



Bernie Marsden

set they played their socks off for us. They are the local Linton village band - all school lads about to set off to different careers, colleges etc and this was a much needed sending off gig for them. They played valiantly and impressed us with their own songs as well as championing their selected 'cover' versions. By the time they finished the sun almost emerged from the grey slow dispersing clouds.

Larry Miller next! Resplendent in navy and gold braided military Sharpe style jacket and a broad crimson bandana holding back (just) his long blonde flying locks he stormed on stage and continued to pound us with military precision on those gunning guitar orientated salvos of rocking blues. He was on a high and so too were the audience before very long. Recently back from Ireland and his success with the Rory Gallagher Memorial concert fans at Ballyshannon on his first visit to the festival, he, it seems, could do no wrong. This last day of Linton was to be no different. Over the top antics, gestures, and searing guitar solos kept his band and audience on their toes throughout. Shell shocked and shattered after such bombardment it was nice to hear his beautiful slow ballads here and there! Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton and Gary Moore were then thrown into a medley of instrumental mayhem that worked. After the encore and final departure of LMB from the stage audience members limped back to their seats or to the field hospital (aka The Beer Tent) to lick their battle fatigued bodies into shape for the next whirlwind of guitar action about to strike! Oli Brown is another rocking bluesy guitar slinger but is far more subtle in his performance than Miller. Grey pinstripe and crisp shirt regalia

for him! Less flamboyant (dress wise and stage performance mannerisms) than Miller Oli is no slouch when it comes to marketing himself or his style to an audience. He is cool, youthful and clever but in no way conceited with his abundant talent. He had a splendid write up (and large photo) in the Telegraph recently following his 26 gigs triumph as support band to John Myall!! He's back now playing the 'circuit' his own man and for the greater part his own music. He won the audience over by the end of his allotted time exposure to the Linton crowd. And now for something completely different as Montypythonians would say and The Grand Slambovians are just that! A New York based band (I would have put them further south than that but I'm wrong) they are over on a short British tour and are known to Linton as they headlined here a year or two ago. I didn't quite know what to make of them then or even now for that matter. Whereas I dismissed them last time I paid more attention this time around and came to the conclusion you shouldn't try to understand them or take them too seriously but just listen! Slambovian fans crowded in front of the stage and so I watched and listened. What is it that turns them onto their spooky but not sinister appearances, their peculiar but not 'potty' or pretentious mannerisms. Their influences mention The Beatles (Lennon not McCartney for my money) Dylan - so obvious in songs chosen and intonations. Bonzo Dog DooDah Band - no mistaking that. I loved the Tom Petty vocal style here and there along with an odd Waits thrown in for measure but it was the normal voice used in intros and asides by front man and lead singer that reminded me of Jack Nicholson in One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest!!! I don't think they intend to be taken seriously but their musicianship and humour has to be. I sang along on the chorus of "The Tran Slambovian Bi Polar Express" as did the hundreds around me! The hundreds also knew and sang along to "Very Happy" and "Everybody Needs A Change". It certainly was - 'a change' and it worked well for both the Slambovians and Linton audience alike. Am I converted...? Well yes - but not as yet in full communion at the holy shrine of Slambovian devotion.

Earl Thomas and Paddy Milner - Just when we thought all the bad weather was behind usit was back on top of us again. Did that bother us? NO! Taking to the shelters - mine under the stage awning - I estimated that at least 95% of the sell out crowd were still there to the bitterly cold wet end and enjoyed every second of it. You cannot fail to recognise the talent, energy, charisma and downright electrifying showmanship this man exudes! The band was a line up of notables too! Paddy Milner - keys, Marcus Bonfanti, Randall Breneman guitars, Bob Dowell trombone, Ben Somers, Sax and Jon Radford trumpet. It was without doubt a spectacular display of talent. Everything Thomas did was outstanding and if you only go to see one band this year or performer then make it this guy and this musical collective. Thomas's tribute to the late Etta James - his version of 'I'd Rather Go Blind' is unforgettable. But then again so was everything else he does be it rock, blues, soul, and gospel he does it all and he does it well. A brilliant finish to the day and Festival The weather may have been bad and other festivals bigger but Linton is still the best little festival going.

Diane Gillard (Sister Feelgood)



Gandalf Murphy

Blues Matters! 101