

The RAM CLUB



THE VERY BEST IN ACOUSTIC MUSIC

at The Old Cranleighan Club,
Portsmouth Road,
Thames Ditton KT7 0HB



FRIDAYS AT 8.15pm

(Bar open from 7.30,
non-members welcome)

Former winner of the BBC Folk Club of the Year award

MARCH 27 – BLUE ROSE CODE

■ An emerging artist taking the folk world by storm

Sell-out shows, lots of TV and radio airtime, accolades galore – Blue Rose Code (Edinburgh-born singer-songwriter Ross Wilson) is winning converts wherever he plays. Bob Harris calls him a “very important emerging” artist, and Emma Freud says: “This is simply beautiful. I am a folk convert.” £10 members/£12 non-members bluerosecode.com

APRIL 3 – CLOSED FOR GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 10 – ANDY IRVINE ■ An institution in Irish music who 'never tires of the road'

The creative forces of passion and gentleness combine in the music of a man who has been labelled “one of the towering talents on the international folk scene”. With influences ranging from Woodie Guthrie to east European tunes, and bags of experience working with fellow Irish musicians, such as Christy Moore, Paul Brady and the Planxty band, Andy brings to the stage his bouzouki virtuosity, an exceptional repertoire of songs, and a timeless collection of stories from his travels. £10 members/£11 non-members www.andyirvine.com

APRIL 17 – TELEPHONE BILL & THE SMOOTH OPERATORS ■ Bluesy, jazzy swing fivepiece

This band hit the self-destruct button and split up in 1981 just as they were about to hit the big time, after a TV series and world tours. Luckily for us they reformed in 2001 and today are as entertaining as ever. Robb Appleton, Nick Barracough, Chris Cox, Steve Reynolds and Paula Welham all sing and are all multi-instrumentalists, between them playing guitar, mandolin, saxophone, accordian, piano, double bass, and more. They maintain a sharp sense of humour – so look forward to a fun evening. £10 members/£11 non-members www.telephonebillandthesmoothoperators.co.uk

APRIL 24 – PHIL BEER ■ The velvet-voiced gentle giant ■ ■ ADVANCE TICKETS ON SALE ■ ■

Phil is equally at home as part of a band (he's in Show of Hands with Steve Knightley and Miranda Sykes) or wowing a crowd on his own, with his guitar and fiddle. He has an imposing stage aura, and Phil charms with anecdotes and songs from the traditional to the contemporary – he has included pieces by Springsteen, Steve Earl, Nic Jones and others in his sets and has been called “a towering presence in the British music scene”. £11 members/£12 non-members (Buy tickets at the club, or email ramclub@btinternet.com, or call 020-8686 9421) www.philbeer.co.uk

MAY 1 – JAMES HICKMAN & DAN CASSIDY ■ Transatlantic duo return after captivating Ram debut

James and Dan have extraordinary backgrounds that colour their performances – Dan is from Maryland, is brother of the late Eva Cassidy, and has a swing band; James is from Shropshire and played with Uisceidwr; and the pair met in Iceland. James has a sweeping voice and plays guitar and Dan has his own style of fiddle playing. When they made their Ram debut in May 2013, the audience was captivated by James's English wit and Dan's dry humour and American drawl – and his mesmerising facial expression while playing. £9 members/£10 non-members hickmanandcassidy.co.uk

MAY 8 – JEZ LOWE ■ Engaging performer and songwriter with a sweet sense of humour

Jez is nominated for two BBC Folk Awards – to be announced on April 22 – singer of the year and best original song. We'll know the results by the time he visits and we wish him luck. But win or lose, his song “The Pitmen Poets” will sound just as good when Jez brings his easy north-east magnetism to our stage. He's a polished and moving songwriter, with beguiling stories and an easy, relaxed singing and playing style. £9 members/£10 non-members www.jezlowe.com

MAY 15 – THE GAVIN DAVENPORT BAND ■ A powerful voice 'custom-built to sing folk songs'

Gavin has been described as having “the sort of voice that is custom-built to sing folk songs” and a musician “who truly respects the songs and their heritage”. His self-penned songs are simultaneously traditional, original and distinctive and his playing and singing style – a powerful voice and mastery of a range of instruments – has a maturity beyond his years. Gavin's bandmates are Tom Kitching (fiddle), Nick Cooke (melodeon) and Tim Yates (double bass), who create a precise and delicate but full and rich sound. £10 members/£11 non-members www.gavindavenport.com

MAY 22 – SARAH MCQUAID ■ Strikingly rich vocals and a haunting, relaxed playing style

Mellow, relaxed and sometimes haunting all describe Sarah's singing and playing style. Accompanied by her beautiful custom-made guitar – regularly tuned to DADGAD – the richness of her vocals is striking. Sarah's international upbringing might explain her eclectic musical influences, which include folk, jazz, traditional, contemporary, classical and even medieval – just listen to her song "In Derby Cathedral". She is touring with her fourth solo album "Walking Into White" just released and winning reviewers' plaudits. £8 members/£9 non-members www.sarahmcquaid.com

MAY 29 – SUNTRAP ■ Freshness and vitality from this energetic fivepiece

The glorious harmonies created by the combined voices of Sara Byers, Mary Wilson and Paul Hoad give a rare freshness and vitality to Suntrap's sound. The fivepiece is completed by Robin Kelly (fretless bass, cello), and John Sandall (violin, viola). With Sara also contributing accordion, guitar, whistles and bodhran, Paul playing guitar, harmonica, and kick drum, and Mary playing violin, Suntrap give energetic and varied treatments to songs both old and new. As Ivor Cutler said of them: "I felt cleansed." £9 members/£10 non-members www.suntrap.org

JUNE 5 – PETE MORTON ■ Compelling wordsmith adds fun to the tradition of the 60s protest singers

Pete is witty and clever and his songs range from the hilarious to the moving. A compelling wordsmith with an inclusive political message, his songs range from the beautiful "Another Train" to the funny and finely observed commentary on modern life "In The Days When Time Was Different". Pete continues the tradition of the 60s protest singers – with the addition of a huge helping of fun. £9 members/£10 non-members www.petemorton.com

JUNE 12 – CROSSHARBOUR ■ Virtuoso playing from a band rising out of London's Irish music scene

From London's vibrant traditional Irish music scene, something special is emerging in the form of this exciting fivepiece who mix traditional tunes and songs with self-penned material and original arrangements. The five are Órlaith McAuliffe (flute, whistles), Sam Proctor (fiddle), Philippe Barnes (guitar, flute, whistles), Tad Sargent (bodhran, bouzouki-guitar), and Rosie Hodgson (vocals). With virtuoso playing – Órlaith has been crowned all-Ireland champion 19 times – CrossHarbour are making a big impact. £10 members/£11 non-members crossharbourmusic.com

JUNE 19 – DAVID FRANCEY ■ Outstanding songwriter with a simple, understated brilliance

Songwriting of the very highest order is David's hallmark. His observant and unique critiques of events and situations include his comment on young love, "Broken Glass" and his poignant take on the 9/11 terrorist attacks, "Grim Cathedral". His Scottish-Canadian background and accent and impassioned, gritty voice accentuate the social commentary in his extraordinary lyrics and magical tunes. £10 members/£11 non-members www.davidfrancey.com

JUNE 26 – CLOSED FOR HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

JULY 3 – GREG RUSSELL & CIARAN ALGAR ■ A welcome return for thrilling young performers

This duo is rightly laden with awards and nominations for their thrilling performances and releases. Ciaran is one the most exciting young fiddle players you will ever see – with a quirky wit to match – and Greg is one of the most appealing singers and guitarists. Their mix of traditional and modern songs, along with their own writing make them one of the most sought-after duos around. £10 members/£11 non-members www.russellalgar.co.uk

JULY 10 – CHRIS & KELLIE WHILE ■ The perfect blending of mother and daughter voices

This mother and daughter duo, renowned for collaborations with others, are simply beautiful together, voices blending intuitively. Each is an accomplished songwriter and interpreter of others' work and each has been involved with the Albions and Fairport. Eddi Reader called Chris "The best singer in England" and Kellie was called the "greatest voice from English folk since Sandy Denny". £10 members/£11 non-members www.whileandmatthews.co.uk/chrisandkellie.htm

JULY 17 – THE SAM KELLY TRIO ■ Sam is 'absolutely brilliant'; 'has so much soul'; 'a BGT hottie'

Sam is another of the hottest young acoustic talents, winning accolades from Cara Dillon ("he sings with so much soul, he's so talented"), Mike Harding ("absolutely brilliant"), Sean Lakeman ("one of the best young male voices"), and others. In 2012, aged 19, he reached the final of "Britain's Got Talent" (he is called "a BGT hottie" in one TV clip) and even then showed huge stage presence. Now 22, he plays with Jamie Francis on banjo and Evan Carson on bodhran, with a sound reminiscent of the great Roberts/Lakeman duo. £9 members/£10 non-members www.samkelly.org

JULY 24 – ELBOW JANE ■ 'Utterly infectious' band provide exhilarating end to the season

It's an exhilarating climax to the spring/summer season with a visit from this fabulous fivepiece – Kevin Byrne, Chris Chesters, Colin Burgess, Joe Topping and Richard Woods, who between them play piano, guitars, drums, mandolin, mandola and dulcimer. They also sing in what have been called "stunning harmonies" and are "utterly infectious". They completely won the club over on their last visit. £10 members/£12 non-members www.elbowjane.com

AUGUST: CLOSED. We're back on September 4 with The Churchfitters and a full autumn programme

■ More details from www.theramclub.co.uk or Bob and Maggie Wood on 020-8686 9421

■ Find us on Facebook & Twitter, and see performances of artists past and future on our YouTube channel – search for TheRamClub

■ To receive e-mail updates or tell us of address changes, e-mail ramfolkclub@gmail.com

■ Nearest stations: Hinchley Wood, Thames Ditton or Esher, via South West Trains