

The Balladeer

Monthly newsletter of Acoustic Routes, Wellington's folk music club

Acoustic  *Routes*

www.acousticroutes.org.nz

May 2024: In this issue

1. AR monthly concert featuring Alan Downes, Madillionette, and the Downundermutts, Roseneath School Hall, Thursday 23 May, 7:30 pm
2. Open Mic at Plimmerton Boating Club, Wednesday 8 May, 7:30 pm
3. Open Mic at The Office, 124 Riddiford Street Newtown, Sundays 12 & 26 May, 5:15 – 8pm
4. AR monthly singaround, Rimu Room, Johnsonville Community Hub, 33 Johnsonville Road, Monday 20 May, 7:30 pm
5. AR April concert with Karen Clarke and Al Witham, review by Janette Munneke
6. Balladeer Music Noticeboard
7. Want to perform?
8. About Acoustic Routes
9. Acoustic Routes contacts
10. Other regular folk events/contacts in the region

This newsletter can be printed out from a pdf located on the website <http://acousticroutes.org.nz/news/the-balladeer/>

1. AR monthly concert featuring Alan Downes, Madillionette, and the Downundermutts, Roseneath School Hall, Thursday 23 May, 7:30 pm



There is probably no songwriter better suited to performing during New Zealand Music Month than Alan Downes. He was raised in a tiny back country Kiwi farming community and his songs form a narrative of our home, our country, and our place in the world.

Alan is a storyteller who only performs his own songs. They are (mostly) true tales of people and places told with careful observation, a good dollop of humour, and a little nostalgia. Armed with just an acoustic guitar, he shares a conversation with the audience about the stories behind the songs. His style can be described as a cross over between folk music and bush poetry.

Come along prepared to laugh and maybe shed a tear as Alan takes you on a journey through Aotearoa New Zealand. He has released four albums of original music: *The Best* (2013), *Moving On* (2014), *Road Trip* (2017) and *No Going Back* (2020). The songs keep coming.

Madillionette (A.K.A. Jude Madill & Joseph Coleman) are half of Folk/Americana group The Madillionaires. Jude and Joseph will entertain you with all original music about and inspired by life in New Zealand. They are very excited to be bringing a new song about Aotearoa to share with you for New Zealand music month.

Check out some of their original songs:
Madillionette, Play Music on the Porch day 2021

- <https://youtu.be/ycEx5SB5CeM>

The Madillionaires, Levin Folk Club 2021

- <https://youtu.be/p4BUD5tv94o>

The Madillionaires, House Concert

2020 - <https://youtu.be/HylwF6dAJTo>



The **Downundermutts** are Peter and Cathy Dyer and like much of their music, they are American born and bred. They have made their home in New Zealand for over 20 years and are happy to play some of Peter's originals as well as some Kiwi classics for New Zealand Music Month.

Peter plays rhythm guitar and loves singing early Americana such as Hank Williams and Jimmie Rodgers. Among his best known compositions are "Go Ahead and Cry", "Yodeller's Waltz" and "The Immigrants Song." Cathy adds the big double bass and harmonies, as well as a bit of fiddle.

As part of the Downunderdogs they have been featured at Wellington Folk Festival, Kiwigrass Festival, Acoustic Routes, Wellington Bluegrass Society and the Auckland Bluegrass Club. Fair warning: expect to hear the occasional yodel as well...

Entry: \$15/\$10 for AR members. Cash only (no eftpos facilities).

Parking on site or catch the number 14 bus to the school gate.

2. Open Mic, Plimmerton Boating Club, 10 Moana Road Plimmerton, Wednesday 8 May, 7 pm

Second Wednesday of the month. Spread the word.

Same Ole MC.
Roy McGuinness 021433878



3. Newtown Open Mic upstairs at The Office, 124 Riddiford Street Newtown, Sundays 12 & 26 May, 5:15 – 8pm



Newtown Acoustic Sound's "Open Mic", upstairs at The Office Bar in Riddiford Street, Newtown.

Contact: kevin.ikin@supermail.co.nz, or newtownacousticsound@gmail.com

4. AR monthly singaround, Rimu Room, Johnsonville Community Hub, 33 Johnsonville Road, Monday 20 May, 7:30 pm



Bring songs, tunes or poems to share, or just come to join in. Go into the main room and the Rimu room is on the left.

Tea and coffee provided. Entry \$4. Third Monday of every month.

5. AR April concert review, Karen Clarke and Al Witham

Al Witham opened for us on our early club concert night in April. What can I say – it was sooo cool to hear him again after all these years! And to get three world premieres in a row! All with beautiful singable lyrics, like "Roll along lonesome river, lay my sorrows on a feather and my sorrows on the breeze" (I may have written that down wrongly but you get the idea), and "Oh my, I was only dancing on a rainbow, I was only singing through the sky". A couple of covers followed, *Dance like nobody's watching* by Susanna Clark,

and *White freightliner blues* by Townes Van Zandt, and one about putting photos on the mantel, "look at me just the same", all with backing from Al's great playing on the big little red guitar.



Karen Clarke – oh my, where to start – Karen started (appropriately) with *Well, I'm ready*, and followed up with Chris Knight's *Send a boat* – a lovely example of 'showing not telling'. Karen said that was supposed to lull us into a false sense of her as a sensitive caring soul - turns out that wasn't so false after all.

Karen's set was hand-picked for her more folkie audience with a nice mix of singalong covers, like *With a little help from my friends*, *Miss (I wanna do right but not right now)* *Ohio*, *Summertime* (with a Māori version first), a gospel number about laying my burden down, and the *Preachin' Blues* by Eddie "Son" House. There was a good dose of social commentary and for me a lot more understanding of the nuances in the songs, thanks to Karen's expression and interpretation.

Two that really resonated for me were kiwi Jamie McDell's song *Paint on a sign* – "Send me right back to that place on the map where the blue ain't just paint on a sign" – sound like somewhere you know? – and the 'mighty Taranaki' song. There were other great treasures too, some of them Karen's own, like the internet dating song, but even if they weren't hers, she made them her own.

I could listen to a lot more of that voice. It made me think of the honey my brother brought home from his travels in the South Island, honey from the hill country around Kaikoura, overtones of sweetness but really made of smoke, fire, labour, earth, energy, velvet and rock.

Towards the end, Karen asked Al to join her – it had to happen really, and the two performed some more numbers together including Al's (commuter) train song, "I should be sitting out there in sunshine drinking wine all day". Who hasn't thought that on a sunny Wellington workday morning?



Karen's encore was rather appropriate – "give me one reason to stay here, give me one reason to turn my back around; I'm too old to go chasing you around wasting precious energy". We tried, but she's gone. Sigh.

It was a concert of great music, lovely lyrics, laughs, pathos, terrific audience-artist rapport, warmth, thought-provoking moments, and it left me feeling buoyed up and more ready to face the week ahead. After this gig and Jon Sanders in March, I'm really at a loss to know what more it would take to get a few more people along to support the performers and the club.

With thanks to Barry for sound and Gerard for compering, both of whom stepped in at the eleventh hour due to sickness. Photos: Gerard Hudson gerard@musichaven.co.nz

Janette Munneke

7. Balladeer music noticeboard

Where you can advertise your music-related items—lessons, instruments, gigs, band members wanted, etc.

a) ***Penny Plain*, created by and featuring Rachel Dawick, St Hilda's Church, 311 The Parade, Island Bay, Friday 3 May, 7pm**

Also featuring Rachel's dad on voice and slide show, and Susan Grant from Christchurch on slide guitar.

Jack Black - the Queen's Rat Catcher, a 14-year-old Mudlark, the Ballast Wives, the Punch & Judy Man and many more will burst out of the pages of Henry Mayhew's book, *London labour and the London poor, 1851*, brought to life in Rachel's signature performance approach, marrying theatre and music, great song-writing and authentic words and experiences from Mayhew's extraordinary interviews with working-class Londoners living in the east end in the 1840s.

Rachel has been called a magician, and her works engrossing, a charming window into a previously unsung time in history. You may have heard her tales of pioneer women in New Zealand in the 1800s in the *Boundary Riders*, finalist for the NZ Folk Album of the Year in 2015, now find out about what life was like for those who stayed behind in Blighty – in this "picture of human life so wonderful, so awful ... so exciting and terrible..."



Tickets \$25/20 Acoustic Routes members; Door Sales or book in advance through [Rachel's website](#) (but only two weeks before the event – available now) or email Rachel on rdawick@me.com for reservations. Plenty of parking along the street and in the church car park.

The booklet including CD will be available for purchase for \$30.00.

b) **Up Close and Personal Plimmerton presents Mike Harding, 21 Gordon Road Plimmerton, Friday 17 May, 7:30 pm**



Mike will present *The Ekatahuna Kid*, which he describes as "Songs that tell the story of my first forty years". In his (inimitable) words.

"I have devoted the past forty years to locating, researching, learning, recording, promoting and performing the folk and popular songs of New Zealand.

In the course of my solo, acoustic presentations around the country and overseas I have found songs that resonate with my own background; growing up in a small town, getting an education, becoming an educator and eventually discovering a musical path as a frequently peripatetic folk-singer. In *'The Ekatahuna Kid'* I intend to

share these songs and by telling something of my own story hope my audience will find people, places, history, situations and aspirations we all have in common as Kiwis."

\$20.00 per person. BYO and a small plate to share for supper. Feel free to arrive from 6:30 to mix and mingle. To book, text Annie 027 459 9376.

c) Songs 6021, The Moon Bar, 167 Riddiford Street Newtown: Sundays 5 & 19 May and Thursday 16 May, 7pm

- Sunday 5 May Songwriters' Showcase #83 featuring: Warm Toucan, Nicke Feint, Gabriel Bond, and Agatha Pahtha
- Thursday 16 May Thirsty NightMusic #2 featuring: Kingston High Allstars, Dónal & The Bucks, Day Moon, and Lost Bird
- Sunday 19 May Songwriters' Showcase #84 featuring: Emily de Vegt, Poropiti Rangitaawa, Catherine Bullock, and Dirty Spoons

Doors open at 5:30 pm, Music from 7 pm. \$12 from Eventfinda or \$15 at the door.

Songs6021@gmail.com

Songs6021 on Facebook and Instagram

7. Want to perform?

The AR Committee would like to hear from you if you are interested in performing at our events, including support acts for our monthly concerts. Contact us at performers@acousticroutes.org.nz.



8. About AcousticRoutes

Acoustic Routes (Wellington Folk Centre Incorporated) is a club for people who enjoy playing and listening to folk and acoustic styles of music.

The fourth Thursday of the month generally features a concert, usually with a visiting artist and support acts from amongst our membership. Check the website or the Balladeer for updates about the venue. Members get priority access to performance opportunities and can have input into the club's activities. To join, email treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz.

Acoustic Routes publishes this newsletter (The Balladeer) at the start of every month, and also an acoustic gig guide for the Wellington region (Acoustic Routes update). You can [subscribe online](#), or contact publicity@acousticroutes.org.nz.

9. Acoustic Routes contacts

President: Ruth Birnie president@acousticroutes.org.nz

Correspondence: Anne McGregor secretary@acousticroutes.org.nz

Treasurer/Membership: Sue Ikin treasurer@acousticroutes.org.nz

Balladeer: editor Philippa Boy balladeer@acousticroutes.org.nz

Acoustic Routes update email: Anne McGregor

secretary@acousticroutes.org.nz **Performance opportunities:**

performers@acousticroutes.org.nz

Postal address: PO Box 27-191 Marion Square, Wellington, New Zealand.

Website: www.acousticroutes.org.nz

10. Other regular folk events/contacts in the region – please check websites or email for updates

Ceol Alba Scottish Music Club

When: 4th Friday of the month, 7.30 - 9.30pm. A club for playing and/or listening to (mostly) traditional Scottish music. Sheet music supplied or downloadable

Where: Lower Hutt.

Cost: \$5 per night

Contact: Lynne Scott, 04 565 0164 lynne@scott.gen.nz

Levin Folk Music Club

When: 2nd Friday of month, 7.30 pm, blackboard concert plus guest artist.

Entry: Members \$5, Non-Members \$10, Children \$3 (includes supper)

Club Night: 4th Friday of month, 7.30 pm \$2 Koha.

Where: Horowhenua Scottish Society Hall, cnr Bartholomew Rd and Middlesex St.

Website: www.levin-folk-music-club.org.nz

Mainly Acoustic Music Club

When: (Mostly) every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm

Where: Mayfair Cafe, 116 Main Street, Upper Hutt

Contact: Mary Khalil 021 02314505 mary.khalil@xtra.co.nz

Club committee email:

info@mainlyacoustic.co.nz

Website: http://mainlyacoustic.co.nz/coming_attractions/

Morris dancing: Dave Barnes <http://www.morrisdancing.org.nz/>

Poneke Shanty Club

When: 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month 7-9pm

Where: The Welsh Dragon Bar, 10a Cambridge Terrace, Wellington

<https://www.facebook.com/PonekeShantyClub/>

Pukerua Bay Folk Club

When: 1st Thursday of the month, 8pm (no club night in January)

Where: 9 Donlin Rd, Pukerua Bay

Contact: Murray or Julie Kilpatrick, (04) 239 9951, musicianmurray@gmail.com

Trad Singing Session with Dave Barnes hosting

When: 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, from about 6.45pm

Where: The Welsh Dragon Bar, Wellington. This session celebrates unaccompanied singing in traditional style. Fine beer and food to be had at the bar.

Contact: Dave Barnes david.barnes@xtra.co.nz

Wellington Bluegrass Society

When: 3rd Friday of the month, 8pm

Where: 54 Richmond Street, Petone

Contact: Andrew Bicknell, (04) 477 0069, bluegrass@xtra.co.nz

<http://wellingtonbluegrass.net.nz/>

Wellington Scottish Fiddle Club

When: Varies, but mostly monthly around the first Sunday

Where: Depends on who is hosting it this time! A club for learning tunes in the traditional "by ear" style, it welcomes fiddlers of all levels.

Cost: Mostly free

Contact: Iain Matcham 04 568 8635, email iain@jumbletree.com