

I'm proud to say that I played a very small part in the process of persuading Risky Business to get back together for a re-union tour.

when we had Scolds Bridle on at the club and Dave Walmisley was backing Liz & Sue on a few songs. When he was packing up his stuff he said "You never had 'The Riskies' here; did you?" and the conversation ended with him saying "I'd like to try and get them back together to play here." I asked him to ring me next day to talk about it – he did and we arranged it.

I'd never seen them play and to be honest I wasn't sure what to expect – for some reason I was expecting a very 'arty farty' – serious affair. I couldn't have been more wrong! Risky Business (Ruth & Ken Powell + Dave Walmisley) are the consummate choice for the informal setting of a folk club. At Gregson Lane our audience want to be entertained and we were not disappointed.

The 'Riskies' have the perfect formula to appeal to any audience.

1. Musicianship – Ken & Dave are both top notch guitar players and Dave also knows his way round the fretboard of a mandolin and a bazouki. Most of the bands instruments (except for Dave's Martin guitar and Gibson mandolin) are 'Powell Guitars/Bazoukis – (instruments that both look and sound fantastic) made by Ken.

2. Great Songs – The fact that the band (obviously) perform several of Dave's songs (I particularly like Africa – Vagabond Rules & Rosemary's Garden) gives them a flying start on 'Great Songs List' – Don't get me wrong – I've heard Dave perform these on his own and he does a first class job – but putting the Risky Business stamp on them takes them to a whole new level. Having a great songwriter in their troupe doesn't mean that they are too proud to include some timeless classics from other great writers such as Rosie Hardman & Jimmy McCarthy.

3. Interface with the Audience Ruth Powell – Brilliant (I almost want to be sexist and say "Front-man") Not only has she got an amazingly – clear – pitch-perfect singing voice she also has that natural ability to communicate with an audience. She can do 'Funny' – she can do 'Brassy' – she can do 'Happy' – she can do 'Sad' and I guarantee that every member of that audience went home thinking that Ruth was their new best friend. A master-class in how to immediately grab the attention of an audience and keep that attention all through the performance – concise and entertaining intros to songs and good humoured banter.

Ruth, Ken & Dave make it look easy – but the fact that they have a wealth of experience – not only playing together – but performing in many other line-ups, has enabled them to hone their craft to perfection. This coupled with the fact that they have no axes to grind, nothing to prove and obviously love what they do. Here's hoping that they get together (again) more often.

Graham Dixon