

North Devon Journal- What's On  
Review of STFU and Blueflint July 21<sup>st</sup> 2007 Barnstaple/Pilton  
by  
*Rosanna Rothery, What's On*

## **REVIEW OF SOUTHERN TENANT FOLK UNION ORGANISED BY PAMELA**

IF YOU enjoyed the strains of country, blues, bluegrass, gospel and folk in the film *Brother Where Art Thou* you would have absolutely loved the Southern Tenant Folk Union.

The band played at Pilton Village Hall at the close of Green Man Day.

With an appealing, almost quirky, earnestness the five guys let rip with acoustic savagery on banjo, mandolin, fiddle and double bass complemented by three-part harmony singing - at times a cappella.

Tales of hardships were hollered out to an infectious toe-tapping beat (quite rightly billed as "uplifting bluegrass melancholy) while mountain ballad laments were embellished with entertaining ear-grabbing arrangements.

Now the capital of country, Nashville, may be turning its attentions to modern country music, but it was great to hear a band celebrating the very roots of country music. With great style too. These guys are contemporary and cool - not a pale imitation of the past. Additionally they are all songwriters in their own right, bringing slightly different tinges to the bluegrass spectrum: everything from Oliver Takes soulful ballads to Pat McGarvey's ranting old-time gospel. The themes, ideas and metaphors from traditional country music are all there yet the overall effect is somehow fresh, exciting and energetic.

If they come back to North Devon do go and see them - they're simply great.

The boys are from London - yet you're unlikely to find such a fabulous bluegrass sound this sound of the Atlantic.

Support on the night came from the sweet-toned but far more soporific and subdued banjo duo Blueflint.

The gig was staged by PAMELA, a Pilton organisation determined to bring high-quality entertainment to North Devon. It was a pity more people didn't turn up to enjoy this great night.