



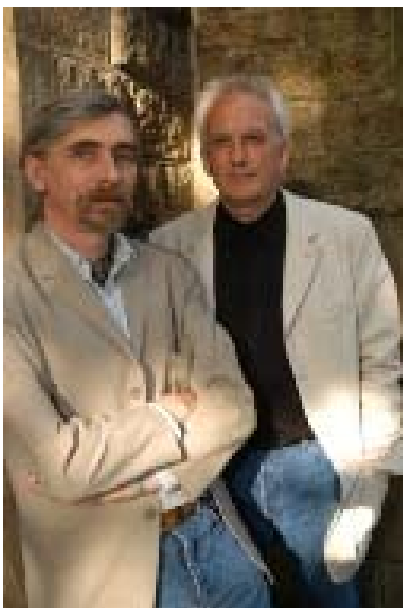
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For the attention of:

10 November 2006

Monday 11 December 2006 **JOHN TAMS & BARRY COOPE** Support: Edwina Hayes Chequer Mead Arts Centre, East Grinstead, West Sussex



John Tams, one of the country's leading songwriters, with his colleague of many years, the widely respected singer and keyboard player Barry Coope in a duo that has proved a winning combination.

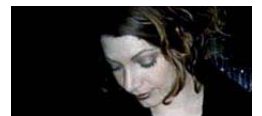
John won a hat-trick of awards in the **2006 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards** for **Folk Singer of the Year; Album of the Year; and Best Traditional Song**. He is considered by many to be one of our finest English songwriters. His warm, tender-hearted and distinctive vocals remain among the most expressive and soulful in English music.

John will be remembered by many as Daniel Hagman in the ITV Sharpe series - a role he played for five years alongside Sean Bean. He also co-wrote the music for the series. More recently, he created the musical score for the acclaimed production of the Crucible at Birmingham Rep and on tour, and also for the world premiere of Through a Cloud, written by Wycliffe star Jack Shepherd.

Barry Coope combines his exquisite versatility as a singer with a deeply passionate mastery of time and harmony as an accompanist.

The collaboration of these two extraordinary talents, who also happen to be great friends, is a recipe for a wonderful evening of entertainment with a fine mixture of traditional and original songs.

Support for the show is provided by Edwina Hayes, a Dublin-born singer/songwriter now residing in East Yorkshire, who has been a regular performer on both the London and Nashville Acoustic scene since 1999.



Tickets £12 (less concessions) Box Office 01342 302000 or email info@chequermead.org.uk.
More information can be found on the Acoustic Sussex website (www.acousticsussex.org.uk).

Extended biography overleaf...

Quotes - what others say:

"They confound expectations. Rich, diverse, contemporary and utterly compelling. It simply does not get any better than this" **Colin Hall, What's On in London**

"One of the ultimate British songwriters" **Mojo magazine**

[On The Reckoning] *"I really like this album - I am a big fan."* **Bob Harris, Radio 2**

"A beautifully composed CD - masculine yet tender, full of integrity -so beautifully expressing things that should be said and felt." **Shirley Collins, singer**

"If you are looking for album of the year - this is it. Tams is in mighty form" **Colin Hall**



What is Acoustic Sussex?

Acoustic Sussex is a non-profit making organisation that promotes quality singer/ songwriters and other acoustic musicians in the mid-Sussex area, using different venues. We encourage new and local talent by providing support slots for the main act and other opportunities such as 'open mic' evenings. Any profit we make from events is used for charitable purposes.

John Tams - biography:

John Tams (born 16th February, 1949) is an English actor, singer, songwriter and musician.

From Derbyshire, John began life as a reporter for local newspapers and worked for local BBC Radio Nottingham and Derby, later freelancing as a writer for the NME, Sounds and Melody Maker.

John was a member of Derbyshire folk group Muckram Wakes in the 1970s, then worked with **Ashley Hutchings** as singer and melodeon-player on albums including 'Son of Morris On', and as a member of the **Albion Band**. Splitting with Hutchings in the 1980s he formed **Home Service**. Now a mainly solo performer, or a duo with Barry Coope, John has made over 50 albums as either singer, musician or producer.



For a period around 1977 to 1985, John was an actor and Musical Director of Bill Bryden's company at the National Theatre, where productions included Lark Rise to Candleford, The World Turned Upside Down, The Iceman Cometh and A Midsummer Nights Dream. John started the odyssey of **The Mysteries** at the National Theatre with Bill Bryden and Bill Dudley. He has been part of that team since then, contributing to the script of The Nativity, performing as musician, singer and actor in all the subsequent productions both at home and away on NT tours of Europe. The Mysteries returned to the Royal National Theatre stage for a Millennium revival and finally closed in May 2000. John has also worked with Albert Finney and United British Artists at the Old Vic, the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych, co-directing with Jack Shepherd for Joint Stock, a TUC sponsored national tour of The Six Men of Dorset during the '84 miner's strike; and for a period was Associate director at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield.

John has acted in and provided the music for a number of TV and film productions, including Sons and Lovers, The Raggedy Rawney, The Rainbow, Heartbeat and the The Ruth Rendell Mysteries. Working in radio, he most recently provided the music and acted in the Radio 4 Classic Serial -Pickwick Papers.



John is probably best known to the general public through having played one of the supporting roles in the ITV drama series Sharpe as one of the 'Chosen Men'; rifleman and former poacher Daniel Hagman, a whimsical, sober, steady hand in the 95th Rifles; always ready with a deadly eye behind a Baker rifle, a folk remedy for an ailment, or a song for a weary heart. The series ran for five years, shooting in Russia, Portugal, Turkey and England. With Dominic Muldowney he co-wrote the score and was script associate to Tom Clegg, the director. John was producer of 'Over the Hills and Far Away' an album of the Sharpe music which sold over 100,000 copies for Virgin records.

In 2006 he became musical director of the 2006 BBC Radio 2 **Radio Ballads**, an updating of Ewan MacColl's 1957 Radio Ballads series. A year in the making, the production team selected six issues that have dominated the half-century since the original series, then set out to visit steelworks, shipyards and fairgrounds, cross the countryside with fox and hare hunters, talk to musicians who'd been caught up in the Troubles and to people living with HIV/AIDS, and to gather location atmosphere and sound effects, in the process speaking with hundreds of interviewees.



Once gathered, the interviews were edited into themes, with layers of recollections and memories. These were then sifted and arranged into possible groupings for songs to be written. John Tams assembled a team of professional musicians drawn mostly from the current folk music scene, as were the musicians in the original Ballads. As this Ballad series was commissioned as part of the BBC's Voices project, the songwriters used dialect, slang and shared experience to inform their songs, and John accompanied the team on several interview-gathering trips to fairgrounds and steelworks, as well as contributing songs to the programme. The six-part series was transmitted during February, March and April 2006.

John has released three solo albums to date, 'Unity' (2001), 'Home' (2002) and most recently, 'The Reckoning' (2005); all of which have met with well-deserved critical acclaim.

At the **2006 BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards**, John won **Album of the Year** for 'The Reckoning', **Best Traditional Track** (for 'Bitter Withy') and **Singer of the Year**.

John is the only artist to have won the Album of the Year award twice, the first time was with his first solo album 'Unity' in 2001.



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