

Island Songwriters Showcase

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www.islandsongwriters.org

September 2000

Newsletter

THE LAST SUMMER



OF THE OPEN MIKE AT THE WRONG WAY INN

The ISS Showcase At The Wrong Way Inn

We had our last ISS open mike for the summer at the Wrong Way Inn and we went out with a bang. This night we heard performances from **Steve Lieberman, Vincent Crici, Tania, Jeff Curtis, Sonny Meadows, Bob Catrano, Michael Clark, The Tone, Stuart Markus, Dominique, Mike Mattel, Dave Isaacs, Guy Pezzullo and John Robillard** backing up so many performers on drums. All sang their heart out and it was a wonderful way to close the summer series. Special thanks to our host and director **Sonny Speed**, and to **George Trapani** for handling the sound system. Remember to check out our ISS compilation CD from open mikes at the Pepper'd Owl in Huntington. See the back page for details.

UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **September 11**

OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **September 7**

OPEN MIKE @ CONKLIN BARN: **September 11 and 25**

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND:

@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK **September 14**

@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **September 22**

*A new open mike is happening every Wednesday night starting September 6th, hosted by Jackalope Junction. See back page for more details.

Jane Ross' Songbox

The next songbox is **September 9th** and will feature **Brian Sendrowitz** who will be warmed up by **Bob Westcott** as well as **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.

ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

Five Towns College

August 7, 2000

By Shari Diamond

This was a hot and muggy night, which was rare for this summer. A breeze came in and we all inhaled. It got better when our first performer **Jane Ross** played one of her songs from her up and coming and most awaited CD "**Sketches From A Day Dream**". The song "*Better By The Minute*" suited her voice so very well. Most thought it was beautiful and loved the harmonics. Some thought it could use a solo instrument like a cello. The majority agreed that it was a great uplifting song and many noted the nice change in her writing style.

A collaboration effort was made between **Mike Blaymore** and **Frank Buddine** for the next song "*My Inspiration (The Air That I Breath)*", which was written about Frank's late wife. Most thought this song was a beautiful tribute and noted that it was very heartfelt. Some noted the personal statements made within the song could be made more generalized so more people could identify with it. Some actually liked the personal touch and suggested adding her name within the song. All agreed this was a very poignant song.

Steve Lieberman followed with the song "*My Punishment*" on tape. Some liked the edginess of the song. Most really dug the lyrics. Some minor comments on guitar strumming and changing the last verse to a bridge. A suggestion was also made for Steve to sing it a capella but Steve thought that it would be his worst nightmare!

Andrew Kirschner followed on guitar with "*Since You Kissed Me*". Some suggestions on grammar changes and less focusing on rhyming schemes were made. Some did not take to the high stretching vocals. Many liked a number of lines but felt the lyrics needed more support. Overall, most felt there was a lot of good stuff to work with.

Up next was a newcomer, **Tanya Purpora**, who presented the song "*Everything*" she recorded, produced and engineered on CD! Not too shabby. Most felt the song had a pretty melody but wanted to hear more energy within the song. There were also lots of comments on production to make it better as well. This was a fine effort and we welcome here aboard and hope to hear more from her soon.

Sonny Meadows followed on his guitar and harmonica with the song "*Subway Series*". This was a very humorous topical song. Many chuckled and some even gave a "yahoo" on certain lines. Most loved the lyrics and found it totally entertaining. Some wanted a slight melodic change at the end but overall this was a very well liked song!

Up next on guitar was **Frank Gambino** with the song "*All the Enlightened Guys Say*". A real funky number with substance! Most loved the groove. Some comments on philosophical statements made but Frank stated he was just trying to have fun and didn't mean to get heavy. Some minor suggestions on wording changes but most found it very enjoyable, engrossing and funny.

Another newcomer **Craig Manganello** presented on tape "*I Would Have Waited*", a song he co-wrote with ISSer **Bill Anacker**. Most liked it but had some minor word changes. Some comments on production were added. Some wanted to hear more info in the song. Even with the suggestions, most felt this was a great song. We look forward to hearing more from Craig.

We took a shmooze break and then we heard the song "*Only Love*" from **Rick Crawford**. Most thought it was an amazing story and many liked the melody. Many agreed that there was a lot of imagery and thought it was one of Rick's best pieces. A suggestion for having this song played on mandolin was made. We hope we can get to hear this song that way.

Following on guitar was **Geraldine Brockwell** with "*I Remember All You Said To Me*". Many liked the melody and rhythm of the song. Some wanted more information. Many felt it would be good to reinforce the first verse. Overall, a very well liked song noting her beautiful voice.

Michael Clark was up next with an untitled song and that's ok with us. But he did not have lyric sheets! After reciting the riot act to him for the big faux pas, we gave him our thoughts. This was a tragic love song with a twist. Many liked the smoky feel and liked the turnaround in the chorus. Some suggested a tempo change in the middle of the song and then coming back to the groove would help. Many liked the jazzy feel and some kudos on his use of the seventh string. Overall, many felt this was a solid song.

Since it was my turn, **Sonny Meadows** wrote the review for me.

Shari Diamond treated us to her latest children's song, "Big Bad Germ". A ghostly and haunting melody that scared us all into rushing to the bathroom to wash our hands. Shari finally found a good use for the clunky, out of tune piano in our ISS room. Some suggestions on lyric changes to give the germ more personality. This was a great scary tune with an educational purpose.

Charlie Ward brought "Inside This Song" on CD. Many felt the song had all the right pieces to it but felt it lacked a hook. Many liked the song but wanted more info. Some liked the concept and felt it needed a musical blend in the bridge. Most noted the song had good stuff and should be worked on some more.

The Tone presented on guitar "Something New". Many liked this song but felt the verses were too vague and wanted more specifics. Some suggestions on starting from the 2nd verse to help flesh out the song more. Some also suggested upping the tempo a bit.

We haven't seen her in some time so it was nice to hear **Lenora Snook** on piano with an instrumental titled "Morning Sun". Most thought the melody was very pretty and many noted that it wasn't predictable and liked that. The song moved the listener nicely as someone stated. Most enjoyed the chord progressions and some thought she could put lyrics to it. We hope to see her again in the not so distant future.

Our last performer was **Stuart Markus** on guitar with "Gloucester Ladies". This was a sea-faring song. Many liked the use of terminology and noted the lyrics had a nice old feel to it. Many could visualize being on a ship and thought this song had real authenticity. Most agreed the melody truly matched the wording and felt this was a good solid song!

Next meetings are **September 11** (note date change due to Labor Day holiday) and **October 2**.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK

August 10, 2000
Barnes & Noble - Commack

This month we heard performances from host **Sonny Meadows**, **Alan Scmerjian** and **Mark and Dee Loeble of Vitamin D**. Next month will feature **Bill Meehan** and **Anthony Frascogna**. All shows are free so come on down on the second Thursday of the month.

Next event is **September 14**. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.

A 4-Way Tie For The

SONGWRITER'S CHOICE

Sonny Meadows, "Subway Series"
Stuart Markus, "Gloucester Ladies"
Frank Gambino, "All The Enlightened Guys Say"
Shari Diamond, "Big Bad Germ"

by **Shari Diamond**

What can I say but we have a lot of talent within the ISS! We also have a lot of diverse writing and music styles within the group as evident by the winners selected. **Sonny Meadow's** song was a bluesy, topical, funny song that was on the money. **Stuart Markus'** song put you on a ship sailing. **Frank Gambino's** song had a real funky soul groove that got us thinking. And **Shari Diamond's** song (that's me and I know what you are thinking) is an evil kids song. You name it, we got it. We also had some close runner-ups. **Bob Catrano's** song "Nothing" and **Jane Ross'** "Sketches From A Day Dream" drew some votes. Talent just prevails here at the ISS.

OPEN MIKE - CONKLIN BARN

Huntington, New York

Good news! The very popular open mike at The Conklin Barn has been extended to September! **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 September 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. 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.

BORDERS RECAP

Borders Syosset
AUG. 3, 2000

By **Vincent Crici**

Filling in for a vacationing Bill Ryan, I had the pleasure of hosting this evening's open mike. What a turn out...NOT! At first, major fear attacked my body - 8PM and nobody there! Me - hosting myself? YUK! Then my fear subsided when I walked **Shelley Shields**, **Mike Mattel**, **Stuart Marcus** and **Bill Goldsmith** to save my neck! I brought my own PA system with digital reverb - it sounded great (brag, brag!). All performers offered excellent sets of 3 songs each. Since there was a small turn out of ISS artists, we had the luxury of going around one more time - 2 songs each - cool! What's not so cool is the turn out. We could use more support at all ISS events to help keep original music alive and well on L.I. CALLING ALL ISS PERFORMERS! HELP! It's up to you.


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

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - WESTBURY

Borders - Westbury

There was no roundtable for the month of August. The next Roundtable at Westbury will be on Friday, **September 22** and will feature a "Guitar Gala" performance with **Jim Dexter, Nick Vermitsky, Scott MacDonald,** and **Rich Stein.**

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


Scoop's Link O' the Month
The ISS Web Site News
www.islandsongwriters.org

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:

September 11* October 2

*** 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 Conklin Barn** - New York Ave. and High Street, Huntington, hosted by Sonny Meadows and friends, 2nd and 4th Mondays of September, 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
- **MVP Cale** - 8:30 P.M. 1495 Hicksville Rd, N. Massapequa, (516) 520-5845, hosted by Jackalope Junction, original or cover

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!)

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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 ISS events. The Cost is \$12 per CD and you can get yours from George when you see him at ISS events, via the web at www.cyber-songs.com or email him at gtrapani@optonline.net.