

RANDOM NOTES AND IMPRESSIONS OF A MAGICAL MUSICAL EVENING WITH A BLUES LEGEND WRITTEN FIVE MINUTES BEFORE DEADLINE
by Luis Cardoso

* Rarely are UNB students, nestled away in the small quiet community that is Fredericton, privy to magical musical moments such as Wednesday night's performance by Long John Baldry. Such performances are usually the domain of those who reside in large urban centers and can choose from a wealth of entertainment in any given week. Tuesday night's show came close to being such a moment; Wednesday's was undoubtedly so.

* Baldry was originally booked in for one night at the College Hill Social Club. The number of those in attendance that night could have only been disappointing to both the performers and the management. The show, however, was flawless and professional. If the size of the audience was disappointing to Baldry and his band, they never showed it. I suspect, however, that they enjoyed the small intimate nature of the show, for if the crowd was small, they were wildly enthusiastic.

* Tuesday night's show finally began at 11 PM: late, but to the obvious delight (and relief) of those who had been waiting since 10 PM. Although the crowd was small they were raucous; what they lacked in size they made up for in volume (pun intended).

* Without the benefit of a sound check Baldry's band sounded better than anyone I've ever heard in the Club at the top of the SUB. This was a result of two important factors: the band travels with their own sound technician and PA; the placement of the speaker stacks was chosen for audio considerations rather than decorative ones.

* Hats off to the management of the Social Club for booking Baldry a second night! It seems obvious they lost money on Tuesday night. But they had the good taste to bring Baldry back for a second night. Baldry is an English Blues legend. Members of his many bands since 1956 take up 5 pages in his press booklet, and include such luminaries as Mick Jagger, Rod Stewart, Elton John, John Mayall, and others.

* And because he is Long John Baldry, it was quite fitting that it all happened so dramatically. Baldry bid those in attendance a warm good night upon finishing the show. The band left the stage and promptly received a very loud encore. They came back on and performed two more numbers, one of which was Baldry's late-seventies cover of the Righteous Brothers' classic *You've lost that Loving Feeling*. He then bid those in attendance a very sincere promise that he wouldn't wait quite so long as he had before performing in Fredericton again. He announced he was heading for Halifax to play the *Misty Moon* the next night, and there was a chance he might be back in Fredericton on his way back. Upon leaving the stage the audience gave him another very impressive encore. It was well over five minutes before the band returned to the stage but the audience didn't give up. The banging of beer bottles on tables, the whoops and howls and cheers, only got louder as the minutes passed. And then Baldry returned to announce that he would be back on Wednesday night. Balls to the *Misty Moon*. Wow!

* Wednesday night's performance was magical in large part because Baldry dug back into his past and performed material that has not only aged well but that he so obviously loves. Tuesday night was made up predominantly of material from his new album. Wednesday night he performed classics such as *Burning Down the Cornfield*.

* The highlight of the evening came when, after a short break to cool down the over-heated amplifiers, Baldry returned solo with his Guild 12-string acoustic guitar to perform some Delta Blues classics. It was an intimate moment with a master showman and a living blues legend. And it happened here at UNB, in our very own Social Club. Imagine that.

Food for thought.



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