

In 2002 Jodie Mitchell and Rick McKay, fresh from touring with The Thunder Rolls Garth Brooks tribute show, formed Pure Country. The duo had both become disillusioned with the British Country music scene and wanted to bring back some of the spirit that had been lost in recent years. Dance crazes had meant that at many Country music venues the focus had shifted from the music itself, to the beats, tempos, and dances written to each individual song. Influences from outside the scene had introduced non-Country material to the clubs, meaning that many genuine Country fans, to whom the clubs had been the only place they could hear their favourite music, now found themselves being forced to listen to pop music, or choosing not to attend at all. Jodie Mitchell has grown up on the Country scene and clearly remembers things as they used to be when her father, Steve Mitchell (Shiloh) was touring in the 1980s and early 90s. She remembers clubs being packed with friendly audiences all sharing a love for the words and music that make Country the unique genre that it is. It didn't matter if you danced or not, nor even if you couldn't dance at all. Everyone was made welcome and came to appreciate what was, invariably, a fully live band on stage. Rick McKay's background is in theatre and cabaret. Although his shows have always included Country music he didn't move onto the Country scene until 1992. His decision to move was motivated by the fact that, on the Country scene, he could play his favourite music to an audience that would allow him to fully indulge his love for Country music. Pure Country's aim as a duo is to recapture the spirit of those days and provide places for



USA for occasional tours. They also have solo ventures in the pipeline. Rick is soon to reprise his role as Garth Brooks for several events around the country, and Jodie is working on a solo cd comprised of her own songs.

If you intend to go out and see Pure Country, don't go expecting to hear any of the current dance material, or many songs that you may hear other bands playing. Jodie & Rick try hard to avoid playing similar material to other acts and flatly refuse to play anything that isn't easily recognised as Country music, whether it's old or new. Their intention is not to offend anyone, but merely to provide an alternative to what has now become the norm, and to put Country music back in the Country music clubs. Website: www.purecountry.org. E.mail: pure.country@zen.co.uk. Tel: 01268 781117.

Pure Country

genuine Country music fans to go.

Music by legendary artistes such as George Jones, Merle Haggard, Tammy Wynette, Buck Owens, Johnny Cash and Billy Jo Spears, coupled with lesser known modern acts, Billy Yates, Heather Myles, Thom Shepherd and David Ball are all included in their shows alongside some of their own self penned material.

Over the last four years Jodie & Rick have released four cds of their favourite songs, and songs chosen by their audiences who often present them with new material they would like to hear the duo sing, which whenever possible, is added to the show.

In 2004 they achieved a life long ambition when they played at The Liberty Opry near Houston, Texas, which has now become an annual event for them. Now in 2006, Jodie & Rick are working on an album of their self penned songs which they intend to record in Nashville in the near future. They will continue to tour and record here in England as well as forming a band in the

