

UK TOUR 2015 by Lynn Boleyn MBE

16 July 2015

First of all many thanks to Dean Egnator, Kennedy Street Enterprises and MCD Productions for arranging the special fan club tickets which enabled the fans to have front arena seats at the shows which was much appreciated by everyone – a million thank you's from all the fans. It was a real pleasure, in conjunction with Frankie, Robby, Dean and Brian to make so many dreams come true for so many fans who wanted to meet with Frankie and the band.

What a terrific start to a fantastic and very special UK tour in Manchester on Friday 26 June at the MEN Arena – the fans were on their feet dancing at the front of the stage and in the aisles after the first song "Grease" at times singing louder than Frankie and the Seasons! Never seen that happen before and I think even Frankie and the band were a bit shocked at the fantastic welcome they received! The atmosphere was terrific and Frankie sounded better than I have heard him for quite a number of years, he looked great too and was happy and relaxed.

Robby Robinson had walked onto the stage on crutches with his left leg clearly strapped up. We were told Robby had fallen down some steps whilst carrying sheet music for the London Symphony Orchestra and needed surgery on his leg for damaged tendons. However, rather than cancel the UK tour Robby had delayed surgery until he returned to the US when he would be on a four week break before starting to tour again in the US. Like the true professional he is he got on with the job in hand, always happy and smiling, and no-one would have known he had such a serious injury if it were not for the cast on his leg. On behalf of all the fans we would like to wish Robby a speedy recovery following his surgery and hope he is soon up and about again.

The song list was similar for all the shows and included:

Grease; Save It For Me; Dawn; Under My Skin; Beggin'; My Eyes Adored You; Swearin' To God; Fallen Angel; Spanish Harlem; Let It Be Me; My Girl/Groovin'; Stay; Working My Way Back To You; Opus 17; Tell It To The Rain; Silence Is Golden; The Night; Perfect Harmony; Who Loves You; December '63; Can't Take My Eyes Off You; Hit Medley (Sherry; Walk Like A Man; Big Girls Don't Cry and Bye Bye Baby); Rag Doll and Let's Hang On.

Frankie did a wonderful acapella start to "Sherry" with the Seasons and a very emotional portrayal of "Fallen Angel" – you could almost see the tears in his eyes - with a beautiful guitar solo from Larry Lingle and "Let It Be Me" was just perfect for Frankie's voice. Great too that the 2012 version of the classic Northern Soul hit "The Night" was included again this year with the wonderful re-arrangement by Robby Robinson and beautiful harmonies by Brian, Brad, Brandon and Todd. "Tell It To The Rain" with some great guitar playing by Yarone; "Dawn" with the brilliant Craig Pilo on drums and Rick Keller's superb saxophone solo on "Silence Is Golden" showed what fantastic and talented musicians Frankie has with him along with the Heart of England Horns who were with him for most of the UK tour.

The Bolton News reported “Showman Frankie Valli Storms The Manchester Arena” ending with “Despite being 81 years old, Valli has lost none of his showmanship and he strolled up and down the stage, shaking hands with the fans whilst producing that amazing falsetto voice that we all know and love for the two hours he was on stage. Twenty seven great songs, as sung by one of the best and most distinctive vocalists that popular music has ever produced. Oh what a night!”

The full review can be read here:

[http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/leisure/featured_article_panel/13369293.Showman Frankie Valli storms the Manchester Arena/](http://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/leisure/featured_article_panel/13369293.Showman_Frankie_Valli_storms_the_Manchester_Arena/)

Before the show the fans had met up at The View Bar at the MEN Arena where Frankie Valli mugs and 50th Anniversary Tour brochures were distributed by Lynn Boleyn and then Mike Taylor from Exeter distributed hats and pens to the fans, retaining some for the Four Seasons and the band of course – many thanks to Mike for his kind gesture in supplying these mementoes for everyone.

London

The next Fan Club Meet Up was at De Hems in London on Sunday 28 June where again mugs, tour brochures, hats and pens were distributed to the fans. Guests of honour were Johnny Hornsby from Louisiana, Bill Bozeman from Florida, Jim Davis from New York and Ark Rickless from Longmeadow, Massachusetts and his friend Glenn Keedy from East Longmeadow, Massachusetts. Dutch fans Hennie Van Zutphen and Feibe Zweers were also there along with former Fan Club President, Malcolm Grace. Other attendees included George and Jackie Ingram; Ray and Avril Nichol; Bryan and Beryl Lomas; Mark and Alison Garvey; John Pingree and his girlfriend Lisa Murphy; Dawn Gates; Mick and Jan Holloway; Cath Carlisle; Gerry Forbes and his daughter; Roy and Diane Court; Lynn Boleyn and Andy Kyriakou and new member Keith Stevenson, all looking forward to the various shows.

The shows at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday 29 June and Tuesday 30 June were made even more special playing with the London Symphony Orchestra – something Frankie Valli had always wanted to do and Robby Robinson had worked extremely hard with the Orchestra to ensure everything was just perfect for the two hour shows. It was good to see the Orchestra singing and swaying along to the hits and obviously thoroughly enjoying themselves too. Ray Nichol and Paul Tavernor were obviously chuffed to bits that Frankie was doing such a special show for their Birthdays on Tuesday 30 June!

At the opening show in Manchester and at the first show at the Royal Albert Hall Frankie had mentioned about his Mother taking him to see his idol Frank Sinatra when he was 7 years old where he had “never seen so many women” who were screaming and throwing underwear on the stage! New Fan Club members, Sue Mitchell and Mariette Chellew from Cape Town, South Africa, turned up for the second show with about a hundred pairs of ladies panties which were distributed to the fan club members on the first and second rows and when Frankie mentioned about the ladies showing underwear on stage we all stood up and threw the underwear at him. It was so funny! Frankie, the Seasons and the band also found it highly amusing – we couldn’t stop laughing! We were then treated to the very beautiful “I’ve Got You Under My Skin” which included the Frank Sinatra instrumental.

Much to our surprise and great delight whilst we were waiting to meet with Robby Robinson after the first show on the Monday evening Frankie Valli strolled onto the stage alone, drink in hand, and chatted with the fan club members. He was very relaxed and happily signed autographs and posed for photographs. He told us that he is working on a couple of songs, possibly for future shows, and mentioned doing "Please Don't Break My Heart" and also "As Long As I Still Have You" by the Alessi Brothers reciting some of the lyrics "When all my hair turns grey, enter our twilight years and our friends slip away, finding it hard to hear, no, I'll never be afraid, as long as I still have you". He was later joined on stage by Robby Robinson and Dean Egnator. We also noticed that Frankie's twins Emilio and Brando and their older brother Francesco were sat down to the side of the stage so we took the opportunity to go and say hello. The last time I saw Emilio and Brando was on the red carpet at the opening night of Jersey Boys, London when they were 14! They have certainly grown into extremely handsome and lovely young men.

It was a shame that the deal to record the shows at the Royal Albert Hall fell through due, we were told by Frankie and Robby, to licensing problems. Everyone was very disappointed and even Bob Gaudio would have made the trip over to the UK had the recordings gone ahead. A great shame but thank goodness for YouTube for anyone who missed any of the shows and for those of us who want to watch the shows again!

Larry Lingle met with the fans after the second show on the Tuesday evening, posing for photographs and signing autographs. It was good to see him back in the UK again.

The Express did a good report of the shows and this can be read here:

<http://www.sundayexpress.co.uk/entertainment/theatre/588841/Frankie-Valli-and-The-Four-Seasons-Royal-Albert-Hall-review>

Birmingham

The next show I attended was Birmingham on Thursday 2 July at the Genting Arena (formerly the LG Arena). I have to admit that I am not a fan of these big arenas and would much prefer to see Frankie playing somewhere like the Symphony Hall in Birmingham where he has played in the past. However, when speaking to Frankie and the Seasons they did say they enjoyed playing the big arenas as they can reach out to more people and certainly they did this again at Birmingham where there was an audience of around 5000. There was a slight problem with one of the pianos and whilst this was being fixed Frankie told the audience they had played two dates in London at the Royal Albert Hall with the London Symphony Orchestra. The problem was soon fixed and the show went on with the beautiful "Silence Is Golden".

We had a fan club meet up at Crowne Plaza in Pendigo's Bar before the show and after the show where we were lucky to meet up with the Seasons, Robby and the band at the hotel for drinks. Robby chatted with us for quite a while and said again how disappointed they were that they were not able to record the shows at the Royal Albert Hall. It was also good to meet up and chat with Larry Lingle again after all these years – it was a shame he was not singing this time around but he said he preferred to concentrate on playing the guitar which he loves. He said he will be doing lots of fishing for three weeks when he gets back to Vancouver Island! We also met up again with long time members, and close friends of Frankie Valli, Sir Greg and Lady Janet Knight – many congratulations on your Knighthood Greg – you must both be very proud.

There is a review of the Birmingham show here: <http://nativemonster.com/music/review-frankie-valli-and-the-four-seasons-genting-arena>

Bournemouth

The show at Bournemouth was on Friday 3 July and I can do no better than to echo the comments by Darren Hirst in his excellent review here:

<http://twilightdawning.com/2015/07/11/oh-what-a-night/>

Leeds

And before you knew it it was American Independence Day at the First Direct Arena on Saturday 4 July in Leeds! Armed with our American flags, sat on the front row the crowd again were terrific, dancing and shaking hands with Frankie after the first couple of songs.

We were lucky enough to meet with Frankie Valli again after the show where he signed autographs – including Ray Nichol's tee-shirt and Dawn Gates's hat – and we also met with Francesco, Emilio and Brando again. We had noticed Emilio earlier in the evening taking photographs during the show along with the official photographer. He told us that he plays drums and sings and Brando told us he plays guitar and writes music. Who knows, maybe one day we might see them on stage together! We were also told that Frankie's Granddaughter, Olivia Polci (daughter of Toni Valli), also has a wonderful voice and has sung with her Dad (Gerry Polci) and his group The Hitmen and does a very good "Sherry". This was Francesco's last show as he was returning to the USA on the 6 July.

Glasgow

Monday 6 July was the Glasgow show at The Clyde Auditorium. There is a really excellent review of the show here by Stacey Auld:

<http://www.musicboxunwinds.co.uk/tagged/Frankie-Valli-%26-The-Four-Seasons>

and also some stunning photographs from her here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/musicboxunwinds/sets/72157653232065714>

Dublin

And to finish it all off the final show was at the 3 Arena in Dublin on Wednesday 8 July 3 Arena. Frankie had already said that he wanted to return to Dublin having played there some 20 years ago and they purposely stayed an extra few days so that they could do this. What a fantastic show. Again, Frankie was in superb voice and the audience were terrific. Frankie said he was so pleased to have finished off the UK Tour in Dublin. I think that this was possibly the best UK tour I have seen!

We met with Frankie after the show both backstage and later at The Gibson Hotel where he joined us on the terrace for drinks. We then moved inside the hotel as Frankie was feeling a bit cold – Emilio laughed and said his Dad always feels the cold and even wears a jacket in Los Angeles! Frankie told us Emilio and Brando are hoping to go into the film industry.

So it was time to say Bye Bye Baby to Frankie, Robby, Brian, Brandon, Todd, Brad, Larry, Rick, Craig, Yarone, Steve, Dean, Allan, Emilio and Brando and the Heart of England Horns. There is talk of another UK Tour in 2017 and the possibility of four shows at the Royal Albert Hall. We will keep our fingers crossed and hope to see all you guys again then. Hope you had a safe and enjoyable journey back to the US.

Brian and Brandon were staying on for an extended holiday in Ireland and we hope you had a fantastic time touring around Ireland – hope you remembered to drive on the left Brian!

USA Tour Dates

For those that can't wait for the next UK Tour we thought we would let you know about some USA tour dates that are coming up!

USA Tour Dates can be found on Frank Rovello's web site: <http://gilgweb.com/initial.html> and also on the official Frankie Valli web site <http://www.frankievallifourseasons.com/index.html> dates until the end of the year are below:

August 5 Grand Rapids, MI [DeVos Performance Hall](#)

August 7 Arcadia, WI [Ashley for the Arts](#)

August 8 Onamia, MN [Grand Mile Lacs Casino](#)

August 9 Madison, WI Overture Hall

August 16 Colorado Springs (Private)

August 18 Richmond, VA

August 19 Vienna, VA [Wolf Trap](#)

August 20 Youngstown, OH (Private)

August 22 Florence, IN Belterra, Casino

August 23 South Bend, IN [Morris PAC](#)

September 2 Richmond BC

September 3 Woodinville, WA

September 5 Saratoga, CA [The Mountain Winery](#)

September 24-26 Nashville, TN

October 7 Hartford, CT [The Bushnell](#)

October 9-11 Atlantic City, NJ Borgata

October 16-18 Westbury, NY NYCB Theater

November 6 Boston, MA [The Wilbur](#)

November 8 Boston, MA [The Wilbur](#)

November 20 Durham, NC [Durham Performing Arts Center](#)

November 21 Charleston, WV Clay Center

November 22 Charlotte, NC [Belk Theatre at Blumenthal PAC](#)

December 2 New York, NY (Private)

December 4-5 Phoenix, AZ [Celebrity Theatre](#)

December 12 San Diego, CA (Private)

Jersey Boys

Of course you can still book to see Jersey Boys to hear all the great hits again. Jersey Boys is playing at The Piccadilly Theatre, London where tickets are from £25 and can be booked at www.jerseyboyslondon.com

Jersey Boys UK Tour

Also, highly recommended is the Tour Seasons – Tim Driesen has an amazing voice – they will be playing Wales (from 21 July to 1 August); then Southampton; Plymouth, Sunderland; Aylesbury; Sheffield; Manchester; Llandudno; Eastbourne; Glasgow; Dublin; Northampton and Wolverhampton (9 – 20 February 2016). You can book tickets here: www.jerseyboysuktour.com

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD – AN INTIMATE EVENING WITH RYAN MOLLOY



Ryan Molloy is appearing at the Electric Carousel, Piccadilly, London, on the 29 August following his return from playing Frankie Valli on Broadway in Jersey Boys. Ryan will open up the New Jersey Songbook, a Hollywood inspired extravaganza, featuring great artists such as Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, the Shirelles, Carol King, The Drifters The Ronettes and Frank Sinatra, taking you on a journey through the downtown streets where these legends were made following the sound they created from the boardwalk all the way to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



Songs include Can't Take My Eyes Off You; Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow; This Old Heart of Mine; Be My Baby and Come Fly With Me. Ryan is currently working on his new album due out later this year.

Full details here: <http://www.theelectriccarousel.com/Ryan-Molloy.html>

YANKEE DOODLE



Frankie Valli, along with other celebrities, has signed a glass plaque with a “doodle” which has been made into a unique piece of glass by glass artists to be auctioned off on the 24 October 2015 at Fieldings Auctioneers in Stourbridge, UK, for The British Glass Foundation, a local charity which is raising funds for a brand new glass museum in Stourbridge following plans by the local Council to close the existing Broadfield House Glass Museum which is second only to the Corning Museum in New York, the largest glass museum in the world, where 70% of the glass comes from Stourbridge!

Other celebrities who have done “doodles” for the project include Tony Hadley (Spandau Ballet); Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin); Dave Hill (Slade); Steve Bull MBE(former Wolves and England footballer); Raymond Blanc; Emma Thompson; Beverley Knight; Sir Trevor Brooking and Sir Lenny Henry.

For more information, to see all the “doodles” and to watch Frankie’s “doodle” actually being made into glass (to “Walk Like A Man”) go to:

<http://www.britishglassfoundation.org.uk/home/celebrity-doodles/>

If you are interested in bidding on any of the pieces information on how to do this is on the Fieldings web site: <http://fieldingsauctioneers.co.uk/auctions/the-buying-guide>

