIKE – CONKLIN BARN

Huntington, New York

Good news! The very popular open mike at The Conklin Barn has been extended to August and possibly beyond! **Sonny Meadows** and co-hosts **Phil & Vanesa Jiminez, Dave Cook** and **Michelle Firmer** are continuing with the very relaxed open mike on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of August at the **Conklin Barn**. It's an acoustic adventure as one performer told me. You can play two songs and get to see a lot of familiar faces and maybe meet some new ones. We had a great turnout for the July 10th and July 24th events. All are welcome so please support this event as well. It's a really cool summer thing to do. Call Sonny Meadows for more info at 631-673-3605. See back page for details.



Scoop's Link O' the Month
The ISS Web Site News

Due to the success of the Post-a-gig feature on the ISS site, we've added a discussion forum. Simply go to the Island Songwriter's site and click on the New ISS Discussion forum link on the home page. To add to the discussion forum, click on Post a new article. You can then choose a topic such as songwriting, and enter your comments, thoughts, experiences, pearls of wisdom, etc.

Any ideas on other topics let me know - scoop@optonline.net.

That's the scoop for this month. – *Bill Ryan*

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS at FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

(Dix Hills) ~ The Island Songwriters Showcase (ISS) is a no fee organization. Group efforts include monthly meetings at Five Towns College, located on Burr's Lane in Dix Hills, Huntington, NY, generally on the first Monday of the month. **IT'S FREE.** Songs are often premiered at the meetings, and so much material is presented that there is limit of one song per writer. Writers may bring an acoustic guitar, CD, or cassette tape (no Dolby n/r reduction is best), and a piano is available for keyboardists. Lyric sheets are encouraged and ensuing discussions regarding presented songs can range from passionate to hilarious to instructive. To become a member, simply come to a meeting. That's it! Really!

Come join us on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. on the following dates:

August 7

September 11*

* date change for this month only

Becoming an ISS member also entitles you to participate in our open mike night at any of our showcases (see highlighted below). Sign ups are at 7:30 P.M. All artists are able to play 2 original songs. Also, you can become eligible to be invited to perform at one of our Songwriters in the Round. No critiquing – just fun! Original bands are also welcome – please call Sonny in advance. Make friends. Make contacts. Get heard!

For more information call our director Sonny Speed at (631) 462-3300 or email him at mcspeed@aol.com.

Schedule of Local Open Mikes:

Mondays

- **The Wrong Way Inn ~ 198 Broadway (Rt. 110), Amityville, (631) 798-9132, 3rd Monday of the month hosted by Sonny Speed, 7:30 p.m. sign-up.**
- **The Conklin Barn** – New York Ave. and High Street, Huntington, hosted by Sonny Meadows and friends, 2nd and 4th Mondays of July, call Sonny for more info @ (631) 673-3605
- **The Stephen Talkhouse** – 8:30 P.M. Amagansett. 267-3117, hosted by Gene Hamilton

Wednesdays

- **The Broadway Beanery** – 9:00 P.M. 2 Broadway, Lynbrook. 596-0028, hosted by Stuart Markus
- **The Cup Café** – 9:00pm. Railroad Street, 3268 Railroad Ave., Wantagh. 826-9533

Thursdays

- **BORDERS Syosset ~ 425 Jericho Tpk, Syosset, 7:00 p.m. sign-up, 7:30 p.m. start on the 1st Thursday of the month, ISS exclusive showcase hosted by Bill Ryan.**
- **Bunnery Pub** - 9pm. 3120 Hempstead Tpk, Levittown, 735-0105, hosted by Frank Walker

Weekly Venue:

- **Sundays at Seven Series** - Northport Historical Society. 7 PM. Contact hosted by Kate Kelly at 757-1111 for listing of scheduled performers. Admission is generally \$2.

Songwriters In The Round:

- 2nd Thursday of the month @ Barnes & Noble, Commack, hosted by Sonny Meadows
- 3rd Friday of the month @ Borders, Westbury, hosted by Rich Stein.

ISS Postcard Mailer

If you didn't receive the postcard mailer that was sent out recently, or want to receive future updates on ISS events via mail or email, please provide Sonny Speed with a completed membership form available at meetings or gigs.

Director's Blurb

ISS workshops have become increasingly popular and we want to ensure that all members get enough time for comments. If you want your song heard but you're not looking for critique, please save the debut for the showcase. If you want feedback, **please remember to bring 25 copies of the lyric sheet** (or be prepared to pay a hefty fine – just kidding!)

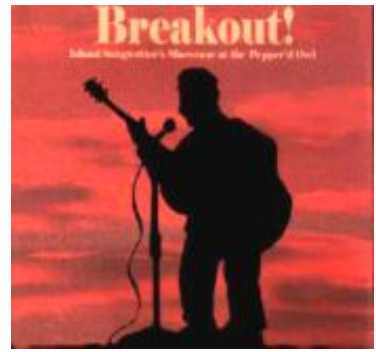
ISS Address

ISS
P.O. Box 430
East Northport, N.Y. 11731-0430
Phone: 631-462-3300 (Sonny Speed)
E-mail: mcspeed@aol.com

ISS Staff

- Ø **Director:** Sonny Speed
- Ø **Press Secretary:** Bob Caltrano
- Ø **Newsletter Writing Staff:** Gerry Dantone, Bill "Scoop" Ryan, Walter Sargent, Michael Clark, Sonny Meadows, Mike Mattel, Martha Trachtenberg, Vince Crici, Rich Stein, Andrew Kirschner and James Yarsky
- Ø **Website Coordinator:** Bill "Scoop" Ryan
- Ø **Newsletter Editor/Publisher:** Shari Diamond (summer slummin')

Please make sure you check out our website www.islandsongwriters.org for info about the ISS, past newsletters, and member performances. If you would like to have a newsletter emailed to you, please send your request to Shari Diamond at shari@kidtestedtunes.com.



Don't forget to get your copy of the first ISS compilation CD featuring 14 ISS members recorded Live at the ISS Showcase at the Pepper'd Owl in 1996. This is a lot of talent crammed into this one CD and this is only volume 1! George Trapani made this release possible and he continues to record performances at the open mike at The Wrong Way Inn. The Cost is \$12 per CD and you can get yours from George when you see him at the open mike, via the web at www.cyber-songs.com or email him at gtrapani@optonline.net.