



# TOY HEARTS NEWS

August 2009

## THE FESTIVAL EDITION

### Independence Day - Maverick Style



The Toy Hearts made a great start to July and the summer festival season with two performances at The Maverick festival, held over the American Independence

Day weekend at the Easton Farm Park in Suffolk.

The band kicked off Saturday's musical festivities with a lunchtime performance in The Barn followed by a more intimate, totally acoustic show in The Tack Room later in the evening.

The festival also provided Stewart with the opportunity to jam with long time friend and pickin' partner BJ Cole.

Reviews of the Toy Hearts performances are set to be featured in September's edition of the UK's only dedicated country music publication, Maverick magazine. This edition featuring Nanci Griffith on the cover) is available from August 17.



More information can be found at [www.maverick-country.com](http://www.maverick-country.com).

### Burgers and Bluegrass

They may be common in Texas, but genuine 50s diners are a rarity in the UK, and Swadlincote, Derbyshire, is not the first



place you'd expect to see one. But that's exactly what greets you just off junction 11 of the M42 - a true 50s diner, built in Elizabeth, New Jersey, by the Jerry O'Mahoney Dining Car Company. Restored to its former glory, and now serving genuine American diner fare in deepest darkest Derbyshire - Toy Hearts shake of choice is Chocolate Peanut Butter Malt, just in case you were wondering - the diner regularly hosts location photo and video shoots, classic car club meetups and, for the first time ever on October 25th is hosting a live gig with the UK's foremost exponents of true American music, Bluegrass-style, The Toy Hearts.

Check out the [50s American Diner website](#) for more info and to book tickets.



# Toy Hearts rock The Alps



The Toy hearts have just returned from a very successful tour of France featuring performances at 2 top festivals - The Country Rendezvous festival held at Crappone-sur-Arzon and the annual bluegrass festival held in and around the pretty town La Roche-sur-Foron, deep in the heart of the French Alps. Both festivals were headlined by top USA bluegrass band Carrie Hassler and Hard Rain and it seems The Toy Hearts took the sunshine with them to France as it was blazing hot the whole time.

The band would like to say a huge thank you to Raphael Maillet who performed with the band on all of their French gigs. Sophia said “we are truly honoured to

have a musician of Raph’s calibre playing with us, he is a lot of fun on stage and gives off a great energy which the band really respond to”. Equally comfortable playing Bluegrass, Manouche Swing or Classical music, Raphael, originally from the south of France and now living in Paris, makes the perfect addition to the Toy Hearts. His own his band ‘Accordzeam’ have just released their debut disk ‘Tapas’ on Vocation records – more information can be found at [www.accordzeam.org](http://www.accordzeam.org)

For any Toy Hearts fans not lucky enough to make it to the south of France, some videos were recorded at the Country Rendezvous have been posted on YouTube - all featuring the Toy Hearts and Raphael on the fiddle. Check ‘em out:

**Panhandle Rag**  
**Gravel Yard**  
**Carolina**



The Toy Hearts would very much like to thank Christopher Howard-Williams, Georges Carrier, Gary Hartman, Jim Young, Didier Phillipe, Pauline Howard-Williams, Ray Whiteway Roberts, Richard and Carol Hawkins, and a special thanks to Mary Reynaud from great band ‘Mary & Co’ for looking after the band and giving them a truly authentic experience in the beautiful city of Lyon!

## The latest addition

After much peering out of the window, waiting for the UPS man, the latest addition to The Toy Hearts finally arrived this month - Stewart’s new Rayco Dobro. Built specially for Stewart by the



boutique Canadian builder, the flamed maple body gives it a powerful, bold tone that sits perfectly with The Toy Hearts sound and shows off Stewart’s blistering dobro licks to a tee. Check it out at a Toy Hearts show near

you...

## Birmingham shows update

Dedicated Toy Hearts fans should try and make it down to the band’s last hometown gig until they play at Birmingham’s Town Hall in October. This month’s Country Cookin’ Acoustic Review, held at the Kitchen Garden café in Kings Heath on Sunday 16th August, will feature two full sets from the Toy hearts and more new material will be unveiled from the forthcoming live jazz and blues EP, which the band hope to record in the next few weeks, in time to take it to the USA.



## Sophia features in Flatpicking Guitar Mag



July saw volume 13, issue 5 of Flatpicking Guitar Magazine published with none other than The Toy Hearts' Sophia Johnson featured on the front cover, interviewed in the magazine and transcribed on the CD. The first female British bluegrass guitarist to be featured in the magazine, Sophia was delighted to be transcribed for such a prestigious magazine. "it's been a lifelong ambition to be featured in FGM, I've subscribed to the magazine for years and it's been kind of a bluegrass bible for me. To be featured alongside some of my guitar-playing heroes is such an honour". Of the transcribed track, Fast Raging River, Sophia said "this is a really bluesy track, the transcription is of the intro and my solo. I was actually a little surprised when I got the transcription through - it looks far more complicated written down than it feels to play it!" Flatpicking Guitar Magazine is available now through the magazine's website

[www.flatpick.com](http://www.flatpick.com)

## It ain't folk, but we like it...

The Toy Hearts brought some bluegrass to the prestigious Ely Folk Festival – their trade mark energy and dynamism winning them lots of new fans from the folk scene and spreading the bluegrass gospel a little further!

Hannah commented: "We really enjoy playing folk festivals, there's nothing like surprising an unsuspecting folk crowd with some hard driving bluegrass, and totally winning them over!"

A great bit of footage of the Toy Hearts tearing through the title track of 'When I Cut Loose' was featured on the folk and roots YouTube channel, and can be found [here](#)



The band also made an impression on the nice folks at the Spiral Earth Website:

"A recent discovery for us, at The Ely Folk Festival, were The Toy Hearts, a Birmingham-based group who play some superbly uplifting bluegrass and western swing... Their history is one of pure dedication to their musical craft and the UK's burgeoning bluegrass scene, with dad's involvement stretching back to the 60's. Just have a look and listen to their site Americana fans. It's stunning stuff!" Spiral Earth is a great resource for anyone interested in folk and roots music in the UK and the full review of the Toy Hearts performance at the Ely folk Festival can be found at the Spiral Earth website, along with music, news, videos, reviews, interviews concerning all folk and roots happenings in the UK.

[www.spiral-earth.co.uk](http://www.spiral-earth.co.uk)





# Gig Guide

## August

Date	Venue	City
15/08/2009	Katie Fitzgeralds	Stourbridge
16/08/2009	The Kitchen Garden Cafe	Birmingham
23/08/2009	Cafe @ Royal Albert Hall	London
28/08/2009	Shambala festival	Northamptonshire
29/08/2009	The Green Note	Camden, London
30/08/2009	The Regent Centre	Newtown, Wales

## September

Date	Venue	City
03/09/2009	Tri-State Bluegrass Festival	Kendalville, IN
04/09/2009	Tri-State Bluegrass Festival	Kendalville, IN
05/09/2009	Tri-State Bluegrass Festival	Kendalville, IN
16/09/2009	Dosey Does Coffee House	Houston, TX
19/09/2009	The Bluegrass Heritage Festival	Arlington, TX
22/09/2009	Cactus Cafe	Austin, TX
23/09/2009	Flipnotics	Austin, TX
26/09/2009	Central Market Westgate	Austin, TX
29/09/2009	NIBGA - IBMA Showcase	Nashville, TN
30/09/2009	BMAM - IBMA Showcase	Nashville, TN
30/09/2009	EBMA - IBMA Showcase	Nashville, TN
2/10/2009	IBMA Showcase, Bluegrass Heritage	Nashville, TN

## October/November

Date	Venue	City
10/10/2009	Bluegrass Plus Club	Croydon
11/10/2009	The Town Hall	Birmingham
14/10/2009	The Travellers Rest	Derby
18/10/2009	The Kitchen Garden Cafe	Birmingham
25/10/1009	The 50s American Diner	Swadlincote
06/11/2009	The Chindit	Wolverhampton
13/11/2009	The Floors	Tenbury Wells
22/11/2009	The Kitchen Garden Cafe	Birmingham
25/11/2009	The Prom	Bristol
28/11/2009	Common Folk Club	Pelsall, Walsall
01/12/2009	Bluegrass Jamboree Tour	Germany

