

Local Songwriter inspired by Kingswear Coastline

Kingswear resident, Les Veale, has launched himself into a new career as a songwriter, inspired by his surroundings

Local songwriter and Kingswear resident, Les Veale has just released a jazz album entitled *Girl In Blue*, performed by The Session 8 Band, a group of accomplished South West session musicians. Les has written all the songs on the album and says a lot of his ideas are inspired by walking the Kingswear lanes and coastline.

Les has lived in Kingswear for 7 years and loves the area not just for the inspiration it provides. He says, "I've never felt settled until I moved to Kingswear, where I feel at home at last. It was only after settling here, that I discovered the name Veale is common in this area but rare and even unheard of, in most other parts of the country."

He usually writes the music at his flat, then goes for long walks to think of song titles and lyrics. He says "It's a great way of writing. I can sit on the sofa with my guitar for ages and not come up with any lyrical ideas but find I often come back from a walk, with the song completed. I do leave the guitar at home though!" So don't be too perturbed if you spot him along the cliff path muttering distractedly to himself!

Les has had a long career in music. Initially inspired by the Beatles, he studied at music college with the ambition of becoming a music teacher but soon got side-tracked playing drums professionally. Indeed, he's made a living 'gigging' until two years ago when he decided to concentrate on writing songs. He's funded



Photo by Graham Tombs

this career change by working two days a week for Riverford Organic.

His first album, *Girl In Blue*, took the best part of last summer to record at a Torquay recording studio. Studio time, the cost of hiring musicians and the initial pressing of CD's was entirely funded by Les himself. He describes it as a 'showcase' of his writing talents although he personally didn't play on the album. He's now busy marketing the album, and has succeeded in getting it onto download websites and the CD onto Amazon. Les has created his own record label 'LVM' with the help of another Kingswearite, freelance designer and marketer Marie Voigt (www.marievoigt.com). Les says "I can write the tunes but I struggle on the business end of things. Marie is not only good with business but is also very creative and it's great working with her."

Three of the songs on the album, including the title track, have now been signed to a leading UK jazz publisher. Les says he's very excited at the prospect of a song of his being recorded by an internationally renowned jazz vocalist. "This has always been my ambition and I would get a huge kick to hear my songs played on national radio." The head of Splashpoint, his publisher, has described the album as containing "songs, that already sound like jazz/blue classics." So maybe Les' ambition is not too far-fetched. Les describes the album as "catchy tunes, in the style of 1940's jazz tradition." He also acknowledges that Splash Point's investment in his songs has given him a big confidence boost and the impetus to record a second album later this year.

Normally a songwriter would hope to get a publishing deal in the hope that other singers record his/her songs. By recording his own songs, Les has managed to get his songs into the market more quickly.

Les is also hoping to introduce The Session 8 Band on to the live gig circuit next year, with vocalists Maggie Reeday and Tim Murray, son of the famous 1950s singer and recording star Ruby Murray.

For more information and to listen to *Girl In Blue* sample tracks, you can check out Les's website at www.lvm-publishing.co.uk.

Girl In Blue is available on CD at www.amazon.co.uk and MP3s can be downloaded from all major online music stores, including www.amazon.com and iTunes. ♦

