

## Interview with The Tivoli (17th July 2009)

The Tivoli are a 4 piece band that all live in Sheffield, and we met up with them after they played their set at the Camden Barfly in London.. The band performed amazingly, and you can read the review of the gig itself [here](#). We took the chance to have a quick interview with the band as follows. Please introduce yourselves, and what your role is in the band Gaz was first up to talk, known as "Jud" or "Bastard", whichever suits and hails from Leicester. He is the drummer, and thinks of himself as the drummer with an opinion, that is just not heard! Damo, the lead guitarist comes from Sheffield and is the old man of the band. Russ is the bassist, also from Sheffield originally, who is the youngest in the band - an entire 18 years younger than Damo! Last, but by no means least, Lee, who is the groups front man on guitar and vocals. He originates from Rotherham where he first started his band almost 17 years ago, and a keen Rotherham United supporter. Tell us about The Tivoli, and how it was formed The name, "The Tivoli", originated from the Rotherham United's stadium - the stand at the front where the home-team fans stand is called "The Tivoli Stand", and Lee saw that name many years ago and decided then and there... 'That's the name of my band'. This name originally came from [The Tivoli Buildings](#) and Cinema on Masborough Street - click the link to show you the history of the town. Lee also mentioned about the song [Drop Me Off In Rotherham](#), and how it holds meaning to the band and its name. The band originally formed as a 6 piece, with an entirely different line-up, but they disbanded after 2 years as none of them were really happy. Lee got hold of Damo and started to do some recordings of the old tracks and some new, including the free download [My Town](#), and then formed the current line-up around those recordings. At this point, GigReviewer.com would like to point out that an extremely fit girl interrupts the interview, and gives the band an unexpected compliment. Shortly after she leaves, Gaz walks out the room for a few minutes and returns with a grin and looking on his phone...wonder what happened then..?! Who has the worst habits? Gaz has the worst habit regarding his sensitivity towards his hair...but then again you don't want to share a hotel room with Lee....we say no more! What's the craziest, or most embarrassing thing that you have ever done on stage? As The Tivoli, there's nothing really to tell of, apart from missing the occasional sampled tracks which threw songs off course. At one point, Damo was having a go at Lee about being stupid, and then starts playing the song without realizing his guitar is plugged in! Once upon a time, when Lee had a solo acoustic set, he was pissed out of his face and playing "What A Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong, and then while walking around the stage he walked...not fell...of the front of the stage! Who is your "Rock Idol?", or who would you want to be most like? Damo shouts out - "Spinal Tap!" Rather than having any idols, or dreaming of being any particular band, apart from themselves, their dream is to play some of the bigger stadiums - i.e Wembley Arena etc... How long has it taken you to write your album, "National Service"? Most of the tracks were taken from earlier bands, so you could argue 17 years! Mainly though, the earliest point of any songs were about 4 years ago, but really working on the album tracks in the last 2. Where is the best venue, and what was your favorite gig you have played? Shepherds Bush Empire (SOLD OUT!?) was definitely the favorite gig - the feeling of walking through the halls looking at the images of artists who have played there including Paul Weller, and knowing that in about 10 minutes time you'll be on the same stage in front of a large crowd is unbelievable. Who would you say has the biggest role in the song writing? Lee holds the biggest role, as most of the songs have originated in his past bands, but the band as a whole have equal say and input to the songwriting and updating of any songs. Do you have any stalkers? Gaz' girlfriend used to be their stalker - mostly over Myspace and following around gigs etc before they got together...I think there's a tip there if you want to get in with a band member, girls! What advice would you give to any upcoming bands? Keep trying and writing, don't always believe what people tell you and write the stuff that you personally feel good about. Russ' biggest tip is to not join a "scene" and be yourself. Meaning that when a new band comes in to play, most bands make their music to sound exactly the same - keep off that path and be yourself! Are any of you very political, and do you think that Britain should bring back national service? Can you see what we did there? Damo used to be in the forces, but ultimately the band are not political in the slightest! The album name was based around several tracks, including [Common Foot Soldiers](#), which was actually a metaphor, or allegory if you will, about the working class... how the soldiers go out in the fields, do all the hard graft while the officers sit back out of harms way, and half the soldiers end up getting killed for it. Very deep stuff! Where was your first gig, and exactly how bad was it? July 2007, it was a benefit gig for all the recent flood damage in the area. Damo forgot his words and from start to finish it was all shit! Who were the best and worst bands you have played alongside? Kora, from New Zealand, were definitely the best band to play alongside. They were very professional and The Tivoli learnt a lot from their two tours alongside Kora. They can't remember the name of the worst band they played with - that's how bad they were! All they can recall was that they came from the USA, and were basically The Rasmus, but with a bad female vocalist! Do any of you have day jobs? Russ and Gaz work for an online travel agent, while Damo is just a full time father! Lee has had several \*thousand\* jobs, such as being a labourer on construction sites, receptionist, and was even a security guard at one point - granted all he did in this job was watch the gigs being played at the time! He is now an NVQ assessor. Now, if he assess you, just make sure all you write is how good The Tivoli is and I'm sure you'll do well! What's the worst review The Tivoli have ever had? 95% of The Tivoli's reviews have all been really good, but you'll always be bound to have some-one give you a bad review - the only one they can think of was a music magazine saying that "Lee's vocals were stupid and forgettable". Rubbish in our books! Don't you just hate inane, pointless questions that are solely added in just to fill up column inches? 'What? Like that one?' Have you written any songs about anyone, or that have hidden messages? 'Tarantino's My Hero' was one, and the 'Cheer Up, Sunshine' which was about conversations between Lee and his dad, which the last verse was about Lee having to carry his granddad's coffin at his funeral. Have you ever had to cancel a gig? Only once in Acrington, when they travelled an hour and a half only to be told they weren't put on the bill in the first place! In your songs, what are your favorite lyrics? Money's a disease

That will cripple and squeeze

The whole world to death

Until there's nothing left At what point will you stop and say, "Yeah, we've made it"? Never, to say you've made it is to say you've failed. After the

interview, Damo threw Russ in the fridge...

## About the Author

Gary Smith - Photographer, Editor, Writer for GigReviewer.com

Source: <http://www.gigreviewer.com>