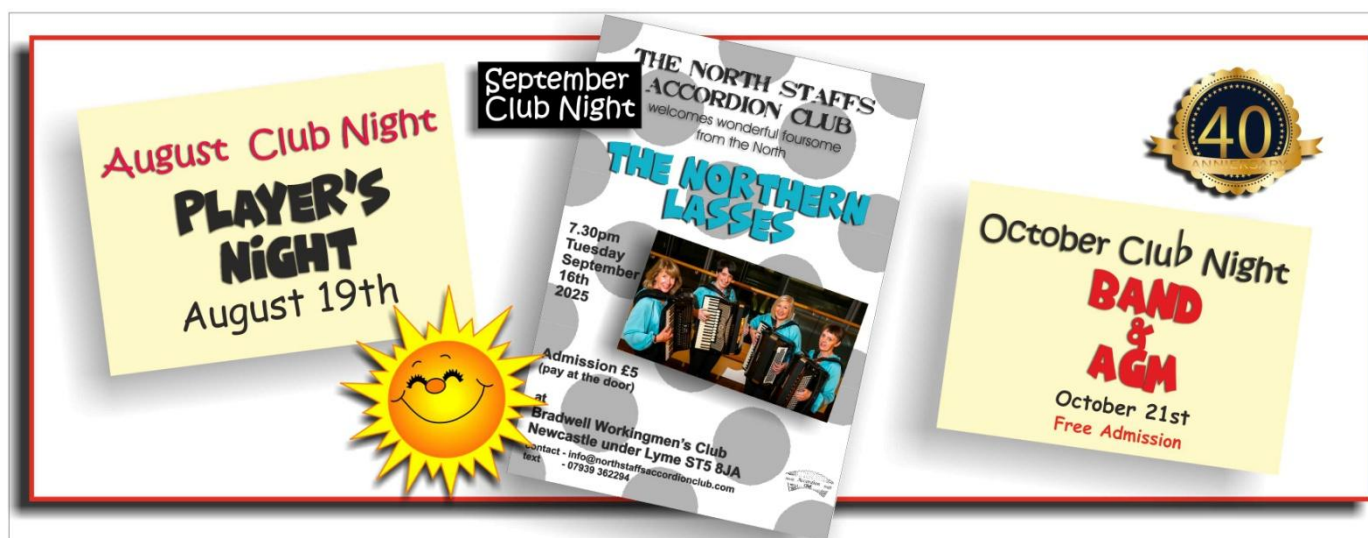


# North Staffs Accordion Club

North Staffs Accordion Club  
July-August 2025  
No 519



HI EVERYONE. I HOPE YOU ARE WELL AND ENJOYING THE WARM WEATHER. THIS ISSUE IS ANOTHER BUMPER BUNDLE OF A NEWSLETTER AND MANY THANKS FOR ALL CONTRIBUTIONS.

THIS MONTH WE WARMLY WELCOME TWO NEW MEMBERS, JOHN GOODWIN AND DARREN DUDLEY. BOTH HAVE JOINED THE BEGINNERS.

CHEERS LILY

## NEXT CLUB NIGHT

The August club night is a players' night with no guest or theme, so join in the playalong and get your party pieces brushed up - our members will be glad to hear them.

## JUNE CLUB NIGHT

**A Bit of French Culture** by Jacqui Flather

North Staffs Accordion Club 17<sup>th</sup> June club night featured a guest performance by **Steve Roxton, Jean Dauvin**, and **Thérèse Dauvin** at Bradwell Workingmen's Club, as part of their 2025 tour of the British accordion clubs. They arrived early to set up their electronic equipment

After the usual introductory group playalong by the club players, Steve Roxton took to the stage. Steve currently lives in Middlesborough having previously lived in Jersey where he formed the Jersey Accordion Band. He gave us a rendition of *En Evante*, *Irish Medley*, *Luci e Ombre*, Elvis and Russian medleys, *Jealousy*, *Sorrento*, and a rock and roll medley. He has good stage presence, giving us the vocals, sometimes in German or French.



Jean Dauvin took over with his 4-row button Museteck accordion, and gave a demonstration of the different 'voices' of his instrument, playing an appropriate piece to suit each voice. He then played French medleys including *C'est Magnifique* and *C'est Si Bon*, and *O Sole Mio*, *Blue Danube*, *El Condor Pasa*, *Mexican Hat Dance*, *Rag Time medley*, *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring*, and *Honey Honey*. His wife, Therese, joined him in song in some of these, and she has a lovely vocal style which fits perfectly with Jean's virtuoso playing.

Jean and Therese live in Avranches, France. Jean has had a remarkable career spanning championships, band leadership, teaching and solo performances, and was also deputy mayor of his home town 1995 and 2014.

After the break we had performances by two of our members before our guests returned to the stage. Charlie Walker sang Beatles songs *I Will* and *Honey Pie* with guitar accompaniment, and John Jones played a French medley.

Jean Dauvin, with vocals again by Therese, started the second half with *La Vie en Rose*, *If You Love Me, Que Sera Sera*, *Take me to Your Heart Again*, *Non je ne Regrette Rien*, and *Roll out the Barrel* before Steve Roxton joined him finishing the evening with *Bluebell Polka*, *Blaze Away*, *La Vie en Rose*, *The Dambusters March*, *I Love You Because* medley, *Music Man*, a Scottish medley, and also a UK medley.

## JULY CLUB NIGHT

by Rosey Galley

After all the very hot weather it was thankfully a lot cooler when we met for July club night. We were a small but happy crowd who met together. Our theme for the evening was 'seasons' and Steve reminded us of the summer days we have just enjoyed by starting off the evening playing *Those Lazy, Crazy, Hazy days of Summer*.

It was lovely to meet two new members of the club, Darren Dudley and John Goodwin. John told me that he first bought an accordion when he was fourteen at a garden party. However, he never played it until he picked it up around four years ago. He joined [accordionlove.com](http://accordionlove.com) where he has been learning to play with the help of Ronen Segall from Canada. Fortunately for us John met club member Joan Walley who directed him to the beginners' class who meet at Bradwell Workingmen's Club a couple of Mondays a month. John's accordion is a Settimio Soprani.



Miriam Umpleby took us on a journey through the years; we started in 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1939. This was when Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's voice rang out of the radio to say the country was at war, Miriam played *Autumn Leaves*. As autumn lead into winter, things were hard for families with men at war. Our next tune was *In the Bleak Mid-Winter*. Spring came in 1940 when wives longed for their husbands to return, our next treat was *We'll Gather Lilacs in the Spring Again*. After five long weary years in the spring of 1945, wonderfully VE day arrived, and husbands returned home. The next tune was *Tulips from Amsterdam*. After the war was over life started to return to some normality and some families even had a holiday. You've guessed our next song! *We're All Going on a Summer Holiday*. Thank you, Miriam, for that journey through the years.

Everyone who played brought wonderful music throughout the evening. I particularly enjoyed Mike Richards playing of *The Household Brigade*. The melody was composed by Felix Burns, who was born in Perth in 1864. His first musical instruments were a tin whistle and mouth organ, graduating to piano, organ and various brass instruments, playing all these instruments didn't hold him back in any way as he was the father of thirteen children! I enjoyed Mike's tune because I have been trying to master *The Household Brigade* for some time (and am still trying) and so it was great to hear it played so well.



If you haven't managed to get to a club night for some time, we would love to see you and have you join us to play some of your favourite tunes. Hope to see you in August.

## SEPTEMBER CLUB NIGHT

We are delighted that **The Northern Lasses**, a multi-instrumental accordion quartet covering a range of music genres will be with us for the club night on the 16<sup>th</sup> September. The players are: **Julie Best, Anne-Marie Devine, Jean Corrighan and Helen Rich**



All are experienced accordion soloists and duettists and together their collective talents showcase the versatility of the accordion. They will entertain you with a varied repertoire of music including classical, popular, cultural music from around the world and traditional Scottish music.

They have played at various clubs, festival



and events in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland but this is the first time for them to visit us as a group, and we look forward to having them.

## BAND ON CONGLETON BANDSTAND

On Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> June the club band performed at Congleton Park, sponsored by the 'Friends of the Park'. It was a blustery day getting the players digging into their cases for clothes pegs to grip their music. We were also trying out our new battery powered speaker for the bass in preparation for a performance in Nantwich Square the following month, where no electrical supply would be available.

The performance went well leaving a happy audience. MD Steve Houghton was happy with the outcome though secretly noting issues to be raised at the next rehearsal.



## BAND AT NANTWICH SQUARE



With temperatures over 30°C on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July, the then hottest day of the year, band members braved the heat wave to perform on Nantwich Town Square. Members Ann and Richard Millward came to the rescue with two gazebos to give us some shade in what turned out to be an enjoyable event, earning a few bob for the Cancer Research UK charity.

Surprisingly, in view of the hot weather and the tennis on the telly, Nantwich was busy and we had a 'healthy' ice-cream devouring audience. A full set of photos and videos are available on our website gallery.

## JOY RENDELL

*We were delighted that Joy Rendell, one of the founder members of our club, was able to attend our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May, travelling all the way by train from Paignton in Devon. She further delighted us by giving a performance (on a borrowed accordion) and by giving us the following bio.*

**Steve Hughes**

### JOY RENDELL - MY POTTED ACCORDION LIFE STORY



I was about 13 years of age when I started to learn to play the piano accordion, following in the footsteps of my eldest brother, 14 years my senior. What with mom and dad loving songs from the shows and the likes of Richard Tauber and my brother into skiffle and Lonny Donegan, understandably music enriched my life from a young age.

Alan Jones taught me in those early days and ironically, the small girl taking her lesson after mine was called Anne. She went on to become Anne Towe after marrying Stewart from the Black Country Accordion Club!

**Who'd have thought!!**

Both Anne and I were members of the 'Les Devaldi Junior Accordion Band' led by Les Devaldi (Les Knock). Our highlight of playing was at the Bilston Flower Show. Les encouraged my singing and I was soon affectionately known for singing Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious! and A Spoonful of Sugar! Also, in that band was Barry Smith!

**Who'd have thought!!**

The band played all over the Black Country at various interesting events such as, pigeon suppers, social clubs, and as my singing career grew I even sang at the Black





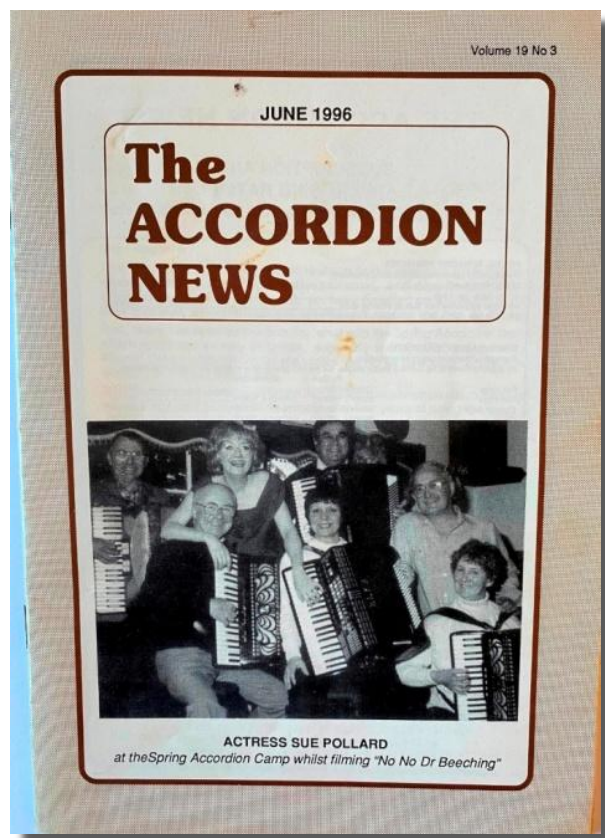
Country Night Out, where I was privileged to share the stage with the local famous talented Dolly Allen and Tommy Mundan. I didn't realise then how famous they would become, even featuring on the TV.

### **Who'd have thought!**

After reading an advert in the Birmingham Post 1976, 'Accordionists! Come and join us at the Stag and Three Horseshoes', I went along to see what it was all about and became a founder member of the Birmingham accordion club 'Club Accord', set up by our very own Malcolm Gee. It can be said with hand on heart that without Malcom Gee's enthusiasm, love of the accordion, and the tireless energy to get people together none of the social accordion activities and events would have happened. No Birmingham Club Accord, no Caister, no St Audrie's Bay and no Accordion Family as it's grown to become.

### **Who'd have thought!**

Malcolm was a great one to rope people in! One year I helped with the running of his Spring Camp held in a farmer's field not far from his pub. Accordion playing campervanners turned up for the week playing morning, noon and night. Thankfully I'd taken simple band parts and in no time we had a little band going. On rainy days we would play in Malcolm's pub and on one of these occasions we had surprise visitors. Apparently, Arley Steam Railway Station, just a walk away from the pub, was filming the TV series 'Oh, Doctor Beeching' and the cast, including Sue Pollard (Hi-de-Hi), turned up at the pub for a warm and something to eat. Malcolm's chef worked only evenings, so yours truly cooked fish and chips for the entire cast! I was gratefully thanked, for that lunch had gone down very well! I'll admit I felt one of those gratifying moments one has in life!



Joy (centre) with Malcolm Gee on her left



Caister, as he sadly passed away the following year.

Because of Club Accord I met Ingrid Gould, nee Prince, Tracy Middleton and many more special people I proudly call friends. We go back a long way. Because of Club Accord I entered NAO festivals playing solos, duets and trios. We formed a Club Accord trio and took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Our first competition was held at Morecambe 1977, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May to be precise, Jubilee Year. Yes, I still have the programme featuring famous names, Nigel Pasby, Karen Street, Julie Best, Andrew Purkiss and none other than our very own HARRY. I was Joy Waterhouse in those days duetting with Ingrid. We came 4<sup>th</sup> in the Advanced Duet section. We went on the following year to enter the Burton-on-Trent Festival, Advanced Solo Section, Ingrid taking first and me second.

### **Who'd have thought!!**

We were on a roll and decided to organise the Birmingham Accordion Festival held at Bournville Cadbury Hall. It was an all-day competing event, followed by a full evening's entertainment of the category winners, as well as a special performance by the Francis Wright Orchestra and led by our very own Rosemary Wright.

### **Who'd have thought!!**

A new chapter in my life, family and work commitments brought great changes taking us to Leek, North Staffs, but I always made time for my accordion and singing. Here I became a founder member of the North Staffs Accordion Club along with the late Brian Shufflebotham and the wonderful late George Karklins. We

also formed a band. George wrote parts the old fashioned way with pen and paper, no computer in those days! We learned from each other. New, good and bad techniques but hey-ho! It was a great experience, great friends, fond memories and such fun.

You can imagine how delighted I am that the club is still going strong today and how proud that I am part of that story.

### **Who'd have thought!!**



**A snap with Harry**

A further work related move took us to Sheffield, where, yes you've guessed, I started the Sheffield Accordion Club! I was missing the music in my life and it seemed a natural decision to start a club. I'd done it before! So, I placed an advert in the local paper to which I received a phone call from a chap saying he'd seen the ad but did I mind him joining in as he played guitar – for those who remember, he was the late Phil Jubb. I was delighted, at least someone was going to turn up I thought!! I was a little apprehensive, nervous even, about the first night starting a new club. Why did I worry!! Phil knew Harry H. Harry turned up to surprise me, as did a number of players and non-players and we had the most wonderful evening to remember. The club has also grown from strength to strength and is still a great success today.

### **Who'd have thought!!**

Devon is where I now live. Not having the same success to get a club off the ground here in Paignton was disappointing, but none the less, I did meet Yvonne, who remains a true friend. We're proud to say that back in about 1996, having formed a ladies' accordion quartet, we were instrumental in raising enough funds, through putting on musical concerts. These funds covered the transportation costs for a desperately needed radiation gamma camera, donated by Torbay Hospital, where Yvonne worked as superintendent radiographer. The camera was urgently needed in Belarus following the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. This was the start of a programme, led by Brixham's Inner Wheel Club, to raise funding for flights and accommodation for 12 children aged between 7 and 12 years to come to Torbay for a 6 weeks summer holiday, just to take in the fresh air. And this programme is still going on today.

### **Who'd have thought!!**

With my family grown up now and 5 grandchildren, I still make time for my accordion and singing. I play regularly for two Dementia Cafés and afternoon singsong sessions, and I also sing in a swing band.

Throughout my musical life I have instigated or helped to raise countless funds for charity events and this I still continue to do today.

9,000 years later - I can be found at Barry's West Midlands Accordion Festival - The Eastbourne Festival (Collette and Gennaro) and St. Audries Bay with Caroline Hussey, Sammie and Lisa-Lee, just so I can meet up with the Accordion Family to reminisce and natter.

### **Who'd have thought!!**

Thank you Malcolm Gee but also a big thank you to Mike, my husband; he's such a star, by my side as always and my number one fan!

Finally, I'd like to thank Steve Hughes for inviting me to the North Staffs Special Big Birthday Celebrations in May which I'll be delighted to attend. 40 years!!

### **Who'd have thought!!**

### **Joy Rendell**

## **ACCORDION FEATURED ON THE PROMS**

Scottish accordionist **Ryan Corbett**, performed with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July's BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. He featured in Shostakovich's *Suite for Variety Orchestra* (also featured in the same programme was Nicholas McCarthy's performance of Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*).

From the age of 14, Ryan studied under Djordje Gajic who was one of the adjudicators in the first national composer's competition held by North Staffs Accordion Club at Hanley Museum in 2000 (when Ryan was 1 year old!).





# Pauline Barker RIP

by Steve Hughes

We got the sad news of the death on the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025, of Pauline Barker, at the ripe old age of 94. She was previously a member of our club and band (3<sup>rd</sup> accordion). She lived, with partner, Ernie Brooks, in the house in which she was born in Hanley and in which she had lived all her life. Ernie, who is just a few months older than her, was also a member of our band. They left when their eyesight deteriorated and driving became a problem.

Ernie and Pauline formed a dance band and played for various clubs and dance events in the Hanley area and beyond, in particular the Polish club, and they were well known in the area.

Geoff Capewell and I represented the club at Pauline's funeral and were surprised to find out that she had twice driven a van from Hanley to Poland to deliver clothing to a charity there; something she never talked about in the club. She was a remarkable woman and a stalwart of her church where the funeral took place. It was only about 20 yards or so from her house.

It is a sad loss and our thoughts go out to Ernie and her family. RIP.



## ACCORDION WORKSHOP WITH RYAN CORBETT



On Saturday 26th July 2025, I attended an accordion workshop which was to launch the 2025 Arts Festival in Church Stretton. The workshop was arranged with the well-known local accordion teacher, Ed Mosley and led by BBC New Generation Artist and Classic FM Rising Star, Ryan Corbett. He is a leading exponent of the accordion and has enlarged the repertoire for this instrument by creating hundreds of new arrangements. He won the honour of performing at the Scottish coronation of HM King Charles III. He made his debut at

London's Wigmore Hall last year.

Ryan was born in Glasgow in 1999 and studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He plays a Bugari Spectrum classical piano accordion. In the evening of the workshop afternoon, he was giving a concert across the road in St Laurence Church.



On arrival in Church Stretton, I had to park in a local car park and transport my instrument about 400 metres to the venue where I was warmly welcomed by Ed Mosley, a friendly, bubbly guy, excited to meet us. Shortly after I walked in, I was followed by another of our club members, Joe Hill and his wife Mary.

The workshop was designed for those at intermediate level (Grade 4 and above).

There were seven participants which made the afternoon very personal. We were able to ask questions easily and it felt like a private lesson.

The welcome was made by Ed, and Ryan began by asking us to introduce ourselves and say a few words about our musical background. It's always interesting to hear the stories of others. Then we began work on the first of three pieces to be studied, *Postlude*. We played the piece together and then Ryan played it for us. The stunned silence said it all. 'It didn't sound like that when I played it'. He then started to explain about phrasing and flow, suspension, bellows, cadence, interpretation, simple structure and posture. (Some were leaning back with the instrument sloping towards the knees.) This unbalances the accordion and makes it harder to work the bellows as they are fighting against gravity. So advice was to sit up straight and slightly forward. We were able to chat easily with Ryan and he offered all kinds of tips and advice, to any who asked.



Ryan with Glenda and Joe

A short tea and biscuits break followed. We took photos and exchanged information with each other.

The 2nd piece chosen was *L'Arc en Ciel* (*The Rainbow*). Same format as before, we played together and then Ryan demonstrated. Hmmm! Why did I feel so inadequate? This young man is exceptional. So, words such as, *sostenuto* bass, *sustained legato*, *consistent bellows*, *rubato*, *cassotto*, all in my head somewhere, were used.

The final piece, *Playa Las Canteras*, was played by Ryan and again he stunned us. But as he explained about melody singing out over a held note, and sorted out fingering on a bass run it all made sense. As I sat there I had a bizarre thought. I have been learning to play the accordion longer than Ryan had been alive. I am old enough to be his granny and here was this terrific young 26yr old teaching me. It was an absolute privilege to be there.

Before the workshop ended, Ed Mosley requested that Ryan played something from the evening concert for us. He chose *Loch Katrine's Lady*. It was impressive and received well deserved applause from our small group. Andrew Hall (Chair of the Arts Committee) closed the event and thanked us all for attending.



I left Joe and Mary Hill preparing to attend the evening concert and felt very jealous. But I had a long journey home ahead of me so I said my goodbyes and headed back to the car. What a great day!

**Glenda Reid**

## Snippet

...the little dots and lines and symbols on the page of music *is* an imperfect system for communicating what the composer had in mind. When followed too literally, without an effort to read between the lines and use the clues that the composer has left us, the result is not really music, but just a soulless sequence of sounds.

**Dr. Noa Kageyama**

## Diary

**Club Nights at Bradwell WMC ST5 8JA (normally third Tuesday of the month)**

September 16th	The Northern Lasses
October 32st	AGM & Band
Nov 11th (2nd Tue)	Leonard Brown
December 16th	Xmas Party Roman Voloshchuk

**Beginners/Improvers at Bradwell WMC**

June	2nd	23rd
July	7th	28th
August	11th	
September	1st	22nd

**Band rehearsals at Bradwell WMC**

Tuesdays except 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Playing for Pleasure at the Boat Club, Endon**

Second Thursdays 2 pm.

## External Events

**Midland Accordion Festival** November 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>

## Club Contacts

President	Peter Cowie	
Trustees: Chair	Steve Hughes	07939 362294
Acting Secretary	Steve Hughes	07939 362294
Treasurer	Tony Britton	07923 580760
John Corden, Jacqui Flather, Rosie Galley, Betty Nixon, Ron Rhodes		

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