

Review for the 'STOURBRIDGE BLUES FESTIVAL' - Saturday 16th May 2015  
@ The Old Halesonians, Wassel Grove, Stourbridge, Worcestershire -  
<http://www.stourbridgebluesfestival.co.uk/>



This was the third 'Stourbridge Blues Festival' and a second visit for me. I would describe the festival as 'small but beautifully formed' , but with a marquee this year, it provided a great space to accommodate a healthy crowd. The sun did shine and even though there was a chilly wind, it didn't take away the overwhelming support for, what was, a great full day festival. It was also a good opportunity for my husband and myself to meet up with some old friends from my Stourbridge Art College days.

Kick starting the day, it was a great pleasure to listen to the accomplished young singer guitar player, 'Sunjay Brayne'. Living locally, he came with acoustic guitar and stomp and gave us a mixed selection of blues and folk orientated covers, plus some original material from his new album 'Sunjay'. He has an excellent voice and guitar style and also had great rapport with the audience. He finished off his set with a bit of Blind Willie McTell and a well performed 'Dust My Broom'.

<http://www.sunjay.tv/>



Sunjay Brayne

The next band, '**Tunky Pig**', came in as a last minute replacement for the original festival line up and did a great job. They are a local and powerful 3 piece band from Oldbury , playing classic blues rock covers and some original material. With a repertoire, including numbers from Free, Hendrix and Led Zeppelin , they went down a storm with the audience. They finished their set with a brilliant take of 'A Whole Lotta Love'. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/TUNKY-PIG/1591762811042914?sk=timeline>



Tunky Pig

Bringing in some great down to earth rhythm & blues, '**46th & Main**' did a good job of rockin' it up with classic covers, plus some of their own material. Influenced by bands like Nine Below Zero and Dr Feelgood, their music was up tempo with some harmonica driven. They performed a great take of the classic 'Riding On The L&N' .

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/46th-Main/1743846599174729?sk=timeline>



46th & Main

A great classic rock opener from the 3 piece blues rock band '**Blacktop Deluxe**' from Cornwall. They played some mean tracks from their album 'Turn Up, Be Nice, Play Hard', released last year, rockin' it up with some heavy slide guitar and classic guitar riffs and rollin' with full on bass and drums from these proficient players. <http://blacktopdeluxe.com/>



Blacktop Deluxe

For me the '**Rainbreakers**', from Shrewsbury, were the icing on the cake. As a young 4 piece blues rock band, they have all the professionalism and musical bent of the more established bands. Their influences are from a wide range of sources, from rock of the 60's and 70's to more contemporary bands of today. I could hear shades of Aynsley Lister and King King in their sound, but they have their own distinctive style, with class musicianship and vocal input. Their forthcoming EP 'Blood Not Brass' is a testament to what they are all about and all the tracks from the album were played brilliantly at the festival. Definitely a band to watch out for. <http://www.therainbreakers.com/>



The Rainbreakers

Raising the tempo and a stalwart for playing good rhythm and blues music, the '**Paul Stedman Band**', from Birmingham, have it cracked. As a 5 piece tonight, the band is fronted by the charismatic Paul Stedman on vocals, who had the ability to get everybody dancing! They are all seasoned musicians and played a great set of classic rhythm and blues. As a tribute to the late BB King they gave us a moving take of 'The Thrill Has Gone'. <http://stedman47.wix.com/paul-stedman-band-1>



Paul Stedman Band

The 'youth of blues' is alive and kicking, as '**The Mentulls**', from the north east, continue to wow audiences country wide. With a mix of sounds from 70's prog rock to music from the guitar masters of today, they gave us a great performance with astounding guitar work from Andrew Pipe. The set highlighted tracks from their forthcoming album, 'Reflections' and also numbers from their previous CD, 'Time Flies'. <http://www.thementulls.com/>



The Mentulls

An amazing young lady, '**Rebecca Downes**' from Birmingham, has been causing a minor storm within the blues fraternity of late. Her performance at Stourbridge Blues festival proved the point why. She has a powerful voice and was well supported by her band with a mix of blues, soul and jazz. She played many numbers from her current album 'Back To The Start', as well as some poignant covers including the great Etta James number 'I'd Rather Go Blind'. Certainly a lady to watch out for. <http://www.rebeccadownes.com/>



Rockin' it up as a 4 piece, the '**Big Wolf Band**' have a 'full on' sound, playing a mix of blues rock covers and some of their own material. From Birmingham they have a wealth of experience between them. The band was fronted by Jonathan 'Big Wolf' Earp on great guitar and vocals.

<http://www.bigwolfband.com/>



The Big Wolf Band

The final act of the evening, was the young **'Tom Walker'**. He is a force to be reckoned with as the front man of his band, on superb guitar and vocals. From Birmingham, the band went out as a 4 piece for the festival and played a mix of blues, funk and rock. Playing some great rockin' blues and funk'd up numbers, the set included some class Hendrix numbers and a wonderful tribute to BB King. <https://www.facebook.com/tomwalkertrio/timeline>



The Tom Walker Band

It was yet another successful blues day, so many thanks go to **Gary Child** and the team of volunteers that made the festival possible. The aim of the festival was to promote live music and to give a platform to the many excellent performers from across the UK or locally. As a non profit making festival it also raised funds for the very worthy charity, '**Acorns**'. Roll on 2016!!!

**Rosy Greer - Lancashire Blues Archive and Independent Reviewer**

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