

MARYPORT BLUES FESTIVAL 2012

As the British Blues Archive rep for Lancashire, I like to keep in touch with the blues scene throughout the country. I am a great supporter of 'Keeping Live Music Alive' and support local bands, artists, and venues who have a passion for 'The Blues' via my facebook website, [Lancashire Blues Archive](#)

I have, over the years, been interested in all genres within the 'blues' spectrum...from acoustic roots to rock and beyond. I see a new generation of British Blues artists emerging, which is refreshing and hope this will continue to keep 'the blues' alive.

Travelling out of the Lancashire area and up into Cumbria, for one of the NW's best Blues Festivals, we found a 'New Look' festival in Maryport this year. With the disappearance of the 'big marquee', and the introduction of a concert venue 'The Wave' as the 'main' stage, it was certainly a different experience.

With plenty of 'trail' venues in the pubs and clubs, it was difficult to get to see all the bands and artists on the trail or the main stage, so it was a bit of a 'pick 'n mix'.

The first band to play at the festival on the Friday evening, were [Rabbit Foot](#) from Sussex - a fresh and unique band for the 'blues' experience. With African drums to provide the driving rhythm, they are young, with a new style of blues (they call 'swamp boogie' blues), which is refreshing... and the 'lady' in the band, Carla Viegas, has a sensational voice. Catch them if you can.



Rabbit Foot

Next, we managed to catch the [Junkhouse Dog Blues Band](#) - a harp driven band from Manchester. Luke 'Junkhousedog' Shaw gave an energetic performance and the band provided a mix of 'swing' and 'Chicago' style blues giving a 'high energy' feel. A great band and performance well recommended.



Luke 'Junkhousedog' Shaw

An up and coming young blues/rock band, the [Mentulls](#), from the North East, were privileged to play on the main stage on Friday evening. The performance that they gave would make you believe they were older than their years, with the standard of musicianship equal to those who have been on the circuit for many moons. Definitely a band to look out for in the future!



Andrew Pipe of the Mentulls

On the trail and the last band for us on the Friday, was [Babajack](#) playing acoustic, roots blues, they provided an exciting and refreshing change to the standard 'electric' band. Becky Tate sings from the heart and pounds the rhythm on the kahon and bongos and Trevor Steger plays a mean slide on his home made wine box guitar. I'd definitely put them on my 'must see' list!



Babajack

Happily the sun was shining on the Saturday. We headed down early afternoon to see [Mike \(Dr Blue\) McKeon](#) (British Blues Archive writer of 'Diary of a Blues Man') for an acoustic set. Mike writes most of his own material, and many songs are linked to 'his journeys'. It was nice to catch up with a fellow 'Archiver'!



Mike McKeon and me!

Next on our list was a catch up with a favourite band of mine, [Fuschi4](#) from Manchester, an Italian/British combo fronted by Paolo Fuschi. They played to a packed house with a mix of blues and funk with a hint of jazz for good measure! To me, they seem to get better each time I see them. Superb guitar work from Paolo and the young Tim Moscrop and exceptional bass playing from Dave Lloyd, while Adam Dawson provided the driving rhythm on the drums. Just watch this space, I think we'll be seeing a lot more of this band!



Fuschi4

Later that afternoon we headed down to the outside family stage on the trail to see [Cry Baby and the Hoochie Coochie Boys](#). Great harmonica playing from Rob (Cry Baby) Wilkinson, and the band provided a fun and lively set with a rockin' edge!!



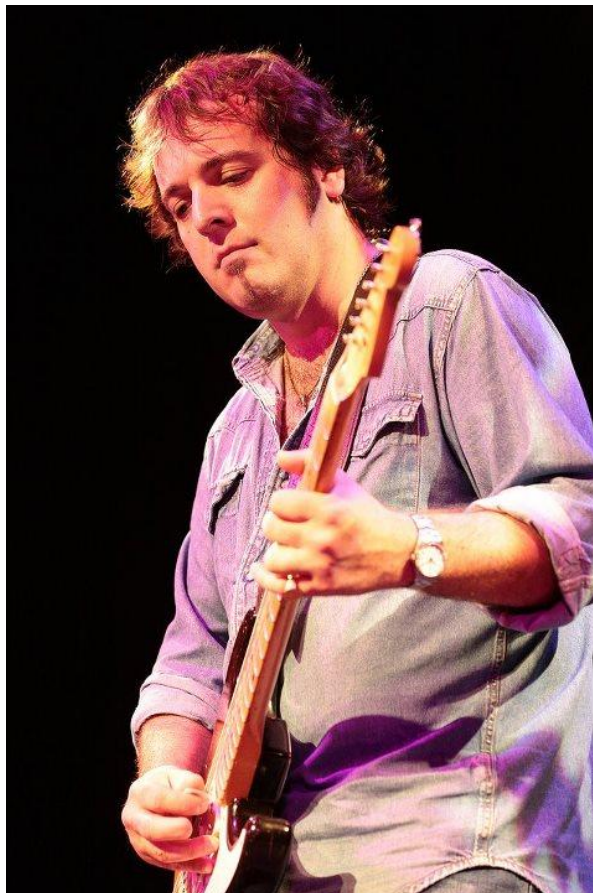
Cry Baby and the Hoochie Coochie Boys

We tried to catch [Hooson](#), as we headed back into town, but the pub was already packed to overflowing when we got there. We were, however, able to hear Jenna Hooson from outside, blasting out her individual blues/soul style.



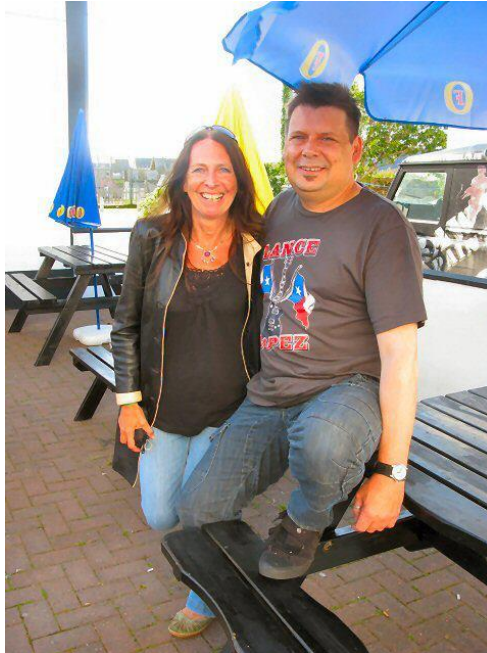
Hooson

Later, at the Wave, we caught some of the [Tod Sharpville Blues Review](#) set on the main stage. A well rehearsed young blues man who plays a 'mean' guitar and has a growing reputation as a song writer. We also caught one of his 'guests', acclaimed American blues man Nick Moss, playing classic Chicago style blues.



Tod Sharpville

I would have liked have made the [Paddy Maguire Jam Session](#) on Saturday night. From what I have heard it was a great success... as it was last year... bringing in a mix of musicians from the trail together for an exciting evening of music. Well done Paddy, yet again!!



Paddy Maguire and me!

Sunday brought an exciting start to the day with the [Russ Tippins Electric Band](#). On the 'rock' side of blues, Russ's guitar playing is in a class of its own. The band played a very tight set with some self penned work and some covers. Jenna Hooson of [Hooson](#) made a guest appearance, which was the 'icing on the cake'..... boy, can that lady sing!! A great way to spend a Sunday afternoon!



Russ Tippins and Jenna Hooson

We headed off for our final evening, to the Wave. Young [Ben Poole](#), a superb guitarist and his band, played to a 'quiet' audience in the Wave auditorium. (the acoustics of the venue are good, but it has the feel of a doctors surgery when it's quiet!) Ben, a singer, songwriter, wowed everyone with his playing and came into the audience, to the delight of many. Lots more to come from this young man!



Ben Poole and his band

Next up was [Marcus Malone](#), a charismatic blues/soul singer. Hailing from Deroit, he has now made his home in GB. He encouraged the audience to get on their feet for a 'boogie' with some great music.



Marcus Malone and me!

The final acts on the main stage were [Chris Farlowe](#), [Cliff Bennett](#) and the [New Amen Corner](#). A great set and enjoyed by all, Chris can still belt out the music and was well supported by the band, A memorable evening.



Chris Farlowe, Cliff Bennett and the New Amen Corner

All in all a great festival, so well done to the [Maryport Blues](#) committee. There were some issues about having the Wave as the main stage, but the quality of the bands and artists on the trail was amazing, I just wish I could have caught some more....so maybe next year!!

So watch out for the 'New Generation' of 'British Blues' and support when you can. Lets continue 'Keeping Live Music Alive'!!!!

[Rosy Greer - Lancashire Blues Archive](#)