**Glossop Labour Club Tuesday Night Folk Club**

Some recollections by Bob Wood.

This club was started about forty years ago at the Railway Inn, Lumb Lane, Droylsden, by a number of retired primary school head teachers. These included Eric Jackson, Robin Clayton and Brenda Judge, and later Audrey Bradshaw and Roger Wright (Jean’s late husband). It was in the main downstairs bar-room on Tuesday nights, and about thirty people attended. There was a raffle or a collection of £1 on singers’ nights, and this paid towards a guest once a month. Guests included Peter Bellamy, Pete Coe, Fiona Simpson, Bram Taylor and Harvey Andrews, along with others from local clubs. Some of these teachers had run folk clubs at college, e.g., Didsbury, and Brenda Judge says that she ran one at Mather with Mike Harding. Dave Jones and John Green took over running the club in the nineties. Other people long associated with the club were Archie Tawney (Cyril’s brother), Christine Stephen, Lynn and Barry Hardman, Frank Kenney, Tony Kerwin, Brian and Kath Rathmill (Brian was inventor and producer of the ‘pub prop’). Roy and Kim Powell were frequent visitors later.

It moved a dozen times with changes of landlord and pubs closing down, returning to the Railway a few times. For about five years, once a year the street was closed off and an open air afternoon concert would be held. I remember Eric Winter (who wrote Flowers of Manchester) at one of these. These yearly concerts moved to the big lawn behind the Bush Inn, Droylsden for about fifteen years. Later bigger guests were put on at the Fairfield Golf and Sailing Club, and these included Dick Gaughan, Vin Garbutt, Jez Lowe. and Allen Taylor.

Eventually, the three main organizers wanted folk clubs in their own areas. Robin moved to the Bull’s Head, Tintwistle. Brenda opened one at the Nursery, Heaton Norris (later the Magnet, Stockport), and Eric continued in Droylsden, The Bush folk club was taken over by Dave Jones, his son-in-law. It no longer had guests, just a singaround, like the others.

Places that the folk club was at include the following, some for years, others months:

Railway, Droylsden (several times)

Bush Inn Droylsden (several times)

Droyslden Football Club

Royal Oak, centre of Droyslden

Old Aldwinians Rugby Club Audenshaw

Railway (Station) Inn, Broadbottom

?pub in Hollinwood

Bowling Green. Compstall

John Robert’s House. Broadbottom

Broadbottom Cricket Club

(Woodcock, Newmarket Road, Ashton (Brenda and Christine)

Broadoak, Ashton

The Junction, Mottram

White Hart, Mottram

Bull’s Head, Tintwistle

Glossop Labour Club

The exact order of these is uncertain in the middle, and dates are not known.

For the first few years at Glossop Labour Club we were in an upstairs room. An elderly couple from Chisworth, Ken and Mags Whiting, would occasionally turn up. They had run folk clubs in the Glossop area for many years, sometimes booking big guests, e.g., June Tabor. They had originally run the Ring o’ Bells folk club in Middleton.

Later, the folk club moved downstairs. For years Robin kept heaving the side seating to create a passageway and I said it’s quite unnecessary. Just keep it round the outside and lock the end door to stop people walking across the middle of our singing. Eventually he relented.

Once, a friend, Vinny Short, rang me and said ‘Are you going to any folk clubs this week?’ I said ‘Yes, the White Hart, Mottram.’ He said ‘I’ll see you there’. (He had several times been all-Ireland bodhran playing champion). On arrival, Eric Jackson shoved a bodhran in his hand and said ‘Play something’. I interjected ‘He’s not come here to play the bodhran, he’ll sing some Percy French songs.’ I used to humour Vinny, and told him that in the song Blackbirds and Thrushes, all true Irishmen pronounce it Trushes.

**Notes**

1. ‘Joe’ Henshall. I remember John Henshall and his band played in the upstairs room of the Royal Oak. They were terribly loud. He later went on to make Post Office adverts and act in the Royal Family, and in Early Doors set in a Manchester pub (the Jolly Angler).
2. Robin and Eric Jackson at one time sang together as a duo and sometimes got paid bookings (as did Dave Jones & Roy and Kim Powell.
3. We followed a landlord to the Bowling Green, Compstall. He let us serve ourselves in the basement and put the money in a pot.
4. On their three day folk festivals, they often invited singers from all the other clubs in the area to perform and it was a good Sunday night. I remember squeezing up to Robin and Dianne when we went inside at the Bush Inn due to a heavy shower, it being very crowded.
5. At the Junction, Mottram, the landlord would not put the heating on. In winter it was freezing, and Benda Judge brought a spanner and turned all the radiators on. We were only allowed in the downstairs room after that, and then moved to the White Hart.
6. At the Station, Broadbottom, the landlady had an enormous fawn dog that went round and round the room like a lion. The young couple who took over the pub hadn’t much idea and it went to pot.
7. The Bush, Droylsden, and the Midway, Stockport are still going as folk clubs.
8. We arrived at the Bull’s Head, Tintwhistle, a number of times on Tuesday nights and it was locked and in darkness. It was then that John Hallsworth and Gwyneth Francis said ‘Why not come to the Glossop Labour Club?’ It had recently been refurbished, with money from selling its carpark and land at the back.
9. At one time, Joe and Audrey Bradshaw used to lug in a giant Yamaha organ to accompany their singing. On one occasion, it went on playing when he had stopped, and everyone burst out laughing. The Bush in Droyslden then declared themselves an acoustic (non-electric) club, but Robin would not do so, and welcomed everybody.
10. One landlord at the Bull’s Head took up the wooden board floor and carpets to reveal the flagstones and make it more yokelly, but it was cold to the feet.
11. At Droylsden Football Club, it was a giant wooden hut. It was used by the Royal Naval Association and had all their flags and pictures of ships on the walls. One day it burned down and I said ‘Was all their paraphernalia destroyed?’, and Archie said ‘No’ Luckily they moved it the week before.