



by ANNA GAULT

INDIE rockers The Amazons are storming the charts... but it wasn't so long ago they were stacking shelves at the local supermarket.

Lead singer Matt Thomson reveals that drummer Joe Emmett was back at work in Waitrose the day after the band's TV debut on Later With Jools Holland.

The four-piece are playing on TRNSMT's King Tut's stage today but haven't let success go to their heads yet.

Matt says: "The bassist Elliot and I worked at Waitrose and our guitarist Chris worked at the local zoo in the ticket office while Joe was still a baker at Waitrose until very recently.

"We did Jools Holland and he was straight home after and up early for his shift the next day.

"Joe is a bit more grown up with a mortgage and all that so he wanted to keep a door open in case the band didn't happen.

"He only quit his job the week our album came out."

'Summer really is about drinking cider in a field'

Ginger Matt, 23, loves coming to Scotland as he is surrounded by more redheads than down south.

He says: "I do feel at home with my fellow gingers in Scotland.

"Gingers need to stick together.

"I am hoping I have some Scottish blood in me – it's just me and my sister who are redheads out of our family."

The band, from Reading, broke into the Top 10 with their debut album *The Amazons* last month and TRNSMT marks their first Scottish festival appearance.

Matt says: "We are buzzing – the Scottish crowds are nutters.

"At festivals you really only have to work – if you can call it that – for an hour-and-a-half between performing and doing interviews.

"After that you can go off and

We won't be left on shelf



ON THE RISE...
The Amazons' album hit the Top 10 and they play TRNSMT today



enjoy yourself – it's amazing.

"You can corner your idols at festivals – it would be good to meet The 1975 if we can."

And Matt can't believe his luck he'll be playing TRNSMT after attending dozens of festivals as a fan.

He says: "For years we'd have to think of saving up the money for the tickets and booking time off work to be able to go but we are actually a part of it now. The British summer

really is all about drinking cider in a field listening to live music."

The Amazons have only been touring for three years but have always made a point of playing north of the border.

Matt says: "We've been up to Scotland a lot of times and had some good nights in Glasgow.

"We wrote one of our singles *In My Mind* after a big night out in Glasgow at the ABC."

But surprisingly it is a gig in Dunfermline that sticks in Matt's mind the most.

He says: "Playing Dunfermline

was one of my favourite gigs. Afterwards we went to this park that is infested with squirrels – it's insane.

"There are five squirrels everywhere you look all the time – it's like there is a squirrel mafia running Dunfermline."

As well as attracting rodents, Matt hopes he'll be getting more attention from the ladies as the band's popularity grows.

He jokes: "The most action I get is sharing a Travelodge double bed with our drummer Joe. I think maybe if you get to a level of tour buses

and private planes and separate hotel rooms maybe there would be more girls.

"We are too on top of each other to get any privacy but definitely getting more attention from being in a band."

Matt's flatmates back home keep him grounded though.

He says: "They all have normal jobs and I'll come back home and realise they are the ones who have got it together and I am not some rock star.

"They keep me on the straight and narrow."

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KATEE KROSS

WHERE: Bishopbriggs, near Glasgow.
FOR FANS OF: Dixie Chicks, Linda Ronstadt, Karine Polwart.

JIM SAYS: Playing Wembley Arena would be a dream for most acts. For 20-year-old Katee Kross, it's already come true.

Last year the country pop singer was invited to appear there with renowned American musician Seasick Steve.

She told me: "I posted a cover of his song *Purple Shadows* on YouTube last summer and never thought much about it. In October we received an email from his management asking for a contact number. They got back to us saying that Seasick was doing a one-off gig in London to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his first album being released. They asked 'Would I want to come down and join him for a song?' Of course I said yes! It turns out that Seasick Steve was shown the cover and absolutely loved it.

"It was completely mind-blowing that he asked me. Playing Wembley Arena in front of 12,500 people really was living the dream. The whole experience was astonishing. Seasick Steve made sure I was 100 per cent comfortable and he spent a lot



NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

of time with me just chatting about music. He even came into my dressing room and sat on the floor with me showing me videos of his tour so far. Seasick was completely down to earth and such a gem. He made the whole trip."

Music has always been a huge part of Katee's life. Her parents own Bishopbriggs School of Music and she now teaches guitar and ukulele at the centre. She said: "I can remember them having many house parties when I was growing up. The only rule was you had to bring an instrument to get in. When I turned 10 my dad decided to give me his only Gibson guitar to encourage me to take playing and singing more seriously. I started to

play local gala days and worked up to playing paid gigs. I've been extremely lucky to have supported Dougie MacLean, Barbara Dickson, Karine Polwart, James Grant and, of course, Seasick Steve."

While a lot of young artists see TV talent shows as the way to get noticed, it's not a path that interests Katee. She explained: "I've actually turned down *The X Factor* and *Britain's Got Talent*. They were both chasing me for a few months. I just feel that it's not the right route for me to take."

She's released two albums so far. Her latest *Don't Fade To Grey* came out in March, exactly a year since her debut *Beautiful Dreamer*. Katee said: "My music has matured enormously from the first to the second album. The first album was quite raw but with *Don't Fade To Grey* I really started to find my sound."

She's due to start work on a third album soon, and plays the *HebCelt* festival in Stornoway, Lewis, on July 22. She'll also support Sandi Thom at *Oran Mór* in Glasgow on October 7.

More: www.facebook.com/KateeKross
● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on *Amazing Radio* Sundays 2-4pm.

www.amazingradio.com
www.jimgellatly.com

▶ Watch a video of the band playing at: www.thescottishsun.co.uk