

live reviews

Texas Radio and the Big Beat and Alex McIntyre

Lass O'Gowrie 11/8/02

When you walk up to a pub at night and there is a pack of bikers and their motorcycles out front, there are several things you might assume. Firstly, that things might get a little rowdy; secondly, the music will be heavy and thirdly, you just might find yourself in a strange conversation about poker machines and politics with a man a foot taller than you, whose wild gesturing occasionally knocks over your schooner of New.

Ok, I didn't assume the last one, but it happened. Let's not speak of it again.

My first two assumptions were grossly inaccurate. Fifteen minutes before showtime, the bikers roared away, and, to quote Billy Joel "the regular crowd shuffled in."

Alex McIntyre (of Supersonic fame) took the stage for an acoustic set of both covers and originals. The self penned songs 'Sucker Punch' and 'Out of Sight' were refreshing displays of a good melody and a catchy chorus that don't lose any of their

edge performed on a lone guitar.

After his solo set, Alex put down his acoustic and plugged in his bass (standing in for Texas Radio regular Joe Velikovsky).

Texas Radio and the Big Beat opened in true Southern style with Creedence's 'Born on the Bayou.' But as vocalist and guitarist, Phil McIntyre, put it; "That's about as swampy as it's going to get tonight".

With Phil's distinctive Telecaster sound leading the way, the band changed the mood by playing the tearjerker 'Cross the Line', before livening it up again with the new radio-friendly tunes 'Monkey Boy', 'You Were The One' and 'Everything's OK'. These originals (and others) will appear on Texas Radio's long awaited second album.

For the first time, Saxophonist Dave Appel joined the line-up, adding a new depth to a number of the now familiar Texas Radio tunes. With several

notable sax solos, Dave's addition to the instrumental 'Kiss Me' worked so well, it was hard to believe this was his premiere performance with the group.

Band member musical chairs was also being played on the drum-kit. There were a couple of one-song cameos by friends and family before Texas Radio regular, Dave Carruthers, reclaimed his stool and sticks to rock it home. The traditional finale of any Texas Radio gig, "Can't Always Get What You Want", once again had the audience singing and dancing amongst the drunkards.

When the lights came up and the instruments were being packed away, strains of Monty Python's 'Always Look on the Bright Side' followed me out the door. No more bikers, no more assumptions, just the echo of someone's jolly whistle as I crossed the train tracks.

- Mickey Rumble