

# MAVERICK

## CD REVIEWS

### THE NEW RELEASES

August 2011 • Issue 109 • [www.maverick-country.com](http://www.maverick-country.com)

'Formidable diversity and excellent entertainment'  
(Paul Collins, 4 stars, Maverick)

#### **Southern Tenant Folk Union • PENCAITLAND • Johnny Rock Records JOROCK 013 • ~~45~~**

*Mainly traditional folk with a couple of bluegrass gems in here too*

This hard working seven-piece band were founded by folk and bluegrass aficionado Pat McGarvey following his split from the Coal Porters some five years ago. Now Edinburgh-based they have put out four albums to date, are regulars on the festival circuit in addition to touring extensively, have made several TV appearances and as a consequence built up quite a large fan base. Southern Tenant's—the name comes from an early US farmers union—latest offering has a good variety across its good value 15 tracks and although McGarvey wrote seven of them the remainder are spread across the very talented band members Jed Milroy, Carrie Fisher, Ewan MacIntyre and Chris Purcell.

The title track is a Pat McGarvey song and the basics of it defeat me, as a small town turning in on itself I suppose Pencaitland which is a community of 1500 souls a few miles east of Edinburgh could be an example of the world passing you by but no apparent reason for the choice. When I first saw the album I thought, it turns out rather bizarrely, that the connection was the celebrated Castlesound Studios, cited in the old Pencaitland Primary School and memories of Runrig and Simple Minds but no nothing to do with that. I greatly preferred some of McGarvey's other contributions on this album the bluegrass feel to the protest song *Ida Won't Go*, balanced with *If You've got The Heart* about the raising of a militia, *Monument* a romp about a put upon male partner and the intense *The Rights And Interests Of The Labouring Man*.

In addition to some co-writes Jed Milroy has two good ones to himself, the cheery *Travelling Song* and the far from cheery *At The Break Of Dawn* which centres on the ending of a relationship. Violinist Carrie Thomas co wrote with Milroy the adaptation of Yeats' revealing *An Irish Airman Foresees His Death* and wrote and also sings the melancholy but very different *The Tide* which concerns a young lady left to fend for herself with the consequences of a brief relationship. Formidable diversity and excellent entertainment.

**Paul Collins**

[www.southerntenantfolkunion.com](http://www.southerntenantfolkunion.com)