

The Ram Club

1983 - 2021

Everyone who has, in their many and varied ways, supported the Ram Club down the years by helping out, performing, or just coming along once or twice will have their very *own* precious memories to preserve.

And since making our closure announcement, the whole of Team Ram has been touched beyond measure by the deluge of warm, appreciative and understanding messages received in response - so much so that we've collated many of them, so that we can share their sentiments with everyone. They come, as you will see, from far and wide: from guest musicians, their agents and management teams, from other clubs, from abroad - yet mostly, we're delighted to say, from audience members. Additionally, we've received a great many telephone calls from many of our regular and popular artists, including Martin Simpson, Steve Tilston, Pete Coe, Dave Ellis & Boo Howard. These all go to show how much of a privilege and what fun it was for all of us involved in organising the weekly events.

So, pour a glass of something and read at leisure. Your name may well be there somewhere?

And for those of you wanting to know more about the history of the Ram Club, there is treasure trove of material - including stories, photographs, and a full list of artists attending the club since it began in 1983. <http://www.theramclub.co.uk/archive/>]



MUSICIANS and SINGERS

From Cara Dillon & Sam Lakeman

Dear Bob and Maggie,

Thank you so much for the email. It's lovely to get the personal touch... even more so in these strange times. We're so, so sorry to hear the Ram is closing and can't really imagine what it must be like to make a difficult decision like that. You have so much of your lives wrapped up in it and so many memories from over the years, it must be painful and upsetting to see it close in these circumstances. We had such a lovely time when Cara and I played. Such a warm and intimate club to play. It's extremely grounding being nose to nose with the audience and having only your wits about you to see you through... we thoroughly enjoyed it and will be sorry that we won't be able to do it again. We have very fond memories of performing there.

I do hope you manage to get out and see lots of live music now you'll have more time on your hands and I'm sure we'll see you somewhere along the line.

Huge thanks to all who helped run the Ram x

Best wishes and respect...

From Boo Hewerdine

Dear Bob & Maggie

It's hard for me to overstate the importance of The Ram? to me. That first night was life changing. And every gig that followed was pure joy. But more than this, your friendship is very special to me. Back to yours for a cheeky fag.

I can honestly say, hand on heart, that my two favourite clubs were yours and The Rock in Wentworth. For very different reasons. At the Rock it was not unusual for a fistfight to break out. I used to feel like a musician in a Western Saloon.....

The sense of genuine community that clubs (and yours in particular) created is a beautiful and necessary thing in an era of increasing personal isolation.

All my love, Boo x

From Martin Simpson

I am so sorry to see this news. I had many gigs at the Ram Club and loved every one. Best wishes and thanks to all involved, in particular to Bob and Maggie.

From Kate Rusby

Aw I'm sad to hear this news. Great club. Thank you for having me all those years ago (late 90s?)* and thank you for all the years of running such a lovely club.

** ...thanks so very much, Kate. The date, for the archivists, was 26th April 1996 and we remember it vividly and fondly?

From Andy Irvine

Dear Bob & Maggie,

I'm so sorry to hear this news. It's really the end of an era. God, it seems to go back for ever! The Claygate Folk Day...

I have to say that I always loved playing The Ram and my memories are all good ones....

We enjoyed, so much, our last visit and ...staying with you. It was a lovely night and morning, altogether! I hope we will be able to keep in touch and meet again when this unique and almost unbelievable time is over.

To you both, well, well done for all those years. Maggie, you were so welcoming and Bob, you're a really good artist. ...until we meet again, lots of love

Andy & Kumiko

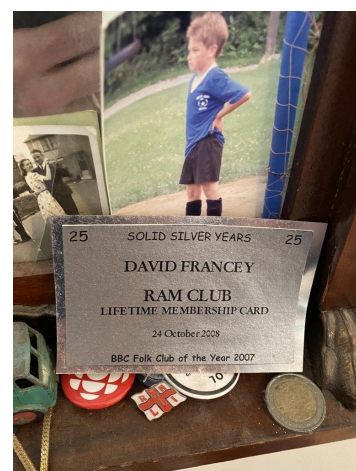
From David Francey

...still seemingly in proud possession of a Ram Club Lifetime membership card, with which David was presented when guesting for us on our 25th anniversary in 2008!

Hullo Bob,

.... I am so sorry to hear that it's come down to that decision but I know you did all you could to keep the doors and the hope open.

It was a wonderful club to play and I enjoyed it the most of all the clubs we played in Britain. That might have had something to do with the billet and the company we got to keep. I think of you and



Maggie as friends, quite outside of your stellar roles at the Club. I always looked forward to our visits. I look forward to the next one, in whatever form that takes.

You're a pair of aces, you took the Ram to the top of the club scene and made it our favourite destination in England. I'll miss our visits.

I wish you and the beautiful Maggie the very best going ahead, and I hope we get to see each other again down the road. Here's to that, and here's to you both. You made an awful lot of people very happy for a very long time. That is the wonderful legacy.

Keep marching, keep playing, keep singing until you get over here or we get over there. Wherever we end up being, it'll be grand to see you both.

Best from the Dominion

From Gary Hammond (The Hut People / The Beautiful South)

Really sad to hear this news but completely understandable. We have fantastic memories of the Ram and it's probably my favourite folk club I've played. Great audience, wonderful welcoming and who can forget the talented crew who used to come up and play with us!

Best of luck in your new adventures, we hope to see you again on the other side.

From Archie Fisher

Sad news but also a lot of sincere thanks and respect for the efforts of you all over the years. One of my really "looking forward to" clubs but then I fear The Ram will not be the last.....

From John Kirkpatrick

Lovely to hear from you, despite the sad news. And I really appreciate your kind words, and your personal touch.....

It's hard to imagine the world ever being quite the same again, and I'm sure a lot of folkies will take a lot of persuading to crowd into a room full of people all bursting with their own unique droplets!

You must feel quite hollow about calling it a day on the Ram. You made it into one the best and most memorable nights, always one to look forward to, always a joy. Thank you for having me there so often.

Your denial of any sex scandal is clearly an invitation to investigate further, and I look forward to it all coming out in the gossip columns of Living Tradition soon enough!

That last visit was incredible. I haven't stayed up that late for years...no wonder the bottles were clonking all night. Wonderful.

Thanks for everything, you two lovely people, take care, and see you safely somewhere soon.

From Sean Lakeman & Kathryn Roberts

Hello you two lovelies,

Well this is a sad email but, I must admit, not a surprise. I suspect many folk clubs will come to an end during this time - it's just too difficult to go back to how things were. We've had some wonderful times at the club with you all over a fair few years and The Ram club will be sorely missed....You'll be missed, we've always loved coming to play.

Thank you for all your support and friendship over the years, we're very grateful as we know that it takes a lot of time and effort to organise a club (on top of full time jobs) so I think some downtime is well earned.....xx

From Simon Mayor & Hilary James

Dearest Bob & Maggie,

For all our adult lives The Ram has been a recurring delight, something we have always looked forward to, as much for the warm welcome from you as for its predictably packed houses.

The audiences have never failed to inspire, so appreciative of our music while having the good grace to laugh politely at most of my jokes. Having started out in the folk scene but somehow drifted off elsewhere many years ago, it's been the one folk club that we have played on a regular basis. It retained the spirit of unbridled enthusiasm for the music that the scene had when we were all young. The change of venue didn't matter; the club was its people and it had you as organisers to thank for its success....

From (i) Chris Newman and (ii) Máire ní Chathasaigh

(i) ...I agree with every word of Simon (Mayor)'s ... email (*see above*). It's a real shame about the demise of arguably the best club in the country, but we completely understand. I suspect that many others will find themselves in a similar position - just another cost of covid.

(ii) ...I just wanted to reiterate everything that Chris said. The Ram was always our absolute favourite place in the country to play and we're very sad that it has had to close. We very much hope we can stay in touch and are crossing our fingers ...

From Peter Knight's Gigspanner

We were so very sorry to read your sad news, the end of an era.

But you have given it your all for such a very long time, and this seems like the right time to call it a day. It's exhausting trying to stay on top of all the reschedules, government advice, ever changing and confusing rules...and then at the end of it all, still no gigs.

I understand people's feeling of ever increasing optimism, but so many live music organisers are saddled with a huge responsibility, and it isn't plain sailing by any stretch of the imagination.

Also, you are not alone, and several promoters and organisers who have more than done their bit for the cause are, or have stepped back.

So a huge Bravo from us to you, and thank you so much for giving Gigspanner a platform, and also for the great privilege of helping you to celebrate the club's big anniversary a few years ago. Also thank you for the exceptionally comfortable bed!

We hope that we get to see you somewhere...who knows where?

Enjoy your new-found freedom, and our very best wishes for the future.

From Clive Gregson

...Lorraine (*Clive's agent...see also below*) forwarded your note to me and I just wanted to say a personal thank you for all the times you've booked me at The Ram Club... I've sung your praises so many times as a shining example of how a music club ought to be. One of the very best... and it is sad news indeed that you have decided to call it a day. I totally sympathise and empathise... as you know, I had announced my own intention to quit the road at the end of last year and I was really looking forward to playing The Ram as part of my triumphant last ramble around these isles in 2020! Ah... man plans, God laughs.

Thanks to you and your stellar team for so many great nights... and hopefully we'll connect again somewhere along the road. All the best for the future, whatever it might hold... Stay well!

From Benny Gallagher

...the very best folk club in the Universe ?

From Liz Simcock

Dear Bob and Maggie

....So sorry to hear that the Ram is no more. I'll really miss it: such a great place to play. I always felt I got such a lovely reception from you and the rest of the crew.

I do understand your decision. You've put so much into it for so long and quitting while you're ahead seems to make absolute sense.

The Ram is a brilliant example of how one or two individuals can make a big difference. Ram Clubs don't just happen: they are the result of a huge amount of work, energy, dedication, thought and love. The thing I'll most miss is the humour you both brought to the evening. Maggie with your brilliantly withering and acerbic asides coupled with genuine warmth and sense of occasion. Bob, such great jokes between songs - oh yes and lovely playing and singing. Whenever I played at the Ram I could always see you both standing at the back really playing attention. Thanks for making me feel so valued....it has meant a lot.

Here's to many great evenings at other places in the ... not too distant future.

From Brian Willoughby & Cathryn Craig

Well, I'm not having it I'm staging a protest....on the Cranleigh pitch!

I know it's only a ploy, so the Woods can free up even more time to go globetrotting!

Anyway...I'm not particularly shocked by the news -- I just can't imagine folk audiences anywhere....being willing to go and sit in each other's laps, even if the all-clear is [given].

I always hoped you two could come and stay with us and there would be a Bob gig at Crawford's in The Rostrevor Inn, organised by Colum Sands. However, 50 crammed into that venue, is a thing of distant memory, methinks

....take care, stay safe and the most hugest, or even more huger, thank you for your friendship and belief in us for all these years. The Ram was, indeed, our fave rave and fond memories abound!

With love

From Brooks Williams

Dear Bob & Maggie

Thank you for your email letting me know of your decision to close the Ram Club. It has been such a privilege to play the club regularly since 1992.

The Ram, always one of my favourites, not only gave my music a home but..a place to grow. Plus, it was a helluva lot of fun on the night. The (organisers and audience) were first class and always up for a laugh. Covid has a lot to answer for but, for me...it means we didn't get one more bash (*Brooks had been due to appear with Rab Noakes - see below - on 5th January 2021*). Still, not to worry - we know how to find you and will see you out and about for sure.



I'm sure we'll see you at a gig somewhere.

Meanwhile, a heartfelt thank you for all you have done for us travelling singers. You will be missed. Take care of yourselves and we'll see you down the road.

Lots of love....

From Rab Noakes

Thanks for the most comprehensive explanation.
Luckily I read a couple of emails with upbeat news in them the day I first saw this.

I am deeply, deeply saddened..... Best wishes, as aye.

From (i) Joe Newberry and (ii) April Verch

Dear Bob and Maggie,

(i) I saw with sadness that the Ram Club is no more, and I just wanted to say thank you for making us feel so welcome when April and I played our Valentine's Night concert there last year. I know that every musician who played for you felt the same sense of welcome. Stay safe, and I hope our paths cross again next time I am over. You are always on my guest list.

(ii) Joe said it well. Thank you for doing all you did to bring musicians and music lovers together for memorable times - we wish you all the best!

From Allan Taylor

Hi Bob and Maggie,

I wasn't surprised to get your news, and I suspect there will be many club organisers who have either made the same decision, or are considering it.

I fully understand your decision; it's not easy running a folk club - there is a lot of behind the scenes work going on that the audience and sometimes the artists are not aware of, and it's a great responsibility having to consider that the artists live by the income and a cancelled gig (for whatever reason) can have enormous impact on the artist's life. I've never underestimated the hard work it takes to run a club, and it's a great credit to you that The Ram was one of the best - for my money, the best in the south...and I'm sure you'll have full support from your friends, musicians and audience alike.

Many thanks to you both for your hospitality and friendship. What you achieved with The Ram is something to be proud of, and you have always had the greatest respect from us, the very lucky recipients of your hard work.

From Paul Sartin

Thanks for all the good times, and best wishes for the future.

From Jez Lowe

Hi Bob and Maggie

Heard that the Ram was closing - just to say thanks for all the support and friendship you've all given me over the years. I hope everyone is fit and well, and looking forward to seeing you somewhere soon....

From Sam Kelly

So sad to read. Always my favourite folk club to play and we had some amazing shows there. Thanks for all your support over the years.

From Daoirí Farrell

I'm very sorry to hear this sad news. I thoroughly enjoyed playing there. Thanks to Maggie and Bob for looking after me when I came over.

From Luke Jackson

Such sad news to hear this but it has been a pleasure to play for you over the years. Always such a great, interactive audience, one of my favourites!

From Hilary Spencer (Quicksilver and Artisan)

This is very sad but not, if I am honest, unexpected. You have given sterling service over many years and should not feel bad about having to close the club. I totally agree that we may lose a great many small venues over the coming years simply because of physical constraints making it impossible to sustain audience numbers or generate enough income to make it viable.

You have my sympathy but more importantly you have my great thanks for the past and my very best wishes to you both for the future

From Mike Silver

Thanks for your kind and informative message. Indeed it is very sad news to read but of course I absolutely understand your decision as well as your reasons for making it.

I have always said that anyone running a folk club does so out of love for the music they hear and in the business of doing that they undertake a labour of love. You lovely people have always given the club and the artists you engaged 100%. As one of the artists, I have always tried to give you back the same and I can feel how much that has been appreciated.

Thank you for all that you have done, my years of playing and singing would simply not have been fulfilled or felt right and proper without my gigs at the Ram.

From Bill Jones

Sorry to hear this. Thanks to Maggie, Bob and all for all your work over the years. It was lovely to come back to you and play in Jan 2020, one of my last gigs.

From Mick Ryan

....I have only just heard that The Ram is no more. A shame, but I can quite see why the decision would have been made....

I just want to thank you for all the gigs over the years. I always looked forward to performing at The Ram, and I was never disappointed. It was a great club....

From George Sansome (Granny's Attic)

Absolutely loved playing for you with Granny's Attic.

You'll be missed! Thanks for everything!

From Aaron Jones

So sorry to hear. Always an absolute pleasure to play at The Ram. Thanks for your support over the years and good luck and best wishes to everyone at the club.

From James Fagan

Sorry to hear that. We loved every visit we made over the years. Thanks for all the work you did for music.

From Arthur Knevett

....I've just had an e-mailto let me know that you have decided to close the Ram Club. Very sad news, but having read the statement on the club website I fully understand why you did so. On a personal note I have fond memories of the times I attended the club, it was always very friendly and welcoming. I wonder how many other clubs will find it impossible to continue. It's the end of an era.

From Harbottle & Jonas

Just a quick email to say well done for all you have achieved and how hard you have worked. Thank you for taking a chance on us and for giving us a wonderful memory. The club will be sorely missed. Best to you both.

From Kate Locksley (The Teacups / Nightfall)

This is totally understandable, but also terrible news! Some of my most favourite gig memories are at The Ram Club, performing both with The Teacups and Night Fall. Sending lots of love. xx

From Niles Krieger (Assembly Lane)

Very sorry to hear this - we (Assembly Lane) had such an enjoyable and memorable night at the Ram back in 2018.

Thanks to Bob and Maggie for all their work and all the best for the future.

From Graham Larkbey

Dear Bob & Maggie

Very sorry indeed to hear about the cessation of the Ram Club.

I was first introduced to it by Kathy Alexander shortly after I moved back to London from Swansea in 1983. I'd started going to the Battersea club, got chatting to Kathy there and she told me about this new club that had just started in the Greyhound in Weston Green, so I thought I'd go over and check it out.

It was there that I met Dave Illingworth and heard him sing for the first time, a meeting which turned into a lifelong friendship and (at various times) musical partnership.

Then of course the club moved to the Hand & Spear, which was a great venue (and much nearer a station than the Greyhound!). Many memories of great nights there, not least when we...Aunt Fortescue's Bluesrockers .. got a booking there To our even greater surprise, we packed the place - I think we held the second-biggest crowd record for some time thereafter (the biggest was for the Oysters).

And, of course, how can I forget Third Degree Burns, not to mention your own fine singing and guitar wizardry (and yours is still the best version of *From Galway To Graceland*).

.... the Ram Club has always been one of the best around and down the years I've enjoyed a lot of great music and made many friends there.

You, Maggie and everyone else involved can be proud of all you've achieved and all the pleasure you've given to a great many people over nearly 40 years - that's quite some achievement. Many thanks to all of you....

From Scott Poley

Many happy memories of The Ram Club. You guys put your heart and soul into that club and achieved so much. Good luck and catch you down the road.

From the Frank Burkitt Band (New Zealand)

Very sad news indeed. I remember our gig there so fondly in May 2019. A fantastic folk club... All the best to Bob and Maggie and the team. Gutted but I'm sure not as gutted as you guys!

From Jenkins' Ear

It is with a heavy heart that I take in the news.... that The Ram will close. It must be so much harder for you and you have my deep sympathy. I am only too aware of the amount of thought and agonising that arriving at this decision has burdened you with, but also that all good things--great things in this case--must eventually come to an end. I believe your reasons for arriving at this decision to be valid, understandable and inevitable, given the circumstances.

I know that I speak for all of Jenkins' Ear when I say that The Ram was without a shadow of doubt our favourite "gig". We felt so privileged to sing there and so many times. We thank you sincerely for that and we wish you a well deserved rest from the demands of running such a successful venue.

I would be even sadder to think that our paths may not cross again and hope to see you some time when this pandemic is under control

From Steve Poole

Well, that is very sad. I'd been half expecting it as we just don't know how it will pan out and none of us is getting any younger but it is still a mighty blow. Life will not be the same. We've had some of the best times of our lives in yon club but nothing lasts forever, even without pandemicals. This plague has been the asteroid that killed off life as we know it. "*Cursed be the Covid with his Cough Cough Cough!*" I'm sure every artist who has performed at the Ram will feel an extreme sadness too. You both deserve a gong for the amount of effort you have put in over the years - no club can boast better hosts! And the team too. It's hard enough putting out the chairs every week so I can't imagine what it would be like putting out a load of individual perspex kiosks with complimentary hand sanitiser and lateral flow test every week!

I hope the EweTube channel stays up too, so we can relive those glorious moments when we need a fix. But let's not do anything on Zoom...I will keep the Ram Club domain going forever *au gratin* now that I have received the first jab ?of immortality....

Please let me know as soon as you have an idea on dates as we don't want to miss the Last Butt. In fact, I am expecting nothing less than the famous Last Waltz gathering to mark the end of The Band, with a similar diamond-studded guest list! It should be a true thanksgiving just like that occasion, but preferably at a warmer time.

Fondest tidings

From Sue Graves

....must have been such a hard decision for you both to make. So many of us considered Friday nights as the highlight of our weeks. But I completely understand you not wanting to reopen with reduced audiences, and all the uncertainties that this would bring. We will all have so many happy memories of packed nights, brilliant music, so much laughter and wonderful company. You would not have wanted it to feel like a shadow of its former self (think that's a line from a Julie Matthews song?).

....Whether as an audience member or a performer, you both always managed to make everyone feel equally welcome and valued.

You always set such high standards, and the enduring popularity of the club was a testament to this.

I am really genuinely sad to hear this news - it is truly the end of an era.

Once again, thank you both for so many years of amazing music and wonderful camaraderie....

From Hector Gilchrist

.....I admire your...determination and commitment to keeping the Ram over so many years, such an excellent medium for the highest quality of folk music and entertainment..

It will of course be much missed by all who performed there and supported the venture. Thanks to you both and to the band of helpers. You well deserve a break particularly when the scene is so uncertain....

Slainte.

From Alan & Carole Prior

Hi Bob, Thanks for your message relating to all things Ram.

As I'm sure all who know you both must know, the decision you arrived at must have been a gut wrenchingly difficult one, but for all the reasons you mention, I'm sure, the right one.

I've not known any club organisers who have put as much heart and soul, not to mention that old band, Blood Sweat and Tears, into running a club than you and Maggie have. We, as members and friends, enjoyed great fun and friendship just being there....The music and songs will survive ... but perhaps the way of enjoying it will change.

Let's hope that we can all together meet up again relatively soon?

From Simon Fawson

Really sorry to hear this. As one who has visited and played (as per the late, great Neil Innes ... "*I've suffered for my music, now it's your turn*") at many clubs around the country over fifty years, I know the Ram to be the best of the bunch. Your guest list has been second to none and it is a real honour to be able to say that I have seen these people and played on the same bill as some of them.

Your personal support and positive comments to me as an occasional and far from confident performer are much appreciated

From Elaine Claxton

Dear Ram Team,

I can't tell you how sad I am that there is no way for the club to survive. Even though I live far away, it has always remained very important to me. Not only the best folk club I know, but full of the best people too....good company and great music I could not have found anywhere else. I'm immensely grateful for all the work everyone put in and I will miss it terribly, as will my husband, Mark. He may be a newcomer but it took only one visit to get him hooked.

From John Mannel

....For everything you have done to give us all the chance to experience the BEST folk club around.

Obviously I am sad that it has come to this, but I really want to congratulate you on what has been such a magnificent success. You have touched and enriched the lives of so many of us over the years. I have so many brilliant memories of nights that I will never forget.

With love and best wishes..

From Broomdasher

So sad to hear this.

The Ram hosted our first ever performance, supporting John Tams. Maggie was incredibly helpful and encouraging the audience was extremely appreciative, giving us a lot of confidence. We'll never forget it.

Thank you Maggie and Bob.

From John de Little

Sad indeed. The Ram had a huge influence on me as a beacon of fine music.

From Lesley & Hugh Loughlin

What an agonising decision for you all to have had to make, and how very sad Hugh and I feel, especially since we have only fairly recently come to enjoy all that the Ram Club had to offer.

I'm guessing this is an inevitable consequence of this wretched virus..... We will very much miss being a small part of the Ram Family...

If you are planning on having an auction of the sound equipment - please may I put in a bid for the tech boys ? – they always did such a superb job!!

...a very big thank you for giving us the opportunity to play as floor singers a couple of times, it meant a great deal to me/us, and will remain in my memory for ever.



From Gail Cooke, Laughing Dog Music

Hi Bob, Maggie,

So sorry to hear but I understand. You have made a big impact on audiences and artists over many, many years and what joy you have brought. It's been an absolute pleasure working with you.

I know Boo Hewerdine and Brooks Williams will be particularly sad to hear the news.

What a vital and integral part you have played for many years on the live music scene.

You will have and will have shared many, many memories. We are hugely grateful for your support. With love and best wishes

Gail Cooke <https://laughingdogmusic.co.uk>

From Lisa Whytock, Active Events

Oh that's such a shame! But I do understand, please keep in touch and if McCusker, McGoldrick and Doyle are down your way at any point in the future and you would like to come to the show then please get in touch and we will happily arrange a guest list for you....

It's a big decision, but sometimes you have to do what you have to do and if it's the right decision, it's the right decision....

Lisa

From (i) Alan Bearman and (ii) Sarah Allen, ABM Music

(i)...Speaking personally and for all at ABM, I am very sad to hear the news but obviously understand your reasons. Having run a club for a paltry 15 or so years, I have huge admiration for anyone who has run a club at such a high level for so long and can well understand why you don't feel able to carry on in constrained circumstances.

We will remember The Ram as being amongst the cream of folk clubs and venues and a huge benefit to the whole folk scene. Thank you for your kind words about ABM, I'm sure I speak for all our team and our artists that the feelings have been mutual. You have been a pleasure to work with and our artists have always been delighted to play for you. I can honestly say that I have never heard of an artist who wasn't keen to appear at The Ram.

So, thanks again for all you have given to the folk scene. I hope you are soon able to get out and hear some music without the pressure that being responsible always brings. You may well hear from the more active members of the ABM team but I wanted to pass on my personal thanks for your great contribution to the music.

Alan Bearman, <https://alanbearmanmusic.co.uk>

(ii)100% **NOT** just another Folk Club!!! I meant to write and add to Alan (Bearman)'s words (*above*) earlier in the week, all of which were so true..... And also, mostly, I wanted to write about playing there (*with Flook, BigJig and the Barely Works*).... I had already posted in our ABM WhatsApp group that The Ram had long been one of my very favourite gigs to play over the years.

So many memorable nights spent with you.....you'll be so very sorely missed. There are very few clubs that hold such affection in my heart, and that I'm sure of so many others. Something of course to do with the warmth and enthusiasm of the crowd, but also so much to do with the warmth and welcome of you and Maggie. That's what makes

gigs stick out in musicians' minds.....

.....I can honestly say that writing and offering gigs to you was a wholly different experience to offering gigs to others. You wrote back! And you wrote back more than a perfunctory reply of either yay or nay, and what's more, either way. You've no idea of the blank abyss that most such emails must land in - so many go unanswered.....

Keep well and happy and all the best for whatever comes next...

Sarah Allen x (Flook / Big Jig / The Barely Works) <https://alanbearmanmusic.co.uk>

From Bob Gilchrist, <http://www.oscarmusic.co.uk>

Read this with great sadness but understand fully the position.

You have done a great job and the club has always been a favourite of my artists. It's the best club in the country.

Wonder how many more will close for good.

.....keep enjoying live music whenever you can and keep well...

From Lorraine Carpenter, www.differentstrings.co.uk

Hello Bob & Maggie

Lovely to hear from you, but not such lovely news ☹️ I was expecting it however, as the jungle drums had started already on the agents' WhatsApp group I belong to. Really sad, but of course perfectly understandable and most definitely the end of an era. What an amazing achievement to have kept the Ram Club going for so many years and maintaining the high standard and quality events and support for the myriad musicians you have hosted. You've both worked so hard and whilst it would be great to hand over the reins, you'd be a pretty impossible act to follow I think! The Ram Club will be missed in the folk and acoustic music world for sure, but it wouldn't happen without your dedication and attention to detail. As Clive is fond of saying "you're one (well two) of the good guys." You'll be leaving an incomparable legacy. Thank you so much. You've made it easy and it's been a real pleasure working with you both, for part of those many years.

Take care, stay safe.

Love, hugs and huge thanks for everything...

From Martin Woodhead, Image Acoustic

..so sorry to hear this is the end of the RAM club - such a shame, but I fully understand ..

It may herald some new options for people also, but we'll wait and see - because after all, it's an often thankless, laborious task behind the scenes, but a joy on the day of the gigs isn't it?

I have passed on your message to Luke Jackson (*see also above*) and he was shocked, but also understands too and particularly wanted me to thank you.

I wish you both all the very best for the future and on a personal note, thank you once again for all that you have done for the music scene in general, and also specifically for Luke's career. It has been much appreciated....

Martin Woodhead <https://www.imageacoustic.co.uk>

From Phil Simpson, Nearfield Artists

....Really sorry to hear this but I understand completely. Thanks on behalf of my artists for all your hard work over the years in making such a great club. I'll pass details on to my artists. Thanks and keep safe.

A

UDIENCE and OTHERS

From Phil & Sue Lloyd

We were so very, very, sorry to read your email announcing the closure of the Club. We know you have all thought long and hard about this, and can fully sympathise with your position.

There will be many like us, for whom Friday night was Ram Club night - a highlight of the week and a great way to round it off in good company listening to wonderful live music. We can all only be thankful that we've been able to enjoy this happy state of affairs for so long, in our case going back to the mid-1990s.

What made The Ram so special? Aspects that come immediately to mind are the club's unique combination of a guaranteed friendly welcome, a relaxed atmosphere, top-quality music, excellent sound quality, and a great venue, which all contributed to a genuine feeling that this was *our* club.

All this was possible only thanks to the professionalism and hard work of the organisers, much of it behind the scenes.

We hope it'll prove possible to hold the farewell event you mention, when we can raise "the parting glass", but in the sincere hope that our paths will cross again....

From Martin & Theresa Thomas

You must be torn apart by the flood of emails following the "official" notification..... I'm really writing to express our appreciation for the complete dedication that you've both shown to the Ram Club over the decades.

It has gone way beyond the call of duty which is why the reputation of the Ram has become so high. As Vin Garbutt said in 2007, the musicians know it as one of the best clubs in the land. And that is all due to your sustained commitment.

Sad to hear We believe that you have earned the right to stand down after all those years of selfless commitment.

Very best wishes to you both.

From Phill Boylett

....To say I'm devastated at this news is an understatement and I can't imagine never having a Friday night at the Ram club again. It's been such a huge part of my life....

But hey I know that you have given your hearts and souls into making this club the best in the country with a reputation that drew major stars to want to come and perform there and I am in no doubt that this is not a decision you will have come to lightly but this dreadful pandemic has devastated so much of everyone's lives especially all the performers who haven't been able to tour and also promote albums etc. that I guess even trying to find a way to make the evenings work again must have been such a thankless task.

I am going to miss so much being able to see all the old (and not so old!) faces again and enjoy such wonderful evenings that were always the perfect way to start off a weekend.

I do appreciate you letting me know personally and I really wish you well with whatever else to manage to fill your days with.....

From Judith & Eugene McGuigan

We are reeling from the shock and sadness of this news...We've been coming to the Club on and off for over 20 years, since it was based in Claygate where we live. We're not classic 'folkies' but love all types of music and especially seeing live performances, so the Ram has been among our favourite venues. We feel so privileged that it's literally on our doorstep. We can honestly say, as seasoned music goers, the performances at the Ram have been some of our most memorable and we can't believe we won't get the opportunity again of seeing new and emerging talent, as well as established and legendary acts that came to this small corner of Surrey...Obviously, we understand the reasons for your decision to close the club but hope that something will be resurrected in its place. Whilst there are other venues with live music, there remains a huge gap for acoustic performances especially at a time when this genre is being rediscovered by a new generation...Thank you so much for introducing us to so many different and talented performers. We will truly miss this gem of an institution.

And, thank you for all the effort and hard work that you have put into this club. Our Friday nights just won't be the same.

From Rob & Lesley Starey (Team Ram)

....many thanks for all your hard work and dedication over many years. You made the Ram the best club ever...

From Esther Phillips (Team Ram)

...the worst news of all, my stomach truly sank.
Thank you so much for having run the club so gracefully, so efficiently, so successfully, I am sure the musicians too will be crying.

From Bernie Perry (Team Ram)

OMG the Ram closure news put me in mind of one of those days when you wake up thinking "thank goodness it was only a dream" but then 5 seconds later you realise "no Bernie, that was no dream, it was for real". And then the sadness kicked in big time!! I'm so sorry to hear the news but I understand your reasoning. You all must be hurting too.

But the beauty of the Ram Club was, is and always will be "It's simply the best"the best people, the best friendships, the best performers and floor singers, the best MCs, the best music, the best atmosphere, the best fun, the best banter, the best audiences and the best memories. So, although the Ram may be no more, our memories will certainly remain. When we need a lift they will transport us back to those joyful Friday nights for sure.

Thank you SO MUCH to all six of you, for all the tremendous work that you have done over so many years. To you, Bob and Maggie, your style, knowledge, enthusiasm and your personal on-stage performances have always been a constant source of inspiration and motivation to your entire support team. I'm sure I speak for everyone when I say that it's been an absolute pleasure for all of us to help out in the various ways that we did....

Jo and I wish you all the very best for a happy, healthy, safe future with plenty of folk music to lighten the load.

Take care y'all...

From Ian Dillon

There are tears in the eyes of a grown man as I write this. The Ram Club has been a beautiful and irreplaceable experience.

As a member of that Friday night audience, I cannot overstate the wonderful legacy of live music that you have brought to all of us for so long.

Thank you so much for doing that with so much warmth and humour. My memories of the fantastic musicians that have performed on that tiny stage will remain a treasure.

As you suggest, I hope we can see out The Ram in style. It deserves no less, You are simply the best.

From Sue & Ian McCoulough

Am so so sorry. We have moved to Devon since 2017 but will always remember Friday nights with fondness at the club, and enjoying Maggie and Bob's excellent running of it.

I so hope you can do something else in the future as many folk are itching to get back to listening to live music - here's hoping Blessings to you all

From Len Holton, Host/producer of From Albion And Beyond, Little Rock Arkansas

..... A sad day indeed, and, as a fellow club organizer/founder myself, one that I will doubtlessly experience at some point. Sadly my folk club bucket list is now shorter by one :- (.....

You have blazed an amazing trail, your community will be much the poorer for your absence, and I know you both have some amazing memories, so, well done you!

From Paul Miles

So much enjoyed the Ram... thank you all for time, effort and dedication.

From Anne Powell

Indeed, the end of an era. What very sad news, but understandable in the circumstances.

Many, many thanks to you all...who have given so many years of service and made it such a fantastic club. It will be very greatly missed.

Perhaps there will come a time again in the future, post-Covid, when it might be reborn, with some new young blood to help as well. We will all be hoping, not least, no doubt, the musicians who always seemed to love to play at the Ram.

From Chris Cooksey

Desperately sad news. I thought the Ram Club would be around for ever. I was an occasional rather than a regular visitor but saw some wonderful acts and thoroughly enjoyed the visits, whether on my own or with friends. More, I loved the atmosphere and ethos of the club.

From Michael Newman

Oh no! This is very sad news. I have, like everyone else, marvellous memories of the Club and the performances I've seen there.

It's the best-run music club I know of, anywhere around London.

I'm really sorry you've been forced to give it up, and hope we'll all be able to persuade you to think again...

Thank you for everything you've done and I look forward to the Party.

From Louisa Spawls and Tim Hollands

I can only say, that having only recently discovered the Ram Club and having become fairly regular attendees, that we are incredibly sad to hear this. We were really looking forward to attending once covid was over.

Thank you so much for the huge effort that has been put in over the years.

From Anne Grant and Trevor Hart

I'm so sorry to hear about the Club's inevitable closure - you must all be devastated. I'm feeling pretty upset about it myself, knowing how hard you've all worked for the Club for so very long and how hard you must have fought to find a way to keep it open. Online clearly wasn't an option, as it thrived on human interaction.

I'll never forget the friendliness and humour at the Club when I've been able to come, and seeing Maggie, the perfect hostess, approaching the front, knowing we're in for another great evening at the Ram, is a memory which will stay with me for a long time.

All the very best to you all, and with so many thanks for all you've done to enable us to experience folk music in such a lovely atmosphere and for booking such amazing acts over the years.

From Steve Smith

....Really really sad news. What will we do on Fridays.

Please give Bob and Maggie and everyone involved best regards and sincere thanks for all the joy they've brought over the many years since I started attending the Hand and Spear sometime in the 80's.

From Nick Edwards

So, so sorry to hear this, but obviously understand all the factors that make it so difficult to even consider continuing.

Many thanks to everybody who's put so much effort into promoting the Ram Club over the years - going along and just enjoying the entertainment was the easy part!

In sadness

From Tim & Jennifer Timpson

Thank you for your sad email, but one that we do understand.... It's a different world now... Best wishes to all the organisers for the future, and many thanks for all you have done so brilliantly to run the club and give so much happiness to the rest of us over so many years.

From Jennie Blackburn

So very sorry to hear this sad news. The Ram Club has been on the periphery of my life for at least 35 years through many changes, both for the club & for me. I don't know of a better folk club.

Thank you all for your work over the years - it's been appreciated by so many.

From Robert Smith and Judy Weleminsky

Very sorry indeed to hear your news: we're going to miss you! Everyone in Team Ram has achieved a lot - thank you for everything you've all done to make our Friday evenings so special and enjoyable....

From Sharon Orton-Gibbs

Dear Maggie and Bob

Just wanted to write and say how grateful I am to you and the committee for running the most amazing club.

I am really really sorry that you have reached the conclusion that the Ram Club is not viable. I'm medically trained and have volunteered to do vaccinations at the moment, in the hope that life will return to normal.

I'm so sorry that you don't feel that this will be possible. I'm particularly concerned for the wonderful musicians, who obviously rely on amazing clubs such as the Ram Club, for their living. If there is any scope for revision of the decision please do contact us we are happy to help volunteer for jobs....

From Richard Cusden

....so sorry to hear.....So many happy memories of wonderful Friday nights there and before at The Foley Arms. I even played a few floor spots there with Ronnie Laing as R&R...If a thriving club like this can't survive ... what will happen to the many smaller folk clubs out there...

From Dave Greenwood

....sad news. I wasn't there as often in recent years ... a big thank you ...don't know how you kept it up so long, particularly Maggie's front of house MC'ing week in week out...A really good job, well done, bringing much joy to many people.

From Michael & Carole White

Such sad news but entirely understandable. Huge thanks to Teams Ram for many years of fun and harmless pleasure....

From Ian Irvine

The worst news I've heard in a year... I'm sorry.....so sorry that this will happen.

What a brilliant club! I had hoped to spend the rest of my life going to it, and getting more and more involved....

From Terry & Suzanna Knott

Truly sorry to hear this sad news. We first went to the Ram in 1985 ... saw Jez Lowe and Jake Walton. Just as wonderful was the singing of Alan and Carole prior that night too. And then so many brilliant nights over the decades. We can appreciate what a tough decision this must have been for you as organisers and want to say thank you for all the hard work over so many years that has given so much pleasure to all of us. Well done....!

Fom Aileen Yule

....very very sad but understandable in the circumstances. Thank you to everyone involved over the years for making the Ram Club such a friendly welcoming music venue with wonderful musicians. It will be missed.

From Jackie Conn

I've just had to take a moment and reread your email about three times to make sure I've understood correctly as I was stunned by the news that the Ram Club will cease to be!

This must have been an awful decision for you all to have to make but especially for Maggie and Bob, who've put their hearts and souls into it for so many years.

I am so very sorry. It was such a friendly club and I am grateful to have seen some amazing performers there. Of course this doesn't bode well for the even smaller folk clubs in the area either I'm involved in.

I just want to give a big heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in making the Ram Club such an amazing venue and experience. But particularly to Maggie and Bob, who were always so welcoming. It's often a bit daunting going to some folk clubs on your own but that was never the case at the Ram. It's a sad day for live music!...

From Rowena Warth

Oh Ram organisers ... I am so very sad that it had to come to this, but I really, really understand. Just thank you all for all your hard and committed work over the years. What on earth will we all look forward to on a Friday night? I wish all the Organisers a well earned happy RETIREMENT!! ... and thank you so much for linking us to the really lovely radio interview that Bob and Maggie had with Bev on Brooklands Radio.

I have so enjoyed it. It brought back such happy memories of the Ram get togethers. Although I wasn't always there after Colin died, I will still miss those jolly evenings, which never ceased to disappoint, and seeing so many people that we got to know so well....

Much love to you all ... x

From John O'Driscoll

...very sad news, but thank you for running the club all these years. Only made it once - for Coig - and regret not finding the club sooner. That was a great night.

From Conor & Senga McGaughey

We are devastated over your email. One of the beacons of light in a constrained world is the Ram Club, and it is what we look forward to most.

Even a severely limited club would be better than no club surely. No one expects things to continue as great as in a golden age.

Imagine if Augustus had ended the Roman Empire saying "*After Julius and me, it's all pants.*"

We could preserve our noble leaders in a glass case, like the philosopher Jeremy Bentham in University College London.

I stand to lose a bundle over this as I bet that we'd never see the end of Maggie and Bob.

Sitting at home practising songs and jokes isn't a sensible option.

So get your jabs, keep your distance and wash your hands, and everything will turn out fine, if a little bronze.

From Brian Farmer

...been a long twelve months hasn't it? It seems that you have also necessarily spent many hours agonising over the RAM Club in various ways. .. I think I intimated to you

early last year that I thought it would be so difficult for small music venues in so many ways to comply with all the new rules and regulations, and at the same time keeping the audience and artists safe, and moreover making the whole thing a viable proposition. I am certain the predicaments you have been wrestling with are being encountered up and down the country.

I have been coming to the RAM right back to the first venue...I cannot even remember where that was now, and it has always been a tremendously run club, with excellent music and a lovely warming environment. In short it has been unique.

Even though there is no comparable venue offering anything like a comparable evening in our neck of the woods, I think you have probably done the right thing, even though it saddens me to write that. However, I think you are correct that people would wish to remember the quality that the RAM provided rather than a reduced offering going forward. There are some hard facts of life here..Nothing very bad or very good are guaranteed to last forever, and that is why we have to make the most of everyday.....

We have our memories and they are wonderful.

Hopefully I will be able to come to your last hurrah ...

From Derek Giles (in Spain)

I am writing to say how sorry I was to receive your news about closing the Ram Club and to thank-you for your efforts. I have helped run a flamenco club locally and I know how difficult and how much effort goes into this type of venture. The few times I have been able to attend your club in the last years, I have been impressed with the quality of the performances and the friendly atmosphere that reigns in your sessions. I am consoled by the small collections of excellent CDs I have bought and won in your raffle and thank-you sincerely for putting me in touch with a fine range of new and mythical folk artists and performances. We cherish the memories of these intimate sessions.

Once the pandemic loosens its grip and we are able to return to the UK, we hope that we can find a suitable nearby venue to renew our visit to the folk scene, but we shall miss going to the Ram Club....

From Di Davenport

I just wanted to say how sad I was to learn the club will not reopen.

Of course, with my first visit to the Ram being 4th September 2009 (Ashley Hutchings and the Rainbow Chasers), I am still a relative newbie. Despite this I have long since been aware that as members of the audience we just rocked up to enjoy a great night of live music and fun whilst being largely unappreciative of the vast amount of work, organisation and goodwill supplied by the Ram Club team, so I understand why, after almost 40 years, it's time to call it a day....

I would like to say how truly grateful I am for around 350 fantastic evenings (especially those Christmas parties) in a warm and friendly club. We enjoyed top quality acts (Seth Lakeman, Cara Dillon, Tim Edey, Jez Lowe, Steve Tilston, Vin Garbutt, Boo Hewerdine, Brooks Williams, Martin Simpson, Sam Kelly with Dan Walsh, Wizz Jones and so many more) via a great sounding, reliable P.A system and at close quarters.

Thank-you so very much Pete, Grania, Cathy, Tony, Matt, Jenny, Ken, Steve, Diane, Ian, Amanda, Barbara (not forgetting Bruce) with my apologies to anyone else I may have forgotten. Extra special thanks to Maggie (taking nothing away from others, no one could M.C like Maggie) and Bob - undoubtedly our favourite floor spot (who without intent made me acutely aware of my own finger style shortcomings) for the many hours, days, months and years of their time that was freely given.

Definitely looking forward to that last Ram bash in the Summer. With love and heartfelt thanks.

From Liz Moon

Oh this is very sad, but what can you do in times like these. Literally an end of an era. Thanks so much for all the wonderful music it was amazing. All the years of hard work from your dedicated team, we were all so lucky, we shall never see your like again and it's all been here in Thames Ditton!
Very fond wishes and so lucky to have been a part of it all.

From Al Cosnett

Another sad blow for the dissolute...well done for all you've already accomplished.

From Gordon Simpson

Devastating that such a long-running and successful club should close in this way. Especially for musicians who have lost what was probably one of their most enjoyable venues. Sad times...

From Stuart Chalmers

So sad to hear that the Ram Club is shutting for good. Had many an amazing night there seeing some of the best folk music and some true greats of the scene like Dick Gaughan, Wizz Jones, Boo Hewerdine, Brooks Williams and many more. Thanks to Maggie and Bob Wood for everything.

From Moira & Leslie Welch

So sad to hear this. We have really missed our Friday night music. But have been grateful for so many great years of it. Hope we do see you all at some point.

From Keith & Kate Felton

We're really sorry to hear this but understand absolutely. We're forever grateful for the amazing job Maggie, Bob and the team have done over the seven years that we've attended. There have been some great gigs, the very odd less so, and many happy memories.

From Marian Thorpe

.....The light at the end of the Covid tunnel just got dimmer. However, it is understandable. I appreciate how frustrating it has been for everyone involved this year. So much effort and hope dashed.

I want to say how grateful I am to everyone involved with the Ram Club. I have enjoyed so many great Friday evenings at the club.

From June King

Ahhh this is such sad news. The Ram Club has seen me through times of great happiness and also great sadness. It was somewhere to go on my own and lift my spirits, or to share a great evening with good friends....Please pass on my sincere thanks and gratitude to Maggie, Bob and the rest of the Team. Your endeavours will be sorely missed by so many in the local area.

From David Morgan

Even for someone like me - a very occasional visitor - this is enormously sad news. Ram has been a superb folk club, and of course a huge credit to the hard work and abilities of Bob and Maggie in particular.

The end of Ram will leave a big gap in the cultural and social life of the area: my very best wishes to any members who can find a way to carry on some part of the tradition. With heartfelt thanks to all who have contributed to Ram's success over the years

From Barry Porter

Dear Maggie & Bob

I received the e mail today from Team Ram with a great deal of sadness. The end of this fabulous folk club is surely something to truly mourn. I've always counted myself a bit of part time "member" picking and choosing my Friday nights, however the memories of some extraordinary music and being introduced to such a range of performers will live long. Stumbling out of Claygate and then Thames Dutton with my mind humming with sounds heard will be sorely missed.

So simply thank you. I know it goes to lots of others associated with the Club but you've been it's very essence. You've made plenty of people very happy.

From Tim Morris

Sad news but understandable...we greatly enjoyed our visits to the Ram.

From Susan & Graham Cox

We are very sorry to hear this news, it is indeed the end of an unforgettable era! We have been coming to the Ram club since 2005 when you were based at the Foley Arms, and we have been delighted that you have provided us with the opportunity to hear live music in a smaller, beautifully decorated venue. Our seats were usually right at the front and our excellent view of the stage wouldn't have been possible anywhere else. We are really going to miss Friday evenings!

We would like to say a huge Thank You to everyone who made those evenings so successful. We know that it takes an enormous amount of the hard work behind the scenes to stage an event, and for this to happen almost every week of the year has been amazing. We really have appreciated all that you have done over so many years! It is disappointing and sad that it has to come to an end, but thanks to you we have very happy memories of many excellent performances and a lovely CD collection to remind us of those evenings.

Once again, THANK YOU !

Sending our very best wishes to you all ...

From Howard & Cherry Jacobs

It is sixteen years since we moved from Walton and moved too far to continue attending the best folk club ever. You moved venues after we had left the area so our memories are of Claygate.

You gave us very many years of wonderful music and fun. Bob and Maggie you were so good as hosts and organisers.

A huge "Thank You" to all the Ram club team and maybe we will bump into you at a folk event somewhere. Enjoy your retirement.

From Maggie Goff

Just to say how sorry I am to hear the Ram is closing. Ihave very happy memories of Friday nights packed in enjoying some of the best folk acts in the country....

From Keith Ossie

...Living in East London I did not get to the Ram as much as I would have liked. However, on the times I did it was always top notch and a pleasure to be there. Thank you for all your efforts over the years and good luck with future endeavours, the party outdoors sounds a great idea and if at all possible I would love to attend.

From Bob Yeo

Very sorry to hear the news. Certainly the end of an era for me as I've been a member since the early 90s. So many great memories!.....

Sincere thanks to Bob, Maggie, Peter, Steve and all the other members of the team. Looking forward to hearing about your farewell party. If I can come to that I certainly will. Best wishes to all of you.

From Ron Bullivant

A very sad announcement indeed. I was always an occasional rather than a "regular" attendee. But over the years, I logged dozens of visits to the lovely Ram Club in the old and new venue and I appreciate all of the work that went on behind the scenes.what a selection of exceptional artists and bands you gave us.

The ticket price at the Ram Club was always kept low, especially when compared to theatre/opera/sporting events....which was nice and kept things "inclusive"....

Thank you for the music - for giving it to me.

PS: Maggie.... you must include a few of your introductory stories, corny jokes and audience put-downs. Bob...you should list out your five favourite opening songs. Together you put the audience in a good mood and set the scene for many an enjoyable event.

From Martin Stringfellow

This is very sad news indeed.

The club was unique and is therefore irreplaceable, reflecting the fantastic work of building and maintaining such excellent relationships in the folk world over so many years.

Much as everyone will regret it, no one can begrudge Maggie and Bob wanting to step down, nor the rest of Team Ram not wanting to take on that commitment.

If any of the team know of anything remotely comparable within a reasonable distance, do let us all know - if they ever re-open, they may find a rush of new members!..Gutted but grateful....

From Karen & Pete Wyllie

Just to add our name to the many others... We are irregular visitors to the Ram but have seen some great acts there, up close and personal.

Very sorry to hear you're going, but after 30+ years, can completely understand your need to move on - and the times are so difficult to keep something like this going.

You've done a great job over the years, and once the lockdown is over, will be sorry that this isn't somewhere we can happily add back to our visiting list...

From Gill & Fred Tutt

Really sad newswe've really enjoyed the times we have been able to attend live music. A great Club really well organised and thank you to everyone involved....We will miss you.

From Ann & Simon Norman

So sorry to hear this, the club and its many wonderful individuals will be missed. This past year must have been very hard on everyone, so many lives will not be quite the same in the future....

From Stella & Roger Eeles

Quite shocked to receive your End Of An Era Email....but guess it is understandable given situation. Wanted to thank everyonefor some wonderful evenings over the years

From Lin & Steve Jones

It was with a huge degree of sadness that we read this email. We have greatly enjoyed the wonderful music from both guests & floor singers, the friendly atmosphere & banter & have made so many friends over the years. Not to mention the CD's won in the raffle! The Ram Club has made such a difference to our lives & we can't thank you all enough for the incredible effort you have all made over the years. Friday evenings will never be the same!

From Martin Read & Lynn Peace

We were very sorry to hear that you have decided to close....after so many years, but fully understand your rationale....

There are probably lots of clubs and music venues across the country ... considering whether it is worthwhile reopening once restrictions have been fully lifted, and many will no doubt make a similar decision to yourselves.

Sadly the options for listening to live music are likely to be greatly reduced, and many artists will decide that the struggle to survive is not worthwhile and stop performing altogether.

We would like to thank you all for the hard work that you have put into running the club so successfully, and for consistently providing top quality music over the years. Although not among your most established members (we have been attending for about 10 years), we have enjoyed our Friday nights at the club, and will now have to watch Jools Holland on BBC instead!

From Jane Smarzik (Ottawa)

Just read about the Ram. Sorry to hear this but surely a time for celebration too! You and Maggie must have some treasured memories and I know that so many people are very grateful for everything you accomplished and all the hard work XX

From Mark Bryan

I was sorry to receive your recent email- what a pity. I wanted to thank you for your efforts over the years. Although only occasional visitors, Sue and I greatly enjoyed our evenings at the club. You guys were responsible for something really good. Enjoy your "retirement".

From Keith and Isabel Martin

Thanks for your recent e-mail with the sad news of the club's closure.

It is indeed a bitter pill to swallow, but we fully understand the circumstances which have led to your decision. We offer our most sincere thanks to **everybody** concerned with **all** aspects of running the club over the decades, but especially to Maggie and Bob, whose tireless efforts have been mightily appreciated by us all.

The Ram Club is a classic case of 'the whole being greater than the sum of all its parts. Over the years, hundreds of folk have had good reason to be grateful for the 'value added' quality that you've brought to all our lives.

Personally, I will never again be able to look at the word "rampage" without calling to mind its alternative interpretation.....?

We'll certainly look forward to the 'farewell outdoor party' with keen anticipation.

Our very best wishes to one and all.

Stay safe, good people....

From Des O'Byrne, Organiser Grayshott Folk Club

We were deeply saddened to hear that The Ram Club ...which has been running since 1983, has decided not to re-open its doors in September 2021, as they had hoped... The good people at The Ram ...were incredibly helpful, supportive and encouraging to us at Grayshott Folk Club when we first had the idea of putting on live music events, prior to our opening in January 2011.

They never saw us as competition...but instead saw us as a like-minded club whose main interest was in bringing quality live music to this part of the world.

At times, we have worked co-operatively with The Ram and booked the same performers when they have been on tour and we have often looked to them for inspiration as to which musicians we should book to come and play for us; bowing to their superior knowledge and wider experience of the folk world.

Bob Wood has actually played for us at Grayshott a couple of times and on one occasion accompanied Benny Gallagher (of Gallagher & Lyle fame). Members of The Ram have visited us and we have occasionally visited them. In 2007, The Ram....won the prestigious BBC Radio 2 Folk Club of The Year Award and has been a Gold Standard Folk Club, putting on hundreds and hundreds of top class performers....Wesalute their achievements and thank them once again for helping us at the time when we most needed it.

From Ronnie Laing

As a more recent member, my short acquaintance with the Ram Club was absolutely fantastic. A very special thank you to Maggie and Bob and all the other hidden heroes.

From Kevin McLoughlin

So sorry to hear that the Ram Club is closing down after nearly four decades. I appreciate how difficult a decision it must have been, but given the effects of Covid one wonders what the new normal will be in the future.

In think I must have first come to the Ram soon after you opened your doors. We moved to Weybridge in the summer of 1982 buying a property just behind the Hand and Spear Pub. I don't remember how I first learned that you ran Friday night sessions in the back room but it was a great surprise that you were on my doorstep - no need for me to worry about drinking and driving as you were virtually on my doorstep. I recall that you organised a one day folk festival that I came along to....There were some special nights that stand out in my memory from that period - the Oysterband, Whippersnapper, Cilla Fisher and Artie Trezise and Michelle Shocked - none of whom I knew before coming through your doors.

I often came along to the club not knowing what to expect or whether I was gong to like whoever was appearing that night. Not all of the artists had the same appeal but I've never left before the end! I was always impressed at how you were able to attract such big names on the folk circuit....A big thank you and much appreciation to Bob and Maggie and the Ram Team for the time and effort put in over many years and the numerous memorable evenings you have given - I was looking forward to coming along to listen to some live music again, but as we learn in childhood - you cannot always have what you want.

From Bruce King

Such sad news: you folks have been absolute stars for years and I like to think that like the Phoenix ... Cheers dears

From Walton Folk

Sad news. Have always enjoyed our visits to you.

From Anne Oram

Thank you for everything, some incredible Friday nights.

From Sue & Howard Hope

Thank you for the heartfelt e mail. The wonderful Ram club will be an incredibly fond memory for so many of us.

We were so well entertained by Maggie and Bob first at the Foley Arms then the Old Cranleighans. We were however very aware of the sheer amount of effort and time-consuming work that went into each Friday evening.

We went for years then a gap when childminding was became an issue, then back again later so we saw some different faces but all the while Maggie with her humour.

Eventually we all have to retire and we wish you a great time with whatever comes next.

It's so sad that the Ram has to close but Covid has wreaked havoc, a problem we never could have imagined. We didn't know you all well as some people did, however you were appreciated and thank you all so much....

From Peter French

You will no doubt have been inundated with messages following the announcement that the Ram Club is to be no more; I hope you wont mind just one more.

After nigh on 40 years it must have been difficult to step away from what had been such a huge part of your lives, even if for very understandable reasons. In that time, you have brought so much pleasure to so many of the Ram regulars - including me (although I was never as 'regular' as I now wish I had been).

I just want to say thank you. Thank you for introducing me to a raft of musicians I would otherwise never have known and who now crowd my playlist. Thank you for the opportunity to experience the environment of a folk club, with all its sense of companionship and the sheer joy of sharing in the music and the laughter. But most of all, thank you for your friendship which, without the Ram Club, Yuko and I might never have known...

From Tony & June Fox

Hi Maggie, Bob and Team

Really sad news for us and live music. We are new to the club having only been members for 3 to 4 years. We wish we'd discovered you sooner.

We would like to thank you all for the pleasure you have given us over the past 3 or 4 years and especially the amazing support you all given to live music.

From Sarah & Paul Fielding

We were so sad, but completely understand, the decision to close the Ram Club. It has been superb and we have enjoyed so many wonderful nights over many years. We very much appreciate the huge amount of work it has taken to keep such a great club so successful.

Thank you so much for all the very happy evenings spent in the company of great music and enthusiastic audiences.

From Andy Parkinson

Listening to Bob and Maggie on Brooklands Radio as I type... So sad to hear that the Ram Club is closing but good to celebrate its 30 or so years existence.

My friend Martin and I went whenever we could. I remember one particular evening ...I think Ninebarrow were playing. And who could refuse to buy a few raffle tickets from the welcoming and affable Maggie. I stupidly, or was it generously, offered to buy £10 quids worth . Maggie chuckled and politely pointed out my stupidity at paying £10 pounds for raffle tickets to win a CD costing...*erghh* £10. She suggested I go and buy the CD instead and gave me a free raffle ticket for being so generous.

I gave the ticket to my chum Martin. Of course the freebie ticket number came up and we took two CDs home with us along with a strange feeling of serendipity at work.

From Rob & Kate Pickles

Dear Bob & Maggie, and everyone at Ram Folk Club,

This is SUCH sad news....

We discovered the Ram Club about 5 years ago, and travelled from Guildford on many Friday nights to see the fabulous range of high quality performances which never failed to be brilliant and inspirational. We also introduced several groups of friends who became regular attendees too.

The group of people who organised the club always seemed to be able to make it feel close, personal and informal, yet professional and high quality. This is an incredibly difficult balance to achieve, yet it seemed effortless.

Of course we understand that all things must come to an end, and we know you have all worked hard enough over the years, but nonetheless, this is sad news indeed.

Most of all though, we wanted to say thank you. We enjoyed every minute, and will keep our fingers firmly crossed that somehow, a phoenix can rise from the ashes....

From David Buckler

Bob, Maggie and the team,

Many thanks to especially Bob and Maggie for many wonderful nights at the Ram at both venues I went to.....Brightened my life so much and enjoyed many a great sing...With much love..

From Terry Robson

So sad. Such magical evenings. What dedication and hard work by Maggie and Bob over many years keeping it running smoothly! Thanks to them and the bar staff and all the helpers for making many happy memories..xx

From Vivien Taverner

Although I haven't been to the Ram regularly as it is a bit far from home, I thoroughly enjoyed my occasional visit and am very sad to hear of its closing. Thank you for running such a lovely club Maggie and Bob and all the very best for the future.

From Sue Stamp

Very sad news. You ran a fantastic folk club. Thankyou very much for the many happy evenings. Maggie, and everyone from the Ram Team over so many years, who worked tirelessly to make the club the brilliantly professional, but also warmly welcoming venue that it was.

From Richard Harrison

Sad news but totally understandable! Very fond memories of working with Elbow Jane at your fabulous club. Good luck for the future and hope to see you again down the road!

From Michael Wickens

So sad but also pleased to have shared great artists and performances over the years. Thank you Bob and Maggie. x

From Hugh Evans

Such sad news. A massive thank you to Maggie and Bob for everything they've done over the years. Friday nights at the Ram will be greatly missed (but they have been missed over the last year!).

From Gary Bridle

Very sad news. Great venue...