

Scottish Folk Music

Alan Reid and Rob van Sante Biography

Alan Reid

(vocal, keyboard, guitar, piano accordion)
Scots Trad Award Nominee

Alan was a vital member of **Battlefield Band** from its inception in 1969 till his departure in 2010. In that time he toured all over the world and made almost 30 recordings with the band, working with such artists as Garrison Keillor, Van Morrison and Mike Oldfield. They won awards in Germany, Britain and the U.S. and throughout Alan was at the heart of the band, his keyboards underpinning the bagpipes and the fiddle. In being the first to use keyboards as an integral part of a traditional folk band Alan's contribution to the band's story has ensured its stature in Scottish culture as well as its influence on many of today's Celtic musicians.

Alan's singing has long been respected by his peers, illustrated when he was invited to participate in the Linn Recordings series on the complete works of Robert Burns. Moreover his song writing has grown in stature ever since the 1980s when his songs first appeared in the band repertoire, lyrical songs steeped in history, strong in storytelling and rich in melody.

His first solo album 'The Sunlit Eye' featuring new songs and tunes was released in 1998 and was followed up with a song and tune book 'Martyrs, Rogues and Worthies' in 2001. Later that decade he recorded three albums "Under the Blue" and "The Rise and fall o' Charlie" both of which showcase many of his works.

2012 has seen the release of the duo's album on the life of Scots born mariner John Paul Jones, a long term project for which Alan composed the music. Commissioned by Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and the duo performed a musical drama based on the story with script written by Alan.

*Alan plays a **Yamaha** P-80 electronic piano, **Hohner** student accordion and a **Yamaha** FG-160e guitar.*

".... The Pleasure Will Be Mine, one of (Reid's) loveliest compositions its winsome melody, vivid vernacular lyrics and tender sentiments, an ideal match with his warm, gentle voice, echoed in later highlights such as The Riccarton Tollman's Daughter, while his storytelling took on a darker hue in What Can A Lassie Dae?, and the slippery-slope momentum of The Arran Convict...."
The Scotsman

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Biography

Rob van Sante

(vocals, guitars, mandolin, bass, synthesizers, percussion, programming)

Dutch born **Rob** is a guitarist of skill and subtlety. His mother was a child prodigy on piano so it is no surprise that music has played an important part in his life. During the 1970's, 80's and 90's he toured extensively throughout Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

He has worked with such stalwarts of the British Folk and Jazz scene as

Danny Thompson, Jon Strong, Tom Napper, Tom McConville, Kate Rusby, John McCusker, Gordon Tyrrell,
Tim Wood, Patsy Matheson and many more.

Rob has worked for Battlefield Band for 13 years as their sound engineer for both live and recorded work. He accompanied them on all their tours as their 'fifth' member until he left the band in 2010.

When Rob is not on the road, he can be found at work in his recording studio in his adopted hometown of Leeds, recording and producing albums for local, national and inter-national musicians.

Rob has appeared on many albums displaying his virtuoso vocal ability both as a lead and harmony singer, also showcasing his undoubted instrumental skills to a variety of projects. All these strands come together to make a perfect foil to Alan and his music.

*Rob plays a Martin D-28, a Harmony H1260, an Ovation Balladeer and a Quiles C-2 nylon strung concert guitar.
He uses DADGAD, DADDAD, CGCGCC, CGDGAD,
CGDGCD and standard tunings.*

"...Rob provides beautiful guitar backing (and forwarding!) on guitar which he jokingly referred to as his high strung wife. To continue this image, he stroked her with gentle passion eliciting sighing harmonies and driving rhythms as the mood warranted. He sings in an intrinsically British traditional style delivering songs with heartfelt sincerity..."

The Beat Magazine - London, Ontario

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Together

Alan & Rob present an evening of old and new music, featuring Alan's compositions, Battlefield Band favourites and songs from Rob.

The show combines open tuned lead and accompaniment guitar work from Rob, Alan's keyboard, guitar and accordion and fine harmony singing from both. Alan and Rob are available for concerts and festivals which can also include workshops on John Paul Jones, song writing and DADGAD tuned guitar.

For special occasion the musical drama on John Paul Jones with expanded cast is also possible.

".....It says much about the bond Alan Reid and Rob van Sante have forged that when they get time off from the prolific Battlefield Band, as founder member and sound engineer respectively, they simply change roles and keep working together.

Many a band, given the chance, might want a holiday away from each other, although the Batties have long fostered something of a family atmosphere.

There were times here when the level of performance was more akin to two pals having a song together, rather than creating the spark of two musicians really on their mettle.

Reid, however, does tend to sing out more in this situation and led several rousing choruses, chiefly in the extracts from the duo's Jacobite song collection, The Rise and Fall o' Charlie.

Away from the mixing desk, van Sante is a capable guitarist and vocal harmoniser, and his singing of The Rout of the Blues, an army mobilising song learned from the classic album of the same name by Robin & Barry Dransfield, was a welcome return for an often overlooked gem.

Most of the repertoire, however, came from Reid, who plays guitar as well as the more familiar accordion and keyboard in the duo, and showed his ready eye for song ideas. There was much evidence, of well-practiced ways with melodies, with The Last Lighthouse Keeper, fulfilling the 'give 'em something to hum on the way home' dictum....."

Rob Adams - The Herald, Scotland