

# THE JOHN BIRMINGHAM CUP

## For Unaccompanied Singing

1. John died on the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and by his will set up a competition to encourage the art of unaccompanied singing – a cappella - and song writing. He adopted the Cumberland Arms, Newcastle upon Tyne as his final home in the few tragically short months prior to his diagnosis. He quickly became a well loved member of the pub community, with his sense of humour and gruff honesty. He could be heard many nights in the back bar, singing his songs written from his broad experience of life. Since his death the Competition has been held at the Cumberland Arms since. However in 2008 Whitby Festival agreed to host and support the competition, in order to broaden its base, an aim which John hoped for. It is the singing and the songs, however rough hewn – as many of John’s were – which is important, not the Competition.
2. The terms of the Trust under which the competition is set up are:-
  - ‘... to create an a cappella competition for singers performing their own work or work written specially for them...with a small monetary prize for the winner and runner up... The John Birmingham Cup is then to be inscribed with the winner and location annually.’
3. Rules of the competition:-
  - a. There shall be two entry groups for the competition; one under 25 and the other over 25.
  - b. Songs written must be sung a cappella singly or as a duo.
  - c. The song sung at the competition must be written by the singer or must have been written for the singer; this is in order to promote the art of song writing.
  - d. Performance times maybe tailored to fit in with competition time frames, but competitors will be notified of this prior to the start of the competition.
  - e. The style of singing and the nature of the song shall be suitable for the songs to be appreciated in a pub, at a folk session, on a street corner, or round a campfire.
  - f. The prize money will be for two places for over 25’s and for under 25’s. In place of third place special mention can be made of a singer at the judges’ discretion.
  - g. The winner of the over 25’s shall have his or her name engraved on the Cup which will be presented at the competition but kept at the Cumberland Arms, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne and shall receive a small cup, as shall the winner of the under 25’s, theirs to keep.
  - h. There may be other prizes for those placed as above at the discretion of the organisers.
  - i. The entrance fee will go directly into the running of the competition.

The Trustee of the John Birmingham Cup.  
May 2008