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Doc Showbiz

BY SCOTLAND'S No1 SHOWBUSINESS WRITER, GAVIN DOCHERTY

Nathan shanty give up on his musical dreams

THE singing voice alone suggests a scurvy 18th century pirate captain who has washed up on an island port, weather-beaten, with long dreadlocked hair, braided beard and a mouthful of gold teeth exposed by a nostril-flaring rumble of “arrghs”.

In reality, Nathan Evans, the Scottish warbler whose Wellerman sea shanty is top of The Official Big Top 40, is clean-cut, mild-mannered, fresh-faced and quiet-spoken.

Thus, a star is born with the unlikeliest hit song and the first good news story in the bleakest of times for the performing arts industry.

In 2010, a group of rugged fishermen carved out their own anachronistic moment in pop music lore, as the copyright-free folk songs sung by Fisherman’s Friends placed them at the Top 10 charts in the UK.

Now comes Airdrie’s singing postie to dip back into the private treasure chest of Davy Jones’ locker.

Well, leastways, the bank vault of record label Polydor, who’ve signed up the TikTok sensation for a multi-release single and album.

Warning: Cliched question coming so apt: “How do you feel?”

He replies: “I feel like I am talking about someone else. Some other person that isn’t me. I am just talking for them.

“It’s as if this is not happening to me. And I’ll just be the same me, regardless of what happens.”

But does Nathan, 26, have mass appeal beyond this haunting 19th century New Zealand whaling song that’s got energy, velocity, and is also suffused with salty sea-dog slang?

On paper, nothing about this easy-breezy, home-made recording should work – the budget is shoestring and the singer inexperienced.

But Wellerman brims with small pleasures that should pay big dividends... if the budding musician can now justify the label’s seed money.

Nathan, *right*, loves music, and he’s not faking it.

A magical, beguiling wonder, he’s all very green,

natural, sincere and reeking of integrity.

He reflects: “I’m hoping for long success in the music business and I am confident in my song writing.

“Now that I have got the platform and people’s eyes are on me, I am sure that I can prove that I am more

than just this shanty singer who got lucky.

“If it were all to fall apart tomorrow, then I’d happily go back to being a postman and take this back as an experience I’ll never forget. I’m loving every minute of it.

“But let’s try and turn this into an actual career.”

To keep costs down, Nathan and wife Holly, 26 – the primary teacher he’s been with for 10 years, since they met and fell in love at school – are living with her aunt, Joy Marie.

Desperate to build upon being dubbed simply a “musical discovery”, he is reaching for the kind of success that will pull his dreams together, buy that new house he has always promised his missus – and maybe allow him to pick up a bar tab once in a while.

❑ *Wellerman is available now on digital platforms*

