

FOLK

PETE COE



The Man In The Red Van

(BACKSHIFT) www.backshift.demon.co.uk



The only time I saw Pete Coe perform was decades ago at the Coppers' folk club in Peacehaven. He came across then as a personable and accomplished musician, with a touch of the schoolmaster about him, as so many who immersed themselves in the 'revival' seemed to have, and a sense of evangelism, that also goes with the territory.

It's no surprise, then, that he's still in post and spread his talents through storytelling and dancing, while adding a whole range of instruments to those he already played with aplomb. It is inevitable that he should be described as 'a one man folk industry' (BBC Radio 2), but I think that's entirely to miss the point. What moves him, clearly, is a passion for his work. That makes for a live tradition, not a business.

The Man In The Red Van brings together his usual gifts, of interpreting and arranging classic songs, such as 'The Banks Of Red Roses', to contributing his own carefully studied and earnest pieces; for instance, 'Farewell To The Brine'. Between these lines runs a quiet sense of humour and detachment only the best can handle. It goes without saying now, Pete Coe is one of the best.

Nick Burbridge