

Albums

JIM ELDON

Songs And Fiddle Tunes Stick SDCD012

Should a fan be allowed to write a review and be expected to give objective opinions? Perhaps, if he admits this from the outset, so let's state that Jim Eldon has been one of this reviewer's main men amongst English performers for some years now.

The album is a reflection of Jim's live performances. No nonsense, nothing fancy, just get on the main business of delivering the songs and tunes in a straightforward way with no fuss. Most of the items are on the short side, around two minutes or less. In the main, the tunes come from Jim's long association with The Goathland Plough Stots and his fiddle playing has the authentic sound of a Romany when he 'fakes the bosh'. The songs are not much longer. The only one that delays you for any time is his take on Seven Drunken Nights – The Merry Cuckold – which has a very different ending from the well-known versions of that song. That is the thing about Jim's songs, they tell the familiar stories of traditional songs but he always manages to seek out unusual and different ways with them. There are some delightful ones here, particularly The Queen of Tavendor and Fair Ones Are Shining. Jim's albums usually contain a sprinkling of his quirky compositions and this is no exception. The construction and content of these songs mark him out as a man with a very unusual world view. One thinks of past offerings, like Pools Win or I Am Agency that manage to stop the listener in their tracks; something that is arresting and different. This time it is It's Still Around Somewhere.

A few more individuals that, like Jim, plough their own musical furrow would enrich the scene considerably.

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Vic Smith