

POSTMAN Nathan Evans will become an official chart star today after breaking the internet with his sea shanty.

The 26-year-old's version of Wellerman, a 19th-century whaling song, created a viral craze of sea shantying on TikTok and Nathan was snapped up by Polydor.

He has given up his job as a postie but still lives in Airdrie with his wife Holly.

We talked to him about his sudden rise to fame and his plans for the future.

Q&A
NATHAN EVANS

Congratulations on signing to Polydor. How does it feel?

I'm still waiting for somebody to pinch me and I'll wake up. Music's always been a passion for me. To be able to do it and try to pursue this further is an absolute dream.

Did you always sing sea shanties?

Not at all. My biggest influences are Lewis Capaldi, Ed Sheeran and Dermot Kennedy. That's always been my music – acoustic folk songs. They can be poppy or they can be laid-back but it always goes back to a bit of folk music.

In July, someone on TikTok suggested singing a sea shanty called Leave Her Johnny. It

Sea change in fortunes

BY ANNA BURNSIDE

Scots postie talks about rapid rise to fame after viral TikTok shanty lands him a record deal

got a few votes. So I thought, "Right, I'll sing that." I'd never really heard it before, so I went away, researched it, and went from there.

At the time, I had 10,000 followers on TikTok but after I posted my first shanty Leave Her Johnny I got 600,000 views. I realised there must be a bit of demand for that kind of music.

Everyone was commenting: "You need to do Wellerman, The Scotsman, The Drunken Sailor."

So why didn't you get on it right away?

I had a list of other songs that were raring to go. I did them first. I didn't get round to the other shanties until December.

What is it about Wellerman that everybody loves?

It is so catchy. I'll be walking

down the street and I'll hear myself singing it or humming it. It's all subconscious. I don't even mean it, it just happens, there I am singing it again. It's that kind of song.

I love that it's stripped back, it's acoustic, just the beat of a drum or the stamp of a foot.

It's also perfect for TikTok. People are joining in on the bassline, adding violin, all this other stuff on top. It shows how creative people can be.

There's one with 20 people all joined in, they've created this choir, they're all singing along. It's really moving.

There's so many ways you can go with that one song, it can appeal to everybody and anybody.

And lockdown has definitely fallen in my favour.

Everybody's stuck at home, looking at their phone, then this has come along and boosted everybody's spirits and got them involved and singing along.

How did you record the track?

Everything is all made by me, in my back bedroom, sitting at a desk. I write music, play piano, play guitar, sing. Sometimes I ask my wife if it sounds good before I upload it. Apart from that it's just me.

Have you always played music?

I've been singing for as long as I've been able. I've played electric guitar since I was eight, then got an acoustic when I was nine. That was it.

What about playing live?

I've only played a couple of gigs in front of family and friends, and friends of friends. And a couple of weddings. It's not loads but I've done enough that I'm comfortable singing in front of people.

I was always just too busy. Before I was a postie, I was a steel erector, doing long shifts. By the time I got home, I was



MAKING WAVES
Nathan Evans. Right, his TikTok video of sea shanty Wellerman. Main pic: Phil Dye



too tired to do anything. I would go into my bedroom, play some music and get back up for work in the morning.

So what do you hope will happen next?

The plan is to get a couple of sea shanties out there to the market, get everybody on it, give everybody what they want.

I want to make it true to the original – I don't think I'll change it much or add any instruments.

I've also got a few of my own songs written and recorded, I want to try to get them in there and let people see what else I can do.

Hopefully, if I play my cards right, I can get people on board with my own stuff as well.

An album of my own music would be the dream scenario.

● Wellerman is out now.