



## Harvey Reid "**Dreamer Or Believer**" Woodpecker Records

This double disc collection is a Harvey Reid career retrospective covering the period 1982 – 2002. Disc 1 features instrumentals tracks only, while Disc 2 is given over to songs that Reid has written or covered. Having established that premise, each disc contains twenty tracks, and by way of, personally, making his task even harder Reid decided to pick a track in each category, from every one of the years that this collection covers. One result is that, across the two discs, there are seven previously unheard instrumentals and eleven unreleased songs, studio and live alike. For the Reid completist, that's a goodly reason to add this disc to your collection.

Having been a professional musician for eight years, in 1982 Harvey decided to go the independent route by establishing his own label, Woodpecker Records, and issued his debut album, "**Nothin' But Guitar,**" that year. Fifteen releases, including this set [WP # 116CD], have followed in its wake and all are still in catalogue albeit that the initial pair of recordings are available to *special order*. What that means is that by the time you read this review, Harvey and Woodpecker will have moved into the field of producing *custom CD's* of those early recordings, plus in the words of his web site, further CD's featuring "*selected goodies including out-takes, live cuts and historic things.*"

On the instrumental disc, numerically there's an almost equal split between material drawn from traditional sources and those melodies with an acknowledged composer. Some of the former hail from the *old world* – sic. "Fiddle Tune Melody [comprising *Lord Inchiquin* [\*], *Flowers Of Edinburgh*, *Whisky Before Breakfast* [#] and Rickett's Hornpipe]" and "*Si Bheag Si Mhor*" [\*]/"Fisher's Hornpipe." In the area known as North-East Scotland [~], Fyvie is a small rural Aberdeenshire town. "Streets Of Fyvie," Reid's title, is actually known as "Maid Of Fyvie-O" or "Bonnie Lass of Fyvie," the "O" being optional. In addition to the foregoing, Reid covers instrumentals that claim an Appalachian heritage, as well as melodies written to memorialise events in the American Civil War. As for the nine Reid penned originals, the Celtic flavoured "Off To Adventure" [1988] and "Crossing The Bandlands" [1993] stand out. Harvey closes Disc 1 with an unreleased rendition of Bach's "Minuet In G."

Having variously employed 6 and 12 string acoustic guitars, autoharp, lap steel, 6-string banjo, mandolin, bouzouki, dobro and probably more on Disc 1, second time around Reid's voice is further supported by sundry stringed instruments. Disc 2 only features a handful of traditional songs of which the tragic love song "Barbara Allen" and "Matchbox Blues" are probably the best known. Geoff Mack's "I've Been Everywhere" possesses a history of being a lyrically flexible crowd pleaser and, on this live rendition [from a show in Maine], Reid substitutes the nearby town of Kittery [Maine] for Pittsburg. The only other cover song is J.J Cale's upbeat "Call Me The Breeze." Reid's own composition "The Flower of Loudoun County" has the feel of being a traditional song, while in "Dreamer Or Believer" and "Lonesome As Can Be" Harvey invokes bluegrass settings. Lyrically intricate, "Circles," features a harmony vocal from long time associate Lynn Rothermich, while there are stylistic shades of David Mallett in Harvey's "It's A Banjo Playing."

### Note.

[\*] - Thought to be both Turlough O'Carolan compositions. "Si Bheag Si Mhor," reputed to be Turlough's first composition, translates as "The Big Hill And The Little Hill."

[~] – Where I was born and raised.

[#] - The appearance of the spelling *whiskey* as opposed to the true *whisky* in the CD liner booklet, may offend Scots of a more refined nature than I.

Folkwax Rating 6 out of 10

Arthur Wood  
Kerrville Kronikles 01/03