'We had an amazing time, some heady moments'

Graeme Clark of Wet Wet Wet is heading to Bury. He tells Melanie Wallwork about the band's heyday

AS a cornerstone of record breaking, multi-million selling band Wet Wet Wet, Graeme Clark is no stranger to playing sell-out stadium concerts all over the world.

But the bass player and song-writer has swapped arenas for intimate gigs, playing stripped back acoustic songs to fans — calling at The Met, Bury, next Thursday.

He said: "A couple of years ago, I decided that I needed an outlet for my creativity and my song-writing because it became clear (Wet Wet Wet) were kind of slowing down.

"We still write and do stuff but it's few and far between. I decided, you know what, I love playing live and I love the atmosphere. Once you've been bitten by the bug, you kind of miss it when you don't do it.



"I wrote a few songs and said, I'm going to go on tour. I wasn't even sure I was going to enjoy it.

"Being a bass player, you stand stage left. To take three steps to centre stage, it was a bit daunting at first."

But the musician said he is relishing being back on stage in atmospheric settings, playing tracks from his 2012 debut solo album Mr Understanding, 2013 EP Catching Fire and new EP Dry Land.

Playing his new solo material and covers of some of the Wets favourites in his inimitable style, Graeme will be joined on stage at The Met by honorary Wet Wet Wet member and guitarist Graeme Duffin and Iain Duff on piano and accordion.

He said: "It's a sit-down gig, it's a come and listen and I will tell them about the songs, how I went about it, how I wrote them."

As one quarter of Wet Wet Wet, along with Marti Pellow, Tommy Cunningham and Neil Mitchell, Graeme wrote more than 30 hits, including Goodnight Girl, Sweet Little Mystery, Julia Says and Temptation.

He said: "Goodnight Girl, we wrote very quickly. We went in the studio, we put the guitars on at about 1pm and by 3pm it was written and finished.

"We thought, that was kind of nice, that was lucky, that will make a nice album track.

"It went out and people heard it and lapped it up. You never know how people are going to react. That's the beauty of music, everyone sees and hears it differently."

Wet Wet Wet formed in Clydebank, Scotland, in 1982, before going on to score a number of hits in the British and international charts in the 1980s and 1990s. Graeme said: "Back then, we kind of thought, we are a bunch of young lads, we had a fairly charismatic singer. We always felt if we wrote the right songs, people are going to enjoy this and get this and buy into it.

"It wasn't a huge surprise that we sold a lot of records but nothing can prepare you for what we experienced. Every day was different. It was an amazing way to go through your 20s and 30s. There was a pretty strong bond made by all of us back then."

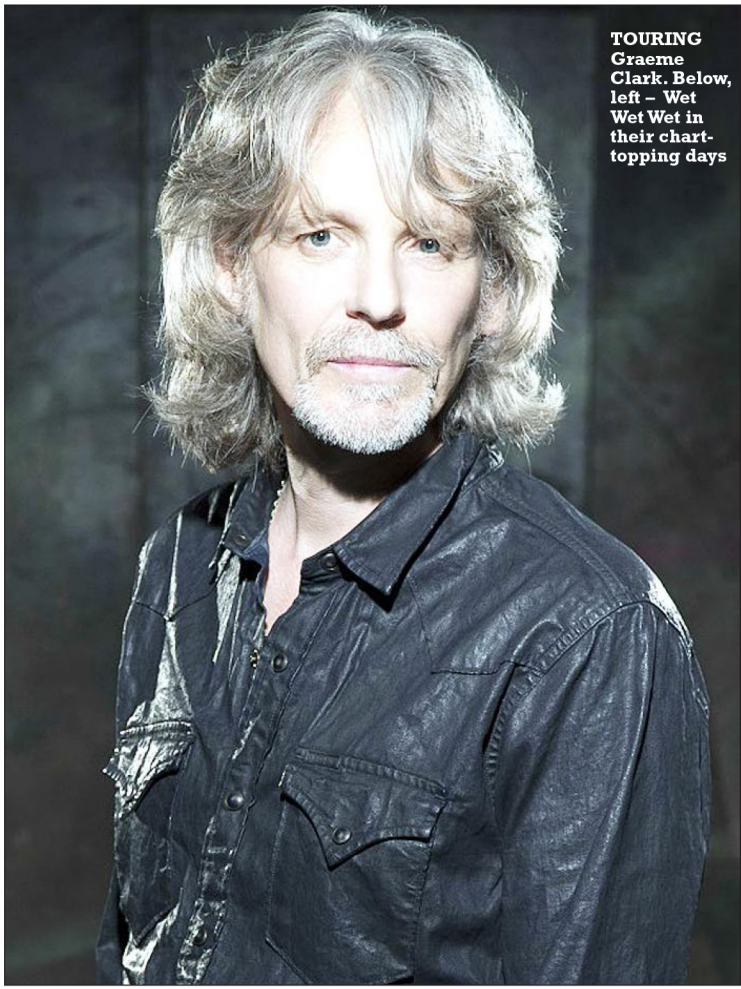
In 1994, Wet Wet Wet had their biggest hit, with a cover version of The Troggs' single Love Is All Around, which spent 15 weeks at No 1 in the charts.

Graeme, who has a 20-year-old son with wife Beverley, said: "We had an amazing time, we had some heady moments. It's easier now to look back on what we did and have a proper perspective on it."

"When you're living so fast, eventually something will trip you up. Like a lot of these bands' stories, you get hugely successful, you don't live a normal life."

While the hectic years of Wet Wet Wet may be behind them, Graeme is looking forward to reuniting with his bandmates to play gigs over summer.

Graeme Clark will be at The Met on Thursday, May 8 at 8pm. Tickets, £12. Phone 0161 761 2216 or visit themet.biz.



TOURING Graeme Clark. Below, left – Wet Wet Wet in their chart-topping days