



Review for THAMESFEST Music Festival 2014 - <http://www.thamesfest.co.uk/>
@ The Rock of Gibraltar, Enslow, Kidlington, Oxfordshire

For the third year 'Thamesfest' was put into action, but at a new venue on the canal, 'The Rock of Gibraltar' near Kidlington, Oxfordshire.

The weather could have been an issue, but luckily enough the the 'pyrotechnic' thunder storms happened during the night and apart from one 15 minute heavy downpour on Saturday afternoon that was it. After a few minor hitches on Friday afternoon the festival kicked off with vengeance.

Friday

Opening the festival on the Friday afternoon were an easy listen, electric and acoustic duo, **Ian Jackson and 'Merlin'**, playing a variety of 60's folk and pop covers.



From Brighton, '**Nik Barrell**' a solo singer songwriter, who has a great voice and has played around the world. He played mix of musical styles on electric guitar but with a 'rootsy' edge. You may catch him buskin on the streets of Brighton! <http://nikolasbarrell.bandcamp.com/>



'**Slippers & Beer**' are a 4 piece rockin' Chicago blues band with great vocals.



With **'Caddy Fins'** think 'Showaddywaddy' and you've just about cracked it! A nine piece rock 'n roll outfit from the local Oxford area. A great show! <http://www.caddyfins.co.uk/>



'Hippy Haze', it's all in the name! A 3 piece from Oxfordshire, they played a mix of 60's music with a raw authentic sound. <http://www.lemonrock.com/hippyhaze>



'The Matt Edwards Band' are a classic electric blues band, with a great sound.
<http://www.mattedwardsmusic.com/>



'Ian 'The Pump' Macintosh' is from Australia and he plays a mix of punk inspired folk. Backed by the 'Missing Persians' for the festival, they did a great set. <http://www.wheezeandsuck.com/index.htm>



'Steamroller' were the final act for Friday evening. A favourite in and around Oxford, giving their own style of rockin' rhythm and blues. <http://www.steamroller.moonfruit.com/#>



Saturday

'Ian 'The Pump' Macintosh' opened the afternoon on Saturday. He did a great solo acoustic set with the help from the Missing Persian's drummer Nick Clack.



From Banbury, the **'Punch Drunk Monkey Club'** are a young, 5 piece rock/indie band, who play all original material. They provided a well put together and proficient set.

<http://bodfestthirteen.wix.com/pdmc>



'1000 Mile Highway', a local band, giving us a taste of rockin' Americana.

<http://1000milehighway.com/>



'Band M' gave us a variety of covers from across the 70's and 80's, including some punk and rock. A great set.



Watch out for these guys! **'Voodoo Stripe'** are a young and 'highly charged' 3 piece blues/rock band. They come broadly from Guilford, with a Venezuelan, a Dutchman and a Yorkshire man making up the band. Playing self penned music, they take their influences from the likes of Hendrix. They gave their all and did a brilliant set. It's so good to hear some class musicianship from the 'youth of blues'. <http://voodoostripe.com/>



'Telephone Bill and the Smooth Operators', are a multi talented and multi instrumental band. As a 5 piece acoustic band, they play guitar, mandolin, banjo, double bass, harmonica, flute, sax and accordion. They provided a wonderful mix of Americana, county, folk and more. With great vocals and harmonies and the female vocalist had a superb voice.

<http://www.telephonebillandthesmoothoperators.co.uk/>



With a new album release hot off the press, the **'Missing Persians'** play a mix of blues, Americana and some alternative. All superb musicians, they come from the Oxford area. They did a brilliant set of self penned works and are well worth checking out if you get the chance. They are all seasoned musicians in their own right which was evident from their performance. Just excellent!

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



Headlining were '**Debbie Bond and the Trudats**'. From Alabama, USA, Debbie, as a singer songwriter, and her band play some great Southern Blues. Opening her mini tour of the UK at Thamesfest, it was a great insight for what her music is all about. A great set from a lovely lady.
<http://www.debbiebond.com/>



Finishing the Saturday evening were '**The Lost Art Duo**' ... but as a trio! They are an acoustic band giving an acoustic take on popular music. Superb guitar playing and great vocals.
<http://www.thelostartduo.com/>



Sunday

For a bit of the 'weird and wonderful', **'Twizz Twangle'** certainly gave us that! Opening for the Sunday afternoon with a mix of self penned, self inspired individual alternative music. From the Oxford area, Twizz plays with a variety of musicians, as he did today. Guitar and trumpet are his main instruments and he provided a great show.

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/dan.eisenhandler/>



A return to the festival with just keyboard and vocals, it's surprising what an impact **'Adina and Johnson'** had. Some great boogie blues, jazz and rock 'n roll, with great vocals from Adina. Some of the songs were self penned, with a few covers thrown in.

<http://www.adina-and-johnson.moonfruit.com/>



Although just drums and guitar, the brilliant '**Beard of Destiny**' provided us with their own style of music. With elements of the blues they could be described as a cross between Seasick Steve meets ZZ Top! Lots of great slide guitar and fantastic vocals, all I can say is 'brilliant'!

<https://www.facebook.com/THEBEARDOFDESTINY/timeline>



An 'occasional' band of well seasoned musicians, '**Crayfish**' gave us a range of covers of contemporary music from a broad range and variety of influences, folk, blues, jazz, country and more.



The final act of the festival and hailing from the Thames Valley area, the '**Backbone Blues Band**' have made a name for themselves in the USA, where they have played on many occasions. As a 5 piece band, their music falls into the realm of 'smooth Southern blues' with soulful vocals, not unlike that of the late Michael Burks, with hints of Robert Cray. They gave us a mix of takes from good Chicago blues to funky soul based blues. They are great musicians and performers which was evident, with some amazing guitar solos along the way. A high class band and well worth watching out for.

<http://www.backbonebluesband.co.uk/>



Well there ended, what was a fantastically successful small festival. Hopefully Thamesfest will continue again next year, so watch this space. Thanks go to Nick and Annette Clack who tirelessly organised this super event. Thanks also to the volunteers who have helped in all areas of the festival and to the Staff at the Rock of Gibraltar who worked there socks off, keeping the drink flowing.

Rosy Greer - Lancashire Blues Archive
<http://www.facebook.com/lancsbluesarchive>