



Island Songwriters Showcase

www.islandsongwriters.org

November 2000

Newsletter

SONNY MEADOWS GETS A HIT IN THE WORLD SERIES!

By Shari Diamond

Back at our August workshop, **Mr. Sonny Meadows** presented his song "**Subway Series**". Being that we were all anticipating the Mets to play the Yankees, we all felt this song was on the money. Sonny is well known for his bluesy topical songs and this tune was no exception. We all loved the part in his song about Piazza getting beamed from Clemens and all the other political references. So, it was more than just a timely tune when the World Series actually got under way. Fortunately, Sonny got busy in **Sonny Speed's Son Spot Recording Studio** and got the song finished. On the way, he changed the title to "Clemens Beamed Piazza", probably after Clemens threw the broken bat at Piazza. (Now we have ball rage!) Mr. Meadows sent the song to various radio stations and **WFAN Sports Radio** aired the song on the "Mike and The Mad Dog Show". Well, a guy from **Cablevision** heard the song and contacted Sonny Meadows. This guy produces the show, "**LT One**", (Local Talent One), and has asked Sonny to be the guest performer. Sonny will be at Cablevision's recording studio on November 8, and the show will air sometime in December. We will keep you posted with the dates and channel. This is not only a great thing for Sonny Meadows, but it is very good for many of us local artists. So the moral of this story is, ya' never know what's gonna work so get it out there. Best of luck to Sonny Meadows and many well deserved congratulations!

ISS Represented At Woody Guthrie Awards Dinner

The **Annual Woody and Marjorie Guthrie Awards Dinner** took place on October 12, 2000 at the Marriott Marquis in Times Square. **Sonny Meadows** and **Marc Clayton** proudly represented the ISS as invited guests of the Guthrie family and **Huntington's Disease Society of America (HDSA)**. The dinner and awards brings together the entertainment, scientific research, and business communities to help raise funds for the HDSA. Each year Awards are given to entertainers "who exemplify Woody Guthrie's social activism and personal commitment to the visions and hopes of people" and to physicians and researchers pioneering in the treatment of Huntington's Disease. **Odetta** received this year's *Woody Guthrie Award* and **Harold Leventhal**, the producer and manager of Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger and many more folkies, received the *Lifetime Achievement Award*.

Check It Out

Looking for a book to help with the songwriting process, check out "**Six Steps To Songwriting Success**" by **James Bloom**, published by Billboard books. Maybe we can start a book swap. Also, on the web is a guitar theory site. To get to it, do a search on "**Dansm's Guitar Chord Theory**". What are you waiting for? Go check it out!

UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **November 6**

OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **November 2**

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND:
@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK: **November 30***
@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **November 17**

* date change this month only

Jane Ross' Birthday Bash

You are invited to come and join host **Sharon Ross** (Jane's sister) for an informal gathering of friends, family and musicians to wish **Jane Ross** a happy birthday and continued success with the **SONG BOX**.

When: **Tuesday, November 14th**

Where: **The Song Box (@ Jane's House) 14 Barkers Lane, Huntington Station** (Barkers connects to Jericho Tpk at Enterprise Car Rental. It's only a bit past Rt. 110 on the right side. You'll also see a take out Chinese restaurant on the corner. The house is immediately on your left and go in the back down the driveway)

Time: **8:00pm**

To help make this a memorable event for all, **please feel free to bring your instrument or other talent** and join in on the impromptu entertainment.

Please **bring a food dish of your choice** as tastes vary.

RSVP to: Sharon Ross, (516) 997-7782, @ Facial Garden, 221 Post Ave, Westbury, N.Y. 11590

And please mention this to all who support Jane's Song Box.

If you haven't been to one of her Song Box events, you have been missing out on something very special and wonderful. On October 28, Jane featured **Scott MacDonald** as musician and luthier with warm-ups from **James Yarsky, Jim Dexter, Paulette Boucher** and **Jane Ross** herself. Jane is continuing to collect canned food to donate to Island Harvest so please remember to contribute. To find out more info about upcoming dates and performances, please call Jane at 631-385-7545.

ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

Five Towns College

October 2, 2000

By Shari Diamond

Steve Lieberman started us off on tape with "*Marika*". Sonny S. noted more cuts in the beat and wished he added more in the song. Stuart had some trouble relating the comparisons of the main character. Jane noted some brilliant lyrics. Steve explained the story behind the song and it wowed us so many suggested bringing the story out more.

Charlie Ward followed with "*In The Rain*" on CD. Stuart liked it. Frank liked the release in the bass but he wasn't sure what exactly all the lines meant. Geraldine liked the feel but noted the chorus was a great hook and got into the groove. Terry agreed. Rick liked it a lot but wanted a stronger lyrical ending. Sonny S. got stuck on one word and noted the drums seemed distracting and took away from the song verses. Overall, a very well liked song.

Stuart Markus played on guitar a parody "*The Moderate*" the music by Dion ("The Wanderer") dedicated to Sonny Meadows. He didn't have lyrics (he'll pay later) but this was quite humorous and appropriate. We all agreed it was a great song with hot lyrics. At first, Sonny S. thought it would have a short shelf life but then we all realized you just have to change the names mentioned! An absolute rip!

Geraldine Brockwell followed on guitar with "*I Like My Coffee In The Morning*". Charlie liked the song, the flow, and the lyrics, but also suggested bringing the energy up at the end of the verses. Sonny M. wanted more sexual innuendoes in the verses. Stuart liked the multi-cultural references and suggested omitting the third chorus. Sonny S. also echoed the remarks about the 3 chorus and thought adding two more tag lines at the end of the last chorus would work better. Rick agreed with Sonny M. and added that more the story was needed here. Frank G. noted the chorus was very catchy and agreed with the other comments. A hot song.

Frank Buddine on guitar up next with "*A Big Woman*". Vinnie loved the lyrics but noted that the melody in the chorus needed to be different from the verses. He also suggested a title change to "Don't Matter At All". Frank G. agreed but noted the lyrics shouldn't be so comical. Sonny S. suggested listening to another song "Donald and Lydia" which has a similar theme. Sonny M. wanted to have a faster tempo. Some other minor phrasing comments. Rick thought it started sweet but then he felt it turned and suggested sticking to one viewpoint. A great song overall.

Tania followed on guitar with "*What Have You Been Told*". Jane liked her song a lot and suggested fooling with different timing and patterns. Charlie liked the way the chorus came out at you even though the chords weren't all that different from the verses. Rick thought the story line could have been a different angle. Shari took the song to be a mother-daughter relationship. Sonny S. noted that as well that she put herself in the story but the relationship is not defined (observer vs. part of the story). Lots of good stuff happening within this song and her voice compliments her style so well.

Sonny Meadows played on guitar "*An American Dream*". Vinnie noted he had heard this song previously and noted the passion within this song. He had 2 comments: one on phrasing and another relating to being similar to a John Lennon song. Sonny M. stated the melody was traditional folk music. Rick though he may want to condense it because he felt as an anthem, it was a bit too long. A very powerful song that was well liked by all.

Frank Gambino performed on guitar what he called an absurd song titled "*That's Nuts*". The song is really a call and response tune but he sang both parts. Steve noted the penis part was brilliant (you have to come to meetings if you want to know the good stuff)! Sonny M. noted it takes a lot to bring to him tears. We were mostly speechless and thought it was very original, zany and great. Some offered their psychiatrist's phone number (hee hee)! The song was definitely absurd but it worked! Then it was time for our schmooze break.

Rick Crawford started our second half of the night off with *"In The Fullness Of Time"*. Vinnie thought it was one of Rick's best works – a really beautiful melody and flow and of course, masterful lyrics. Rick had brought this song to a previous meeting and incorporated some of our suggestions. Mike C. enjoyed it and thought it might be better to shorten it a bit. Mike B. noted that the first verse had fewer lines than the rest. Shari liked the song as well (both times) and suggested speaking the seventh line in the verse for diversity. Overall, a very well liked song.

Mike Clark followed on guitar with *"Cold Beer and Remote"* (and without lyric sheets again – me thinks he is on to something). Vinnie stated he left out the chips! He loved it. Frank B. agreed and Sonny M. suggested sending it to ESPN. Sonny S. suggested sending it to any beer company. Her got his priorities straight here with this hit song.

Terry Hallock, a newbie, who just got recently divorced, wrote this song *"It's Not Forever Anymore"*. Frank G. felt it was a great country tune and noted the great play on words in the chorus. Rick felt it was fine the way it was. Sonny S. noted the chord structure was locked in the whole way and thought he could modulate it near the end. The song is sad but very poignant. Terry also mentioned he plays in a band. We hope to hear more from him and welcome him aboard.

Bill Goldsmith, another newbie, played on guitar *"Santa Claus Is Coming"*. This song has a very interesting twist from what you might think. Sonny S. felt it was a very catchy hooky number and felt he carried it through nicely. Vinnie has his CD and loves it and thinks it's a good representation of McCartney. Sonny M. also had his CD and loves it and thought of him as a cross between Paul McCartney and Quentin Tarantino. Great job and we hope we hear more from him as well!

Mike Blaymore, who collaborated with **Frank Buddine** played *"A Trucker's Dream"*. This song is in the style of Johnny Cash and it really rocked. Tania really liked the groove but felt the chorus / bridge should slow down more. Sonny S. noted that lyrically it was a solid song. He suggested changing the ending line to add diversity or as some stated, dragging it out. A great job!

The Tone was our last performed for the night. He played *"Cold And Windy Night"*. He presented this song previously but changed the melody. Vinnie felt it was beautiful and wouldn't change a thing. Mike C. agreed and noted the changes in the melody. He suggested a change for the last line. Frank G. liked it and thought one part could be put a little later in the song. Sonny S. liked the tempo as well as Sonny M. Rick felt it was a great song and had minor suggestions in modulating the lyrics in one part, and noted certain words stuck out and did not match up as well. He noted that this song makes the listener want to listen so the words are real important. Great dynamics and a wonderful voice!

Next meetings are November 6 and December 4.

SONGWRITER'S CHOICE

Sonny Meadows
"My American Dream"
By Shari Diamond

Sonny Meadows has a knack for writing topical songs, sometimes echoing current events, and sometimes, making light of situations. His song, *"My American Dream"* is timely now and it has been in the past. This is a very powerful song about being an immigrant in America and the awful injustices that have happened to many, especially recently right here on Long Island. As one ISS member stated, Woody Guthrie would have been proud of Sonny for this song!

Coming in second, was that zany, wild and wacky song from **Frank Gambino**, *"That's Nuts"*. Originality at its best!

Other votes were for **Tania** for *"What Have You Been Told"*, **Charlie Ward** for *"In The Rain"*, **Bill Goldsmith** for *"Santa Claus Is Coming"*, and **The Tone** for *"Cold and Windy Night"*.

BORDERS RECAP

Borders, Syosset
October 5, 2000

The open mike scene at Borders hosted by **Bill Ryan** is still going strong with performances from various ISS members as well as some new people. This night is dedicated to showcasing ISS members so come on down, bring a song and support your fellow ISSer's.

Next Borders events are November 2 and December 7. Support the ISS and original L.I. music.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK

*Barnes & Noble – Commack
October 26, 2000*

There was a date change for this event after the October newsletter was printed and I apologize for any inconveniences. Host **Sonny Meadows**, was joined by **Toby Walker** and **Tony Barca** for a night of fine music. On **November 30th**, (which is also a date change), Sonny will feature artists **Dean Mahaltis**, **Bill Ryan** and **Larry Knoch**. On **December 7th**, (another date change due to the holidays), Sonny will present an evening of guitar instrumentalists with **Mark Yodice**, **Jeff Curtis**, **Nick Vermitsky** and **Jim Tepe**. Mark your calendars for these Thursday events! You don't want to miss out on this. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - WESTBURY

*Borders – Westbury
October 20, 2000*

Host **Rich Stein** was joined by **Bill Meehan**, **Sonny Meadows**, and Mike Clark for a night of awesome original music. In November, Rich will be joined by **Shari Diamond** (yours truly) and **Kitty** for a night of youthful music.

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.

Next Borders roundtable events are November 17 and December 15.

MEMBER PERFORMANCES

DeStefano & McLeod at 8pm and **Mark Yodice** at 9pm.

FRIDAY, November 19th \$10 cover

Our Times Coffeehouse presented by the Ethical Humanist Society of LI (www.ehsl.com)

38 Old Country Rd

Garden City

516-741-7304

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: November 6 December 4

Becoming an ISS member also entitles you to participate in our open mike night at our showcase (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 Café – 8:30 P.M. 1485 Hicksville Rd., N. Massapequa, (516) 529-5845, 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 hosted by Kate Kelly at 757-1111 for listing of scheduled performers. The Sunday At Seven Arts in Concert Series is supported by funds from the NYC Council of 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!)

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, Frank Gambino, Vince Crici, Andrew Kirschner, Martha Trachtenberg, Rich Stein, and James Yarsky
- Ø **Website Coordinator:** Bill "Scoop" Ryan
- Ø **Newsletter Editor/Publisher:** Shari Diamond (looking for a new me)

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.