



Island Songwriters Showcase
Newsletter

www.islandsongwriters.org

October 2000

Wild About Wheatus!

By Shari Diamond

The band Wheatus has been getting a lot of well-deserved attention as an up and coming musical group of the future. There were articles and pictures of the members including keyboardist and producer **Phil Jiminez** in the local paper, The Long Islander, as well as Newsday's Part II section this past September. Their song "Teenage Dirtbag" was in the movie **Loser** and has been hitting the charts hard. They got a rave review and rating from **Rolling Stone Magazine** and only recently got picked up by **Columbia Records**. They can now be heard around the country on local popular radio stations and are doing the tour thing as well. Check them out on the web. They'll be at the Vanderbilt in Plainview on October 11th - call (516) 694-6200 for more info about tickets.

Jane Ross' Songbox

September was a busy month at **Jane Ross'** Songbox. On **September 9th**, she featured **Brian Sendrowitz** who was warmed up by **Bob Westcott** as well as **Jane Ross** and her band **Wild Ginger**. On **September 30th**, **James Yarksy** was the featured guest. Jane is continuing to collect canned food for **Island Harvest**, so bring something to contribute. A collection is also usually taken to pay the artist. Jane is an incredibly generous woman who offers her home for the sake of getting people together to support local artists. She has transformed her barn / garage into an intimate and magical place to perform and listen to music. She puts a table out for munchies so bring something to share. 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.

Tim Huss' Song Used On TV Show

One of **Tim Huss'** songs "To Lend A Helping Hand" is the intro and outro song on the TV show, **Game Warden Wild Life Journal**, an environmental program on Channel 5 on Saturdays at 12 PM! Tim has a captivating voice that compliments his heartfelt lyrics and music so nicely and I wouldn't be surprised to hear more of his songs going public. Congratulations are in order!

UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **October 2**

OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **October 5**

SONGWriters IN THE ROUND:

@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK **October 12**

@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **October 20**

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

Martha Trachtenberg Going To Debut in Louisville

Martha Trachtenberg is one of twelve writers chosen for the Songwriter Showcase at this year's **International Bluegrass Music Association** convention! She's going to Louisville this month, where she'll play to her first bluegrass audience in 23 years. A million congratulations on much well deserved recognition. On a local note, Martha and many others will be performing **October 8** at the **Northport Historical Society's Sunday At Seven Series** (see following). Mark your calendars and don't miss this event.

Sunday At Seven Series Bash In October

On **October 8th**, **Tom Griffith** will be hosting a Sundays at Seven show he's calling "POTLUCK PERFORMANCE". **Frank Bellucci, Jim Dexter, Bill Graser, Vanessa Jimenez, Jane Ross, Jean Stainback, Martha Trachtenberg, James Yarksy, Judith Zweiman** and **Tom** are performing at the **Northport Historical Society Museum** at 7pm. All names will go into a hat. The names will then be picked two at a time, and each pair of artists will get up and do "something" together. Watch out, they're live and in person! No rehearsals! Seat of your pants improv! Spontaneous combustion! So

join Tom for a totally unpredictable evening of random acts of art! See back page for more details.

Folk Music Society Kickoff

On September 16th, **Sonny Meadows** and **Bill Meehan** opened up the season at the **Hard Luck Café** for the **Folk Music Society**. Sonny opened up with his "Bibles, Guns and Flags" tour to promote his upcoming CD of same name. Keep a look out for more events.

Open Mikes Get Kudos From Newsday

Newsday reporter **Ian D’Giff** has always been and an advocate of the open mike scene and he recently printed an article about two places that support original music, **The Cup Café** in Wantagh and **The Broadway Beanery** in Lynbrook. He specifically mentions that there are "various members of the *Island Songwriters Showcase traveling between the two venues before stunned crowds*". Check out the article (9/28) but more importantly, check out the open mike spots.

ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

Five Towns College

September 11, 2000

Part I by Shari Diamond

Steve Lieberman started us off with a song on tape called "Bop Gun". Many really enjoyed the offbeat, avant-garde writing style that is prevalent in Steve's songs. Some suggested shortening the song by cutting out one of the verses to keep it tighter. As one ISSer said, Steve is in a class by himself!

Bill Anacker followed and sang "What You Did Best". Many liked this song and felt the lyrics matched the music very well. Most enjoyed the way he wove into sections of the song. Some minor suggestions on rhythm flow being a bit too choppy – probably nerves. One actually liked the unevenness since the song related to being on the road and the road is often bumpy. A few other suggestions but overall, most really felt this was a fine song.

Charlie Ward played a song on CD called "You and Me (Pick Up The Pieces)". Many liked the happy, group effort feel and energy in this song. Some felt that the lyrics felt a bit preachy. Some suggested adding more breaks within the verses. Other suggestions for slowing down the tempo in the bridge, and ending the verses with a bigger punch. Also, some comments on not having harmony on vocals throughout the whole song to change the dynamics. Most felt it was a really great rocking tune!

Tania, a relatively new comer to the ISS, brought on CD "Lonesome Road". Many felt this song really rocked and suggested on economizing in the lyrics. Some suggested varying guitar and vocal melody a little more. Other suggestions on letting her voice go out more, adding harmony and stretching her range. Her voice reminded many of us of Pat Benatar! Some minor production comments were made but overall, this song was well liked.

Jane Ross followed with the song "My Mother's Words" which will be on her upcoming CD *Sketches From A Day Dream*. Most loved this song, her voice, the performance, and the whole sha-bang! Not many negatives comments if any were made. We all basically agreed this was a beautiful awesome song.

Bob Cattrano brought on tape, "Another Time". Many felt it could be a soundtrack and most were wowed by the groove. Some felt the front and back end could be shortened. Bob added those parts would not be on the CD but used for performances. Most felt it was a very unique song and noted the many levels and feels within the song. Many agreed that his vocals and melody really played well against each other. Some didn't like the vagueness in lyrics, some felt it made it more mystical and generic. All agreed this was a very creative, catchy different song. Please note that I mistakenly omitted Bob's write-up from last month's newsletter (I am truly sorry for any errors in the newsletter). A revised version will be available on the web.

Mike Clark did not bring lyrics again but that 7th string guitar is back so we'll let him slide. He performed "Coming Home". Mike received the big compliment right off the bat when many stated it was the best song he has written. Mike is in a real good writing groove lately. Many enjoyed the lyrics. Some minor comments on shortening the song a bit and varying the chord progression. Most felt this was definitely a solid song!

New to the ISS, **Mike Allegra Jr.** played on his beautiful guitar an untitled instrumental song. A Led Zep tune influenced this song and many noted the similarities. He is looking for a collaborator for lyrics and most agreed that lyrics would be good for the length of this song. Some suggestions on moving away from the Jimmy Page sound included losing the pick and trying to change the rhythm with the same chords to see what comes out. Great guitar playing and we hope to hear more from him!

Part II by Vinny Crici

Frank Gambino came up after the break with a new song entitled "My My My". The very first verse stole a reaction from several faces around the room-smiles and chuckles. Many people agreed this was one of the best we've heard from Frank. He covered all bases: something new is happening every day/ some things never change. A nice mood was achieved-- well written Frank.

Part III by Frank Gambino

Rick Crawford played "Maiden of the Crescent Moon". Bill A. said it was Rick's best yet. Vinny C. agreed and said that the minor key worked well in this song. Jane R. thought the song presented a clear picture and the words were accessible. Sonny S. stated that the 4 count works well and he liked the song structure.

Craig Manganello played "A Lie To Myself", a song about addiction. Jane R. and Sonny S. would have liked to hear more details in the verses. Vinny liked the hook of the chorus. Others agreed that the chorus was strong.

Tim Huss played "*Men's Lives*", a song about fisherman from Gloucester. Craig M and Sonny S. really liked the song but would prefer it performed at a slower tempo. Jane R liked it and said that Tim had the perfect voice for this song. Rick C. also stated that it was a great song.

Bill Meehan played "*Heaven on Earth*". He didn't have song sheets but they really weren't needed. Sonny S. liked the fact that specific places were mentioned. Everyone loved the tune and it was recommended that the big chorus be saved for the end.

Vic Villa, a newcomer, played "*Dolores Paine*" It had a 60's feel. Sonny S. said it had Psychedelic Furs influence. Bill A. liked it a lot. It was recommended that the overdubbing of the piano be dropped.

Next meetings are October 2 and November 6. Many thanks to Frank and Vinny for pitching in.

SONGWRITER'S CHOICE

JANE ROSS
"My Mother's Words"
by Shari Diamond

Jane Ross has proven over and over again to be an outstanding writer and performer and she does this again with her song "*My Mother's Words*". This is a very exciting time for Jane as she is near completion of her debut CD titled **Sketches From A Day Dream**. It will be wonderful to hear a whole album of Jane's music, many songs of which she has won a writer's choice in the past.

Since the ISS prides itself in quality writing, we had a number of close runner-ups that should be mentioned: **Bill Meehan** for "*Heaven on Earth*", **Bob Cattrano** for "*Another Time*", and **Frank Gambino** for "*My My My*".

Congratulations to all!

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK

September, 2000
Barnes & Noble - Commack

This month featured **Bill Meehan** and surprise guest artist **Sonny Speed** (who stopped in to listen and wound up performing), as well as host **Sonny Meadows**. All shows are free so come on down on the second Thursday of the month.

Next event is October 12. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.

OPEN MIKE - CONKLIN BARN

Huntington, New York

The very popular open mike at **The Conklin Barn** finished its season this September, and it will be sorely missed. The place was a perfect summer setting for listening to great original music from many ISS artists as well as others. Many great thank you's are in order to host **Sonny Meadows** and co-hosts **Phil & Vanesa Jiminez**, **Dave Cook** and **Michelle Firmer**. Please remember to continue to show your support for L.I. original music.

BORDERS RECAP

Borders Syosset

Bill Ryan hosted the night at Borders in Syosset with performers **Vinnie Crici**, **Carl Ferrara**, **Bill Anacker**, **Mike Mattel**, **Andrew Kirschner**, and some new brave souls. If you like to perform and / or want more experience performing, make the first Thursday night of the month your night at Borders. And if you just like to shmooze and listen, come on down as many of us would love the support


Next Borders events are October 5 and November 2. Support the ISS and original L.I. music.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - WESTBURY

Borders - Westbury

This month, the Roundtable at featured a "**Guitar Gala**" performance with **Jim Dexter**, **Nick Vermitsky**, **Scott MacDonald**, and **Rich Stein**. Rich is looking for people to perform so reach him at the number below of you are interested. *Next event is October 20th.*

See Rich Stein at meetings or gigs for more info or call him at (516) 742-2817 or e-mail him at clearsteer@aol.com.



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

Our web site is getting more and more state-of-the-art and we already have popular features such as Post-a-Gig, and the on-line newsletter, up and running. Post-a-Gig lets you enter in your gig dates, no need to call, or fax anyone. If you can't get to a PC, you can leave the details on the cyber-songs phone line (516) 628-1163. So check out the site, and keep coming back as it grows. If you would like to purchase a CD from many of our talented ISS members, get it via the web from www.cyber-songs where you can listen to songs and become eligible to win a free CD! What are you waiting for? Get with the music!

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: **October 2** **November 6** **December 4**

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 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** – The Northport Historical Society Museum, Main St. Northport on the north side of the street opposite the police station 7 PM. Contact Kate Kelly at 757-1111 for listing of scheduled performers. The Sundays At Seven Arts in Concert Series is supported in part by funds from the NYS Council on the Arts, distributed in Suffolk County through the Huntington Arts Council. They request a \$2 donation for the evening.

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.