

Under The Blue

Battlefield Band's Alan Reid and guitarist/singer Rob van Sante present an album of Scots songs and tunes peopled with heroes, vagabonds, dreamers, zealots and workers, in other words, ordinary folk.

This is a project borne out of a conversation in the Lake District towards the end of summer 2000. A bottle of wine later, and the world looking rosier, the Alan Reid/Rob van Sante partnership was set in motion. This is the result.

We begin with **54 Winters**, a tale of one who's highlight in life is having been in the war and who spends the rest of his life talking about it in the pub. **Ballantrae** was prompted by the memory of reading many years ago R. L. Stevenson's 'The Master of Ballantrae', an analysis of the Scottish psyche by a great story teller. **Campbell's Sisters** evokes a ceilidh somewhere in rural Scotland where everyone is determined to have a good time while the **Bold Grenadier** is a re-working of a fine old English folk song. **Atlantic Bridge** is a waltz that has a distinctly American resonance, hence the title.

The 1600's were a period of much bloodshed and religious strife in Scotland and **Covenanter** imagines a banned outdoor meeting being set upon by dragoons and a worshipper trying to flee the carnage. In stark contrast **A Jug of Charlie's Wine** is based on a whimsical poem 'A jug of Barney's wine' by Belfast man John Campbell. **A Gage Load of Men**, also a poem by the Fife Miner turned poet/playwright Joe Corrie, was set to music by Rob. Rob also composed **Elaine's Farewell to Skye** for his wife after her all too brief visit to the island.

Civil strife may be history in Scotland but it still persists in part of Ulster and **Across the Water** expresses the hope that there's been a sea change in the fortunes of that beautiful part of the world. **Fair One** is a song for any parent with kids who have trouble getting to sleep.

The tunes which follow are **Stovies/Trip to Raasay/The Calleach With the Crash Helmet**. **Stovies** are a tasty Scottish dish which includes tatties and onions and leftovers from the night before ...delicious, honest! **Trip to Raasay** commemorates a walk in the fair isle which ended up as a 4 hour endurance trek in which a 10 year old asked her mother if they were going to die there. **The Calleach With the Crash Helmet** is a splendid elderly Breton lady who set off towards the holiday gite by taking off her apron, strapping on her helmet, and running down a track to kick start her motorcycle.

We close with **The Last lighthouse keeper**, a salute to an intrepid band of men who are no more, the last manned station in Fair Isle having been closed in the summer of 2000, just before Rob and I began talking about this project. Nothing remains the same.

Engineered by **Rob van Sante**

Recorded/Mixed at **RVS Music Productions**, Leeds, UK.

Produced by **Alan Reid** and **Rob van Sante**.

Photography by **Cailean MacLean**.

Graphic Design by **John Slavin @ Design Folk** .

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Tacks 1,2,3,5 published **Kinmor Music**, track 4 © **Reid/Van Sante**, track 6 © **Reid/Campbell**, track 8 © **Van Sante/Corrie**, track 9 © **Van Sante/Reid**, tracks 10,11,12 © **Reid**.

Thanks to families and friends for support, also **John Molden, Duncan McCrone, Stuart Fleming, Robin, Roy ...** och the whole world.

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Musicians:

Alan Reid – *vocals, backing vocals, guitar, keyboard*

Rob van Sante – *vocals, backing vocals, guitar percussion, keyboards*

Alasdair White – *whistles, fiddles*

Roy Whyke – *drums*

Mike Kats – *whistles*

Tom Napper – *banjo, octave mandolin, tenor guitar*

Alastair Russell – *backing vocals*