Colin July 2011

Gig Reviews 2011

Dirty Dog Band - Chelmsford Beer Festival

Admirals Park

15th July 2011

The Blockheads Colchester Arts Centre

22/12/11

Click Here For all Pre 2011 gig reviews, includes Junior Jump, Prima Donna, Eddie & The Hot Rods, Dirty work, Crossbow, Automatic Star, P-A-U-L, Blues Band, The Cover Up, Junior Zooky and the Freak Flags, The Hamsters, Fuze, Lee Brillaux Memorial, New York Dolls, The Stranglers, Dr Feelgood, Lew lewis, The Smokin Jackets, Oaklands Park Festival, Weller Man, Sensational Alex Harvey Band, SAHB Max Maxwell, V Festival, Jackie Wilson Says, John Otway, Kelvedon Free Festival.

It's that time of year again when we make our annual visit to Admirals Parks and the CAMRA beer festival. Because of family commitments I wasn't able to get there until about 8pm which was a godsend as Duncan and Maurice had been there since 5.30pm.

I try to review bands only once a year, but the Blockheads got a second outing on Chelmsfordrocks as this was new venue for me. I would like to give a big thank you to Roy for these tickets. He sadly couldn't go and kindly let Colin, Ivo, Ash and myself have them. We started off in the Hole in the Wall pub in Colchester. A nice little pub selling some good beers, drank Timothy Taylor's Landlord. A decent jukebox as well. We then headed all 30 yards to the Colchester Arts Centre. It wasn't what I expected, it was an old stone church converted into a venue for music and arty stuff. I must say it was very atmospheric with high ceilings and just like being in church. I would like to think that by going here it made up for missing midnight mass on Christmas Eve. Another thumbs up for the place is the bar, a couple of Fridays before we made the trek to Southend's Riga Club to see the wonderful Junior Jump and the Bottom Line. A great show which everyone enjoyed apart from having to queue in excess of 20 minutes for a drink, it was that bad that you had to buy 2 at a time. The Arts centre on the other hand had to very small bars, one at the entrance which sold cans and a small one at the back which actually sold Old Speckled Hen, 5.2% nice. The good thing was that you were only queuing for a minute. A great venue, which seems steeped in atmosphere and history.

This is a well run event which gets bigger every year, although in total they advertise that they have in excess of 350 ales there is normally about 100 on at anyonetime. I had decided to stick to the golden ales and headed straight for The Brentwood Brewery Company stand where I had a pint of their blonde, and although I didn't have a bad pint all night I think this was my favorite. The prices of the beers are reasonable on average £3. There seemed to be more people there than last year although it was easier to get served, perhaps the nice weather kept people out of the tents.

The evening entertainment came in the shape of The Dirty Dog Band a covers band I think from the Hertfordshire area. They were a 4 piece band who played a good mix of music, including Long Train Running, 20th Century Boy, Hound dog, Valarie, Who's that Lady, I feel Good, Hotdog, The Joker, Sweet Home Alabama, Summer of 69 and one of my favorites Too Hot to Handle. They seemed a mish mash of members from the long haired Scott Gorham lookalike lead singer to the bassist who wouldn't look out of place as Jerry St Clair in Phoenix Nights. They were a very good band which certainly hit the spot on Friday night. Maurice's legendary MOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOORE (the loudest in all of the world) got them back for a second encore which disappointingly was a Beatles song (I'm not a fan).

The band came on with the obligatory "Sex and Drugs and Rock and Roll" as a starter and finished with "Sweet Gene Vincent" and "Hit me with your Rhythm Stick" as encores. They had everything else in between and as usual were there normal set, all played with there usual aplomb and they probably are one of the funkiest bands out with the great Sir Norman Watt Roy on bass.

Another good night roll on next year, having said that its now getting a little more expensive with a £3 entrance fee and £3 (refundable) for a glass before you start drinking.

Apparently the Blockheads play this gig every Christmas and this is about the 10th or 11th time they have done this. A new Christmas tradition for me, I think.

Once again thanks again Roy

Duncan, December 2011.

Beady Eye - Somerset House

12/07/11

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I don't often get the chance to see one of the bigger bands at a smallish venue but when our friend Colin had 2 tickets which he couldn't use, my son Charlie and me jumped at the chance. A pub which deserves a mention first though is the Magpie in New Street opposite Liverpool St Station. I had a fine pint of Thornbridge Jaipur IPA, excellent.

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Anyway a short trip to Somerset House saw us at a new venue for me. Somerset House is where you go to look at birth and death certificates when you are trying to research your family tree. They have reinvented themselves and have concerts and ice skating in the big open square in the middle of the building. It's a fantastic place to see live music, full of atmosphere and on the building behind the stage a Union Jack proudly fluttered.

After getting in I couldn't be bothered to queue up for a beer as the queue's were quite long and it was £4 for a fizzy lager. The support band were playing and as far as I can make out they were fronted by a chap called Miles Kane. They were pretty good and played fastish moddy music. The lead singer sounded like the chap who fronts Junior Jump and the Bottom Line, who I think sounds like Steve Marriot. Anyway they were pretty good and most of the audience agreed, and more importantly they actually knew the band. The last song was good "Inhaler" no encore but I will definitely look out for these again. The music between the two bands was disappointing (I would love to pick the songs for these events), they played very obvious songs from the Stones, Beatles, the Who, T Rex, the Pistols and only reprieved themselves with the Stone Roses. Normally when you go to one of these 60's influenced gigs you get rare Freakbeat, Northen Soul or obscure Psych. It gives you something to try and track down and identify.

On next was Liam Gallagher's Beady Eye. I can't give you a set list as I didn't know one of the songs ut if you liked Oasis, you will like these. Liam was up to his usual self on stage, very confident and arrogant. He is what you would expect of an experienced front man and he gave a great show. His band are also very competent as you would expect. The encore was strange as the crowd just waited for them to come back on, no cheering or clapping and definitely none of Maurice's "MOOOOOOORE" 2 good songs for the encore and then everyone made there way home.

All in all a good night, especially as I had a good time with my son. The venue was great, it's not often you can go to this sort of place to see a band, watch them outside with not a seat in sight. I have never seen so many Fred Perry polo shirts and Harrington jackets since the early 70's. The crowd were all mods and there was a rumour that Paul Weller was there watching as well.

Shalamar

Indigo Rooms, O2

29/10/2011

A great night had by all at Debbies 50th at the Indigo Rooms. If you are going to go to the O2 I would thoroughly recommend going from upstream of the Venue and arrive there by the river Taxi. It just starts the night of right It's the

first time I have been here since it was the Millennium Dome and I was very impressed with the place. The part of the O2 that I saw had plenty of restaurants and bars and even though the Artic Monkeys were on in the main arena it wasn't overcrowded. We ate in the Argentinean steak house Gaucho's. We had some fine food and wines here and started the night off in fine fettle. The Indigo rooms was next door, I don't know how Pete did it, but we was whisked through all the queues and even had our own private lift to the top floor. It's quite good having people who are queuing held back so you can go in front of them. The actual place is quite large but seems small and intimate. There are 2 floors, one is the balcony, where we were. Great views from here. There is also the ground floor which is all standing and I would think all dancing. I think I would prefer to see bands down stairs but this is personal preference. One moan about the place is that where we were, we could only buy bottles of beer. Also if you buy shorts they pour you out a double, a bit of a shock if you thought you had 6 vodkas which turn out to be 12. Apart from these small gripes the place is spot on. I was looking forward to seeing Shalamar, it's not the sort of band I would normally go to see live, but they dopout on a great show. I didn't realise they had so many hits, but they came out with a conveyor belt of great songs. I was especially pleased when they announced one that was for their true fans as no one else would remembe nes that I could re disco hits "second ending with "a n here was one in th because I would go of Howard Hewitt, h Michael Jackson tion. Jody Watley is riffey. If you wan ter than these.



The goo re is a disco until 2am. Not so good if you have to get back to Chelmsford as the trains are shocking, but excellent if you are staying in a hotel in Canary Wharf. The disco is all old school and I heard some tunes I haven't heard for years, "movin on" by Brass Construction and "Me and baby brother" by War. There were Lyn Collins, James Brown, Fatback Band and Maze tracks. One little tip, if you come out late and want a cab, get a local number and get them to pick you up outside the arena. If you don't, the queue for the cabs takes at least an hour to get to the front.

I would like to thank Pete and Debbie for a fantastic memorable weekend and everyone who went for being such great company.

Duncan, October 2011

Thanks Colin that's great.

Duncan , July 2011

The 13th Kelvedon Free Festival

09/07/2011

This was my first ever visit to the Kelvo festival and I must admit I wanted to go to the Brentwood Festival which was on the same weekend. I am glad I came here though as it was a top event. I went to the gig with brother Colin and his son Joel. Met Mo and Angela who had kindly reserved us a bit of space in front of the mixing desk. I got there to catch the last song of what sounded like a great funk band "Housework" doing a good version of Gil Scott Heron's "Lady Day and John Coltraine" shame I missed them as they sounded right up my street. I will defo make time to see them in Colchester or maybe at Brownstock this year.

Next on was another band that I have never seen but had a pretty good Bio, they were supposed to have played many anthemic festival songs from all your favourites, such as Mr Brightside from the Killers, Zombie from the Cranberries and Muse's, Knights of Cydonia. All the songs were all singalong ones so they couldn't go wrong, especially to the audience they were playing to. The lead guitarist even got on one of the audiences shoulders and made his way through the crowd

playing a superb solo. They finished with Nirvana's "Come as you are" which had the crowd rocking. The only problem was the idiots throwing full cans of beer into the crowd. I will go to see these again as they are just a good fun band.



I was a bit worried as the band that I had come to see Automatic Slim were on next and even though I would prefer them to all the other acts, they had to compete with a superb covers band on before and people would not understand them. I didn't have to worry though as Tim and the boys went through a great set with all of the humour and brilliant musicianship that is always apparent at their gigs. Met young Mr Eagle at the front of the stage for this one. They played all the favourites that are loved by people of a certain age, "looking back," "king bee," "beatbox billy," "little red rooster," "bad to the bone," "highway 61" and many others. Being a Rhythm and Blues fan, I would rather watch these than all the other bands out there doing the same genre of music. As usual the showstopper is Howard J Bills rendition of a country song as he calls it "Werewolves of London." This is a typical Slim track as it's not just a cover but reworked so it sounds original. Howard (the second best bass player in the world) had his own fan club with a host of teenage girls (his daughter and friends I presume) with a letter each on their hands spelling out HOWARD FOR EVA! A great show and if you get a chance, go see them at one of their too few rare gigs. You wont be disappointed.

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Last up was top of the bill, the Blockheads, now these have the greatest and best looking bass player in the world, the fantastic Norman Watt Roy. They started up with "sex and drugs and rock and roll" and went through all of their hits finishing with "hit me with your rhythm stick." They have had many hits and are really a quite funky band and it might seem strange to say don't miss Ian Dury as much as they should. They also played quite a few tracks of their New Boots and Panties Album, "Bill
second time that da
standout track for m

COMMENTS (new March 2010)

Name:

Comments:

This year was over at about 7.30ish and the rain held off till we were walking away from the park. This was a great day and I will come back next year as it is a very friendly festival with some bands that are probably too good to play in a little park near Witha[Submit Info][Home]what a good job off organising the committee do. A few little gripes, there weren't enough toilets, I was also going to buy all of my beer from the beer tent to support the festival, but I was told that you would have to queue for hours, which you did, so luckily I brought my own and also the t shirts commemorating the day were all in black (why not some white ones). The beer can throwing was out of order but the main one was the idiot who was wearing the t shirt with " I am the only CU*T in the village" but his was spelt correctly. Ikid. You not he was about the same age as me, 50ish.

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A great day cant wait for Kelvo 14

Duncan, July 2011

Jackie Wilson Says
Touchline Club Hullbridge
04/06/2011

Our second time to Hullbridge saw a couple's night to see the tried and tested JWS. As usual one of our favourite bunch of Soulsters did not disappoint. They play 2 sets, the first with all of your usual Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, AWB, and Curtis Mayfield . In fact mostly 60's Stax, Atlantic and Tamla, you can't go wrong with that. The second with much the same, but people dancing this time. The set list does not throw up any obscure tracks, but anyone who doesn't enjoy this music must be as Major Lance sings "aint no soul left in these old shoes," they don't play that, but you do get "pick up the pieces," "Try a little tenderness," "Jackie Wilson says," " tears of a clown," "I feel good," their trademark "tracks of my tears" and just too many others to mention. I did do a review of Aretha's "House that Jack built" on Chelmsford Rocks to celebrate this gig, as they always play it. You guessed it, they didn't.

I always wonder how they get so many people on the stage, 13 I think. The Hullbridge club is a good venue, but unlike last time they put all tables and chairs on the dance floor. I don't really like that, but I suppose that's what the good people of Hullbridge like, they see it more of a show than a gig. It's a bit of an older audience and my wife Lee made me laugh when she commented that when the second set came on and the dancing started, it was like the Thriller video. I shouldn't laugh too much as I am in that age group.

Anyway it was a great night, even better with our other halves for a change and "if you like soul music, that sweet soul music," then this the band for

you

Duncan, June 2011

http://www.jwsays.co.uk/home.htm

18th Lee Brillaux Memorial - Oysterfleet Pub - Canvey Island 6th May 2011

Another year older (I wish I could say wiser but I'm not so sure) and that time again for our annual pilgrimage to Canvey for the Lee Brillaux memorial. Another good turnout there was 14 of us who made the trip.

It started off as many a concert night out in The White Horse meeting Paul and Neale there was obviously a breakdown in communication because the that venue was selected by Jim who for a reason known only to himself went with Paula to the Blue Lion, still he is the older statesman and can be forgiven as he is in is dotage, lucky it didn't make the same error as an alter boy or he may have been preying to the east. Any way the Broadside was good although Neale was overly happy with his IPA tasted like Sarsons apparently.

As always the taxi bus was on time for the short but always exciting journey across the water. The oysterfleet didn't seem quite as busy as normal and the IPA was spot on even the carp liked it, added to that the rather fine cheese burger I can say that the Oysterfleet is fine dining at its best. At this point I feel I must commend Neale on his whip holding as I don't remember at anytime not having a pint in my hand.

Still onto the reason for our visit the music, we were already aware that both Wilko and the Rods were going to be absent as they were playing else where, so I wasn't sure what to expect. in total we saw 5 of the bands which ended up being a mixed bag. The first was Lew Lewis who played with Sparko and Figure unfortunately I think although his harmonica playing was good I couldn't understand his vocals.



Next on was Gordon Russell (Who took over from Gypie Mayo in the Feelgoods) whose band were called the Peccadilloes. I think they played all there own stuff and I really liked them, the last time we saw Russell at the memorial was in the Two Timers a duo who again were very enjoyable.



Next up the Practice featuring Figure, Sparko, Gypie Mayo and Gary Miller (Lead singer with a Southend Band Brothers Grimm?) these for me were the highlight of thr night playing all Feelgood tunes, short punchy and how R n b should be. Still how could they be anything other than good with that rhythm section.



Next were the Kursaal Flyers I have to say I didn't watch to much of them a bit to country for my liking.

Lastly the head liners Dr Feelgood those who have read my previous reports about the know my opinion that they shouldn't go by the name Dr Feelgood as they should be a tribute band like Fake That or Limehouse Lizzy. Although they are accomplished musicians, there is no one left from the original lineup and they are too blusey for my liking and the Feelgoods are/were may things to many people but in my humble opinion not a blues band. Still I was probley in the minority as they seemed to go down well with most of the crowd especially the Dutch and Scandinavians.



I can't remember which bands did what but between they played all the favourites, Lights Out, Down at the Doctors, Looking Back, Hunting Shooting Fishing, Milk and Alcohol etc etc. Another good night with good company roll on the cup fianl and dirty work.

As a footnote I made two new friends I met Gary Miller in the loo and shook his hand, I can't remember but hopefully after he washd them, and I had a chat with Rick Butler who is now completely bald (not sure if that was by design or natural) Seemed a decent chap and didn't seem to mind being pestered. A quick precis of the chat was He's not playing at the moment, doesn't known exactly what went wrong with the relationship with weller, worked with Bruce Foxton for a while and asked Paul weller to join them but he declined and he loved every minute of his Jam days and why not. I didn't get an invite to visit him in Woking but I think he just forgot, I will contact the Oysterfleet to see whether he left a message for me, if he hasn't he may send a friend invite on facebook.

Colin May 2011

The Stranglers

Hammersmith Apollo

11/03/11

As Esther Phillips sang in 1975 “What a difference a day makes,” well it couldn’t have been more different as on the Thursday night, a night out with Maurice took us to the Golden Fleece to see some death metal band playing songs with lyrics of death coming from above and the bass guitarist with a big plastic skull on the headstock of his guitar. I don’t know what they were called as the Fleece never has the names of the bands visible. They were ok but as different to the Stranglers as you could possibly get.

Whe we got to the Apollo we were wrestling with the choice of seeing the support act, at the Hammersmith Apollo. It was one of our old heroes, Wilko Johnson. I am sorry to say the beer won in the end, so we stayed in the pub (We wouldn’t have met people like Onion Ring and Suicide Sue if we had gone in early, also the beer is rubbish inside), safe in the knowledge that we would probably see Wilko 3 or 4 times this year anyway. Apparently talking to other fans, he was really good.

The Stranglers came on and they played their usual set, with a few notable exceptions, no “Walk on by” or “Go Buddy Go” plus a few others were missing. They played quite a bit of stuff I didn’t know as well. They were their usual polished selves and I do enjoy a Stranglers gig, as do the rest of the audience. There is not much to say about them that I have not said before, so if you get a chance, go and see them, make sure you are standing at the front and I am sure they won’t disappoint.

Duncan, March 2011.

Nine Below Zero, Touchline Club, Hullbridge, 11th February 2011

Nine Below Zero - Out go the Lights 11022…



Nine Below Zero - 11 plus 11 11022011037



I have to admit that I was really looking forward to this one, a great live band who I hadn't seen for about 4 years in a new venue and local. The first time most of us had seen Nine Below Zero was at The Shrimpers Club at SUFC in the late 70's, I can't really remember that night too well but I seem to remember I really enjoyed it, and there is no doubt that 'Live at The Marquee' is a great album on a par with 'Stupidity'.

The night started in a familiar pattern a meet with Paul, Barry, Jim and Paula at a pub in Baddow this time The Blue Lion, for a couple of pints of Woodford Wherry then collected by the others for the short journey to Hullbridge.

I had seen pictures of the Touchline on the internet so knew it was going to be like a locals social club, so I wasn't sure how good it would be for music and atmosphere, I needn't had worried. We hadn't previously paid just booking and paying on the door and getting a stamp on the back of your hand (that hasn't happened since going to DJ's and Saracen Head disco's). The club was a fair size with dance floor in front of the stage surround by tables and chairs which could have been reserved on booking tickets. The bar was a decent size and well staffed but here comes my one criticism of the night, they only had
Worthington's and Caffreys no pump ales but that's just a personal preference.

When we got there was a blues singer on stage, who was quite good but I think the 1/2 hour we saw would be enough. On a trip to the toilet I saw that the band were changing behind curtains at the back of the stage I got a hold of a poster and Dennis and the band all signed it, this time I didn't lose my precious memento for the cabin.

They came on stage about 9.30pm and pounded out great RnB for about 1hr 40, the time flew by, as always I struggle to remember their set but they certainly played 'Don't Point Your Finger' Eleven Plus Eleven' 'Rockin Robin' 'Sugar Pie Honey Bunch' 'On the Road Again' 'Out go the Lights' plus many many more. My favourites came one after the other 'Ridin on the LnN' where Mark Feltham's great harmonica playing came too the fore followed by one of the best songs ever 'Homework', both songs fairly rocking along. When a band work so well together it is sometimes easy to forget how good each member is individually. It must be so easy to just to go through the motions when you have been touring for so long but the band really seemed to enjoy it, I don't think they were.

Here's a conundrum have you ever seen Maurice and Mark Feltham together.

What a great night it shows that you don't have to go to London too see great music, the last 4 gigs we have seen were The Blues band and Wilko at the 100 club, which it's fair to say didn't excite; compared to Junior Jump, Club Riga and Nine Below Zero which both were brilliant.

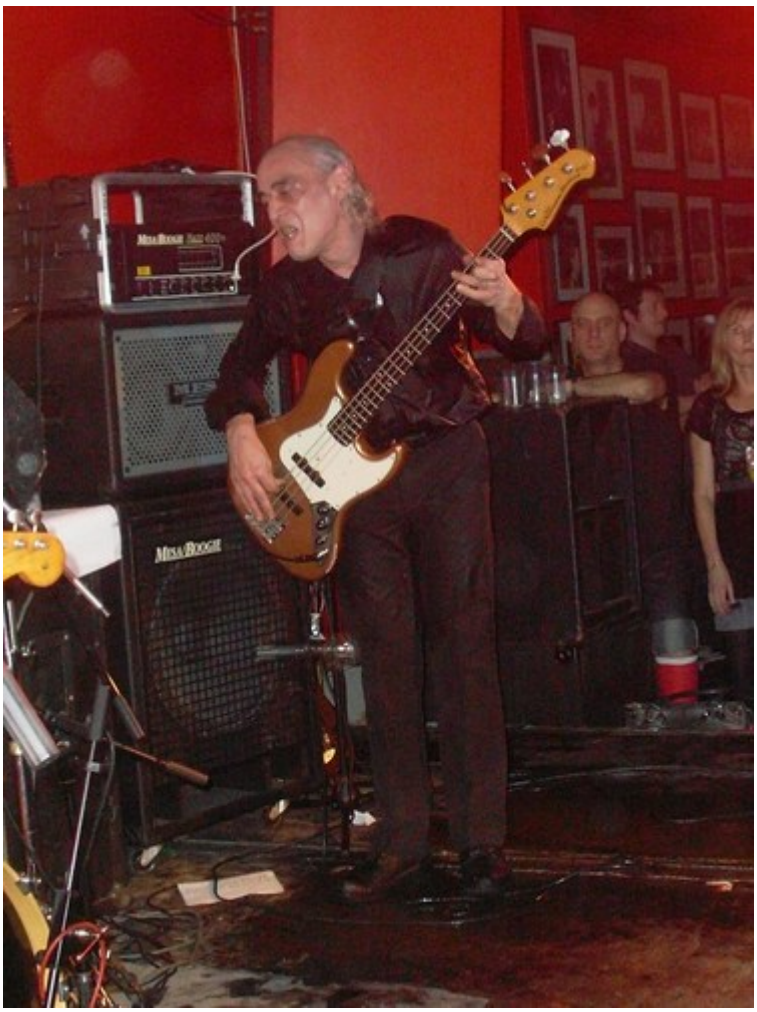
Just a quick word about the Touchline, it would appear that they normally have tribute bands who I am told are of a good quality but this year they have booked Mud (the originals) and the Hamsters, its a great venue the sound quality was really good, I think there was about 230 people there which was a good sized crowd but not rammed. I hope they continue as they are the good people of Hullbridge are lucky to have it on their doorstep, if only Chelmsford had such a place.

Thanks Jackie for booking a great night.

Colin February 2011

Wilko Johnson, 100 Club, 30th December 2010





Another night out watching the Mighty Wilko JOHNSON at the 100 Club. Wilko a man we have all seen on loads of occasions from his days with the Feelgoods to many a solo gig withvarious line ups.

I don't know whether familiarity breeds contempt or whether Wilko was just going through the motions or not on his game, but for me something just wasn't right.

The night statred as many a good one does with a few pints in the Railway before a train and a few more pints in Hamilton Hall, we were a few short for diffrent reasons but still a nice little drinking crew. Onto Oxford Street and we found a cheap pub around the corneer in a pub called The Green Man, decent location and beer.

Into the club and the support band, I think they were called the Zeds, a 3 piece band who we didn't see enough of to make an informed opinion of, but did a reasonable version of 'I Thought the Law'.

Then onto the main event Wilko, playing classic such as 'Everybodies Carrying a Gun' 'Back in the Night' and 'Paradise' as I have already said it was not Wilko at his best fortuanately he had Norman 'Gollum' WATT-ROY pounding out the bass and sweating for England upto his normal standard. Wilko was lack lustre and he wasn't helped by really poor sound quality which in someways helped his voice which was awful. Hopefully this wasa one off and he will be back banging it out when he supports the Stranglers.

It sounds as though I am just moaning but the set was fairly short, the band didn't come on until 9.30pm, and we were back at Liverpool street by 11.20pm so they played for less then 1 1/2 hours including encore not great.

11.30pm Norwich Express home and a game of hunt the working toilet, what a way to end the night

Colin Jan 2011