

[News](#) ▶ [Features](#) ▶ [September Features](#) ▶ [Dead End Drive-In: Now Showing - The Quireboys](#)



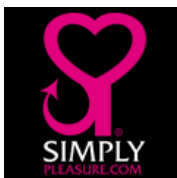
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Dead End Drive-In: Now Showing - The Quireboys

Written by Gaz E
Sunday, 22 September 2013 03:40

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The Quireboys - 'Live at the Town and Country Club, London' (Wienerworld)

"C'mon, let's give it some good English rock 'n' roll!"

So begins, with the honest to goodness working class ethics of Spike, The Quireboys' performance at London's famous Town and Country Club, recorded in October 1992 and released this month, for the first time on DVD, by Wienerworld.

Continuing the label's fine work in digging out seemingly long-lost television footage and getting it out there in the best quality available, though obviously limited given the material's source, Wienerworld has resurrected a performance from The Quireboys almost forgotten by the band's legion of fans.

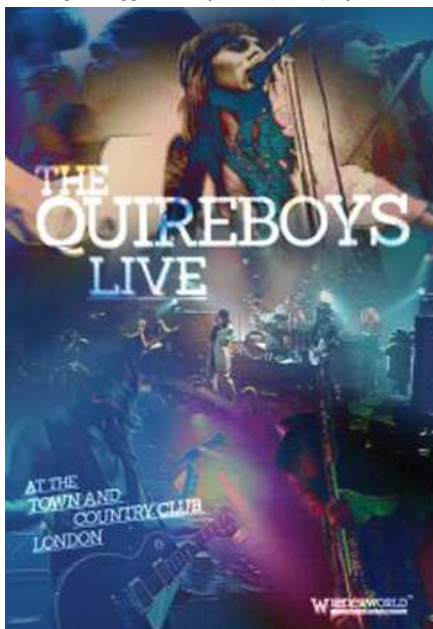
Almost...

Filmed for Central Television over two decades ago, and broadcast in the prime (for us night dwellers, anyhow) post-pub slot, this live show finds the band in that curious place between their first two albums. 1990's 'A Bit Of What You Fancy' hit Number 2 in the UK album charts when bands actually had to shift a truckload of vinyl and tapes to garner such success, and, from the outside looking in at least, it appeared that The Quireboys were walking a well-trodden footpath to Difficultsecondalbumsville. 'Bitter, Sweet & Twisted', that sophomore long player, when eventually released in early 1993, would find the band in definite MOR territory, lazy songwriting saved by the band members' obvious charms. That the band would split that same year wasn't really a coincidence.

The Quireboys have, in my humble opinion, released much better albums than that second offering since reforming, properly, at the start of the last decade. I'd go so far as to say that this year's 'A Beautiful Curse' towers above it both song- and attitude-wise. But let us not forget that the band were Top of the Pops-famous when they hit that Town and Country Club stage twenty-one years ago, the sell-out crowd a timely reminder of just how beloved this band of loveable rogues actually were.

With former Lone Justice drummer Rudy Richman installed as a permanent member after touring with the band in support of the hugely-popular debut album, and joining Spike, guitarists Guy Griffin and Guy Bailey, bassist Nigel Mogg, and keyboard/piano player Chris Johnstone, the band's set at the Town and Country Club, or the one featured on this DVD at least, is split roughly half and half between those first two albums - the debut's tunes greeted like long lost friends, the yet-to-be-released second album tracks garnering a more polite applause.

I say the set featured on this DVD because, running at thirteen tracks and around fifty minutes, this release is seven songs shorter than a full-length version of the same concert that fans may well have on dusty VHS tapes in their extensive and exhaustive collections. It's those fans who this new digital versatile disc release is obviously aimed at, fans who have long been asking for a DVD release of this set, but I can't help but feel that anyone familiar with the recording will be a little disappointed: between tracks 9 ('Ode To You') and 10 ('Brother Louie') resided a further seven songs in the original taping. It's a shame that a truncated copy is the source material for this release but, with much better audio and visuals than any full-length copy might offer you with a quick internet search, this DVD takes for what it is, the best of Wienerworld's recent copies of Town and Country



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this DVD, taken for what it is, is the best of Wienerworld's recent series of Town and Country Club concert releases by some stretch, the others hardly undesirable, being fine rock 'n' roll time capsules in their own right.

As Spike, in questionable white suit that wouldn't have looked out of place on a Miami Vice cast member or Liverpool FA Cup final squad, throws his micstand around in time-honoured Rod Stewart fashion during the opening one-two of 'Tramps and Thieves' and 'Can't Park Here' it's difficult not to be impressed at the band line-up, much slicker than my favourite era when Coze tapped at his drums and Ginger threw shapes alongside Mogg, but certainly sounding and looking the part.

Splitting the thirteen song set into six debut album tracks, seven from the sophomore release, it's certainly the former that struck the most chords with this viewer: 'Misled', 'Roses and Rings', 'Hey You' and '7 O'Clock' standing out. That's not to say that the (then) newer material withered and died; a very cool 'King of New York' impresses, as does 'White Trash Blues'.

It's come encore time that things go crazy, the end credits appearing all over a classy version of 'I Don't Love You Anymore', sung mostly by the crowd, while final song, 'Long Time Comin', fades out in trademark shoddy TV fashion before its end. This never happened on the VHS version.....

Wienerworld's DVD, a Region-Free vanilla disc with a spattering of whiplash editing, does its best with the limited rock 'n' roll resources at hand though, the picture quality the best of its recent rock releases by far, the sound quality more than acceptable too.

Completists will go for this DVD, of course they will, but knowing that there is a fuller version of the same show out there in some corner of this rock 'n' roll world will forever taint this release in the minds of some. For those not willing to dwell on the negative, however, this rare Quireboys footage will throw up more positives than you can shake a custom-made microphone stand at. In fact, I'd say that Q'boys fans completely unaware of the missing footage will love this DVD, the ladies swooning over Spike in his prime.

It's been a long time comin', and, yes, some may feel misled, but this is rock 'n' roll.....and I like it.



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