



Island Songwriters  
Showcase Newsletter

[www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org)

2001

May

## ISS WORKSHOP BACK ON TRACK

By Shari Diamond

After a two month hiatus due to nasty, bad weather, the ISS returns to having its monthly workshop meetings at **5 Towns College!** I think we are safe from badgering snowflakes for a good while now. And like the flowers blooming, lots of events are popping up getting the spring / summer music scene underway. April was a good month for many ISSers. At the **ISS night** at the **Sunday at Seven Series**, we had performances from **Sonny Speed, Sonny Meadows, Geraldine Brockwell, Tim Huss, Sarah Haddock, and Frank Gambino.** **Sonny Meadows** had a CD celebration party for his latest release, "**Bibles, Guns and Flags**" at **Jane Ross' Songbox.** Yours truly, **Shari Diamond** performed at **Heckscher Park** as part of their **First Annual Tulip Festival.** **Martha Trachtenberg** opened for **Janis Ian** at the **30<sup>th</sup> Folk Festival** at **Nassau Community College.** **Michael Clark** performed at **Sam Goody's in Roosevelt Field,** Garden City. I'm sure there were many others. And there are lots of great music events coming so read on and remember to support local original music.

### OPEN MIKE AT THE CONKLIN BARN IS BACK

**Huntington Open Music Evenings (H.O.M.E.)** is back in the groove with getting the open mike scene at the **Conklin Barn** in **Huntington.** Instead of Monday nights though, there are 3 **Fridays - June 8, July 13, and August 11** scheduled-with the events run by **Bob Wescott, Sonny Speed** and **Sonny Meadows.** The Barn is located on New York Avenue and High Street. Call Sonny Meadows for more info at 631-673-3605.

### JANE ROSS SONGBOX COMING ALIVE

**Jane Ross** is committed to helping local artists debut their music and is once again offering her **Songbox** as a venue. On the fourth Saturday of every month, Jane makes the Songbox come alive with various local talents. On **May 26,** she will feature **Toby Walker** and **Cathy Kreger.** A donation is suggested to pay the performers and please bring a can of food to support the food drive of **Island Harvest.** Shows generally start at 8pm. The Songbox is located at 14 Barkers Lane in Huntington Station. Call Jane for more info at 631-385-7545. If you have never been there, please do yourself a big favor and come enjoy the experience.

### DEMOCRACY RECORDS GUEST AT APRIL MEETING

We had a special guest to talk to us at the April meeting. **Mark Hubbard** of **Coconut Groove Studios** in Smithtown, spoke on behalf of his studio and production company. Mark works with ISS'ers **James Yarsky** and **Tom Griffith** and started up **Democracy Records** as a progressive record label. They want to change the way the artists typically get treated by labels, which is pretty shabby, as most of us know. They are also targeting an older audience (the 25-65 range) which the major labels don't (15-25 year olds). They will also do more target marketing and research to see what kind of music people want and listen to. So if you have a CD, contact Democracy Records. They are planning on releasing a compilation CD and test marketing it. They are also planning on doing this globally, not just locally. Their goal is to sell 5,000 to 10,000 units of various artists' CDs. Call Mark Hubbard at 631-724-4088 for more information or write him Democracy Records, PO Box 1206, Smithtown, New York, 11787.

## UPCOMING ISS EVENTS

WORKSHOP MEETING: **May 7 June 4**

OPEN MIKE @ BORDERS SYOSSET: **May 3 June 7**

SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND:

@ BARNES & NOBLE, COMMACK: **May 10 June 14**

@ BORDERS, WESTBURY: **May 18 June 15**

### ISS WORKSHOP MEETING

*Five Towns College*

*April 2, 2001*

*By Shari Diamond*

We started our workshop with **Steve Lieberman** with the song “Diaspora Blaster”. He was playing the recorder and his vocals through his daughter’s Barbie cash register! (A very new recording technique!) Some comments on providing more information and more emotion in the song. Some thought it needed more of a story to listen to. Some felt the beat was very hooky and noted its high-energy. Yeah!

Next up was **Rick Crawford** with a new song called “Paris Is Burning (See How They Dance)”. Many liked this song and liked the conciseness of it. Some felt it was one of his best to date – lots of good imagery and nice musical contrast in the bridge. Some suggested playing major chords in chorus and converting to a waltz or  $\frac{3}{4}$  time. Some felt sustaining the chords in the chorus might be better and have less chord changes. One suggested there might be a whole play around this song.

**Silent Bear** followed with “Peltier” which was inspired by “Prison Writings” by Leonard Peltier. Some noted the rhythm wasn’t consistent throughout the song however the chorus melody was really catchy. Some felt the focus of the song should have been more specific to Peltier and more accuracy about the story of his situation. Some felt the focus was okay and enjoyed the Woody Guthrie-style rhythm. Most agreed it was a great song. Some suggested changing the focus to Crazy Horse rather than Peltier.

**Shari Diamond** gave us the song “Why Am I” that was inspired by a dance class she’s currently enrolled in. Some felt the song could use some black humor to compliment the piano style. The major suggestion that Shari agreed to was the confusion in the 3<sup>rd</sup> line in the chorus – changing feelings “like channels on my color TV”. Beyond this, most felt it was a cool, jazzy tune, with much potential. – *Thank you Vinnie Crici for writing and hope your hand feels better.*

**Jim Baron** followed with “Chameleon”. In general, many felt Jim had a good feel for melody line and chord changes. Some minor suggestions on condensing certain lines or singing them slightly differently to obtain a better flow. The tag line at the end of the verses was the crux of much discussion and was basically a toss up of some whom liked it and some that didn’t.

**Brian Sendrowitz** performed “Looking For You”. Most really liked this song and some suggestions on moderating the dynamics. Some comments on another word for “sleeping” in the chorus and also some suggestions on alternative chord changes there. Many felt it was a very genuine song and was presented that way.

**Bill Goldsmith** performed “Corner”. This was a very short song but very to the point. Most found it brilliant in concept. The lyric sheet embellished this song even more with pictures of Britney Spears, Backstreet Boys and others of that caliber. The song even had a beginning, middle and an end. Some minor additives were suggested but then the song would be over 30 seconds!

**Gerladine Brockwell** was up next with “The Other Side”. We had some disturbing noises from outside the room but that didn’t deter us from noticing how beautiful this song was. Some comments on making the first verse more poetic. Many noted how well she delivered the song.

**Frank Gambino** followed with "Circumference Line". Many noted good flow and some minor suggestions on removing articles. The last line in the chorus seemed to be weaker than the rest some pointed out. Some also felt the words in the chorus were not as strong. Some suggestions on flipping verses around.

**Nolan Myerson**, played "Open Up". Most liked this song and the musical contrast in the chorus. Some suggestions on ending it more snappy. Some minor changes on presentation and arrangement of lyrics were also mentioned. Most noted this was a very upbeat well-written pop tune.

**Stuart Markus**, back from his trip to Copenhagen, played "I'm Not Here". This is the darker side of Stu. The song was nicely edited and presented well. The title line was used quite often throughout the song and some felt may have been overused. A suggestion for a musical bridge instead of 3<sup>rd</sup> verse was made, and to have a full band to really rock it out. There was great tension built within the music but some felt the lyrics needed to match the mood more. Overall, the song was well liked by many.

**Sevi**, our last performer for the night, played "No One Else But You". We didn't have lyric sheets (she apologized profusely knowing how we make people feel so guilty), so it made it tougher to give feedback. Musically, the song seemed to work but there were some cliches and you know how we ISS'ers are about cliches. We suggested bringing it back with the lyrics for a fair evaluation.

And that my friends marks the end of another fine meeting. Keep writing those songs and bring them down, with lyric sheets if applicable to our upcoming meetings – **June 4 and July 2**.

## *Songwriter's Choice*

*By Gerry Dantone*

**"Corner" by Bill Goldsmith and**

**"Looking For You" by Brian Sendrowitz**

They say there's more than one way to skin a cat, though personally I'd prefer not to be made aware of any cat-skinning methodology. Apparently there is also more than one way to win a Writer's Choice Award, and that's something I would like to know more about!

One way, it seems, to win it is via utter cleverness, and that path to victory was followed by the sly **Bill Goldsmith** who penned "Corner" and played it on acoustic guitar. The song lasted not 30 seconds yet it had what so many songs lack - a beginning, a middle and an ending with a point to make on top of it. Further, the lyrics sheets he handed out contributed to the experience with photos of well-known manufactured pop stars adorning it. We won't name names (Britney, N'Sync). "We've taken bigger losers than you and made them a star," Bill sang and we knew what he meant. At least everyone else did.

**Brian Sendrowitz** took an entirely different route to success, one paved with pain and torment. "Looking For You" was the call of the broken hearted and for a second there it looked liked we might lose Brian altogether. "Though thick and through thin/And I won't go to sleep till I find you again" he sang, though I think I prefer thin. His usual urgent and riveting performance made us believe. The result is a shared Writer's Choice Award, the hard way.

*Gerry Dantone has been in bands longer than some ISS members have been alive. Gerry used to play lead "hit animal skins with sticks" before moving on to guitar when it was invented.*

## LT1 CABLE SHOW LOOKING FOR ARTISTS

**Bruce Figarsky** at LT1 TV is still looking for original Long Island artists for his show. If you want to be considered for a performance on LT1 send a press kit, bio, recordings – audio and/or video, and other pertinent information to:

**Bruce Figarsky** c/o  
Community Media Network, Inc. Dept. -A  
P. O. B. 2801  
Lake Ronkonkoma, NY 11779

**Sonny Meadows, Jeff Curtis and DeStefano & McLeod** have been on this show recently. The show's theme song was written and performed by **Jeff Curtis**, and was produced and engineered by **Sonny Speed** at his **Son Spot Studios!**

## WGBB LOOKING FOR LOCAL ARTISTS

*This email came to Sonny Speed.*

I am a radio show host on 21st Century Music Radio, **WGBB-1240 AM**. We air live every Monday night from 8-9 pm and webcast the show simultaneously with the broadcast. I just saw your website (islandsongwriters.org). Please have your artists send me their CD's and press kits/bio. My show is mainly devoted to giving airtime and exposure to the local artists in our communities and giving them the airtime and exposure that is so sorely needed.

My address is P.O. Box 0301, Baldwin, NY 11510 or you can go to <http://21stcenturymusicradio.com>

**\*\*Also, check out our radio show's songwriting contest. You can go to the homepage at [www.21stcenturymusicradio.com](http://www.21stcenturymusicradio.com).**  
**\*\***

Thanks  
**Diane Corrado**

## SONGWRITER'S CONTEST

The **2001 Songwriters Contest** is now open for all **unsigned original songwriters, composers, bands, singer-songwriters and solo artists**. There are **13 categories** (see entry form) that will be awarded. There is a **\$30.00** (U.S. currency) **per song entry fee**. Entries are accepted up until June 30, 2001. No entries will be accepted after that date, no exceptions. All qualified entrants (see rules) will receive one copy of the winners on CD. Winners will have their songs distributed to the top 25 radio stations in the US and top 2 stations in the UK for play in those areas. A management contract will be awarded to all winners. We will send the winning songs to several record labels A&R Departments. Also the winners will receive a certificate with their name and category. For Official Rules and Regulations and printable entry form e-mail [encoreproductionsinc@velceroispc.com](mailto:encoreproductionsinc@velceroispc.com) Or send SASE to: Encore Productions Inc. 5402 Brantford Ave. Memphis, TN. 38120-2440 USA  
<http://www.encoreproductionsinc.com/2001.htm> (901) 821-9921 \*Collect calls will not be accepted. Long distant calls may or may not be returned.\*

## R&B MUSIC WANTED

*This email came to Sonny Speed.*

Music Publisher is seeking Top 10 Quality R&B hits for new female artist. Major labels are interested in her. She has major management in place. Songs must be fully produced, and available for immediate contract consideration! If interested we will need an instrumental track as well. Unpublished songs only. Make us say "WOW!" and feel the groove! Please submit songs in this style only! We need songs ASAP! Send Songs to:

**J. Cooch Music (BMI)**

22 Williams Way South  
Baiting Hollow, NY 11933 USA  
Attn.: Ron White A&R dir.

Visit our website for more info at [www.coochmusic.com](http://www.coochmusic.com)

**Joseph Cuccia**

**SONGS WANTED**

**Sonny Speed** met **Jody Targove** at our Borders open mic and he mentioned his organization **FatherSky.org** to him. It's a worthwhile cause so you may want to check his web site out.

He's looking for song to include on an upcoming national CD. But they must be about either:

1. Written by fathers for their child, or
2. Written by sons or daughters for their father.

**BORDERS RECAP**

*Borders, Syosset  
April 5, 2001*

The snow did not affect this event from taking place. The open mike scene at Borders hosted by **Bill Ryan** is still going strong with performances from various ISS members. This night is dedicated to showcasing ISS members. So this is your night and your opportunity to come down and play so bring a song and support your fellow ISSer's. *Next events are May 3 and June 7.*

**SONGWRITERS IN THE ROUND - COMMACK**

*Barnes & Noble - Commack  
April 12, 2001*

This month featured the outstanding songwriting and performing talents of host **Sonny Meadows, Paulette Boucher, Bill Anacker, and Anthony Francogna**. On **May 10, DeStefano and McLeod, and Princess Peapod** will be performing so mark your calendars. See Sonny Meadows for more info or call him at 673-3605. Support L.I. music.



Scoop's Link O' the Month

The ISS Web Site News

[www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org)

**Check it out - ISS artists are being broadcasted on the Web as we speak (or read) - MP3LI.**

Go to the Island Songwriter site - [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org), click on the MP3LI link, this will take you to Live365.com. You'll

need an MP3 player, such as RealAudio's Realplayer or Winamp. If you already have one the broadcast begins automatically. If not you can go to the Live365 help page - <http://www.live365.com/help/index.html>. There you'll hear ISS members - **James Yarsky, UniversalDice.com (Gerry Dantone), dunderhead (Walt Sargent), and OverSoul 7 (yours truly)**. Help us out - click on the "Rate this Broadcast" to move the station up in the charts. Click on the "Tell A Friend" link to spread the word. Oh and, If you'd like to get your songs up on internet radio or converted to MP3 for other sites, email me at [scoop@optonline.net](mailto:scoop@optonline.net) or call me 516 628-1163.

That's the scoop for this month. – *Bill Ryan*

## MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS at FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

(Dix Hills) ~ The Island Songwriters Showcase (ISS) is a no fee organization. Group efforts include monthly meetings at Five Towns College, located on Burr's Lane in Dix Hills, Huntington, NY, generally on the first Monday of the month. **IT'S FREE**. Songs are often premiered at the meetings, and so much material is presented that there is limit of one song per writer. Writers may bring an acoustic guitar, CD, or cassette tape (no Dolby n/r reduction is best), and a piano is available for keyboardists. Lyric sheets are encouraged and ensuing discussions regarding presented songs can range from passionate to hilarious to instructive. To become a member, simply come to a meeting. That's it! Really!

**Come join us on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 P.M. on the following date:**      **June 4**                      **July 2**  
**August 6**

Becoming an ISS member also entitles you to participate in our open mike night at any of our showcases (see highlighted below). Sign ups are at 7:30 P.M. All artists are able to play 2 original songs. Also, you can become eligible to be invited to perform at one of our Songwriters in the Round. No critiquing – just fun! Original bands are also welcome – please call Sonny in advance. Make friends. Make contacts. Get heard!

For more information call our director Sonny Speed at (631) 462-3300 or email him at [mcspeed@aol.com](mailto:mcspeed@aol.com).

### Schedule of Local Open Mikes:

#### Mondays

- **The Stephen Talkhouse** ~ 8:30 P.M. Amagansett. 267-3117, hosted by Gene Hamilton

#### Wednesdays

- **The Broadway Beanery** ~ 9:00 P.M. 2 Broadway, Lynbrook. 596-0028, hosted by Stuart Markus
- **The Cup Café** ~ 9:00pm. Railroad Street, 3268 Railroad Ave., Wantagh. 826-9533
- **The Wrong Way Inn** – 8:00P.M.

#### Thursdays

- **BORDERS Syosset - 425 Jericho Tpk, Syosset, 7:00 p.m. sign-up, 7:30 p.m. start on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month, ISS exclusive showcase hosted by Bill Ryan.**
- **Bunnery Pub** - 9pm. 3120 Hempstead Tpk, Levittown, 735-0105, hosted by Frank Walker

### Weekly Venue:

- **Sundays at Seven Series** – The Northport Historical Society Museum, Main St., Northport on the north side of the street opposite the police station. 7 PM. Contact hosted by Kate Kelly at 757-1111 for listing of scheduled performers. The Sunday At Seven Arts in Concert Series is supported by funds from the NYC Council of the Arts, distributed in Suffolk County through the Huntington Arts Council. They request a \$2 donation for the evening.

### ISS Postcard Mailer

If you didn't receive the postcard mailer that was sent out recently, or want to receive future updates on ISS events via mail or email, please provide Sonny Speed with a completed membership form available at meetings or gigs.

### Director's Blurp

ISS workshops have become increasingly popular and we want to ensure that all members get enough time for comments. If you want your song heard but you're not looking for critique, please save the debut for the showcase. If you want feedback, **please remember to bring 25 copies of the lyric sheet** (or be prepared to pay a hefty fine – just kidding!)

### ISS Address

**ISS**  
**P.O. Box 430**  
**East Northport, N.Y. 11731-0430**  
**Phone: 631-462-3300 (Sonny Speed)**  
**E-mail: [mcspeed@aol.com](mailto:mcspeed@aol.com)**

### ISS Staff

- Ø **Director:** Sonny Speed
- Ø **Press Secretary:** Bob Catrano
- Ø **Newsletter Writing Staff:** Gerry Dantone, Bill "Scoop" Ryan,

## Songwriters In The Round:

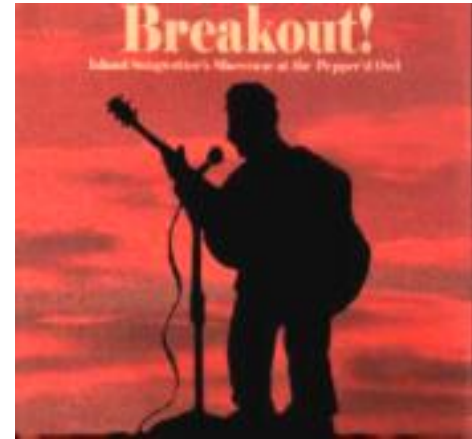
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month @ Barnes & Noble, Commack, hosted by Sonny Meadows
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month @ Borders, Westbury, hosted by Rich Stein.

Walter Sargent, Michael Clark, Sonny Meadows, Mike Mattel, Frank Gambino, Vince Crici, Andrew Kirschner, Rich Stein, and James Yarsky

Ø *Website Coordinator:* Bill "Scoop" Ryan

*Newsletter Editor/Publisher:* Shari Diamond

Please make sure you check out our website [www.islandsongwriters.org](http://www.islandsongwriters.org) for info about the ISS, past newsletters, and member performances. If you would like to have a newsletter emailed to you, please send your request to Shari Diamond at [shari@kidtestedtunes.com](mailto:shari@kidtestedtunes.com).



**Don't forget to get your copy of the first ISS compilation CD featuring 14 ISS members recorded Live at the ISS Showcase at the Pepper'd Owl in 1996. This is a lot of talent crammed into this one CD and this is only volume 1! George Trapani made this release possible and he continues to record performances at ISS events. The Cost is \$12 per CD and you can get yours from George when you see him at ISS events, via the web at [www.cyber-songs.com](http://www.cyber-songs.com) or email him at [gtrapani@optonline.net](mailto:gtrapani@optonline.net).**