

Subdued lighting, candlelights on every table, a sparse piano and a husky sax certainly changed the feeling that this was Coal Aston's Village Hall as Ian Millar and Dominic Spencer set out to recreate the evocative atmosphere that epitomised the smoky bars and haunting melodies of bygone times.

If this description seems over the top – believe me it's not!

With Ian playing either his Soprano or Tenor Saxophone and Dominic on Piano they more than achieved just that and more in their two sets as part of their "Jazz in the Village" tour.

The small but appreciative audience were able to enjoy their music at close quarters and better appreciate the musicianship and arrangements being displayed,

The mix of Jazz Standards and Ian's own compositions was just right with Victor Young's Weaver of Dreams setting us off on a journey with the likes of Cole Porter, Johnny Green and Jerome Kern amongst others - all sitting comfortably alongside Ian's Morning Dew, Midnight and a tribute to a canal walking charity fundraiser of their acquaintance – Towpath Ted.

The second set highlights for me included All the Things You Are, Smoke Gets in Your Eyes and Autumn Leaves, and, their encore of Stella by Starlight.

This was live music at its best with no hint of repetition – the arrangements and interpretations 'belonged' to Ian and Dominic – both fresh yet familiar.

No vocals needed here when every individual note and run conveys a word, a phrase or an emotion with the voice of the Sax providing the stories in the landscape created on the Piano.

This was music that harked back to an earlier age but you didn't have to be of that age to truly appreciate the performance.

Those who were in the audience will be able to add this evening to their collection of 'most memorable and enjoyable' music events.

John Reedman