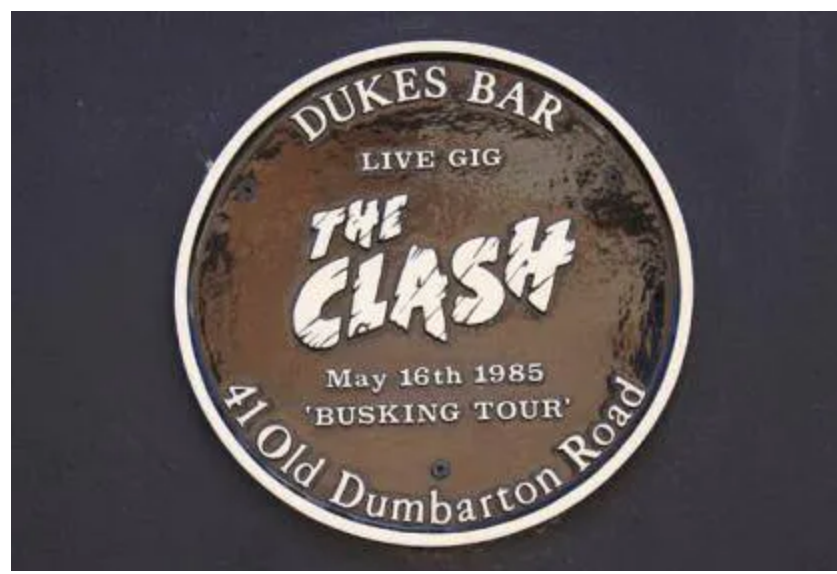


← Back to Glasgow Blog

Eyewitness account of The Clash and their busking tour of Glasgow

Gigs in Glasgow • Glasgow Walking Tours
July 2, 2015



In our earlier blog, we rattled on about the [The Clash tribute gig](#) taking place at Duke's Bar on Old Dumbarton Road tonight.

The event is being held to celebrate the time that The Clash played in the West End bar back in 1985.

Thanks to the magic of Twitter, we came across the following eyewitness blog written by [Tony McCormack](#). Tony has kindly let us re-run his blog.

Incidentally, Tony plays bass in a band called [51st State](#). Specialising in covers of punk, post punk and New Wave bands, they play regular gigs in London.

Here's the post from [Tony's blog](#):

The night They Fought The Law

It was a hot summer's day. The previous day I had just finished my final exam at university. My flatmate and I decided to head into town for a few beers and see what was happening. Most of our crowd had finished their exams a few days before so they would probably be in one of two or three places.

We decide to walk in to Glasgow city centre (translation: - I had no cash for the bus fare). The grant had long gone! For younger readers, a point of information - the government used to PAY YOU a grant to go to university. My flatmate's Dad banked with a merchant bank frequented by the Queen. So he decided to write a bouncy cheque so we could have a drink.

We decided on the Rock Garden as the first port of call. When I turned into Queen Street, I saw a large crowd congregated around the door and they had door staff on too, which was very unusual for Thursday lunchtime.

So I went up to the doorman who I knew (he was called Big Ted as his name was Edward and he was 6ft 2)

Me: What's going on Ted

Ted: The Clash are playing downstairs

Me: Aye. Right.

I thought he was joking as he knew I was a Clash fanatic.

Ted: Seriously. They are doing busking tour around Britain and it's Glasgow today.

Me: Ted, you need to let me in.

Ted: If I let you in I need to let the other 50 odd people in.

Me: How much? I know it's free but how much for me to get in there?

Ted: Look they are finishing up anyway - I'll let you in when they finish and you can ask them yourself.

Ten minutes later me and my flatmate were standing at the upstairs door of the Rock Garden with a beer. The Clash walked up the stairs. We had a quick word and they told us they were moving onto a place called The Cul-de-Sac in the West End. I thought WTF. Strummer will take one look at it and walk straight back out.

But we headed there anyway. I said to my flatmate 'Let's find out where they are going next 'cos Strummer won't play here'. The door man said they were going to Dukes next, a bar just behind the Kelvin Hall.

Drinking with The Clash

So we went to Dukes and we were the only people there. I was beginning to doubt my judgement on Strummer when the door opened and in walked The Clash (Strummer, Simonon, Sheppard, White and Howard). No hangers on, just the five of them.

I went and asked them if they wanted a beer. 'No, we'll get you one,' said Strummer, 'as we're playing for beer and food.'

So we ended up drinking with The Clash. Obviously as word got around the place filled up fast.

The set was classics and covers: Pressure Drop, Guns of Brixton, Bank Robber, Brand New Cadillac. Then Strathclyde's finest turned up to be met with Police on My Back. Classic Clash. They were told to get outside as there were too many people inside and a mob outside.

The Clash duly broke into I Fought the Law. Loads of wee Glasga women were hanging out their windows and I can only imagine what they thought as a couple of hundred Clash fans sang and danced about like maddies.

Straight to Hell

Then they did Straight to Hell - I will always remember that as Howard played the drum part on a window sill. It was eerily quiet.

The police panicked as more and more people turned up and sent them back inside and only let the number back in that met with fire rules. We were left outside.

When the Clash came out, we jumped in a cab and said 'Follow that cab'. They stopped at a venue in Sauchiehall Street that had a reggae night on Thursday nights. They were told to come back later. My flatmate and I sat in a pub across the road sipping our pints waiting for them to come back.

When they did we ran across and sneaked in with their growing entourage. Simonon got stopped at the door as they had said there were fifteen in total. The bouncer said, 'Fifteen have already gone in'

He of course got in and they did a storming set of all the famous Clash reggae stuff finishing with White Man, my all time favourite Clash track.

They were due to play a couple of venues the next day, but, being a bit hungover, I didn't get up in time and just missed their set at the Glasgow School of Art. The day before however had been perfect.

Tags: [Dukes Bar](#) • [Glasgow venues](#) • [The Clash](#) • [The Clash busking tour](#) • [The Clash in Glasgow](#)

Share Tweet Email

← Previous Post

Next Post →

Glasgow Music City Tours

(131) 558-2715

info@glasgowmusiccitytours.com

C/O Hutchison and Co B5
Whitcrook Business Centre,
78 Whitcrook Street
Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire G
81 1QF

Facebook Instagram Twitter YouTube



Share Tweet Email

Site Map

- Walking Tours
- About Us
- FAQ
- Press
- Blog



