

Anthony John Clarke – In Concert

27th February 2010, North Cheshire Cruising Club

We were promised, according to the Ditchcrawler, “An Evening of Musical Magic”, and we were certainly not disappointed. In fact, we enjoyed an evening of superb, first class entertainment in the packed but not overcrowded club room, with a relaxed, good humoured and appreciative audience. According to one member of the audience “It was the best £8 I’ve ever spent!”



Although the concert was not due to start until 8:00pm, the room was already filling up by 7:30pm. People arriving at the last minute boosted the numbers to over one hundred, and the bar staff were kept busy from the very beginning.

The support act Jiva, consisting of a married couple from the North East, named Jimmy and Val, set the mood for the evening with a series of thought provoking songs which they had written themselves. Their musical abilities combined with their entertaining story of their first meeting, going their own separate ways for 30 years, then their reunion and eventual marriage warmed up the audience and prepared the scene for Anthony John Clarke to raise the concert to the next level.

Anthony John Clarke was supported by a full band: Elizabeth van de Waal on keyboard and vocals, Steve Rothwell (first male model for Reebok fame!) on percussion, Ray Baguley on guitar and vocals, and Anthony’s own son, Conor, on bass guitar and vocals. Individually each member of the band is an excellent musician and together they were outstanding!

Anthony John Clarke has the ability to capture an audience and mesmerise them with a combination of intelligence, humour and musicianship. He is a master of his craft! He contrasted the sensitive, thoughtful lyrics of some of his songs with the hilarious humour of others. The audience were with him all the way, singing along with gusto to the choruses of such vastly different songs as ‘The Only Life Gloria Knows’, ‘Blame it on Dolores’ and ‘Tuesday Night is Always Karaoke’.

We were promised an unforgettable evening by Estelle and Ian Bruce, and they have yet again kept their promise. So our thanks go to them for all their hard work in arranging a superb, hilarious and entertaining evening of professional musicianship.

I can only say to members who weren’t there, “you missed an unforgettable evening” and finish with a question. When is the next one?

Val Dockerty
Aquarius