

The Crack Magazine

August Issue 2010

Bottle Bank Band

Gateshead Heritage @ St Mary's, 17 June 2010

“What sort of name is Bottle Bank Band?” asked a skeptical friend to which the best reply is probably that it is one that will stick around in the minds of knowledgeable musicians for many years to come. In my view this new Tyneside ensemble appears to mean business. I understand that they have been in rehearsal for the best part of nine months despite all being highly experienced musicians. Such is the meticulous nature of Stewart Hardy, ever the perfectionist as anyone who has heard any of his solo CDs will testify (Tod’s Assembly or more recently Compass). Now he brings together Sophy Ball and David Jones, both BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award winners in separate bands (422 and Last Orders respectively) to complement the beautiful fiddle playing of Hanny Pawsey. Together, on a warm June evening high above the River Tyne, they took a sell out audience by storm. Favourite tunes included Stewart’s fine composition, Waking Moment, which drew audible sighs from the audience and a driving and innovative set entitled Bombay Dog. I confess to prior doubts as to whether four fiddles, no matter how talented, could hold the attention for a full concert. I must now concede to feeling quite stupid ever to have harboured such thoughts. This was a highly professional, intricately arranged and well-crafted performance of the highest standard that for me really did do the business.

Liam Gladstone



Bottle Bank Band

www.myspace.com/bottlebankband

Formed during the summer of 2009, **Bottle Bank Band** brings together the fiddling talents of Sophy Ball, Hanny Pawsey, David Jones and Stewart Hardy.

The band takes its name from the one-time residence of Tyneside's most famous fiddling son, James Hill, and their repertoire is firmly rooted in, but by no means limited to, the North East of England - a region which enjoys a centuries old tradition of fiddle playing.

Individually the members of **Bottle Bank Band** have all established reputations as outstanding musicians, and by coming together in this combination, they create a new and exciting musical landscape. The glorious sound of these four fiddles, rich in harmony and captivating arrangements, is underpinned by an instinctive understanding of traditional playing, which gives voice and space to the musicality and talent of the individual players.

Stewart Hardy is a core instrumental tutor on the Folk and Traditional Music degree at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Stewart is well known for having played in the John Wright Band and is currently gigging in a duo with Frank McLaughlin. He has enjoyed working as a session musician with bands such as Lindisfarne and also for television.

David Jones, Bottle Bank Band's only native Geordie, began developing his prodigious musical skill in groups such as XYZ and Folkestra. Current bands include Last Orders, who won the BBC Young Folk Award in 2007.

Sophy Ball plays with the Alistair Anderson Band for projects such as Steel Skies and The Farne Islands. She is also in The Andy May Quartet, and 422, whose latest CD 'Go Forth' is just out. Sophy works as a music teacher too, and her Hexham-based youth folk band Gigue Fish has recently played in the Albert Hall.

Hanny Pawsey is currently playing with Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies. Over the past few years she has featured on a beautiful album by Orla Wren called 'The One-Two Bird and the Half Horse', worked with trip-hop outfit The Monocult and done a variety of theatre work with The European Players. Hanny spends much of her time teaching the violin privately.

Bottle Bank Band are available to lead workshops both individually as an ensemble. We are exploring the exciting possibilities and benefits of teaching as an ensemble in the Tyneside Fiddle Alliance, a community fiddle orchestra based in the North East.

The tracks on this CD can also be heard at
www.myspace.com/bottlebankband

-
- 1: Isaac's Been Lang Awa
 - 2: Blaydon Reels
 - 3: Waking Moment
 - 4: Lusignac
 - 5: Swing Reels

Thanks for listening!

bottlebankband@googlemail.com
www.stewarthy.com/performanceBottleBankBand.htm
0191 237 6521 • 07711 963677